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Aug 23, 2022 by [Nicholas J. Cull](#), [Simon Anholt](#)

People, Places, Power | Season 2, Episode 39: Italy: Rising or Falling? ^[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](#) and features their weekly discussions on international reputation, foreign policy and related issues along the way.

Season 2 launched in May 2022 and covers nation-ranking indices, the impact of COVID-19 on national images, branding indices, transnational issues and much more.

Season 1: 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 | Ep. 17: Japan at the Crossroads | Ep. 18: Scotland's Next Step | Ep. 19 Public Diplomacy and Place Branding | Ep. 20: The Talent Trade: Who's Looking for Einstein? | Ep. 21: France: Trouble at the Top? | Ep. 22: Systems and Structures: Organizing Public Diplomacy | Ep. 23: Trust: The Linchpin of Reputation | Ep. 24: Nordics: The Saga of Success? | Ep. 25: The Media: Friends or Foes of Country Image? | Ep. 26: Israel: Branded by Conflict? | Ep. 27: Afghanistan

Season 2: Ep. 28: War in Ukraine | Ep. 29: Meet the Goodest: The Good Country Index for 2022 | Ep. 30: Issues in the Index: The Nation Brands Index, 2021 | Episode 31: Honest to God: The Image of Religions and other Transnational Groups | Episode 32: COVID-19, Image, Media and Communication | Ep. 33: What's in a Name? Renaming Places as a Strategic Gambit | Ep. 34: The Power of "From:" The Country-of-Origin Effect | Ep. 35: Northern Ireland Peace and the Challenge of 'Relevance' | Ep. 36: The Power of Language | Ep. 37: For the Love of Mexico | Ep. 38: Of Greenwashing and 'Hipster Nations'

Episode 39: Italy: Rising or Falling?

This episode considers Italy, hailed by *The Economist* in December 2021 for its improvement but in the news in the summer of 2022 for political problems. Simon and Nick dissect elements of Italy's reputation, noting both the advantages and pitfalls of its long significance in the cultural field. Simon compares Italy to fellow high performer, Japan, but asks whether and why Italy is seen as decorative rather than useful. Nick questions the role of the diaspora and the connection of Italy to the church as contributors to Italy's significance. Simon presents the profile of Italy in the Good Country Index, where weakness in key fields are apparent. The conversation concludes with a discussion of policy responses to ensure that Italy's existing soft power is preserved to provide a future hedge of what Nick has termed 'reputational security.'