



# BEST COUNTRIES



In association with The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and U.S. News & World Report

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# WELCOME TO **Best Countries** 2024

**THE WORLD'S  
BEST GUIDE ON  
HOW COUNTRIES  
ARE PERCEIVED  
BY CONSUMERS  
GLOBALLY –  
AND WHY.**

How a country is viewed around the world is of huge importance to brands. The words 'Made in ...' can instantly lend credibility and trust to a product or brand that a consumer hasn't previously encountered. That can be enough to convince someone to buy, and, beyond that, convince them to pay a premium. Likewise, 'Made in...' can prove an instant turn-off if a consumer associates the country of origin with poor safety standards, or sees it as being behind the times on social issues or workers' rights.

The perceptions and performance of brands abroad feed back into the development of the country itself. Willingness to invest is closely linked to the strength of a country's brand, and as local brands and businesses succeed, they generate economic growth as well as lending further positive associations to their country's brand.

The annual Best Countries ranking measures global perceptions of countries against a series of characteristics – impressions that have the potential to drive trade, travel and investment, and directly affect brands. It was developed by WPP BAV, and The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, with U.S. News & World Report.

The ranking is based on a large global survey, which asks a range of people about how they perceive different countries against a range of key attributes.

# WHY DO WE RANK COUNTRIES?

There is a close relationship between how people feel about a country, and their attitudes towards the brands they associate with that country.

Strong countries fuel strong brands, and vice versa.

Think of France and Chanel; both represent elegance, glamour and prestige. Chanel is intrinsically French, and France is synonymous with Chanel. The same could be said Italy and Ferrari, or Japan and Sony. In each case, the brand and the country are part of a virtuous cycle, a symbiotic relationship. In fact, Germany is a fine exemplar of this symbiosis in action: Germany has come to represent the quality, durability and engineering that brands like Bosch, BMW, Audi and Mercedes have shown the world that Germany can deliver.

Brands can both shape and be shaped by perceptions of their country of origin. Japan in the 1970s was known as a cheap manufacturing base, but is now respected as a world leader for quality electronics and technology thanks largely to brands like Sony and Toyota. South Korea has taken a similar path, with Samsung and LG demonstrating to the world what modern South Korea is and, in doing so, creating a consumer predisposition in international markets to favour other Korean brands.

In a relatively short time, China, too, has shifted perceptions from being seen as the world's toy factory, to a place of entrepreneurship and innovation, particularly in digital technology. This is partly because of government strategy and a rebalancing of the Chinese economy, but also due to the ambassadorial role of some of China's leading export brands, such as Haier and Alibaba.

When a country and its brands represent consistent qualities and values, they lend one another credibility, and there is a multiplier effect for both.

Photo by Isaac Wolff on Unsplash



# 82%

of consumers globally agree that consumer brands play an important role in defining a country's culture

# 77%

agree that 'the country a product is made in impacts my preference to purchase it', with a significantly higher proportion of business decision makers and 'informed elites' saying the same



NEW FOR 2024!

# How perceptions vary

This year, Best Countries includes a section in which we delve into how countries are perceived within their own part of the world and compare these results against the global findings.

The **'How proximity changes perceptions'** section looks at each of seven regions in the world, and how countries there are perceived by people within the same region.

This has been done to highlight differences in perception between those who are most likely to know and have a strong opinion on a country – those who live in or near it – and those who form their views largely from afar.

The findings show there are, indeed, huge variations in how people regard a country depending on how well they know – or think they know – it.

With the right exposure to communications, brands and experiences, simple awareness of a country can develop into understanding, appreciation and a shift in perceptions.

A willingness to buy goods from a particular country can develop into a preference for them, and, ultimately, a willingness to pay a premium for them.

# HOW TO MEASURE & COMPARE COUNTRIES

Developed by WPP BAV, the annual Best Countries ranking was first launched in 2016 at the World Economic Forum's meeting in Davos, the world's largest gathering of global leaders and heads of industry and influence. It is now in its eighth wave.

The Best Countries ranking incorporates the views of 17,000 individuals surveyed in 89 countries in seven regions: Latin America, Oceania, North America, Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Europe. These people included a high proportion of 'informed elites' – college-educated people who keep up with current affairs – along with business decision makers and members of the general public. This year's survey was completed in mid-2024.

Collectively, the 89 countries in the 2024 ranking account for around 95 percent of global Gross Domestic Product and represent around 80 percent of the world's population. Newly added to the survey this year are Iceland and Kuwait.

People surveyed for Best Countries were asked how closely they associated 73 attributes with a range of countries. These attributes were then grouped into 10 categories that were used to calculate the Best Countries ranking

# STATE OF A NATION

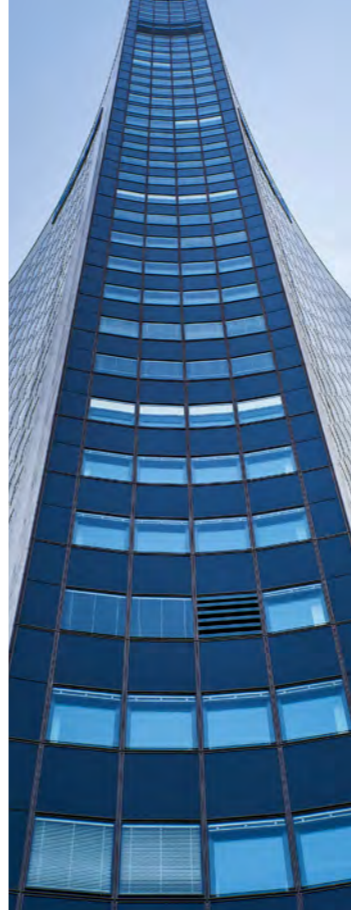
## THE 10 FACTORS THAT DETERMINE A COUNTRY'S BRAND



## QUALITY OF LIFE

There's a good job market, it's economically and politically stable, family-friendly, safe, has good income equality and well-developed public education and health systems.

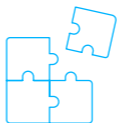
#1  
**Denmark**



## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

It is connected to the rest of the world, has an educated population, is entrepreneurial, innovative, and provides easy access to capital. There is a skilled labour force, technological expertise, transparent business practices, well-developed infrastructure, and a well-developed legal framework.

#1  
**Germany**



## AGILITY

The country is adaptable, modern, forward-thinking and responsive.

#1  
**USA**

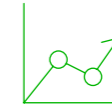




## SOCIAL PURPOSE

A country is caring, committed to sustainability, and offers an equitable society. It is perceived as caring about gender and racial equality, human rights and the environment, and has well-distributed political power. Religious freedom is respected and there are strong property rights.

#1  
Denmark



## MOVERS

A country scores well on this measure when it's perceived as being up-and-coming, known for its dynamism and uniqueness.

#1  
UAE



## OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Manufacturing is inexpensive, there's a lack of corruption, the country has a favourable tax environment, and transparent government practices. A lack of bureaucracy helps a country be seen as open for business.

