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Sep 02, 2022 by [Nicholas J. Cull](#), [Simon Anholt](#)

People, Places, Power | Season 2, Episode 41: Visions of Progress and Country Image

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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.

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Episode 41: Visions of Progress and Country Image

This episode considers one of the problems of international relations today: the absence of the kind of compelling visions of the future that inspired international cooperation in the past. Nick argues that countries need a vision for stability and are finding that in distorted ideas of the past rather than an image of the future that might be open to collaboration. Simon notes that most people aren't aware of visions articulated at the transnational level. The conversation develops to include positive messages from the Nordics and other 'hipster' nations; negative messages in fiction and the stand-out case of China as a country that does look to the future and builds ideas about the future into its image and diplomacy. They consider whether apocalyptic ideas embedded in so many religions might hinder the articulation of visions of the future and the merits of different venues for presenting visions such as Expos or Disneyland's Tomorrowland. They conclude that the need for positive visions of the future is critical and that the space seems all too vacant.