

In order to assess and monitor its international reputation, Northern Ireland has been included on the Nation Brands IndexSM (NBISM) since 2016.

The NBISM measures and ranks the reputations of 50 nations across Six Dimensions: Exports; Governance; Culture; People; Tourism; and Immigration and Investment.

This bulletin examines Northern Ireland’s reputation in relation to **Immigration and Investment**. The score for the Immigration and Investment dimension is calculated using scores from five attributes (see opposite). For each attribute, survey participants 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*.

The score for the Immigration and Investment dimension is out of 100, while the score for each of the attributes is based on a scale from one to seven (with seven being the highest and best, and one being the lowest and worst).

50 countries are included in the NBISM; rankings presented in the report show Northern Ireland’s position among these 50 countries.

Attribute	Statement
Work and Live*	‘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.’

*In relation to the “work and live” attribute, participants were not asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed but to what extent they would be willing to work and live for a substantial period in Northern Ireland, on a seven point Likert scale, where one is ‘very unwilling’, four is ‘neither willing nor unwilling’ and seven is ‘very willing’.

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



Headlines

- In 2019, Northern Ireland ranked 21st of 50 for the Immigration and Investment dimension (unchanged since 2018/2017 but down one place since 2016). Immigration and Investment was Northern Ireland’s 2nd highest ranked dimension, as was also the case in 2017 and 2018.
- Northern Ireland’s score for Immigration and Investment increased to 57.07 in 2019 (+0.76 since 2018). Immigration and Investment’s 2019 score is higher than in all previous years.
- Immigration & Investment received significantly higher scores from those who had visited Northern Ireland than those who had not.
- The 3rd and 4th lowest scoring attributes were in the Immigration and Investment dimension (“invest in business” at 4.11 and “work and live” at 4.15). When asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with attribute statements, large proportions of respondents (more than 23%) disagreed with these two attribute statements.
- In 2019, the largest changes in rank were from India, who ranked Northern Ireland eight places higher, and China, who ranked Northern Ireland three places lower than in 2018.

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

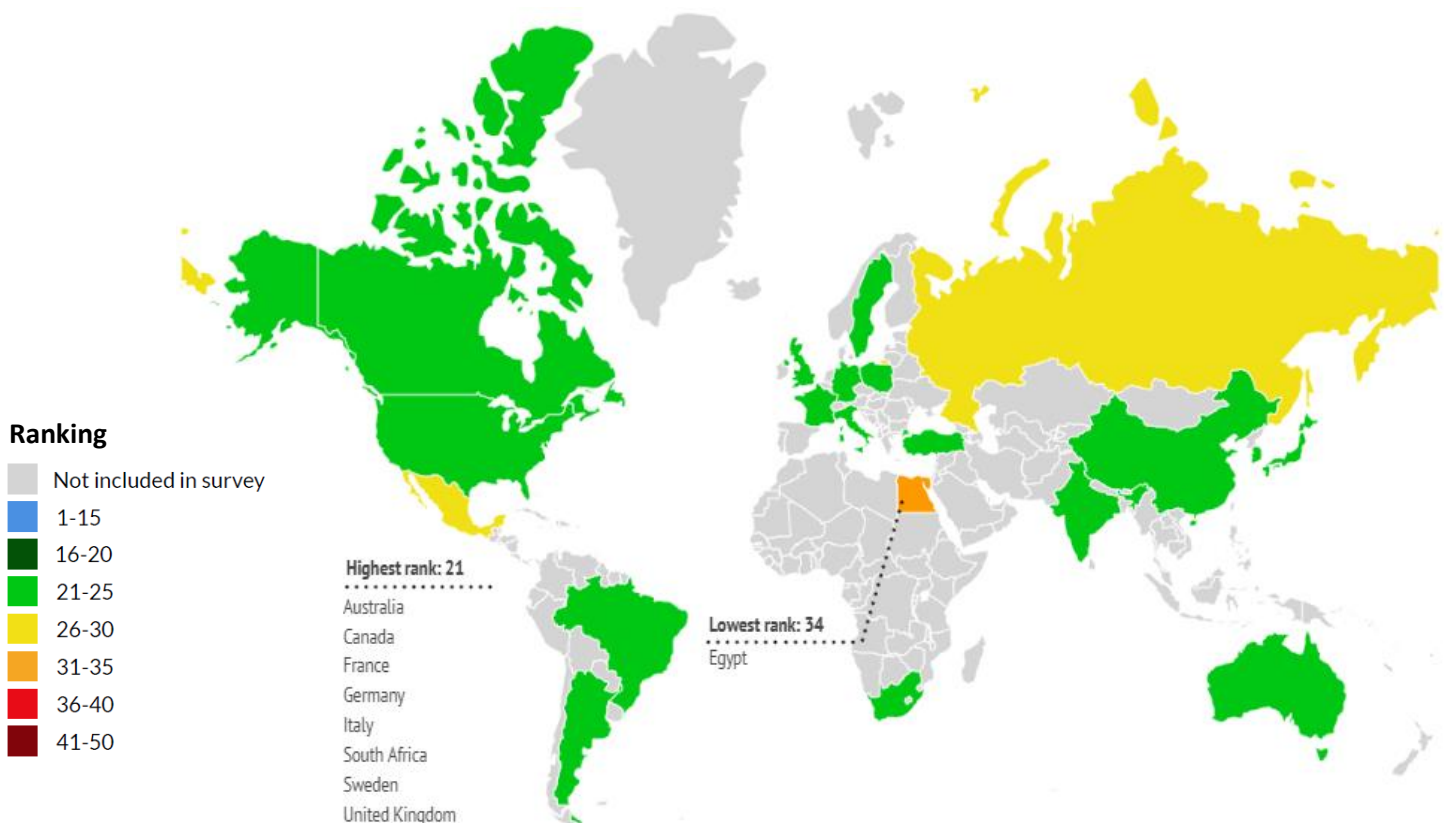
Northern Ireland was ranked relatively highly on the Immigration and Investment dimension globally, with all but three panel nations providing a ranking between 21st and 25th (Figure 2). The highest rankings were received from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom (all ranked Northern Ireland 21st). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Egypt (34th), Russia (29th) and Mexico (26th). Northern Ireland was also ranked relatively highly on the Immigration and Investment dimension in all previous survey years.

