

Northern Ireland offers
a compelling nearshore
proposition for international
firms seeking an optimum
mix of high quality labour in
a low risk, cost effective location.

Business Services



A thriving sector

The Business Services sector in Northern Ireland employs around 13,000 people in a wide range of services centres, including shared services centres, technical support centres and contact centres. The region is an ideal nearshore location for international companies who wish to access a high quality workforce at a relatively low cost.

Investors such as Allen & Overy, Citi, Teleperformance, Herbert Smith and Firstsource use Northern Ireland as a base for servicing both internal and external customers. They carry out a variety of activities including legal services, finance and accounting, IT helpdesk, customer services support, telesales, HR, supply chain and logistics.

Talented workforce

Northern Ireland attracts global Business Services firms primarily because of its pool of well-educated people with a professional attitude and strong work ethic. Northern Ireland's people are highly loyal ensuring low labour turnover rates within the sector.

Consistent focus on business, financial and technical disciplines is a key feature of the region's universities and further education colleges.

Well-educated workforce



Can-do attitude

Well-educated workforce





Northern Ireland's education system has long been recognised as one of the best in Europe. Nearly a fifth of public expenditure is spent on education. Two world-class universities and an extensive network of further education colleges provide excellent academic and vocational training.

The opportunity for companies, government agencies and academia to collaborate in designing bespoke training programs ensures a continuous pipeline of skilled and relevant talent.

Northern Ireland consistently out-performs all other UK regions at GCSE and A level. Both universities are responsive to business, creating over 2,000 graduates each year in business related subjects.

Northern Ireland universities produce almost 10,000 graduates each year. Nearly a third of these are awarded degrees in a discipline related to a shared services facility - computer science, finance, accounting, economics, law, maths, business and management, and languages.

Northern Ireland has a large pool of people with language skills, including university graduates and foreign nationals. Among the multilingual centres now operating in Northern Ireland are: gem, Teletech and Caterpillar servicing customers throughout Scandinavia, France, Germany, Italy and Spain.

Proven to work

Allen & Overy

Allen & Overy, one of the world's largest law firms, recently opened a Support and Legal Services Centre in Belfast.

The office delivers a range of support functions such as IT, HR and financial management, as well as transaction support to its legal teams servicing Allen & Overy clients based outside Northern Ireland.

"We believe Northern Ireland offers an excellent location from which to support our global operations. We are confident we can attract the calibre of staff needed to deliver the high quality services that are synonymous with the Allen & Overy name."

Wim Dejonghe,
Global Managing Partner, Allen & Overy



Competitive costs

Northern Ireland's operating costs are highly competitive and significantly lower than the rest of the UK and Europe. A wide variety of business facilities are available at highly competitive costs with prime office rents among the lowest in the world; as little as £12.50 per sq ft in the greater Belfast area and £7 in other areas.

Salary costs are also lower in Northern Ireland. They range between 20 per cent and 40 per cent less than other locations in the rest of the UK and ROI.

Telecoms costs remain amongst the lowest in Europe and remain very competitive.

Advanced infrastructure

Northern Ireland offers a resilient digital network, providing high speed voice and data connections throughout the world. Northern Ireland was the first region in Europe to have 100 per cent broadband availability. It is among the first to operate and experience high speed, next generation services with a new 40-gigabyte per second transatlantic link between Northern Ireland, North America and Europe. This offers a secure, reliable service and delivers prices up to 20 per cent below market rates in London, Dublin, Manchester and Glasgow.

Accessible to Europe

Northern Ireland provides a competitive nearshore proposition to Europe, with the advantage of operating in the same time zone and regulatory environment to the UK. As part of the European Union, companies located in Northern Ireland can take advantage of tariff-free access to the world's largest consumer market of over 400 million people. London is only one hour away by air, with Dublin only two hours by road or rail. There are daily direct flights from Northern Ireland's airports to a variety of business locations such as Paris, New York and Amsterdam.



Proven to work

Norfolkline

Norfolkline offers ferry services on the Irish Sea, North Sea and English Channel and has a logistics division offering tailor-made management solutions, warehousing and both rail and road transportations to a variety of industry sectors across all of Europe.

In 2009, Norfolkline announced the centralisation of its European finance activities into a new centre in Belfast. This multilingual shared services centre covers activities such as accounts receivable/payable, general ledger, claims and accounting.

"In reviewing our total cost base, it became evident that Norfolkline had opportunities to be more cost competitive by, amongst others, establishing a European Finance Service Centre."

"Through a very thorough and comprehensive process Northern Ireland was chosen as it offered the best value composition to Norfolkline."

Lars Olsen,
Chief Financial Officer, Norfolkline Group

With you all the way

From initial enquiry to investment, Invest Northern Ireland will work with you to ensure your business gets off to a great start in Northern Ireland. A comprehensive range of support initiatives will help to ensure your ongoing business success.

For more smart reasons to choose Northern Ireland visit www.investni.com/invest or email invest@investni.com

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