

In order to assess and monitor its international reputation, Northern Ireland has been included on the Nation Brands IndexSM (NBISM) each year 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 **Culture**. The score for the Culture dimension is calculated using scores from three 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 Culture 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
Sports	'This country excels at sport.'
Cultural Heritage	'This country has a rich cultural heritage.'
Contemporary Culture	'This country is an interesting and exciting place for contemporary culture such as music, films, art and literature.'

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



Headlines

- In 2019, Northern Ireland ranked 32nd of 50 for the Culture dimension (up 3 places since 2018). Culture was Northern Ireland's lowest ranked dimension, as was also the case in all previous survey years.
- Northern Ireland's score for Culture increased to 56.68 in 2019 (+1.17 since 2018). Culture was Northern Ireland's 2nd lowest scoring dimension.
- Culture received significantly higher scores from those who had visited Northern Ireland than those who had not.
- In 2019, thirteen countries gave Northern Ireland a higher rank for Culture than last year. The largest changes in rank were from the United Kingdom, who ranked Northern Ireland seven places higher, and China, who ranked Northern Ireland nine places lower than in 2018.

Rankings and scores on the Culture dimension from around the world

Northern Ireland received lower rankings from panel nations on the Culture dimension compared with the other five dimensions of the NBISM in 2019. This was also the case in all previous survey years.

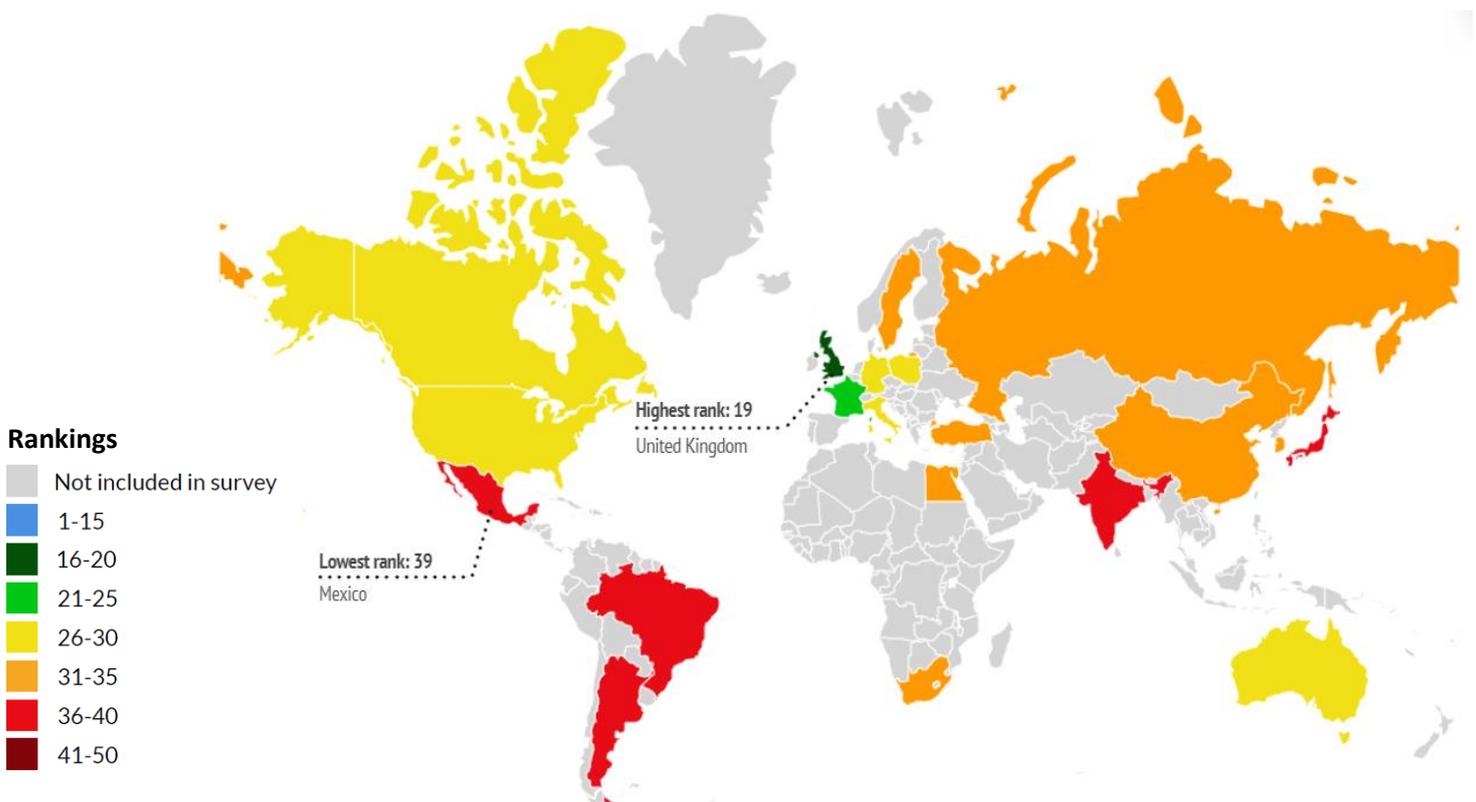
In 2019, Northern Ireland's highest rankings were received from the United Kingdom (19th of 50 participating nations) and France (25th). Northern Ireland's lowest rankings were received from Mexico (39th), India (38th) and Brazil (37th).