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 score on the Immigration and Investment dimension was higher in 2019 than in 2018. Northern Ireland's highest score was received from India (68.48). Northern Ireland also received relatively high scores from Mexico (64.20), China (63.02), Brazil (61.86) and South Africa (61.27) in 2019. Northern Ireland's lowest scores were received from Japan (46.79) and Sweden (50.90).

Northern Ireland's relatively high rank (21st) and low score (50.90) from Sweden, contrasts with the relatively low rank (34th) and high score (60.97) from Egypt. This suggests that scores from different panel countries are not necessarily comparable, again, highlighting the importance of considering both score and rank when evaluating responses from other countries.

Figure 2: Northern Ireland's rankings on the Immigration and Investment dimension from around the world



Attribute scores and rankings

The score for each attribute is an average of participants' 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 on this dimension have been positive (i.e. above the neutral value of 4) each year since Northern Ireland was included in 2016. The highest scoring Immigration and Investment attribute in 2019 was "quality of life" (4.72).

When attributes were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked relatively highly (20th, 21st or 22nd out of the 50 nations examined) on four out of the five Immigration and Investment attributes, with a lower ranking (24th) on the "invest in business" attribute.

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

SCORE	ATTRIBUTE	RANK
4.15	Work and Live 	22
4.72	Quality of Life 	21
4.44	Educational Qualifications 	21
4.11	Invest in Business 	24
4.57	Equality in Society 	20

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

Differences between those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not

In 2019, ten per cent of NBISM participants reported that they had previously visited Northern Ireland.

Participants who had previously visited the region scored Northern Ireland statistically 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 previous survey years.

Figure 4: Immigration and Investment dimension scores – those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not

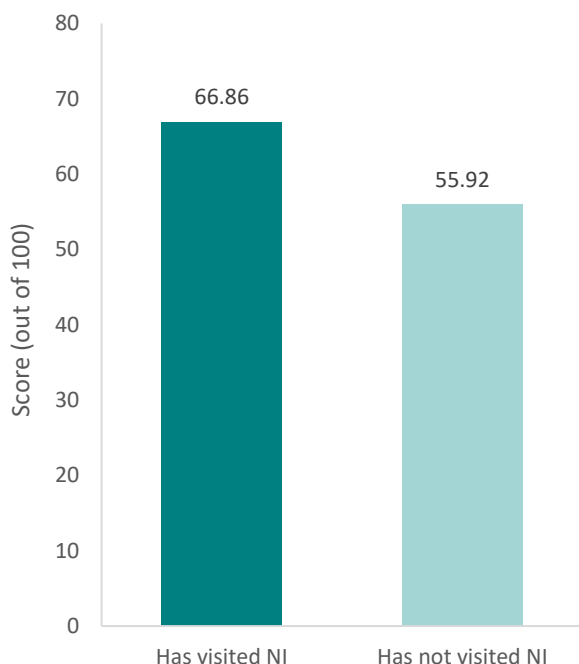
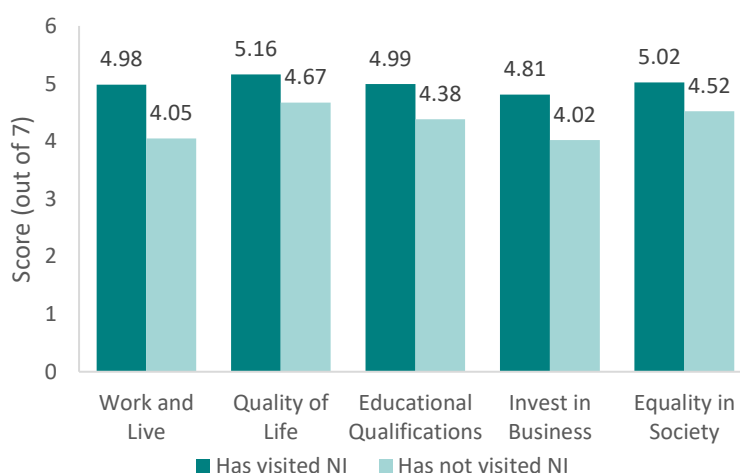