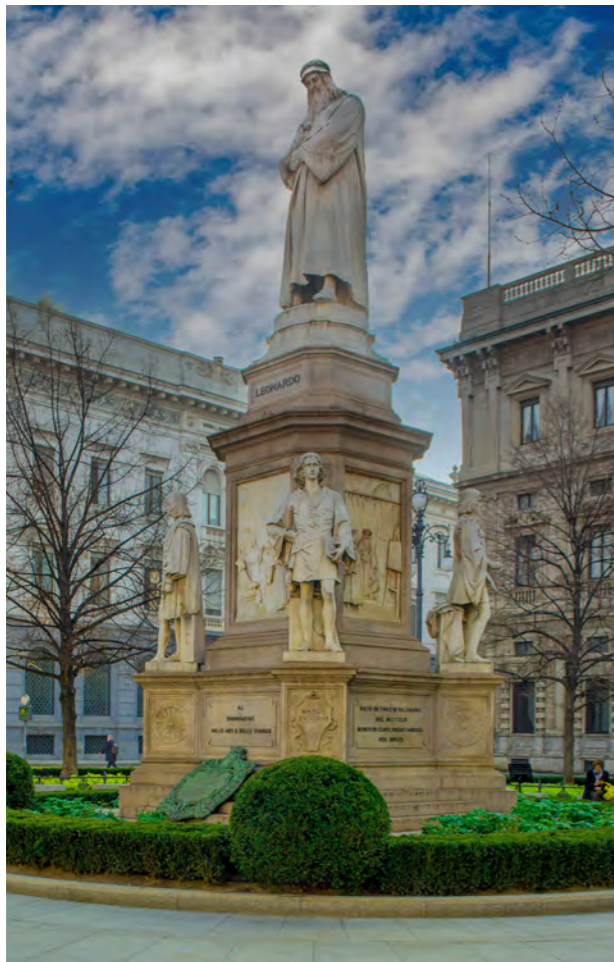
#1  
Luxembourg



## CULTURAL INFLUENCE

It is culturally significant in terms of entertainment, its people are fashionable and happy, it has an influential culture, is modern, prestigious and trendy. It also has strong consumer brands.

#1  
Italy





## ADVENTURE

A country is seen as friendly, fun, has a pleasant climate and is scenic. Adventurous countries are often perceived as great tourism destinations.

#1  
**Brazil**



## POWER

It is a leader, is economically and politically influential, has strong international alliances and a strong military. Strong exports are often part of a picture of power.

#1  
**USA**



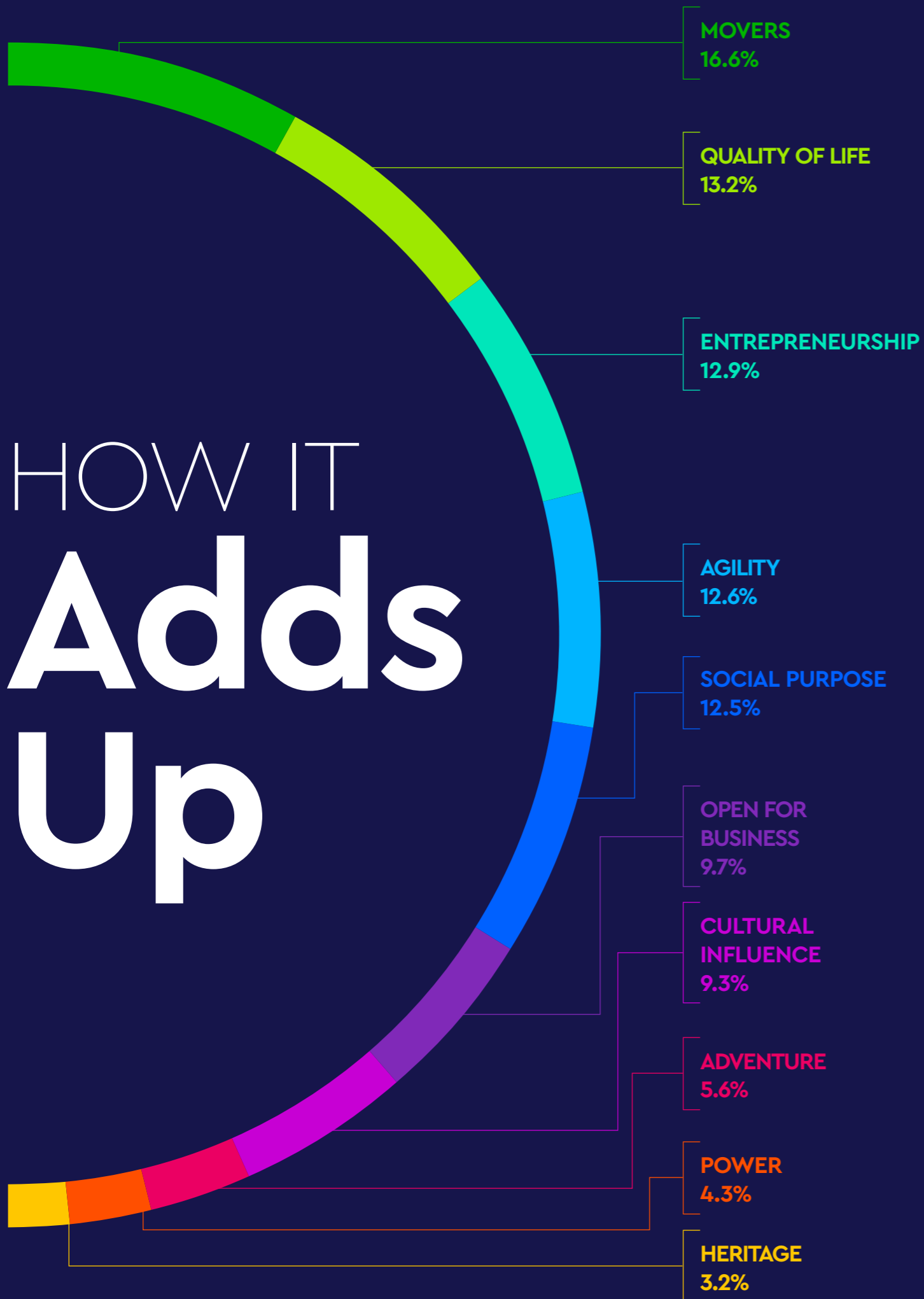
## HERITAGE

The country is culturally accessible, has a rich history, has great food, and many cultural attractions.

#1  
**Greece**



# HOW IT Adds Up



Each of the 10 measures is given a weighting in its contribution to the total Best Countries score for each country; countries are ranked according to their total score.

Photo by Zac Durant on Unsplash



The weighting of each category in the final index is determined by the strength of its correlation to per capita GDP and forecast GDP for 2027.

A nation focused on providing great quality of life for its people, which cares about rights and equality, and has a focus on entrepreneurship, is seen as having the most powerful nation brand.

This reflects the modern world and the factors that influence public perceptions and consumer decision making.

No longer is it just tanks and banks that give a country influence around the world. Softer power, which comes about as a result of entrepreneurship and cultural exports, is increasingly making an impact.

Quality of Life and Social Purpose have become increasingly important factors in driving people's perception of a country and, in turn, perceptions of the products and services it exports.

We have also seen perceptions of Entrepreneurship gradually playing a bigger role in shaping the way people feel about a country.

Agility is another defining feature of the Best Countries. Agile countries efficiently adopt modern solutions in order to meet changing circumstances. Agile brands, meanwhile, are similarly able to adapt so they can overcome the challenges they face. Brands that are seen as agile are associated with dynamism, being progressive and even being visionary.

It is deeply important for countries and brands to be perceived as being guided by a strong social purpose – to be caring, sustainable and fair. Brands driven by purpose – to benefit the lives of their customers and the wider world – tend to be liked.

**To see the full Best Countries methodology, [click here.](#)**

GAME CHANGERS

# How to shift perspectives

The views people have about countries are formed in much the same way as the views we have about other people, and about brands.

Personal experiences, rumours, news reports, advertising material and subconscious prejudices all combine to give us a sense of what we think a country and its people are like, and what they and the brands that originate there have to offer.

These perceptions are often deep-seated and based as much on feeling as fact, but our data shows that it is possible for countries to change the way the world sees them in a relatively short space of time; think not generations, but a few years.

**QATAR** is a powerful example of this kind of change in action. It ranked 35th in the Best Countries ranking in 2018 and has gradually risen to 25th place this year.

The country hosted the 2022 World Cup, giving it prominence on the world stage and exposure to an estimated 5 billion TV viewers worldwide. While not all of the news coverage related to the event could be considered positive, it did help put the country on the map and position it as a country bringing change to the region.

Qatar's Best Country scores for cultural influence and heritage have fuelled its rise up the overall rankings, but it is perceptions of the country being dynamic and unique – as measured by our Movers metric – that has been behind much of Qatar's advance on Best Countries. It is third in the world on Movers in 2024, up from 13th in 2021.

