WHY BELFAST?
Northern Ireland’s economy looks to be back on track following a weather-related slowdown earlier in the year. According to the Northern Ireland Composite Economic Index (NICEI), total output contracted at an annual rate of 1.0% in Q1 2018. However, recent data suggest the economy has rebounded. The Ulster Bank Northern Ireland PMI indicates that business activity accelerated for the fourth straight month in July, with good weather cited as a factor supporting demand.

With a fresh wave of Sterling weakness since April – a tailwind for the export economy – business from abroad is on the rise and has helped push overall new orders to a six-month high.

Northern Ireland’s labour market managed to weather the first-quarter storm and continues to perform well. Total employment rose by 11,000 in the twelve months to Q2 2018 and, at just 3.8%, the unemployment rate remains below that of the UK as a whole (4.0%). While risks do remain in the economy, including an uncertain Brexit outcome and the ongoing stand-off in Stormont, recent recruitment announcements across a range of sectors bode well for the outlook.
AT A GLANCE

Belfast has a population of 340,000 in the city and there are more than 1 million people living in the greater Belfast region.

34% of the population aged 16-64 has achieved degree level education or higher.

41% of Belfast's population is under 30 years of age.

ECONOMY

900 international companies have invested in Northern Ireland.

Almost 80% of new inward investors have reinvested.

Northern Ireland is the 2nd fastest growing knowledge economy region in the UK.

There are over 200,000 jobs located in Belfast, these account for 30% of all jobs in Northern Ireland.
CONNECTIVITY
Belfast is well connected by road, rail, air and sea.

TWO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORTS WITHIN
30 MINUTES
OF BELFAST CITY CENTRE

LONDON IS
1 HOUR
BY AIR

AND DUBLIN IS
1 HOUR
BY TRAIN

EDINBURGH
LONDON HEATHROW
GLASGOW
LONDON CATHWICK
BELFAST

BELFAST INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT IS THE 5TH BUSIEST AIRPORT IN THE UK FOR DOMESTIC PASSENGER TRAFFIC

BELFAST HAS
97% ACCESS
TO SUPERFAST BROADBAND

AND
85% ACCESS
TO ULTRAFAST BROADBAND

EDUCATION
Northern Ireland was the top performing region in the UK for GCSEs and A levels in 2017

Northern Ireland’s primary school pupils are the highest achieving students in maths tests in Europe and the 6th highest in the world

Northern Ireland’s primary school children are ranked 4th in Europe for literacy rates

77% of school leavers in Northern Ireland go on to further and higher education colleges

RUSSELL GROUP
Queen’s University is a member of the Russell Group of 24 leading UK research-intensive universities and is ranked in the top 1% of universities worldwide

Belfast is well connected by road, rail, air and sea.

Two international airports within 30 minutes of Belfast city centre.

London is 1 hour by air.

And Dublin is 1 hour by train.


Belfast International Airport is the 5th busiest airport in the UK for domestic passenger traffic.

Belfast has 97% access to superfast broadband.

And 85% access to ultrafast broadband.

Queen’s University is a member of the Russell Group of 24 leading UK research-intensive universities and is ranked in the top 1% of universities worldwide.
GLOBAL BLUE-CHIP COMPANIES INCLUDING CITI, ALLSTATE, LIBERTY IT, CHICAGO MERCANTILE AND FUJITSU ALL HAVE KEY BASES IN BELFAST

BELFAST IS THE 2ND MOST SUCCESSFUL UK CITY, AFTER LONDON, AT ATTRACTING US TRADEABLE SERVICES FDI PROJECTS AND THE NUMBER ONE GLOBAL DESTINATION FOR FINANCIAL TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT INVESTMENTS

BELFAST IS HOME TO MAJOR TV AND FILM PRODUCTIONS INCLUDING HBO’S GAME OF THRONES, THE FALL AND THE NEW WARNER HORIZON SERIES, KRYPTON

BELFAST AND THE CAUSEWAY COAST WERE VOTED ‘NUMBER ONE REGION IN THE WORLD TO VISIT IN 2018’ BY LONELY PLANET

BELFAST IS A GLOBAL LEADER IN AEROSPACE ENGINEERING

BOMBARDIER AEROSPACE HAS OPERATED HERE FOR OVER 70 YEARS (PREVIOUSLY SHORT BROTHERS)

CRUISE VISITORS TOTALLED 154,000 IN 2017

IT IS HOME TO TITANIC BELFAST, WHICH WAS NAMED THE WORLD’S LEADING TOURIST ATTRACTION IN 2016
FROM CYBER SECURITY TO MEDICAL RESEARCH, BELFAST IS HOME TO GLOBAL RESEARCH CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

THE CENTRE FOR CANCER RESEARCH AND CELL BIOLOGY FACILITY AT QUEENS UNIVERSITY BELFAST IS AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF CANCER RESEARCH

NORTHERN IRELAND IS FAST BECOMING A GLOBAL CYBER SECURITY HUB AND WAS THE WORLD’S NUMBER ONE DESTINATION FOR US-BASED CYBER TECH INVESTMENT IN 2016

BELFAST IS HOME TO THE CENTRE FOR SECURE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES (CSIT), THE UK’S LARGEST CYBER SECURITY FOCUSED UNIVERSITY TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION CENTRE

THE LEGAL INNOVATION CENTRE AT ULSTER UNIVERSITY BRINGS TOGETHER RESEARCH INTO THE APPLICATION AND IMPACT OF NEW LEGAL TECHNOLOGY AND TEACHES CURRENT AND FUTURE LAWYERS ESSENTIAL LEGAL TECH SKILLS
INFRASRUCTURE

BELFAST CITY COUNCIL IS WORKING COLLABORATIVELY WITH FIVE PARTNER COUNCILS ON A 10-YEAR INVESTMENT PLAN TO IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURE, DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY, TOURISM ASSETS AND INNOVATION HUBS, AS WELL AS DELIVERING A MAJOR SKILLS PROGRAMME TO THE CITY

BELFAST TRANSPORT HUB IS A £200M FLAGSHIP INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT PRIORITISED BY THE NI EXECUTIVE. SCHEDULED FOR COMPLETION IN 2022, IT WILL INCLUDE A NUMBER OF SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS DESIGNED TO ENHANCE TRANSPORT OPTIONS TO AND FROM BELFAST, INCLUDING AN INTEGRATED BUS AND RAIL CONCOURSE WITH THE ABILITY TO ACCOMMODATE INCREASED PASSENGER GROWTH

QUALITY OF LIFE

NORTHERN IRELAND IS THE HAPPIEST REGION IN THE UK

IT HAS THE HIGHEST LIFE SATISFACTION RATING IN THE UK

BELFAST HAS 49 PARKS IN THE CITY WITH 19 GREEN FLAG AWARDS

BELFAST IS AMONG THE CITIES WITH THE LOWEST COST OF LIVING IN THE WORLD (MERCER, 2017)

BELFAST RANKS VERY FAVOURABLY AMONG CITIES SURVEYED ON THE COST OF LIVING (152 OUT OF 209)

BELFAST RANKS IN THE TOP TEN EUROPEAN LOCATIONS FOR BUSINESS FRIENDLINESS, FDI STRATEGY AND ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AMONG CITIES OF ITS SIZE
WHY BELFAST?

Produced by Savills in conjunction with Belfast City Council