Figure 5: Attribute scores (Immigration and Investment dimension) – those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not



*Statistically significant differences are at the 95% confidence level. This means that we can be 95% confident that the differences between groups are actual differences and have not just arisen by chance.

Proportion of participants who agreed or disagreed with each Immigration and Investment attribute statement

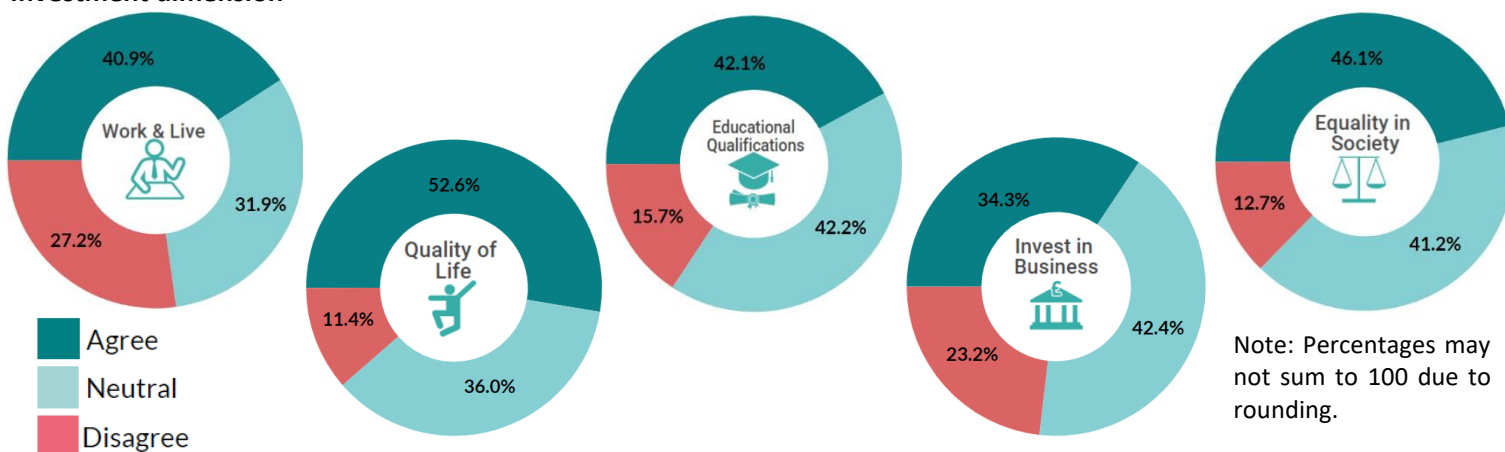
It is also useful to consider the proportion of participants who either agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement* (see Figure 6). These proportions were all similar to those observed in 2018.

More than half of participants (53 per cent) agreed that Northern Ireland is a place with a high quality of life, 46 per cent agree that Northern Ireland cares about equality in society and around two in five participants agreed on the “work and live” (41 per cent) and “educational qualifications” (42 per cent) attributes.

A large proportion of participants gave a neutral response in relation to each of the five Immigration and Investment attributes, with percentages ranging from 32 per cent (“work and live”) to 42 per cent (“invest in business”, “educational qualifications”) which could suggest a lack of awareness or strong views on Northern Ireland’s Immigration and Investment reputation.

More than a quarter of participants (27 per cent) indicated that they would not be willing to work and live in Northern Ireland, and almost a quarter (23 per cent) disagreed that Northern Ireland has businesses they would like to invest in.

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



Words associated with Northern Ireland’s economic and business conditions

Participants 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’ (25 per cent of participants). Figure 7 presents adjectives chosen by remaining participants. The words most commonly associated with Northern Ireland’s economic and business conditions were ‘Developing’ (20 per cent), ‘Modern’ (18 per cent), ‘Forward-thinking’ (15 per cent), ‘Stagnant’ (13 per cent) and ‘Ambitious’ (12 per cent). These are similar to those in 2018.

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



Further information

The other five bulletins for the Six Dimensions of the NBISM, as well as data tables and infographics, are available from:

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/six-dimensions-nation-brands-index-2019>

The overall NBISM report (published February 2020), data tables and methodological documents are available from:

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/nation-brands-index-2019-report-northern-ireland>

*For each attribute statement, survey participants 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. Participants 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.