**NEW ZEALAND** is another country that has changed perceptions relatively quickly. The country has always been warmly regarded by global consumers, but it has moved from 14th place overall in 2017 to ninth position this year. It has been as high as seventh in recent years.

Although perceptions of it being open for business have slightly declined – perhaps a result of the country's total-isolation response to the pandemic – its score for having a strong social purpose and rich heritage have risen significantly.

# GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE PERCEPTIONS OF THE WORLD IN 2024

The Best Countries study asks people all over the world how they feel about a series of 'opinion statements' that reflect their view of the state of the world.

IN 2024, WE FIND THAT:

72%

of people believe that a country is stronger when it is more racially and ethnically diverse.

77%

believe the global economy is in decline.

56%

of people believe their country should be more open to immigration.



77%

say they choose products from companies that have a purpose beyond making a profit.

71%

say they're willing to make financial sacrifices to address climate change.

66%

say the benefits of AI outweigh the threats.

62%

believe social media has a positive effect on society.

57%

say their job is less important in their life than it used to be.

58%

believe the next generation will have a better life.

# BEST COUNTRIES 2024 Ranking

2023 Rank		2024 RANK	CHANGE
1		 1 Switzerland	-
2		 2 Japan	↑ 4
3		 3 US	↑ 2
4		 4 Canada	↓ 2
5		 5 Australia	↓ 1
6		 6 Sweden	↓ 3
7		 7 Germany	-
8		 8 UK	↑ 1
9		 9 New Zealand	↓ 1
10		 10 Denmark	↑ 3
11		 11 Norway	-
12		 12 France	-
13		 13 Netherlands	↓ 3
14		 14 Singapore	↑ 2
15		 15 Italy	-
16		 16 China	↑ 4
17		 17 UAE	↑ 2
18		 18 South Korea	↑ 3
19		 19 Spain	↓ 2
20		 20 Finland	↓ 6



Precision watchmaking, political neutrality and the crisp fresh air of the Alps are synonymous with Switzerland, which once again leads the Best Countries ranking this year. With an economy powered by its secretive banking sector, low corporate tax rates, and a service sector led by financial services and high-tech manufacturing, it is strongly perceived as being Open for Business and leads the world for prestige with its well-established luxury sector.

Switzerland is perceived as the least corrupt country in the world and is seen as offering political and economic stability. It is seen as the safest country on Earth, is perceived as trustworthy, and has strong appeal both as a tourist destination and as a place many people would like to live. It is also seen as being committed to climate goals. The country has low unemployment and a skilled labour force; Switzerland is perceived as having one of the most educated populations in the world.

Famous as a land of captivating contrasts, the ancient and the state-of-the-art, Japan is home both to the traditional elegance of the tea ceremony as well as the bullet train; the venerable martial art of karate and Tokyo's gleaming skyscrapers. Modern Japan rose from the ashes of World War Two to become, by the 1970s, an economic super-power, one of the most technically advanced countries and the third-biggest economy in the world. It is still a major manufacturing nation – of vehicles, electronic equipment and steel – but today, the service sector makes up the largest part of the economy in terms of both GDP and the number of people employed.

Japan's greatest strength in Best Countries stems from having fostered a sense of Entrepreneurship, a measure of how a country is perceived in terms of being innovative, having well-developed digital infrastructure and allowing easy access to capital, along with having a skilled labour force, a robust legal system and transparent business practices. It also has significant cultural influence. Japan is seen as having the most advanced digital infrastructure and most educated workforce in the world, though affordability is a key concern. It ranks in the top third of all the countries we measure on perceptions of being Open for Business, the Best Countries metric reflecting business and government transparency, bureaucracy and the tax environment.

Japan

2



# US 3

The United States of America has been the world's dominant economic and military power for the past century, and the popularity of its music, movies and TV exports mean its culture is widely consumed and understood. The US consistently ranks highest in the world on the Best Countries Power metric – thanks to perceptions around the strength of its military and its economic and political influence. The US is also, once again, the leading performer on the Agility metric, being seen as highly adaptable, responsive and modern, though it has slipped behind Germany this year on Entrepreneurship.

The US is perceived in Best Countries to be a good place to raise capital and to be economically influential, as well as being a trend-setting country that is home to strong brands. A sense that it is a relatively expensive place for manufacturing drag down the US's performance on the Open for Business measure, on which the country achieves a mid-table ranking.

A land of immense size – in fact, the second-biggest country in the world after Russia – Canada is thinly populated, and the majority of people live within little more than 100 miles of the United States' border. The country has a reputation for being tolerant, progressive, welcoming to immigrants and embracing a diversity of cultures. Canada's services sector nowadays dominates the economy but the country is still a major exporter of energy, food and minerals.

Canada briefly held the #1 position in Best Countries, in 2021, and has consistently taken a position in the top five. The country is a leading performer in Best Countries for Social Purpose, which measures perceptions of how much a country cares about human rights, the environment and equality. Canada leads the world in Best Countries for religious freedom, is seen as the friendliest country in the world, and is believed to have an educated, health-conscious population. The country ranks top in Best Countries as one of the top three places where people would like to live; it's perceived as being safe, corruption-free and family-friendly.

# 4 Canada

# 3

# Australia

Australia is seen as being a progressive and dynamic country, as well as being extremely family-friendly, all of which helps account for the country placing in the top 10 on the Best Countries measure of Quality of Life. Australia is perceived as being particularly concerned about environmental issues and animal rights, ranking among the leading countries for Social Purpose, as well as offering a sense of adventure.

Australians have a comparatively high standard of living, and also a long life expectancy. The country's economy is dominated by services along with commodity exports. A country that traditionally had strong links to the UK, Australia has been strongly influenced in recent decades, demographically and culturally, by immigration from many countries, but especially from Asia. It's seen as one of the friendliest countries in the world, and has consistently strong pulling power as a tourist destination and as a place people would like to live.





# 6 Sweden

Impressions of Sweden focus on its perceived high Quality of Life, which ranks second only to neighbouring Denmark in Best Countries. Nations known for their Quality of Life are seen as stable and safe societies in which individuals can develop and prosper. There tends to be a good job market, affordable living costs, and economic and political stability; these countries are family-friendly and have good income equality.

Sweden is seen as having a strong sense of Social Purpose, for having well-developed public health and education services, it ranks highest in the world for transparency and gender equality, and it is perceived as being a happy and progressive place. It is not seen as being an affordable country, however, and, despite the popularity of IKEA meatballs globally, Sweden's cuisine is among the least favoured of all the countries in the Best Countries ranking.

7

Germany

The largest country in the European Union and among the top five biggest economies by GDP in the world, Germany is a trading powerhouse and one of the biggest exporters in the world. While services make up the lion's share of the economy, Germany is probably best known for its exports of high-quality engineering products, especially cars. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall and reunification in 1990, the country has grown both in economic and political significance. Today, Germany is a highly affluent, politically stable, parliamentary democracy.

Germany took second place in Best Countries in 2022 and consistently places in the top 10. It is a strong performer on a range of key Best Countries metrics, seen as one of the top five most powerful countries in the world, is perceived as being agile, and is seen as the most entrepreneurial place on Earth. Germany is widely perceived as being economically stable and influential, and having well-developed digital infrastructure. Respondents believe that Germany is highly progressive, and has a good jobs market and a skilled workforce.

# UK 8

The United Kingdom has long had a presence on the global stage, politically, economically and culturally. Its contributions to culture and science range from Shakespeare to the Beatles, David Bowie and J K Rowling, from Isaac Newton and Charles Darwin to Stephen Hawking and the inventor of the internet, Tim Berners-Lee. Perhaps its greatest contribution to the modern global landscape is the English language itself. The UK's exit from the European Union marked a turning point in how the country is perceived around the world, and we continue to see an evolution of the UK's role on the global stage. The country is home to some of the most prestigious universities in the world – Oxford, Cambridge and Imperial College London.

