

International Perceptions of Northern Ireland: Immigration and Investment

Six Dimensions of the Nation Brands IndexSM 2017

Bulletin 2, May 2018

Introduction

In order to assess and monitor its international reputation, Northern Ireland was included on the Anholt GfK-Roper Nation Brands IndexSM (NBISM) for the first time in 2016 and then again in 2017.

The NBISM is an analytical tool which attempts to measure and rank the broad international reputation of 50 nations, across six dimensions of national competence: Exports; Governance; Culture; People; Tourism; and Immigration and Investment.

The 2017 NBISM involved the completion of over 20,000 online surveys, across 20 major developed and developing panel countries, with at least 1,000 surveys per panel country.

This bulletin examines how Northern Ireland is viewed in relation to the **Immigration and Investment** dimension. The score for this dimension was calculated using scores from five questions (attributes): Live and Work*; Quality of Life; Educational Qualifications; Invest in Business; and Equality in Society. For each attribute, respondents were presented with a statement and asked to state to what extent they agreed or disagreed on a seven point Likert scale, where one is strongly disagree, four is neither agree nor disagree, and seven is strongly agree. These statements are presented in Table 1.

All rankings presented in the report are out of 50. The overall score for the Immigration and Investment dimension is out of 100, while the score for each of the attributes is an average of respondents' scores, based on a scale from one to seven (with seven being the highest and best, and one being the lowest and worst).

This bulletin is the second in a series on the six dimensions of the NBISM. The other five bulletins, associated data tables and infographics are available from: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/six-dimensions-nation-brands-index-2017>.

The overall NBISM report (published in February 2018), associated data tables and accompanying methodological documents are available from: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/anholt-gfk-roper-nation-brands-index-2017-report-northern-ireland>.

Table 1: Attribute statements, Immigration and Investment dimension

Attribute	Statement
Live and Work*	'Please rank your willingness to live and work for a substantial period in Northern Ireland.'
Quality of Life	'This country is a place with a high quality of life.'
Educational Qualifications	'This country is a good place to study for educational qualifications.'
Invest in Business	'This country has businesses I'd like to invest in.'
Equality in Society	'This country cares about equality in society.'

*For the Live and Work attribute, the anchoring words were as follows: 7 meant respondents would be 'Very Willing' to live and work for a substantial period in Northern Ireland; 1 meant respondents would be 'Very Unwilling' and 4 meant respondents were 'Neither Willing nor Unwilling.'

Northern Ireland's NBISM score and ranking for the Immigration and Investment dimension

Northern Ireland received an overall score of 56.57 on the Immigration and Investment dimension (up from 55.25 in 2016). This means that Northern Ireland was ranked 21st out of the 50 participating nations in 2017 (compared with 20th in 2016). Despite the fall of one place in ranking, this dimension had the second largest increase in score between 2016 and 2017 (+1.32 points).

Figure 1: Northern Ireland's ranking and score on the Immigration and Investment dimension of the NBISM



Rankings and scores on the Immigration and Investment dimension from around the world

