

# **The Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index<sup>SM</sup>: International Perceptions of Scotland's Response to Covid-19**

**Scottish Government Constitution and  
External Affairs Analysis**

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## Key Findings

- Scotland was ranked **12<sup>th</sup> out of 50 nations for its handling of healthcare crises** (including Covid-19) and 11<sup>th</sup> out of 50 nations when measuring how comfortable people feel about travelling here in the next five years.
- Across 20 countries, more than **1 in 3 respondents** (35.8 per cent) view Scotland's handling of health crises as **favourable**. Only 1 in 10 (10.8 per cent) respondents rated the handling as unfavourable.
- **Two in five** (38.9 per cent) of the respondents feel **comfortable in travelling to Scotland** in the next five years.

# Introduction

This report provides a summary of the findings on international perceptions of Scotland's response to COVID-19. Data for this report and the Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index<sup>SM</sup>: 2020 Report For Scotland<sup>1</sup> is from The Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index<sup>SM</sup> (NBI<sup>SM</sup>), which we have subscribed to since 2008. The NBI<sup>SM</sup> examines the reputation of 50 countries<sup>2</sup>, including Scotland. Twenty thousand respondents<sup>3</sup>, aged 18 and over, from 20 core panel countries<sup>4</sup> were interviewed.

This year, two additional questions were included in the NBI<sup>SM</sup> survey in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These looked at how countries perceive Scotland's response to healthcare crises (including COVID-19) and, with that in mind, how comfortable respondents would be visiting Scotland in the next five years.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index<sup>SM</sup>: 2020 Report For Scotland found in the supporting files, alongside this report for further details.


<sup>2</sup> See Annex A for a list of the 50 nations measured.

<sup>3</sup> The number of respondents who were asked about Scotland was 9,766.

<sup>4</sup> See Annex A for a list of the 20 core panel countries.

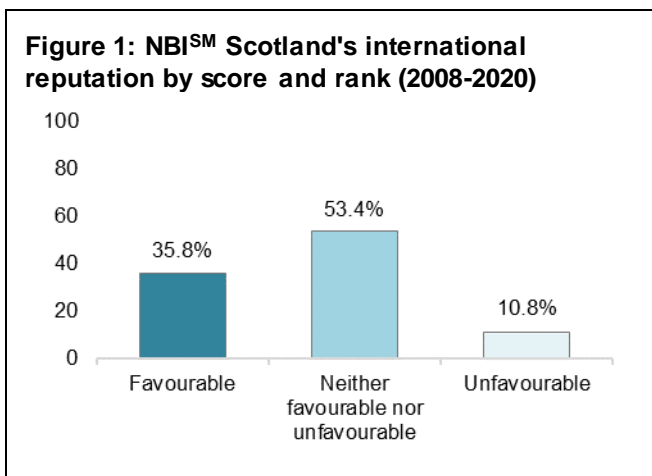
# Scotland's handling of healthcare crises (including Covid-19) – overall

To capture opinions on how Scotland handles healthcare crises, respondents were asked to place their view on a scale of 1.0 to 7.0. Based on the average responses from each nation, Scotland ranks 12<sup>th</sup> out of 50 nations with an average score of 4.42 for how it handles healthcare crises (including COVID-19). Since 4.0 represents “neither unfavourable nor favourable”, this means that on average people view Scotland's handling of healthcare crises as more favourable than unfavourable.



Scotland ranks **12<sup>th</sup> out of 50 nations** regarding its handling of healthcare crises with an average score of 4.42.

When aggregating people's views into “favourable” (responses ranging from 5.0 to 7.0), “neither favourable nor unfavourable” (responses of 5.0) and “unfavourable” (responses ranging from 1.0 to 3.0), this positive picture becomes clearer. More than one third (35.8 per cent) of the international sample viewed how Scotland handles healthcare crises as



favourable (see Figure 1). Only 1 in 10 (10.8 per cent) respondents rated the handling as unfavourable and about half (53.4 per cent) as neither favourable nor favourable. This is largely comparable to how respondents view other European nations' handling of crises on average with a third (35.6 per cent) rating it as favourable, but fewer than half of respondents as neither favourable nor unfavourable and around 1 in 6 (15.5 per cent) as unfavourable.

## Scotland's handling of healthcare crises (including Covid-19) – by country

The data also provide an overview of how each of the 20 panel countries perceives Scotland's handling of the healthcare crises (including COVID-19) (see Figure 2). Three countries ranked Scotland in their top 10: the United Kingdom<sup>5</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup>), Australia (9<sup>th</sup>) and the United States (10<sup>th</sup>). Scotland received its lowest ranks from China (26<sup>th</sup>), India (23<sup>rd</sup>) and Egypt (19<sup>th</sup>).

Looking at Scotland's scores, opinions of how Scotland has handled the healthcare crises (including COVID-19) were the most favourable on average in India (4.99), the United Kingdom (4.94), China (4.85), Egypt (4.78), and Mexico (4.62). Views were the least favourable in Japan (3.94), South Korea (4.05), Turkey (4.08), Italy (4.13) and France (4.14).

