

International Perceptions of Northern Ireland: Governance

Six Dimensions of the Nation Brands IndexSM 2017

Bulletin 1, 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 **Governance** dimension. The score for this dimension was calculated using scores from five questions (attributes): Competent and Honest; Rights and Fairness; Peace and Security; Environment; and Poverty. 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 Governance 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 first 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>.

Northern Ireland's NBISM score and ranking for the Governance dimension

Northern Ireland received an overall score of 59.51 on the Governance dimension (up from 57.96 in 2016). This means that Northern Ireland was ranked 20th out of the 50 participating nations in 2017 (no change since 2016). This was the dimension for which Northern Ireland received the highest ranking in 2017 and also the dimension with the largest increase in score between 2016 and 2017 (+1.55 points).

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

Table 1: Attribute statements, Governance dimension

Attribute	Statement
Competent and Honest	'This country is competently and honestly governed.'
Rights and Fairness	'This country respects the rights of its citizens and treats them with fairness.'
Peace and Security	'This country behaves responsibly in the areas of international peace and security.'
Environment	'This country behaves responsibly to protect the environment.'
Poverty	'This country behaves responsibly to help reduce world poverty.'



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Governance rankings and scores from around the world

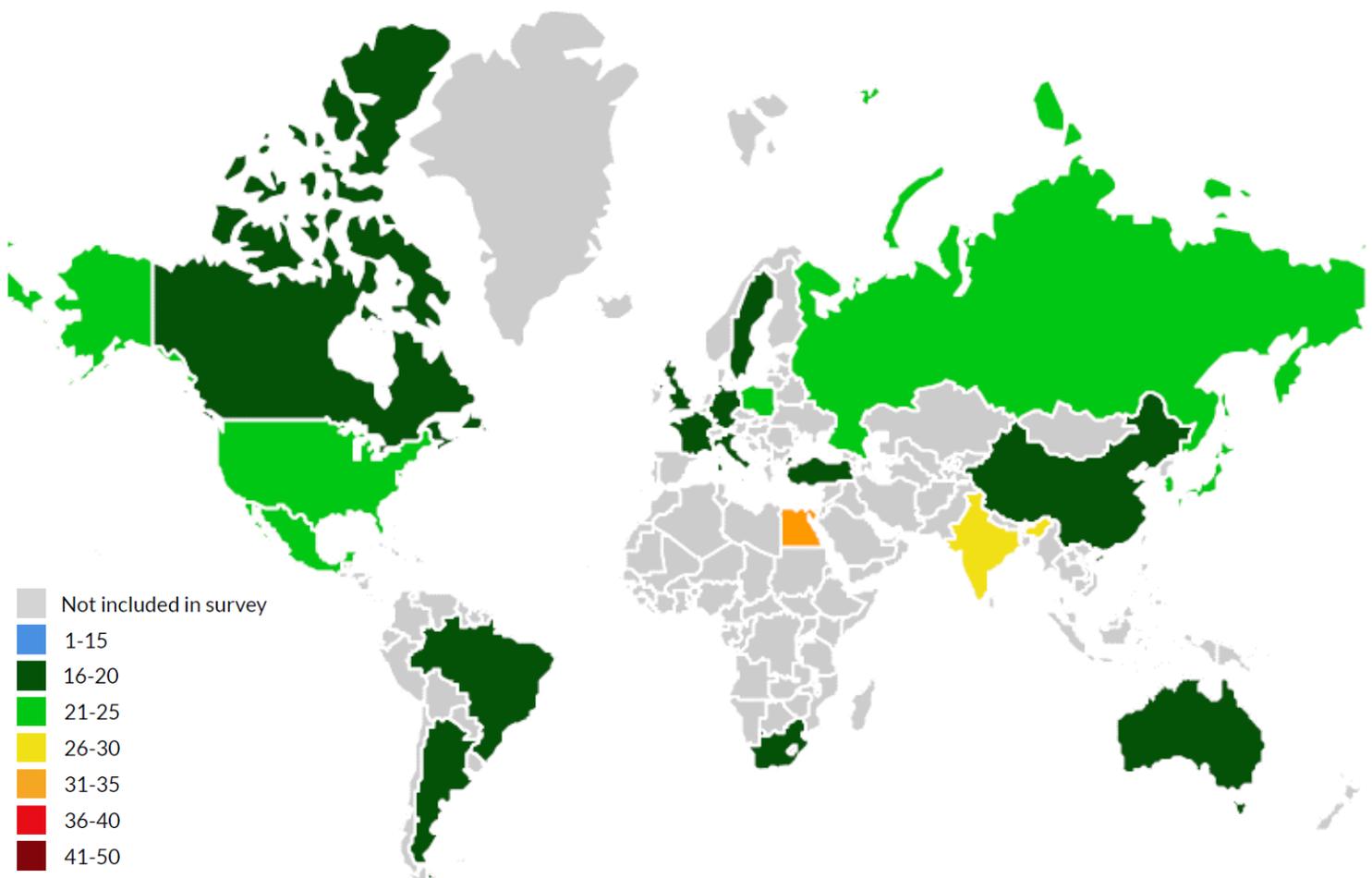
Northern Ireland's Governance was ranked relatively highly globally, with all but two of the panel nations providing a ranking between 17th and 24th (Figure 2). The highest rankings were received from China, Italy (17th respectively), Germany (18th), France, South Africa, Turkey and the United Kingdom (19th respectively). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Egypt (33rd) and India (26th). Northern Ireland was also ranked relatively highly on the Governance 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 (66.41) as was also the case in 2016. NI also received relatively high scores also received from China (65.24), Egypt (63.47), Germany (62.88), South Africa (60.71) and the United States (60.57) in 2017. Northern Ireland's lowest scores were received from Japan (53.32), Sweden (56.32) and Turkey (56.65).

