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Oct 01, 2021 by [Nicholas J. Cull](#), [Simon Anholt](#)

People, Places, Power - Episode 17: Japan at the Crossroads ^[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 Elizabeth Islas USC M.A. Candidate of Specialized Journalism (2021), and features Cull and Anholt in weekly discussion on international reputation, foreign policy and related issues along the way. Future episodes will cover place branding, 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?](#) | [Ep. 10: Can Individuals Make a Difference?](#) | [Ep. 11: Migration Nations](#) | [Ep. 12: Credible India?](#) | [Ep. 13: The Bad Image](#) | [Ep. 14: Populism](#) | [Ep. 15: Oh, Canada!](#) | [Ep. 16: Digital Disruption: New Technology & Soft Power](#)

Episode 17: Japan at the Crossroads

This episode examines the image of Japan: consistently admired in the Nation Brands Index (#4 in 2020) but apparently out of step with the behaviors that bring strength in the Good Country Index (#26 in 2020). Simon and Nick look at some of Japan's strategies to maintain a global presence such as hosting the Olympics and the upcoming Expo 2025 in Osaka; successful behavior such as the collective action of fans; cleaning stadiums during the soccer World Cup; and underlying weaknesses including a decline in knowledge of foreign languages and a reluctance to welcome migrants. Japan emerges as a unique actor with tremendous advantages but one that needs to take care to adapt its approach to 21st century priorities and global needs or risk a decline in its standing.