In Best Countries, the UK has climbed one place overall this year and is among the highest ranked on several key measures: Entrepreneurship (#4), Power (#4) and Cultural Influence (#6). The country is also seen as a leader, as being economically and politically influential, having a strong military and being a significant exporter. It is widely perceived as having a well-developed legal framework and for having an educated population. The UK's famously dismal weather does dampen its overall Best Countries performance, though, and it is seen as being an expensive place for manufacturing.





New Zealand's wide-open spaces and varied landscape have long made the country a hugely popular tourist destination, one that has been boosted by the country's starring role in the 'Lord of the Rings' movie trilogy. The 'Kiwi' spirit and culture are personified by such notable natives as Sir Edmund Hillary, the first person to climb Mount Everest in 1953, and Lord Rutherford, who split the atom. New Zealand has one of the highest per capita incomes in the world thanks to exports of dairy, sheep, beef, poultry, vegetables and wine.

In Best Countries, New Zealand's ranking is driven by an outstanding performance on the Agility, Adventure and Social Purpose metrics. New Zealand is seen as leading the world in caring for the environment and is among the strongest for perceptions around human rights. It ranks as one of the most scenic countries in the world on Best Countries (second only to Greece), and thanks to perceptions of New Zealand being a happy, safe and the most family-friendly country in the world, it is also the country where most people say they would like to live.



# New Zealand

Denmark is a new entrant into the Best Countries top 10 in 2024; a country of just under 6 million people that is punching well above its weight thanks to strong perceptions around Denmark being a progressive, stable place that offers a good quality of life. The country has one of the highest tax to GDP ratios in the world, and in return offers its citizens mostly free medical care and heavily subsidised childcare. The economy is powered by banking, transport, tourism, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and green energy.

In Best Countries, Denmark leads the world for Quality of Life and Social Purpose. It is also seen as being Open for Business and fostering a strong entrepreneurial spirit. It is perceived as being among the best in the world for being family-friendly, fun, offering racial equality, and for having an educated population. Education, including at university level, is free in Denmark.

Denmark 10

# STARS ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

The leading countries in the world in 2024 on each of the 10 factors that make up a country brand.

**MOVERS**

- UAE
- China
- Qatar
- Egypt
- South Korea

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

- Germany
- United States
- Japan
- United Kingdom
- Switzerland

**SOCIAL PURPOSE**

- Denmark
- Sweden
- Canada
- Norway
- New Zealand

**CULTURAL INFLUENCE**

- Italy
- France
- United States
- Spain
- Japan

**POWER**

- United States
- China
- Russian Federation
- United Kingdom
- Germany



**QUALITY OF LIFE**

- Denmark
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Norway
- Canada

**AGILITY**

- United States
- Canada
- Australia
- Germany
- New Zealand

**OPEN FOR BUSINESS**

- Luxembourg
- United States
- Sweden
- Finland
- Norway

**ADVENTURE**

- Brazil
- Italy
- Greece
- Spain
- Thailand

**HERITAGE**

- Greece
- Italy
- Spain
- France
- Türkiye

WORLD IN MOTION

# BREAKING NEWS

FROM BEST COUNTRIES 2024 **LIVE**

## BREAKING NEWS



The two biggest climbers in Best Countries this year are Tunisia and Uzbekistan, which have both risen up the rankings because of improved perceptions of their Agility and their Movers scores, reflecting a sense of uniqueness and dynamism.

Tunisia has moved up 10 places this year, to 60th, and Uzbekistan is up nine, to 74th.

Two Middle Eastern/North African (MENA) countries feature in the top five for changing perceptions around Heritage.

Saudi Arabia has climbed from 60th place in 2019 to 51st in 2023 and now sits in 37th place, while Algeria has moved up eight places on the Heritage ranking in the past year alone. Algeria is also among the biggest climbers on our Adventure metric, up six places, along with Türkiye.

Qatar has been storming up the Best Countries charts in recent years and stands out in 2024 for a 37-place jump on the Open for Business ranking to 34th in the world.



HOTSPOTS FOR

# Stability, sporting prowess and plenty more

The Best Countries data can be further analysed to create rankings based on 73 attributes. Most of these attributes are grouped together to make the 10 factors contributing to a country brand's overall ranking, but taken individually they provide some fascinating insights.

**MOST ECONOMICALLY STABLE**

-  UAE
-  Switzerland
-  Germany
-  Canada
-  Japan

**MOST ECONOMICALLY INFLUENTIAL**

-  China
-  United States
-  UAE
-  United Kingdom
-  Germany

**MOST ATHLETICALLY TALENTED**

-  Brazil
-  Argentina
-  Russia
-  South Africa
-  United States

**MOST FAMILY-FRIENDLY**





-  New Zealand
-  Spain
-  Canada
-  Norway
-  Finland



**MOST TRUSTWORTHY**

-  Switzerland
-  Sweden
-  Norway
-  Denmark
-  Canada






**MOST INNOVATIVE**

-  Japan
-  South Korea
-  China
-  UAE
-  Singapore

**MOST TRENDY**

-  Italy
-  United States
-  France
-  Qatar
-  UAE

**HAS GREAT FOOD**

-  Italy
-  Spain
-  Mexico
-  Thailand
-  Türkiye

**COMMITTED TO SOCIAL JUSTICE**

-  Sweden
-  Denmark
-  Norway
-  Canada
-  Switzerland

# THE ORIGIN

# INDEX

## HOW COUNTRY BRANDS AFFECT CONSUMER SPENDING

The Best Countries study explores the international opportunity for brands in a range of industries, based on what the world's consumers think about their country of origin.

The Origin Index ranks consumer preferences across many categories, as well as overall.

Brands can lean into the perceptions people have about their country of origin. These perceptions are a powerful force and have a strong bearing on the decisions people make as consumers, investors, students and holidaymakers.

David Roth, Chairman, WPP BAV

# BEST FOR...

## TECHNOLOGY/ELECTRONICS

-  Germany
-  United States
-  Japan
-  United Kingdom
-  Canada

## CLOTHING

-  Italy
-  France
-  United States
-  Germany
-  United Kingdom

## PHARMACEUTICALS

-  Germany
-  United States
-  Canada
-  United Kingdom
-  Switzerland

## FINANCIAL SERVICES

-  Germany
-  United States
-  Switzerland
-  Canada
-  United Kingdom

# BEST OVERALL

'I PREFER GOODS MADE IN ...!'

-  Japan
-  Germany
-  Italy
-  United States
-  France
-  Switzerland
-  United Kingdom
-  Canada
-  China
-  Australia

## CONSUMER PACKAGED GOODS

-  Germany
-  United States
-  France
-  Italy
-  Canada

## AUTOMOBILES

-  Germany
-  Japan
-  United States
-  Italy
-  United Kingdom

## BEER

-  Germany
-  France
-  United States
-  United Kingdom
-  Spain

## COSMETICS

-  France
-  United States
-  Germany
-  Italy
-  United Kingdom

## SPIRITS

-  Germany
-  France
-  United States
-  Italy
-  United Kingdom

# ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS

Unsurprisingly, people's perceptions of a country have a direct bearing on how they feel about it as a place to take holiday, to do business or to study – all vital sources of investment for countries.

Best Countries 2024 shows there are some clear patterns among global preferences.

The countries with strongest appeal as destinations for study are those that unite economic stability and influence with entrepreneurship or agility. They are seen as having an educated domestic population, and they are generally seen as offering a good quality of life.

The biggest factors behind a country being on people's travel wish lists include perceptions around the quality of the food, along with offering a sense of adventure, having a pleasant climate, and having geographic attractions.



## TOP 10 COUNTRIES TO CONSIDER FOR UNIVERSITY

-  United States
-  United Kingdom
-  Germany
-  Canada
-  France
-  Switzerland
-  Australia
-  Japan
-  Sweden
-  Spain



## TOP 10 COUNTRIES TO CONSIDER VISITING

-  Italy
-  France
-  United States
-  United Kingdom
-  Canada
-  Germany
-  Spain
-  Switzerland
-  Australia
-  Greece



NEW THIS YEAR!

# How proximity changes perceptions

The Best Countries rankings reflect what we have always intuitively known and now can see in the data: that opinions are formed on the snippets of experiences, news and third-hand conversations people have. This applies equally to countries as it does to brands.