Northern Ireland's relatively high rank (19th) and low score (56.65) from Turkey, contrasts with the relatively low rank (26th) and high score (66.41) from India. This suggests that the distribution of scores varies across different panel countries.

Figure 2: Northern Ireland Governance rankings from around the world



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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 overall score for each attribute on the Governance dimension was noted to be positive (i.e. above the neutral value of 4) in both 2016 and 2017. Scores ranged from 4.73 (Rights and Fairness) to 4.28 (Poverty) in 2017 and these were also the highest and lowest scoring attributes in 2016. The score for Rights and Fairness (4.73) was the fourth highest score Northern Ireland received for any of the 23 attributes across the six dimensions of the NBISM in 2017.

When attribute scores were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked relatively highly (either 20th or 21st out of the 50 nations examined) in each case.

Of all 23 attributes of the NBISM, Northern Ireland received its highest ranking for four of the attributes in this dimension: Competent and Honest; Rights and Fairness; Peace and Security; and Environment (all ranked 20th) (Figure 3).

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 Governance 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: Attribute rankings and scores for Northern Ireland's Governance



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

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

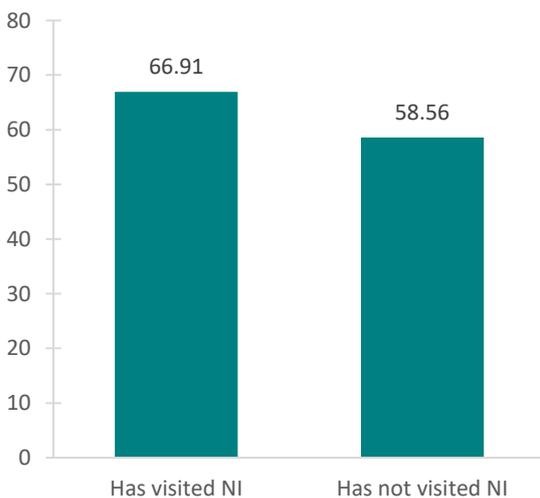
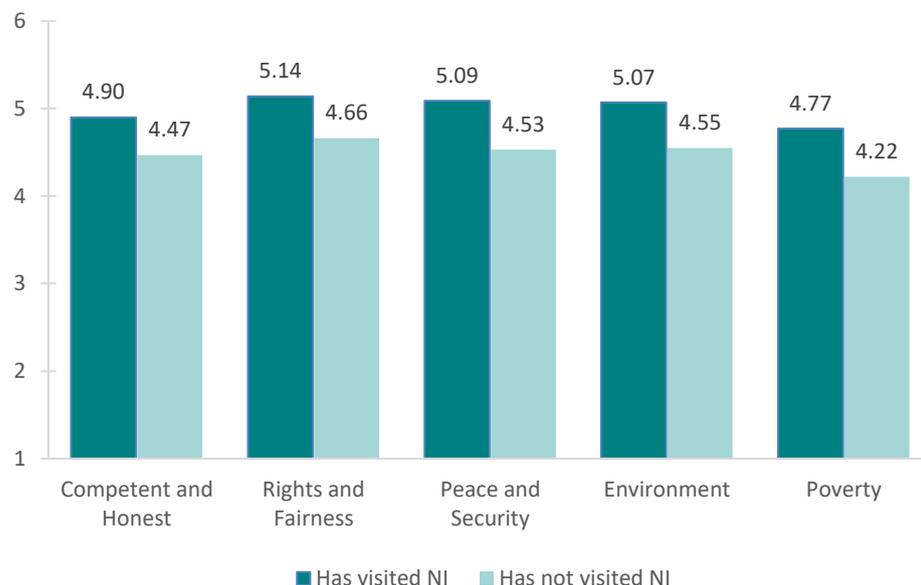


Figure 5: Difference in attribute scores between those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not



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Attributes of the Governance 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).

