



# The Information

## How countries see themselves

➔ When residents of more than 30 countries were asked to rate their home country on the basis of “overall respect, trust, esteem, admiration and good feelings”, those living in Australia were the most positive. The country recorded a whopping self-image score of 92 out of 100, followed closely by Canada and Finland. Virtually all countries surveyed were in a range from the high 60s to low 80s, but spare a thought for Japan, coming bottom of the pack with a mere 57.

The Australians’ self-image was not totally misplaced, though. When people were asked about their perceptions of other countries, Australia scored well – but was pipped for top spot by Switzerland and Canada. Russia and China were the least admired.

Our illustration plots the difference between the two sets of scores – a crude measure of the extent to which a country overrates itself. Residents of China, Russia and India, with the US not far behind, all think more of themselves than do others – hence the large numbers on their score cards. Japan is the only place where non-residents think more of the country than its residents – giving a negative score. The UK, Germany, Switzerland and Italy are among the larger countries whose self-image is broadly in line with others’ perceptions.

**Simon Briscoe**  
Source: Reputation Institute, 2009.

The score cards show the gap (expressed in marks out of 100) between countries’ self-image and external perceptions



**CHINA** How they rate themselves 79 How others rate them 38 Perception gap 41. **RUSSIA** How they rate themselves 74 How others rate them 36 Perception gap 38. **INDIA** How they rate themselves 82 How others rate them 50 Perception gap 32. **US** How they rate themselves 77 How others rate them 48 Perception gap 29. **UK** How we rate ourselves 72 How others rate us 63 Perception gap 9. **SWITZERLAND** How they rate themselves 80 How others rate them 73 Perception gap 7. **ITALY** How they rate themselves 68 How others rate them 63 Perception gap 5. **JAPAN** How they rate themselves 57 How others rate them 61 Perception gap -4

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