Most people have a view of brand BMW, for instance, whether or not they've ever driven one, been a passenger in one, or ever expect to be in a position to buy one. Similarly, most people in the world have a view on the United States, or France, Egypt or Thailand, and what these countries' strengths and weaknesses are.

Those views might well be informed as much by pop music and prejudice as they are by first-hand experience, but these all affect perceptions, and perceptions are what affect consumers' buying decisions.

In this region-by-region breakdown of the Best Countries data, we look at how people's views on what a country represents differs depending on how close they are to it and, by implication, how likely they are to know a little more about it.

What's clear from these first-year results is that proximity really does affect perceptions.

Views that people have on a country that's in their own part of the world aren't necessarily more 'correct' than those from farther away. Even people in countries that share borders may well have biases and make assumptions about their neighbours.

But what our data shows is that when a country makes changes – through the brands it develops, the news it generates and the experiences it gives people – that change is likely to be reflected in perceptions of people in the region before it reaches the wider world.



# LATIN America

Global brands entering Latin America find it useful to regard it as a fairly homogenous region, a land united by a language (with the exception of Portuguese-speaking Brazil). We have included Mexico in our Latin America grouping for this reason.

While it's true that the region is home to around half a billion people here who would all understand the same Spanish-language advertising copy, they are far from being part of a single entity.

Yet a glance at global perceptions of Latin America suggests that, from afar, many countries in the region do look very similar.



To a global audience, these countries rank fairly consistently (at the bottom end of the table) on Best Countries metrics for being entrepreneurial, being innovative, being safe, family-friendly, and for having an educated workforce.

There is a broad perception in the rest of the world that these markets all tend to lack economic stability and influence, that they're not particularly well connected to the rest of the world, and that corruption is a real risk.

Closer to home, however, there is a more nuanced view of each place, and a different idea of which country in the region is 'best'.

Overall, Latin American respondents in Best Countries rate the 14 markets in the region much more highly than the global audience, and also rate each one slightly differently.

Mexico emerges as the Best Country in the region to those living in the region themselves, while Brazil takes first prize among a global audience. This is due to more positive perceptions close to home regarding Mexico's agility, connectedness to the rest of the world, racial equality and performance on human rights. Global audiences perceive Brazil as offering adventure, heritage and affordability, and as being scenic, friendly and fun.

Uruguay, to highlight just one example, performs significantly better in the region than more widely; it is seen as responsive and transparent with a good public health system by people in neighbouring countries, while globally, it lacks differentiation.

Among the countries of Latin America, the Best Countries data shows there's an opportunity to stand out to a global audience on issues such as being committed to climate goals, having technological expertise, or being open for business – things that can be changed through policy and communication.



THE WORLD VIEW ON THE BEST COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA		REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON LATIN AMERICA'S BEST COUNTRIES	
Global Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries	Latin America Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
Brazil	30	Mexico	18
Mexico	34	Brazil	20
Argentina	42	Argentina	23
Costa Rica	43	Uruguay	32
Peru	49	Colombia	33
Dominican Republic	51	Chile	34
Chile	52	Costa Rica	35
Colombia	56	Peru	38
Panama	57	Panama	41
Uruguay	66	Dominican Republic	43
Ecuador	75	El Salvador	48
Guatemala	78	Ecuador	50
El Salvador	79	Guatemala	62
Honduras	84	Honduras	67





# What if LATIN AMERICA WAS ONE COUNTRY?

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The Best Countries list is out, and while individual Latin American nations shine, the region as a whole seems to lack the global punch of a superpower. But what if we were to think differently, and look at what these countries offer collectively, as a United Latin America (ULA)?

Extending from Mexico to the south of Chile and Argentina, with the Amazon rainforest at its heart, the region shares cultural heritage, aspirations and strength that support the concept of a united Latin America. The two main languages spoken in the region – Portuguese and Spanish – converted to a 'Portillo', make collaboration readily achievable.

The Best Countries rankings hint at the potential of a ULA. The region would be stronger if the countries combined their business and technological acumen; culturally, the impact would be immense. Economically, a ULA could leverage negotiate stronger trade deals and better attract foreign investment, potentially becoming a top-tier global economic force.

Challenges would exist, but the shared DNA of Latin America creates a unique opportunity for unity. So, study the Best Countries rankings, but ask, too: what if Latin America, with all its potential, finally became whole? The world might just be surprised by the superpower that emerges. The ULA awaits.

Luis Fernando Dugand  
Deputy Chief Strategy Officer LATAM  
VML



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# Oceania

We should start this section with a caveat: the only countries being measured in this region are Australia and New Zealand. The smaller nations in this region may be included in future rounds of the Best Countries research, but for now we are looking only at the two economic giants of the region.

Australia and New Zealand are consistently high performers on Best Countries, enjoying favourable sentiment across the world based on offering a high standard of living, having a strong social purpose, a sense of adventure, and being agile. Both are in the global Top 10 once again this year.

In the global survey, Australia outranks New Zealand overall, ahead by four places. This is mainly due to being seen as a more powerful player on the world stage, and offering richer heritage. Australia also has the edge on quality of life, though the scores are close for both countries.



When we drill down a little deeper, it seems Australia is perceived as having a much stronger jobs market than New Zealand, as being more entrepreneurial, more modern, and being more economically stable.

The two countries are neck-and-neck as appealing tourist destinations, while New Zealand beats Australia on several measure. It's first in the world as somewhere people would like to live, and first for being family-friendly. The climate is seen to be more appealing, and it leads Australia on racial equality.



Ask people within the region about their own country and the one next door and perceptions are, not surprisingly, somewhat different. New Zealand emerges as the best country of the two, thanks to perceptions of it being more Open for Business, having a stronger Social Purpose, and offering more by way of Heritage.

Both countries perform better closer to home on the quality of life metric than they do among a global audience, with Australia ranked first in the world among people who know it. Both countries are seen as more affordable and less bureaucratic closer to home than the global survey shows. Curiously, while the world sees Australia as home to a wealth of athletic talent, this is not reflected in Australia/New Zealand.



The opportunity for both Australia and New Zealand is to develop perceptions that contribute to our Movers metric, which reflects dynamism and uniqueness. Both countries perform much more strongly on this regionally than they do globally.



### THE WORLD VIEW ON THE BEST COUNTRIES IN OCEANIA

Global Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
 Australia	5
 New Zealand	9

### REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON OCEANIA'S BEST COUNTRIES

Oceania Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
 New Zealand	4
 Australia	7





# What does this mean for LOCAL BRANDS

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For global businesses, Australia and New Zealand are excellent markets in which to test and learn. Whether that's through product innovation, new ways to engage digitally, or creatively pushing boundaries. We are a sophisticated market, so learnings made here can apply to a multitude of other countries, but we remain isolated enough that if the test doesn't work, it can be minimised by our sheer lack of population size.

Closer to home, Australians and New Zealanders are proud of their local brands and often willing to pay more for them. What is reassuring for local brands is that, from the outside, there is a belief that Australia and New Zealand are both 'Open for Business', with both countries ranking in the top 20 globally. This is coupled with us presenting 'a good job market'. It would suggest more opportunities to export local brands or to attract overseas investment.

Make no bones about it, brands that are linked to what Australia and New Zealand represent, or that seek to appeal to consumers here, need to show up in a certain way. Here, we trust consumer brands to have a positive impact on society and we are more inclined to buy from companies that have a purpose beyond making profit. Home-grown businesses seeking to build on consumer openness to goods 'Made in Australia' or 'Made in New Zealand' need to carry that sense of purpose with them.

Katie Rigg-Smith  
Chief Strategy Officer  
WPP Australia and New Zealand

WPP

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# NORTH America

This is another region in which we're throwing the spotlight on just two countries. In this case, it's Canada and the United States, and again the perceptions of these countries close to home are rather different to the global perspective.

