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Oct 22, 2021 by [Nicholas J. Cull](#), [Simon Anholt](#)

People, Places, Power - Episode 10: Can Individuals Make a Difference? ^[1]

Note from the CPD Blog Manager: This post features the podcast *People, Places, Power* co-hosted by CPD Faculty Fellow [Nicholas J. Cull](#) and Good Country Index founder [Simon Anholt](#). The podcast is produced by USC Master of Public Diplomacy 2021 alum Anna Podkowski and features Cull and Anholt in weekly discussion on international reputation, foreign policy and related issues along the way. Future episodes will cover migration, populism, specific nations and more.

Previously: [Ep. 1: Biden's America](#) | [Ep. 2: Brexit Britain](#) | [Ep. 3: In Search of the Good Leader](#) | [Ep. 4: The European Union](#) | [Ep. 5: What Price Monarchy?](#) | [Ep. 6: Cities and International Image](#) | [Ep. 7: Mega Events? Buyer Beware.](#) | [Ep. 8: Germany: From Pariah to Paragon](#) | [Ep. 9: Culture: Decorative or Useful?](#)

Episode 10: Can Individuals Make a Difference?

This episode considers whether a single well-known individual can significantly enhance the image of an entire nation state. Moving beyond politicians and leaders, the conversation focuses on the impact of artists and celebrities, and the tendency for all abstract identities to be personified. Cases discussed include Kazakhstan and the cost/benefit of having Borat as a fictional citizen; the recent strength of South Korea; and the contribution of the world-famous pianist Jan Paderewski to the image of Poland 120 years ago when the country didn't have independence. The show notes that some cultures are more open to individual preeminence than others but also acknowledges the special role of individuals with relevance or connection to two places/communities and the special role of individuals in 'diaspora diplomacy'.