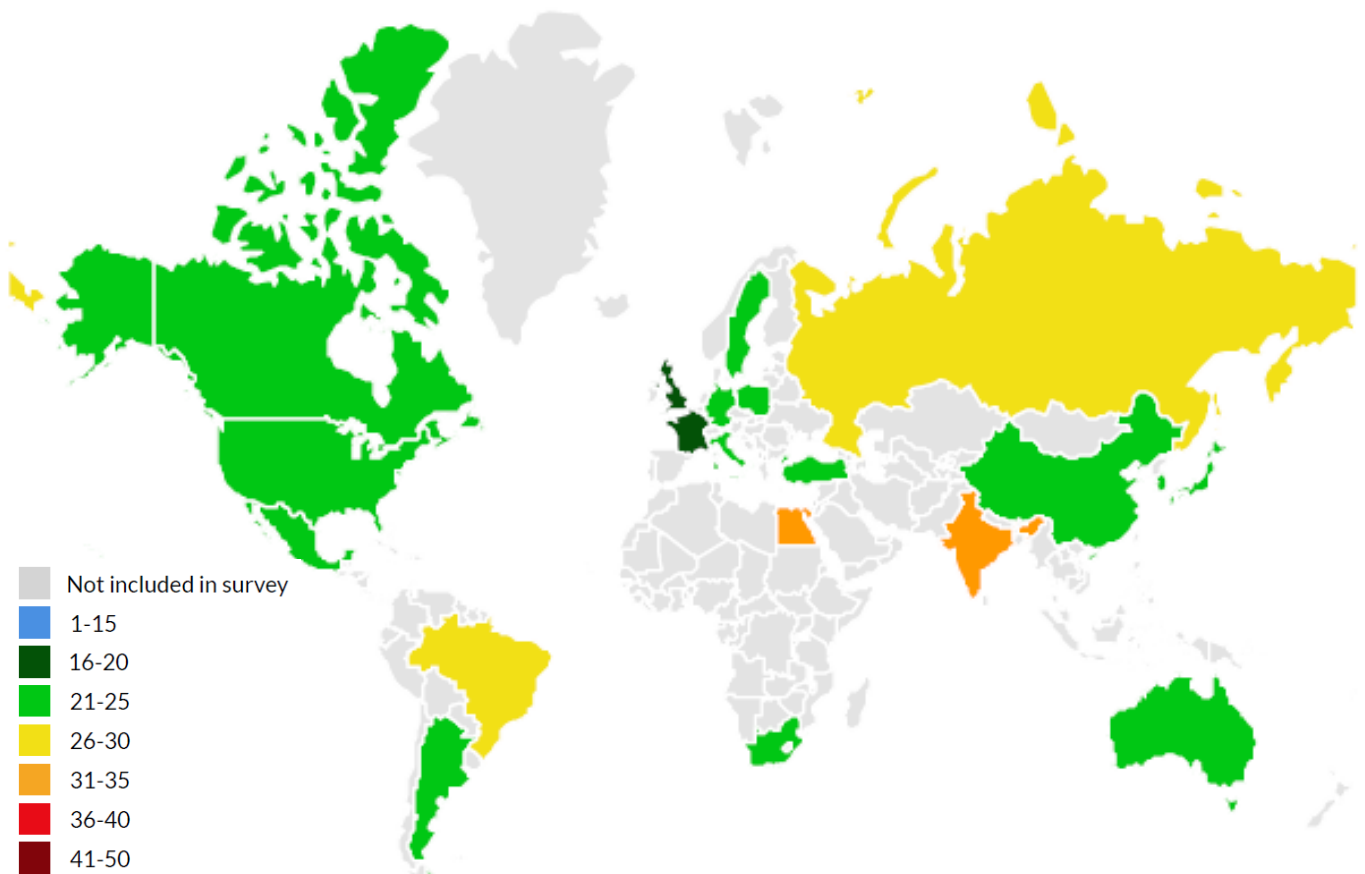
Northern Ireland was ranked relatively highly on the Immigration and Investment dimension globally, with most panel nations providing a ranking between 20th and 25th (Figure 2). The highest rankings were received from France and the United Kingdom (20th respectively), Canada, Germany, Italy, South Africa, Sweden and the United States (21st respectively). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Egypt (35th) and India (31st). Northern Ireland was also ranked relatively highly on the Immigration and Investment dimension in 2016.

While rankings provide an insight into how Northern Ireland is viewed by panel countries relative to the other participating nations, they can be impacted year on year due to the inclusion of new countries in the survey. The dimension score provides a more absolute understanding of how Northern Ireland is viewed, both overall and by each of the individual panel countries. In this sense, it is useful to consider both rankings and scores.

Northern Ireland's highest score was received from India (63.76) as was also the case in 2016. NI also received relatively high scores from China (63.47), Mexico (62.55), Egypt (60.95) and South Africa (60.48) in 2017. Northern Ireland's lowest scores were received from Japan (46.60) and Sweden (51.40) in 2017.

Northern Ireland's relatively high rank (21st) and low score (51.40) from Sweden, contrasts with the relatively low rank (31st) and high score (63.76) from India. This suggests that the distribution of scores varies across different panel countries.