Almost half of respondents (49 per cent) agreed that NI respects the rights of its citizens and treats them with fairness. Over 40 per cent of respondents agreed on the Environment, Peace and Security and Competent and Honest attributes. A smaller proportion of respondents (35 per cent) agreed with the statement that Northern Ireland behaves responsibly to reduce world poverty.

The proportion of respondents who disagreed with any of the attribute statements displayed in Table 1 ranged from 10 per cent to 16 per cent. Respondents were most likely to disagree with the statement that Northern Ireland behaves responsibly to help reduce world poverty (16 per cent).

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



Words associated with the Government of Northern Ireland

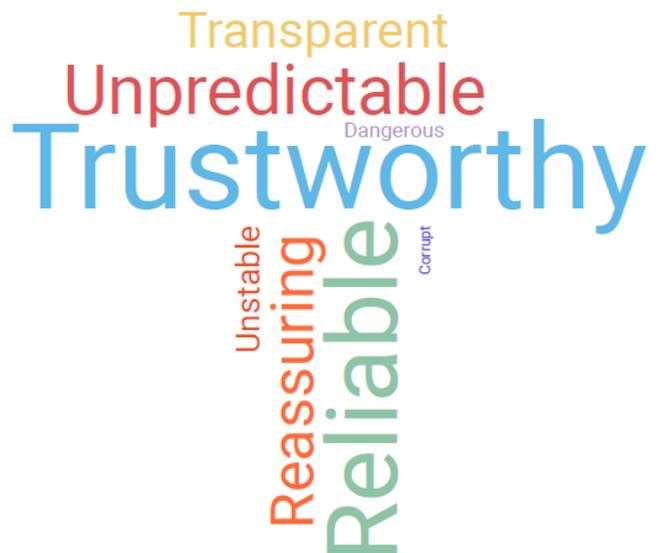
Respondents were asked to select, from a predetermined list, the one adjective they thought most accurately described the government of Northern Ireland. The most common response was 'none of these' (24 per cent of respondents). Figure 7 presents a word cloud of the adjectives that were chosen by remaining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

The words most commonly associated with Northern Ireland's government were 'Trustworthy' (18 per cent) and 'Reliable' (16 per cent). Eleven per cent of respondents associated 'Unpredictable' with Northern Ireland's government.

A smaller proportion of respondents associated the words 'Reassuring' (10 per cent), 'Transparent' (eight per cent), 'Unstable' (six per cent), 'Dangerous' (four per cent) and 'Corrupt' (three per cent) with Northern Ireland's government.

These proportions were all similar to those observed in 2016.

Figure 7: Words associated with the Government of Northern Ireland



*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.