



Northern Ireland
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Northern Ireland's Global Competitiveness in Comparison

1 Introduction

In response to a research request by the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment this briefing note sought to compare economic conditions in regions where Invest NI's global offices were located. As comparable sub-national data was unavailable, country level data has been used in order to make comparisons.

The global data within the table below is sourced from the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index 2012-2013. The index ranks and scores 144 countries on a wide range of economic factors using statistics collected by recognised international agencies and from the World Economic Forum's Annual Executive Survey to capture concepts that require qualitative assessment.¹

The data for Northern Ireland has been obtained from the Competitiveness Index for Northern Ireland 2012-2013. This index, commissioned by the Economic Advisory Group for Northern Ireland, uses the same methodology as the World Economic Forum and therefore we can compare and place Northern Ireland in a global context.² Thus

¹World Economic Forum (2013), Global Competitiveness Report 2012-2013,
http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GlobalCompetitivenessReport_2012-13.pdf

²Economic Advisory Group NI (2013), Competitiveness Index for Northern Ireland 2012-2013,
<http://www.eagni.com/fs/doc/publications/eagcompetitiveness-index-report.pdf>

we can add Northern Ireland to the Global Competitiveness Index, which now enlarges the sample from 144 to 145 countries.

2 Northern Ireland's Global Competitiveness

Alongside Northern Ireland (NI), the below table ranks (out of 145) and scores (worst 1-7 best) the following countries (where Invest NI's global offices are located):

- Germany;
- Republic of Ireland (RoI);
- United Kingdom (UK);
- United States (US);
- United Arab Emirates (UAE);
- India;
- China;
- Singapore;
- Japan;
- Saudi Arabia (Saudi).

Table 1: Global Competitiveness Index³: Northern Ireland in Comparison⁴

Country: Score 1-7 Rank /145	Overall		Quality of Electricity Supply		Availability of Financial Services		Government Support for Improved Business Performance		Quality of Overall Infrastructure		Quality of Educational system	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
NI	4.5	42nd	6.0	32nd	4.3	87th	3.7	69th	4.0	79th	4.6	30th
Germany	5.5	6th	6.4	19th	5.8	18th	4.5	22nd	6.2	9th	4.9	20th
RoI	4.9	27th	6.5	18th	4.5	78th	4.1	44th	5.2	37th	5.3	9th
UK	5.4	8th	6.7	8th	4.1	3rd	4.1	42nd	5.6	24th	4.7	27th
US	5.5	7th	6.0	34th	4.2	12th	4.2	33rd	5.6	25th	4.7	28th
UAE	5.1	24th	6.4	20th	5.7	27th	5.7	3rd	6.4	6th	5.0	17th
India	4.3	60th	3.2	111th	3.6	44th	3.6	76th	3.8	88th	4.4	35th
China	4.8	29th	5.2	60th	4.6	68th	4.3	32nd	4.3	69th	3.9	58th
Singapore	5.7	2nd	6.7	6th	6.1	9th	5.9	2nd	6.5	2nd	5.8	3rd
Japan	5.4	10th	5.9	37th	5.2	36th	3.6	72nd	5.9	16th	4.2	44th
Saudi	5.2	18th	6.3	21st	5.3	31st	5.2	5th	5.8	23rd	4.4	33rd

Given that Invest NI's global offices are located in some of the world's most advanced economies, and some of the world's largest developing economies, NI is generally less competitive in comparison, placed 42nd out of the 145 countries in the overall index. India, which is placed 60th, is the only country where Invest NI offices are located that scores lower than NI in the overall index.

On 'Quality of Electricity Supply' NI is placed 32nd in the index, behind Germany, RoI, UK, UAE, Singapore and Saudi Arabia. NI scores marginally higher than Japan and US, and considerably higher than India and China.

On 'Availability of Financial Services' NI is in 87th place, last among countries where Invest NI have offices. RoI is also low scoring in this area placing 78th, while UK and Singapore are high scorers in this category.

In the category 'Government Support for Improved Business Performance' NI places comparatively low in 69th, scoring marginally better than India and Japan, lower than RoI and UK, and considerably lower than Singapore and Saudi Arabia who score highly in this category.

On 'Quality of Overall Infrastructure' NI places 79th, slightly higher than India and marginally lower than China. NI is ranked lower than the UK and RoI, and considerably lower than UAE, Singapore and Germany who score highly in this area.

³ World Economic Forum (2013), Global Competitiveness Report 2012- 2013, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GlobalCompetitivenessReport_2012-13.pdf

⁴ Economic Advisory Group NI (2013), Competitiveness Index for Northern Ireland 2012-2013, <http://www.eagni.com/fs/doc/publications/eagcompetitiveness-index-report.pdf>

In terms of 'Quality of Educational System' NI performs relatively average in comparison. NI scores better than India, China and Japan and Saudi Arabia, marginally lower than UK and US and considerably lower than Singapore and RoI, who are top performers in this category.

Overall, NI is more competitive than its average score on 'Quality of Electricity Supply' and 'Quality of Educational System', though is less competitive than the average score on 'Availability of Financial Services', 'Quality of Overall Infrastructure', and 'Government Support for Improved Business Performance'.