Figure 2: Northern Ireland Immigration and Investment rankings from around the world



Attribute scores and rankings

The score for each attribute is an average of respondents' scores, on a scale from one (lowest and worst) to seven (highest and best) with four being neither positive nor negative.

Northern Ireland's attribute scores for this dimension ranged from 4.09 (Invest in Business) to 4.71 (Quality of Life) in 2017 (see Figure 3), and these were also the highest and lowest scoring attributes in 2016.

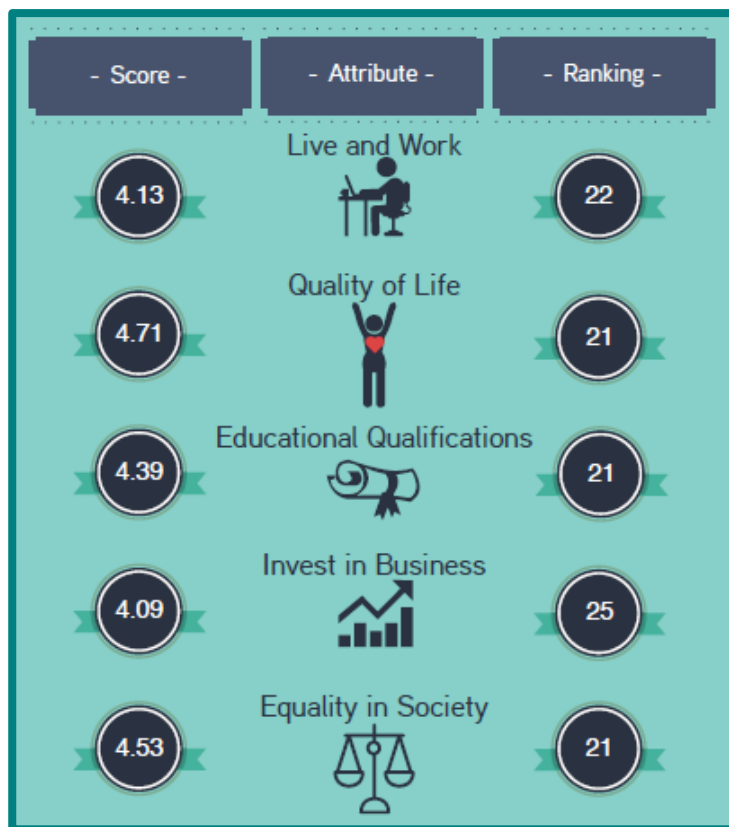
When attribute scores were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked relatively highly (either 21st or 22nd out of the 50 nations examined) on four out of the five Immigration and Investment attributes, with a lower ranking (25th) on the Invest in Business attribute.

Attribute scores in relation to previous visits to Northern Ireland

In 2017, nine per cent of NBISM respondents reported that they had previously visited Northern Ireland.

Respondents who had previously visited the region, scored Northern Ireland significantly higher on the Immigration and Investment dimension, as well as on each of the composite attributes, than those who had not visited. (Figures 4 and 5). This pattern was also evident in 2016.

Figure 3: Rankings and scores for Northern Ireland's Immigration and Investment attributes



Note: Attribute scores range from 1 to 7 and all rankings are out of 50.

Figure 4: Difference in Immigration and Investment dimension scores between those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not