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 Culture dimension was higher in 2019 than in 2018. Northern Ireland's highest scores were received from India (67.50), China (61.32), Egypt (59.25), Brazil (59.14) and South Africa (59.04). Northern Ireland's lowest scores were received from Japan (50.30), Sweden (52.26) and Germany (52.95). Northern Ireland received a much lower rank and score from Egypt in 2019 compared to 2018.

Northern Ireland received a relatively high rank (26th) but low score (52.95) from Germany, which contrasts with the relatively low rank (37th) but high score (59.14) received from Brazil. 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 Culture 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.

In 2019 the "sports" attribute received its first positive score (i.e. above the neutral value of 4) since Northern Ireland was included in 2016. The highest scoring Culture attribute in 2019 was "cultural heritage" (4.72).

When attribute scores were compared with the other participating nations, Northern Ireland was ranked relatively poorly (29th, 31st and 34th) on all three Culture attributes (Figure 3).

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



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 Culture 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 all previous survey years.

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

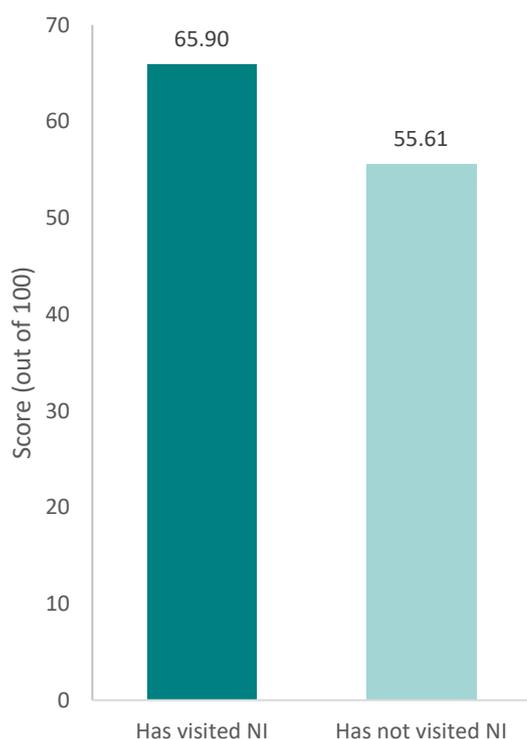
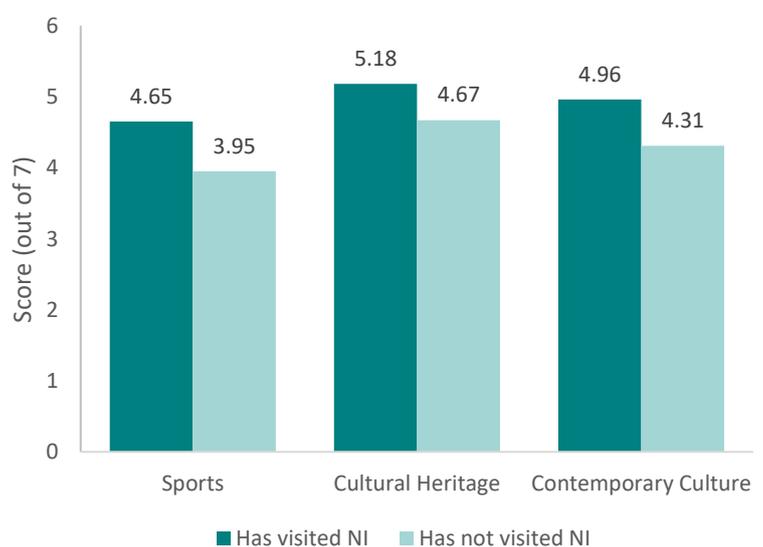


