November 2026

The case for Northern Ireland

Pocketbook

Key facts and statistics



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Our vision and mission

Vision: A prosperous Northern Ireland people believe in.

Mission: Making the positive case for Northern Ireland.

Our aims:

- **Build confidence in Northern Ireland** by telling a clear and positive story about its progress, strengths and potential, grounded in evidence.
- **Broaden support for Northern Ireland's future** by building a shared sense of belonging that respects British, Irish, Northern Irish and other identities.
- **Turn potential into progress** by developing practical policy solutions that improve public services, strengthen the economy and make Northern Ireland an even better place to live.

Our approach:

- **Evidence first.** We combine rigorous research with practical policy thinking to understand Northern Ireland's strengths and identify credible solutions to the challenges we face.
- **Positive and broad-based.** We speak to people across political and community backgrounds, respecting different identities, traditions and aspirations.
- **Focused on delivery.** We build coalitions across politics, academia, business and civil society to turn good ideas into better outcomes for Northern Ireland.

A positive story

Northern Ireland today is a place transformed.
In a generation, we have come from conflict to build a peaceful, democratic society. Across our communities, people live, work and build their lives together, within a settlement that respects difference. There is a shared sense of belonging and a quiet pride in what we call home.

Too often, that story is overlooked.
The conversation drifts towards division. Confidence has been shaken by instability, pressure on public services and uncertainty about what lies ahead. We focus too much on competing futures, instead of improving the present we already share.

But Northern Ireland is changing.
More people are looking beyond old divisions. The foundations are already in place. A growing economy. Ambitious and talented young people, with the ability to deliver. This is our moment to move forward with confidence.

To realise our opportunities, a stronger case for Northern Ireland must be made.
Renew NI exists to lead that work. Bringing together evidence, ideas and practical solutions. Building a clear, positive vision that reflects our strengths and meets our challenges head on.

We can build a future where more people feel proud.
Not just of what we have overcome, but of what we are building together. A Northern Ireland that delivers. Confident in ourselves. Clear in our direction. We can build a Northern Ireland people don't just live in, but believe in.

Northern Ireland transformed



Northern Ireland's unemployment rate has fallen from 8.5% in 1998 to 2.1% today.[1]



The number of employee jobs in Northern Ireland has reached a record high of 857,660.[2]



Northern Ireland's service sector output is 11.7% above its pre-pandemic level, compared with 8.7% across the UK.[3]



In 2024, Northern Ireland businesses exported £19.6 billion of goods and services, producing an £8.4 billion trade surplus.[4]

* Figures used are accurate at the time of publication.

A place where we all belong



77% of people
say that they feel a sense of belonging to Northern Ireland.[5]



This includes:

- **89% of Protestants**
- **71% of Catholics**
- **66% of people with no religion**

* Figures used are accurate at the time of publication.

Where your money goes further



Rents in Northern Ireland are at least 30% cheaper than in the Republic.[6]



Annual rent for a two-bedroom property is £11,604 in Belfast, compared to £25,598 in Dublin.[7]



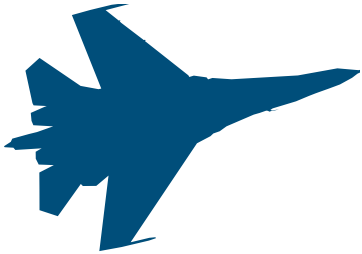
The average house price is £202,487 in Northern Ireland, compared to £334,560 in the Republic.[8]



Weekly full-time earnings in Northern Ireland have increased by 6.1% in the last year.[9]

* Figures used are accurate at the time of publication.

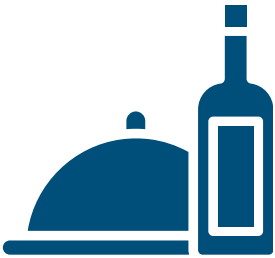
Strong foundations for growth



Northern Ireland's aerospace, defence and space sectors generate around £2.2 billion in turnover and employ approximately 9,000 people.[10]



Cybersecurity contributes around £237 million and employs 2,750 professionals, with more than 100 firms clustered within three miles of Belfast city centre.[11]



Northern Ireland's food and drink sector has an annual turnover of approximately £7.3 billion and supports an estimated 109,000 jobs.[12]



The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre, backed by £100 million of investment through the Belfast Region City Deal, is expected to generate over £1 billion of economic impact by 2050 and more than 1,500 jobs.[13]

* Figures used are accurate at the time of publication.

Security in an unstable world



Recorded crime is around 50 offences per 1,000 people, compared with 87 per 1,000 in England and Wales.[14]



92% of people in Northern Ireland say that they feel safe in their own community.[15]



Around 80% of the public express confidence in the Police Service of Northern Ireland.[16]



UK defence spending directly supports an estimated £271 million of economic output.[17]

* Figures used are accurate at the time of publication.

An insecure alternative



A united Ireland has an estimated 25-year cost of €101bn to €838bn across the range of scenarios modelled by Fine Gael.[18]



Even if the UK continued paying for pensions and retained NI's share of UK debt, a united Ireland's debt would reach 110.5% of Gross National Income (GNI) after 25 years.[18]



If Ireland instead assumed responsibility for pensions and NI's share of UK debt, a united Ireland's debt would rise sharply to 160.5% of GNI.[18]

* Figures used are accurate at the time of publication.

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