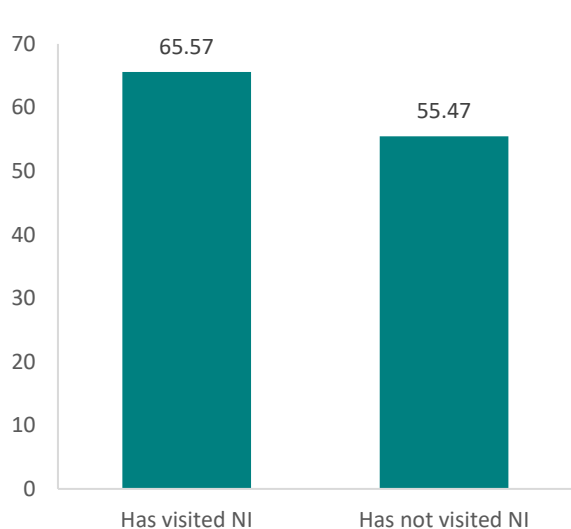
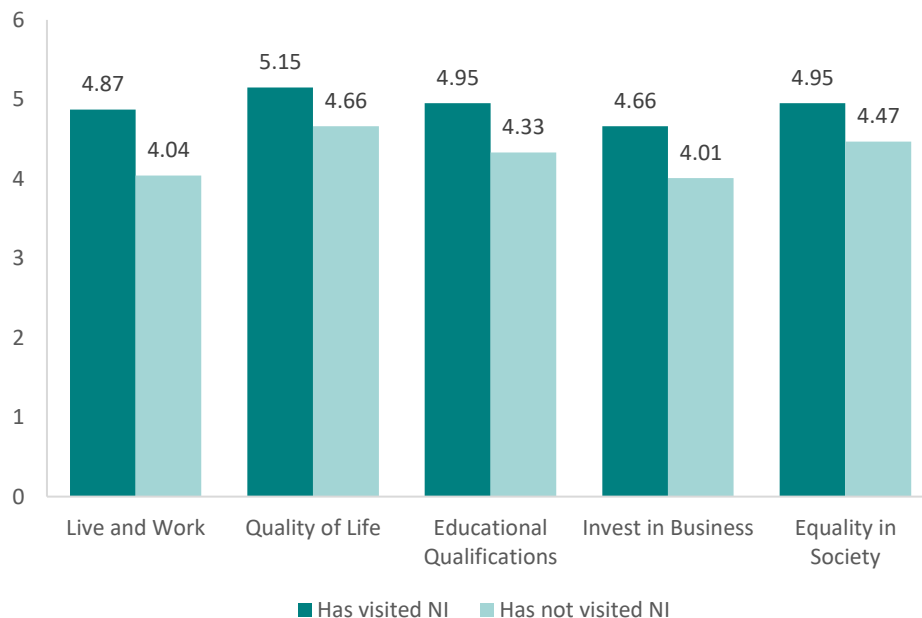


Figure 5: Difference in attribute scores between those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not – Immigration and Investment dimension



Attributes of the Immigration and Investment dimension: Proportion of respondents who agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement

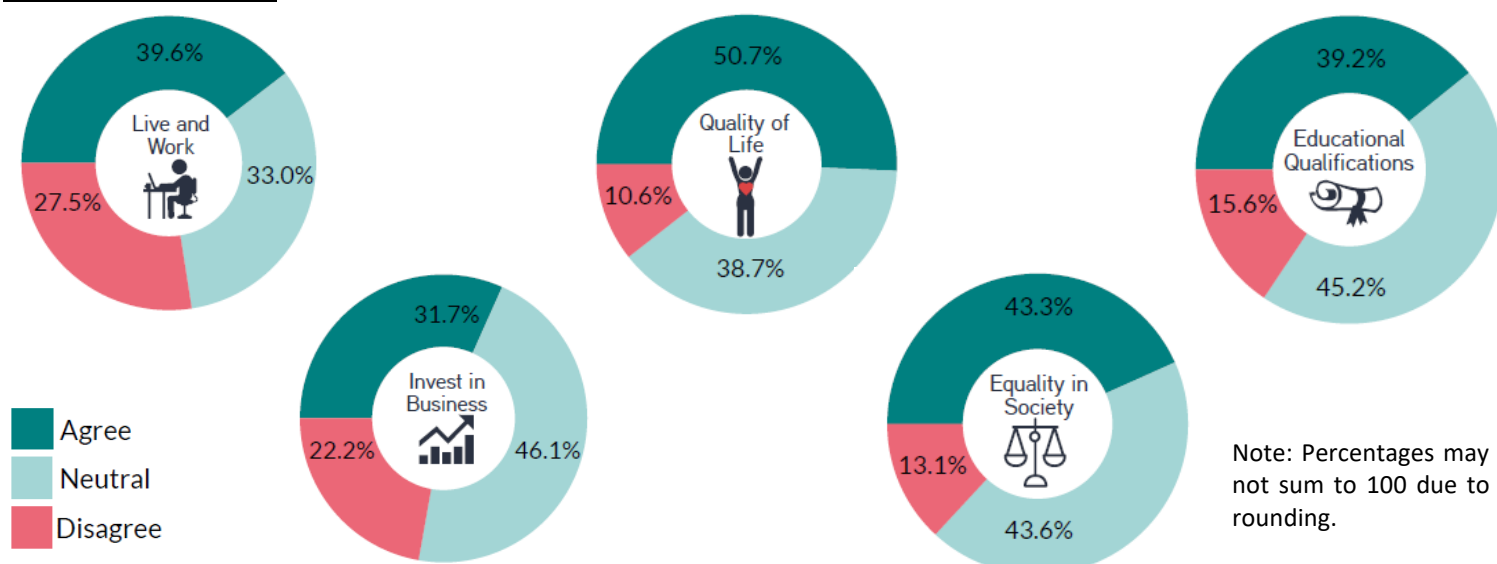
As well as examining scores and rankings, it is also useful to consider the proportion of respondents who either agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement* (see Figure 6). These proportions were all similar to those observed in 2016.