The US ranks one position higher than Canada among a global audience, and though they are closely ranked, they each achieve their high placings due to very different factors: for the US, its perceptions of Power, Cultural Influence and Agility (the US ranks first in the world on Power and Agility, second for being Entrepreneurial, after Germany, and third in the world for Cultural Influence).

Canada is also seen as entrepreneurial (sixth in the world in the global ranking) but really shines on a range of very different measures to the US; a global audience sees Canada as a place with a strong Social Purpose offering a great quality of life.



Among respondents who actually live in North America, Canada is seen more favourably and the US less so. North Americans see Canada as more Entrepreneurial than the global audience does, and as being the most Agile country in the world. It's also considered to be the world's friendliest country.

Perceptions of the US among North Americans are let down by a poor score on our Movers metric, which covers dynamism and uniqueness. North Americans also rate the US poorly on our measure 'has a favourable tax environment'.

North Americans see the US as being much more Open for Business than the rest of the world does, and racial equality is seen as a problem for the US globally but less so locally. They also see the US as a more friendly, happier place than people outside the region do.

Canada, meanwhile, has an opportunity to build on perceptions locally that the country has great food – an opinion not widely shared by a global audience – as well as on the regional belief that it has many cultural attractions.

**THE WORLD VIEW ON THE BEST COUNTRIES IN NORTH AMERICA**

**Global Audience** Ranking out of 89 countries

-  United States 3
-  Canada 4

**REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON NORTH AMERICA'S BEST COUNTRIES**

**North America Audience** Ranking out of 89 countries

-  Canada 2
-  United States 8



# What does this mean for

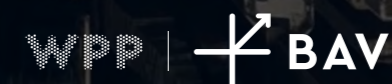
# NORTH AMERICAN BRANDS?



While Brand USA has many strengths, there are also aspects of it that can be viewed as controversial or less appealing. Regardless of a consumer's stance on America's economic and political policies, though, the USA's true strength lies in its cultural influence, and this reflects positively on US brands. Best Countries Origin Index data shows that 'Made in America' is the fourth-most appealing for products of any kind among a global audience. In certain categories, such as tech, spirits, and pharma, brands from the USA rank even higher. This reflects the interplay between brand and country associations; influential USA brands have come to epitomise the American lifestyle and innovation, and vice versa.

American tech and entertainment brands are among the strongest globally, often surpassing local brand options in the eyes of global consumers. According to our global brand study, BAV®, Apple is one of the most desired brands across 28 countries, preferred by 65% of the world's population. American entertainment brands like Disney and Netflix not only have global appeal but also provide a glimpse into American culture. Approximately 63% of our surveyed global audience regularly or occasionally use these platforms, with over 70% reporting some use of Facebook. Brands from our North American neighbours, such as Canada's Lululemon and Cirque du Soleil, also hold significant power. Mexico's Corona brand is globally recognised for its portrayal of a universally appealing tranquil experience, ranking among the top authentic, trendy, and cool brands in the world. Ultimately, despite diverse opinions on some aspects of the countries themselves, there seems to be universal alignment on the ideals and lifestyles often portrayed by American brands.

Michael Sussman  
Chief Product Officer & Lead  
Consumer Psychologist





# Asia

Asia is home to a handful of strongly defined and highly regarded countries in the eyes of global consumers, as well as a lot of countries that are seen as offering the world broadly the same strengths and weaknesses.

The Asian countries perceived to be best in the world both by people in this region and the rest of the world are Japan, China and Singapore. Japan is seen as the leader by global respondents, and among a regional audience it's Singapore that's considered the best, with China taking second place and Japan in third.

Almost every country in Asia ranks higher within the region than it does to the rest of the world, with India a particularly strong contender among Asian respondents to Best Countries compared to the wider world (it ranks 23rd overall in this region, but 33rd to a global audience). Malaysia, Indonesia and Vietnam see a similar gap of around 10 places, with the regional view more favourable in each case.





## THE WORLD VIEW ON THE BEST COUNTRIES IN ASIA

Global Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
Japan	2
Singapore	14
China	16
South Korea	18
Thailand	28
India	33
Malaysia	38
Indonesia	41
Vietnam	44
Philippines	45
Sri Lanka	55
Cambodia	68
Bangladesh	71
Uzbekistan	74
Azerbaijan	81
Kazakhstan	83

Singapore leads regional perceptions of offering an excellent quality of life, social purpose, agility, and business openness, while Japan excels in power, cultural influence, and heritage. China, up four places this year on Best Countries overall, to #16, is recognised globally and within the region for its economic influence and power. It ranks third globally for innovation. Regional respondents perceive China as being more friendly and responsive than a global audience currently does.

Asian respondents see Singapore as having greater political influence and economic stability than global observers do, as well as being more culturally accessible. Japan, meanwhile, is perceived globally to have more stringent bureaucracy that is not seen as such an issue within the region. Both countries are seen by Asians as offering religious freedom and a sense of safety that is not yet well reflected outside the region.

South Korea is the fourth-best country in the region according to Asian and global respondents; within the region it is seen as more adventurous, more affordable, more friendly and fun, and much more culturally accessible than global consumers perceive it to be. It is seen as having a much more appealing climate by observers closer to home and is much more attractive as a place to live.



## REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON ASIA'S BEST COUNTRIES

Asia Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
Singapore	2
China	9
Japan	10
South Korea	18
Thailand	21
India	23
Indonesia	27
Malaysia	32
Vietnam	38
Philippines	44
Sri Lanka	55
Uzbekistan	63
Azerbaijan	69
Cambodia	70
Kazakhstan	71
Bangladesh	81



Thailand has a strong international identity with little variation between the global and regional perspective on the biggest metrics. Within the region, though, Thailand is seen as having greater religious freedom, having a stronger sense of social purpose, particularly regarding human rights being more family-friendly, and having a much more skilled workforce than global consumers expect. The country has an opportunity to improve perceptions within the region relating to technical expertise and the level of bureaucracy people face in Thailand.

India is another country that within the region is seen as having a bigger battle with bureaucracy than global audiences perceive. And while global respondents see the country as more scenic than regional respondents, the view within the region is of India being a stronger performer on happiness, innovation, commitment to climate goals and economic stability.

Indonesia and Malaysia take seventh and eighth places in both global and regional rankings and are separated by just a few places. Indonesia has the edge among a regional audience, with global consumers believing Malaysia is the better country overall. Malaysia is perceived globally as being more Entrepreneurial and Open for Business than Indonesia; both rank high for affordability, both are mid-table on economic stability and influence, and they're neck and neck as attractive tourist destinations.

To Asian respondents, though, Indonesia is seen as having more to offer on the Movers measure (reflecting difference and dynamism), and as being more culturally accessible, offering more racial equality, and being more fun.



# What does this mean for ASIAN BRANDS

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With over 2,000 distinct ethnic groups and languages, Asia is a remarkably diverse region, home to 60% of the world's population and three of the five largest economies. Global consumers rank Japan, South Korea, China, and Singapore among the top five most innovative countries in the world, underscoring their vital contributions to innovation and technology, exemplified by prominent brands like Samsung, LG, Sony, Huawei, Nintendo, and Alibaba.

However, global respondents perceive every Asian country in our study as less culturally accessible than regional respondents do, as well as less friendly, which has big implications for Asian brands seeking global growth as well as global brands coming into the region.

One Asian country to have successfully bridged this cultural gap is South Korea, which has risen from #27 in 2016 to #7 in 2024 on our Cultural Influence measure. This reflects Seoul's long-term investment in Hallyu, or the Korean Wave of popular culture. Korean pop music and TV dramas have helped promote the country's cultural ideals and aesthetic values globally. In 2020, the South Korean film *Parasite* made history as the first non-English language film to win the Best Picture Oscar, and in 2022, boy band BTS achieved a record-breaking 12th win at the Billboard Music Awards, overtaking Destiny's Child from the US.

Ultimately, fostering deeper cultural connections will be essential for any Asian brand looking to succeed in an increasingly interconnected world. By embracing cultural nuances and promoting understanding, stronger relationships can be built, paving the way for new opportunities for collaboration and growth.