Figure 5: Attribute scores (Culture dimension) – those who have visited Northern Ireland and those who have not



*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.

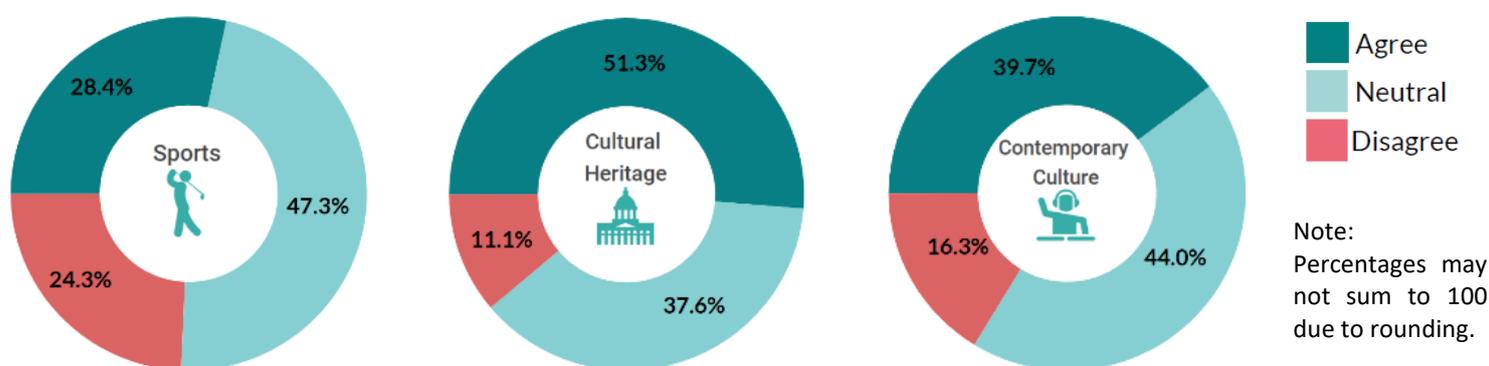
Proportion of participants who agreed or disagreed with each Culture attribute statement

It is also useful to consider the proportion of participants who either agreed or disagreed with each attribute statement* (see Figure 6). The proportions reported below for the attributes within the Culture dimension are all similar to those observed in previous survey years.

A relatively large proportion disagreed that Northern Ireland excels at sport (24 per cent) and the agreement rate for this statement was low compared to other attribute statements (28 per cent). The majority of participants (47 per cent) gave a neutral response.

More than half of participants agreed that Northern Ireland has a rich cultural heritage (51 per cent), while 40 per cent agreed that Northern Ireland is an interesting and exciting place for contemporary culture. A large proportion of participants gave a neutral response in relation to both of these attributes (38 per cent and 44 per cent respectively) while disagreement rates were lower for both attributes (11 per cent and 16 per cent respectively).

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



Cultural activities or products associated with Northern Ireland

Participants were asked to select, from a predetermined list, the cultural activities or products they would most associate with Northern Ireland (participants could choose more than one response). The most common response was 'none of these' (41 per cent of participants). 'None of these' was selected less frequently for similar questions on most of the other dimensions. Figure 7 presents adjectives chosen by remaining participants. The activities and products most commonly associated with Northern Ireland were 'Museums' and 'Music' (both 20 per cent), 'Sports' (14 per cent) and 'Sculpture', 'Modern Design' and 'Film' (all 12 per cent). These proportions were broadly similar to those observed in all previous survey years.

Figure 7: Cultural activities or products associated with Northern Ireland



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.