Just over half of respondents (51 per cent) agreed that NI is a place with a high quality of life, and around two in five respondents agreed on the Live and Work (40 per cent) and Educational Qualifications (39 per cent) attributes. A smaller proportion of respondents (32 per cent) agreed with the statement that Northern Ireland has businesses I'd like to invest in.

More than a quarter of respondents (27 per cent) indicated that they would not be willing to live and work in Northern Ireland, while 22 per cent disagreed that Northern Ireland has businesses they would like to invest in. These were two of the three highest disagreement rates that Northern Ireland received across the 23 attributes of the NBISM.

A large proportion of respondents gave a neutral response in relation to each of the five Immigration and Investment attributes, with percentages ranging from 33 per cent (Live and Work) to 46 per cent (Invest in Business).

Figure 6: Proportion of respondents who agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement within the Immigration and Investment dimension



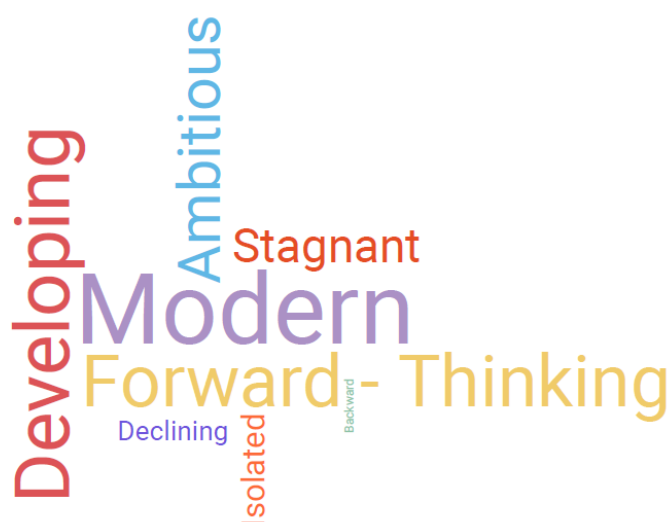
Words associated with Northern Ireland's economic and business conditions

Respondents were asked to select, from a predetermined list, the one adjective they thought most accurately described the current economic and business conditions in Northern Ireland. The most common response was 'none of these' (24 per cent of respondents). Figure 7 presents a word cloud of the adjectives that were chosen by remaining respondents.

The words most commonly associated with Northern Ireland's economic and business conditions were 'Modern' (17 per cent), 'Developing' (13 per cent), 'Forward-Thinking' (12 per cent) and 'Ambitious' (11 per cent).

A smaller proportion of respondents associated the words 'Stagnant' (nine per cent), 'Isolated' (six per cent), 'Declining' (five per cent), and 'Backward' (three per cent) with Northern Ireland's economic and business conditions.

Figure 7: Words associated with Northern Ireland's economic and business conditions



These proportions were all similar to those observed in 2016.

*For each attribute statement, respondents reported to what extent they agreed or disagreed on a seven point Likert scale, where one is strongly disagree, four is neither agree nor disagree, and seven is strongly agree. Respondents who provided scores between one and three were categorised as disagreeing with the statement, scores between five and seven were categorised as agreeing, while scores of four were categorised as neutral.