Jane Raynandi  
Head of BAV – Asia

WPP |  BAV

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# Middle East & North Africa

The people of the Middle East and North Africa have a vastly different view of the countries in their region to the perspective the rest of the world takes.

From a global point of view, every country in the region that's measured in Best Countries ranks lower than it does among respondents from within the region, and it's clear that much of the world views the MENA region as a cluster of countries with largely similar characteristics, with a couple of notable exceptions.

The UAE is the Best Country in the region according to the global audience and leads not just the region but the world for being progressive (#1) and prestigious (#1), innovative (#4) and dynamic (#5). Egypt also stands apart from the others thanks to its widely recognised cultural heritage. It ranks first in the world on having a rich history, influential culture, as unique, and as having many cultural attractions. It is one of the few countries in the region that is globally perceived as being a good tourist destination, along with Morocco.



The region is home to eight of the top 10 countries recognised for their religious values. While MENA countries may not be widely known for their scenic landscapes or social justice rankings, there is significant potential for growth and positive change in these areas on the global stage.

Within the region there is a much more nuanced view. The outlook people have on their own and neighbouring countries in this region is overwhelmingly much more positive on almost every measure.

And there is a stronger sense of each country's own identity. Kuwait, for instance, shines on perceptions of being Open for Business and offering a good Quality of Life. Morocco stands out for offering Adventure and Heritage, Qatar for being well connected to the rest of the world and offering a good jobs market, Oman is seen as being highly culturally accessible and family-friendly. Qatar and the UAE rank as the friendliest countries in the world, according to those most likely to be familiar with them, and people within MENA look to Algeria and Morocco for world-class food.

The biggest perception gap between the regional and the world view on MENA countries is on how culturally accessible these countries are. There is a 43-place difference (out of 86 countries) on the average of MENA countries on this metric as measured among people in MENA and the rest of the world.



### THE WORLD VIEW ON THE BEST COUNTRIES IN MENA

Global Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
United Arab Emirates	17
Qatar	25
Saudi Arabia	32
Egypt	35
Morocco	39
Israel	46
Kuwait	53
Tunisia	60
Oman	61
Bahrain	69
Jordan	72
Iran	82
Algeria	86

### REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON MENA'S BEST COUNTRIES

MENA Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
United Arab Emirates	10
Qatar	15
Saudi Arabia	18
Egypt	27
Kuwait	29
Oman	38
Morocco	40
Bahrain	41
Jordan	47
Tunisia	58
Algeria	61
Iran	71
Israel	76

The MENA region also excels in the minds of consumers who live there on having a rich history, offering strong heritage and a sense of adventure – a view not widely shared by those from outside.

The countries of this region have a great opportunity to shape new and positive perceptions among global consumers. While no MENA country has yet to emerge as a standout for friendliness, fun, family-friendliness, health, or exceptional cuisine, the region holds untapped potential in these areas. Many of the countries are seen as reasonably safe, placing them in a solid position to build on these strengths and enhance their global reputation.

The fact that Qatar and the UAE are ranked within the top five globally on our Movers metric (showing uniqueness and dynamism), well above the other countries of the region, shows it is possible to stand out in the minds of a global audience, but it may require significant investment.





# What does this mean for

## MENA BRANDS

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Most of the world views the MENA region as a monolith, a cluster of countries with largely similar characteristics. It's convenient. But you would never perceive England as being largely the same as France, or Norway as being a lot like Italy. The things that make those countries different – their unique histories, cultural nuances, and consumer behaviours – enable brands to project rich stories that speak to authentic truths. This is the opportunity for MENA brands.

Rather than adopting generic attributes that flatten the region's diversity, brands should be actively embracing their local cultures. Everything from architecture to history, and language to art, is a chance to weave something powerfully authentic into their brands. This isn't a marketing tactic but an act of cultural preservation – and a powerful tool for brand differentiation. By celebrating what makes each country unique, MENA businesses can craft compelling narratives that resonate deeply with consumers, foster a sense of pride, and ultimately, paint a more accurate and vibrant picture of this incredibly diverse region.

Mario Morby  
Chief Strategy Officer, MENA  
Ogilvy

Ogilvy

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The countries of this region are viewed with much more positivity by those who live here than by a wider, global audience. All of the countries we measure in sub-Saharan Africa rank about 20 places higher in the world rankings determined by regional respondents than those resulting from the global survey, though the order of preference is only slightly different. It should be noted that only five countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are included in this aspect of the Best Countries study, so we are providing here a snapshot of regional perceptions.

# SUB-SAHARAN Africa



South Africa is considered the region's Best Country by the regional and the global audience, and performs well for athletic prowess, having a rich history, for having cultural and geographical attractions and for having achieved a high degree of racial equality. It also performs well on our Movers metric, showing that South Africa is seen as unique and dynamic. The country has climbed 10 positions on Movers since 2023, and five places for Agility in the eyes of a global audience.

The regional view of South Africa is of a country that is much more fun, friendly, happy, healthy and fashionable. Sub-Saharan African consumers see it as having a favourable tax system, a much more educated population than the rest of the world recognises, and sees it as significantly more innovative, modern and adaptable.

Kenya takes second place in both the regional and global rankings of countries in this region, but while those respondents from the region recognise it as a country offering Adventure, Heritage and affordable living, these strengths are not seen by a global audience. Athleticism, cheap manufacturing and a lack of bureaucracy are the country's best offerings on our global survey. Kenya is seen closer to home as offering a much higher Quality of Life (39 places higher than on the global survey), and for Adventure and Agility not yet well known beyond the region.






Zimbabwe is recognised within the region as offering far more Adventure and Heritage than a global audience perceives there to be; from outside, the country is seen as 'unapproachable', our study shows.

Similarly, Ghana is a far stronger performer within the region on Heritage, Adventure, Social Purpose and Quality of Life; globally, aside from athleticism and affordability, the country ranks in the bottom third of the Best Countries league table on close to every measure. There is a similar pattern for Cameroon.






Our data suggests that most people outside the region have little detailed knowledge of most of these countries, with the exception of South Africa, and that what they do know is largely limited to sporting results. The region's countries are not yet known outside Sub-Saharan Africa for having strong consumer brands, and the perceived strengths of each country among fairly local audiences have not yet translated beyond the region.



### THE WORLD VIEW ON THE BEST COUNTRIES IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

Global Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
 South Africa	40
 Kenya	59
 Zimbabwe	76
 Ghana	77
 Cameroon	85

### REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA'S BEST COUNTRIES

Sub-Saharan Africa Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries
 South Africa	21
 Kenya	37
 Ghana	43
 Cameroon	60
 Zimbabwe	72



# What this means for BRANDS FROM SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

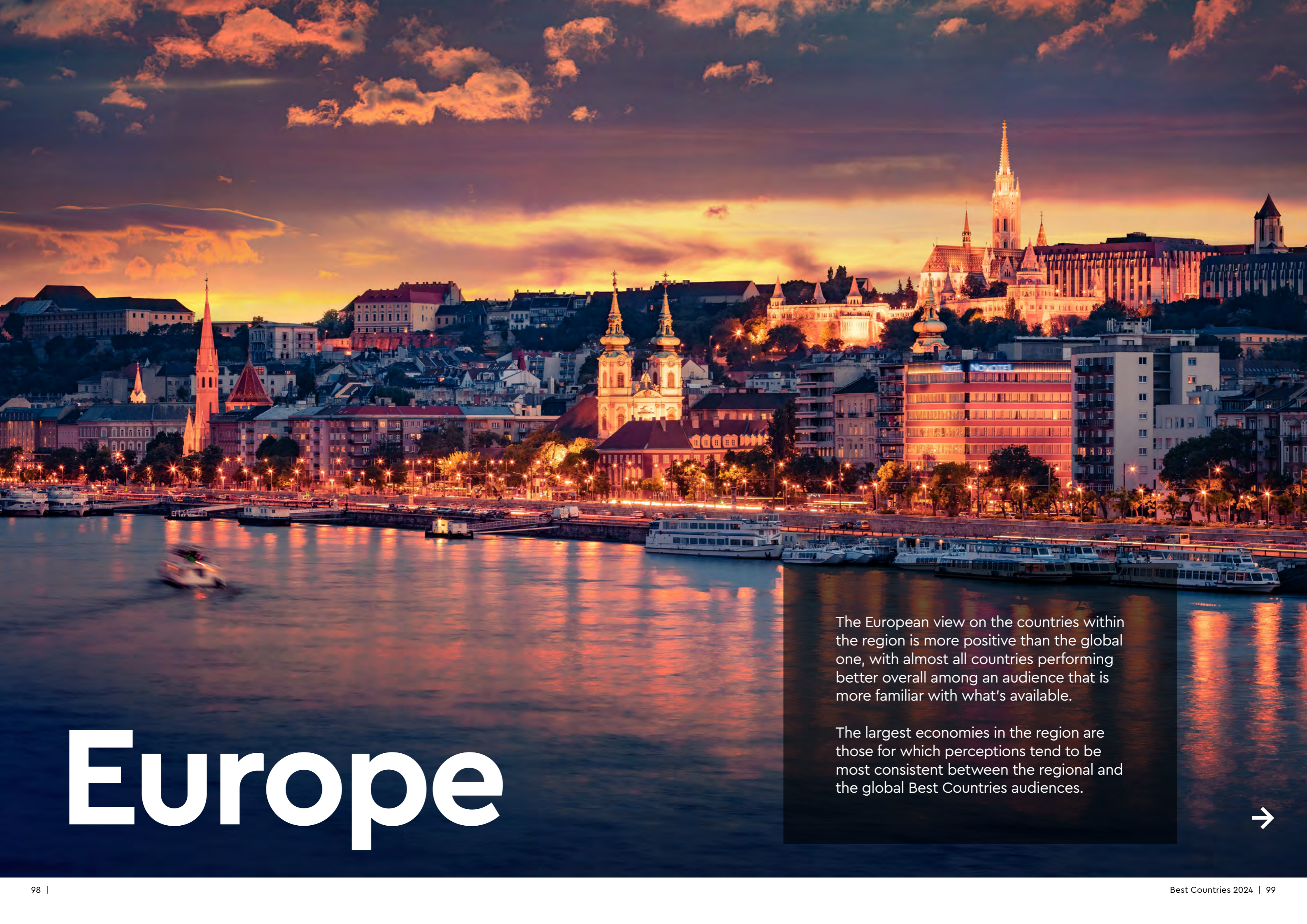
“ South Africa is a much-misunderstood nation in a much-misunderstood region. Global audiences have often viewed our region's progress with more cynicism than admiration; where they have seen positive change, it has been viewed as likely to be one step forward, two steps back. Sometimes, those low expectations have been correct. To zoom in on South Africa, the country I know best, it's true that the excitement around the end of apartheid was followed by a lack of pace in improving the lives of local people, and a time of great uncertainty for investors. This is reflected in the Best Countries data, which shows pretty poor perceptions generally of what this country and indeed the region has to offer the world.

Those of us on the ground here sense that recently, things have changed, and that many of these international perceptions no longer hold true. As we mark 30 years of freedom, South Africa in particular has a new sense of hope, energy and entrepreneurship; but the gap between global perceptions and local reality presents a challenge for brands from this region.

Bridging that that gap is a task in which brands can – and should – play a key role. Brands are ambassadors of nations; their strengths, described and demonstrated with authenticity and promoted with the pride they merit, can challenge and change perceptions. And nowhere else on earth needs better marketing than Africa.

Dono White  
Strategy Director  
VML South Africa





# Europe

The European view on the countries within the region is more positive than the global one, with almost all countries performing better overall among an audience that is more familiar with what's available.

The largest economies in the region are those for which perceptions tend to be most consistent between the regional and the global Best Countries audiences.





Croatia, for example, is regarded much more positively within Europe for offering Adventure and Heritage, being adaptable, scenic, and approachable. The vast majority of tourists in Croatia come from elsewhere in Europe, and the number of arrivals has been steadily growing since the pandemic, national tourism data shows.

Estonia ranks 18 places higher overall among a regional audience, due to much stronger perceptions of Entrepreneurship, Agility and Quality of Life. The founders of fintech company Wise, Bolt mobility and gaming software supplier Playtech are all from Estonia – something perhaps better known within the region than outside it.

Finland ranks eight positions higher overall within the region, with much higher scores for military strength and athletic success (it is



The UK, for instance, has near-identical scores on most measures when we compare the responses of Europeans and global consumers, apart from being seen from afar as a little happier, and from countries closer to home as being more unique and dynamic.

That said, Germany and France are seen as being much more Open for Business among respondents from beyond the region, and the UK's food is judged more kindly by people from outside the region than by other Europeans.

Switzerland ranks as the Best Country in the world as determined by Europeans and a global audience, and the other European league leaders are consistently strong among regional observers, largely for the same reasons.

The Scandinavian countries are also well known regionally and globally as being quite different to the European nations to their south. What makes Sweden such a strong performer overall, for instance, is the perception that it offers a great Quality of Life and that it has a strong social purpose. This perception is equally strong among Europeans and a global audience.

It's among the perhaps less-widely known countries where perception gaps really open up between those who live within the region and those from outside.



home to recently retired Formula 1 driver Kimi Räikkönen) than awarded by global consumers.

And Poland has a much stronger reputation within Europe as a place with an influential culture and good food than is seen by the rest of the world.

Belgium ranks higher overall among a European audience than it does globally, thanks to higher scores for affordability, though it has an opportunity to boost regional perceptions around fun, fashion and scenery to match the prevailing global view.

The Netherlands is viewed within Europe as being more agile and more modern than people outside the region perceive; it has work to do to lift European perceptions related to food and scenery in the Netherlands.




## THE WORLD VIEW ON THE BEST COUNTRIES IN EUROPE

Global Audience	Ranking out of 89 countries	Ranking out of 86 countries
Switzerland	1	Luxembourg 27
Sweden	6	Portugal 29
Germany	7	Poland 37
United Kingdom	8	Croatia 47
Denmark	10	Cyprus 48
Norway	11	Czechia 50
France	12	Hungary 54
Netherlands	13	Romania 58
Italy	15	Estonia 62
Spain	19	Lithuania 63
Finland	20	Bulgaria 64
Austria	21	Slovenia 65
Iceland	22	Latvia 67
Belgium	23	Slovakia 70
Ireland	24	Ukraine 80
Greece	26	Serbia 88

## REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON EUROPE'S BEST COUNTRIES

Europe Audience	Ranking out of 86 countries	Ranking out of 89 countries
Switzerland	1	Portugal 25
Sweden	4	Greece 27
United Kingdom	6	Croatia 33
Norway	7	Poland 35
Denmark	8	Czechia 37
Germany	10	Cyprus 41
Netherlands	11	Estonia 44
Finland	12	Lithuania 51
Austria	13	Hungary 53
France	14	Slovakia 54
Iceland	16	Slovenia 56
Luxembourg	17	Latvia 58
Spain	18	Bulgaria 62
Belgium	19	Romania 63
Ireland	20	Serbia 79
Italy	21	Ukraine 81





# What this means for EUROPEAN BRANDS

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Where brands come from really matters to people. The power of a country's brand can have an enormous effect on the way people feel about its key industries and the brands that originate there. Belgium, where I'm based, is a great case in point. Belgium has always been proudly associated with beer, chocolate, famous music festivals, fries, the list goes on. Brands like Neuhaus, Stella Artois and Godiva use their Belgian origins to provide guidance on their own branding, and this has been a good part of their success.

Now is the time for European brands to examine how consumers from different countries feel about their country of origin. Where there are perceived strengths, then brands can benefit from aligning with those characteristics and the halo effect of 'Made in ...'. Where there are gaps between the image a country has of itself and the one the rest of the world sees, there may lie opportunities.

”

Gio Canini  
WPP Country Manager, Belgium



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