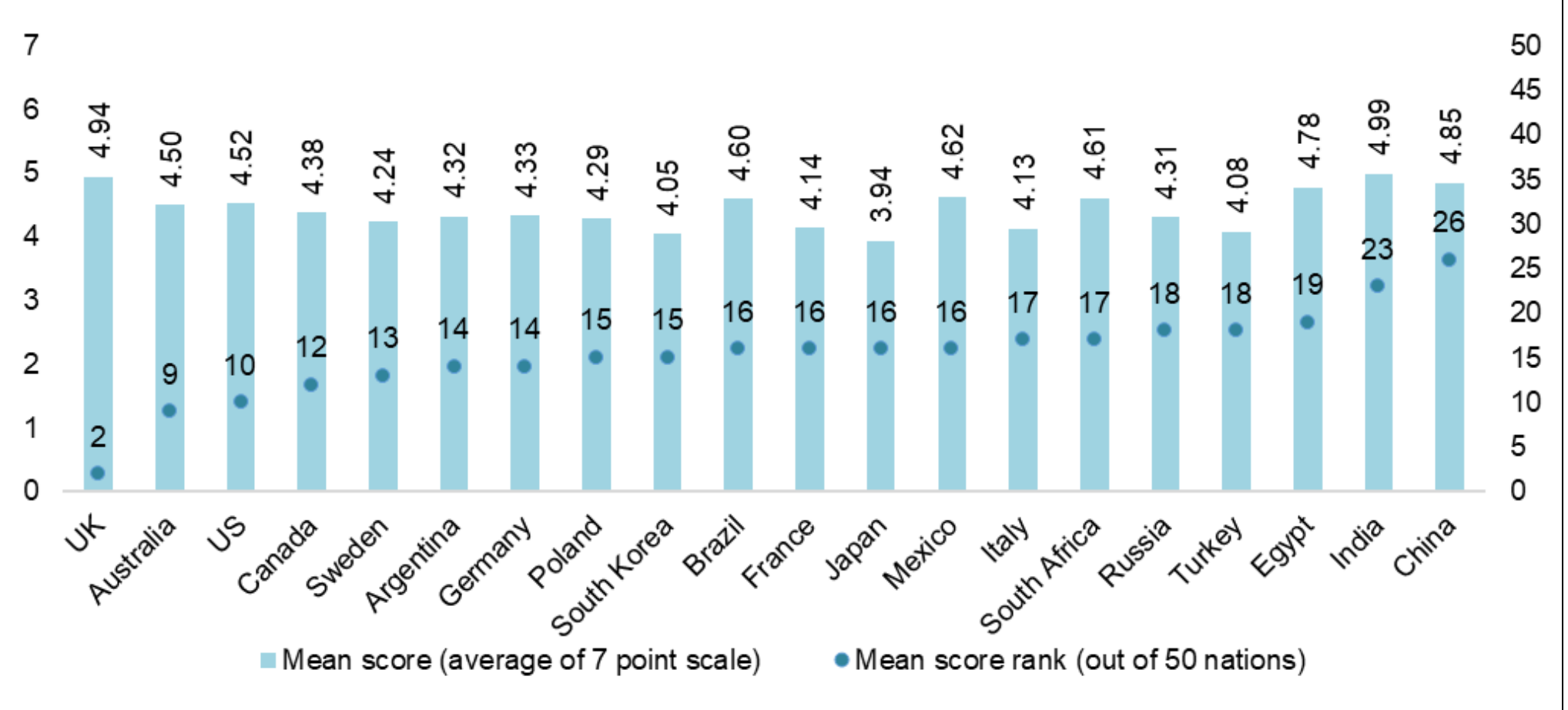
There is an apparent discrepancy between ranks and average scores. Whilst ranks reflect Scotland's position relative to other nations, the average scores illustrate how favourable a nation's handling of health crises was perceived, regardless of other participating nations.

For example, respondents in India credited Scotland with the highest average score of 4.99 that it received. However, because respondents there rated other nations even higher than that, Scotland only appears 23<sup>rd</sup> in the ranking provided by India. At the same time, South Korea ranks Scotland 15<sup>th</sup>, but only scores Scotland an average of 4.05. An exception here is the United Kingdom, where Scotland ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> and also receives its second highest average score of 4.94.

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<sup>5</sup> The United Kingdom sample includes Scotland.

Figure 2: How does Scotland handle the healthcare crises (by country)?



# Comfort in visiting Scotland in the next five years – overall

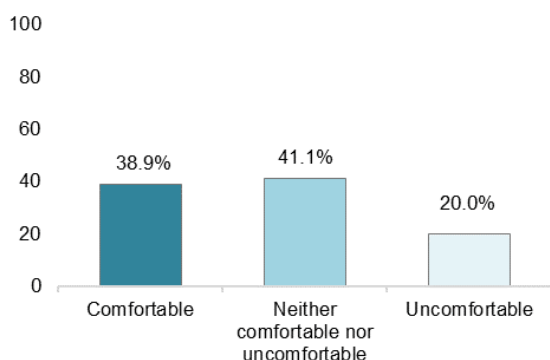
In a similar manner to the previous question, respondents were also asked to state their level of comfort in visiting Scotland in the next five years based on how it responds to the health crises (such as COVID-19, Ebola, Zika) on a scale of 1.0 to 7.0<sup>6</sup>. Based on the average of all scores across the entire sample of responses, Scotland ranks 11<sup>th</sup> out of 50 nations with an average score of 4.29 for comfort in visiting Scotland in the next 5 years.



Scotland ranks **11<sup>th</sup> out of 50 nations** for levels of comfort in travelling to Scotland in the next 5 years with an average score of 4.29.

Again, when aggregating responses into “favourable” (responses ranging from 5.0 – 7.0), “neither comfortable nor uncomfortable” (responses of 4.0) and “uncomfortable”

**Figure 3: Level of comfort in visiting Scotland in next 5 years, based on how it responds to health crises - overall (% of respondents)**



(responses ranging from 1.0 to 3.0), this positive view of Scotland becomes clearer (see Figure 3). Two in five (38.9 per cent) respondents felt comfortable travelling to Scotland in the next five years, compared to only 1 in 5 (20.0 per cent) saying they do not feel comfortable travelling to Scotland. The remaining 41.1 per cent of respondents feel neither comfortable nor uncomfortable.

<sup>6</sup> 1.0 being the lowest and worst and 7.0 being the highest and best



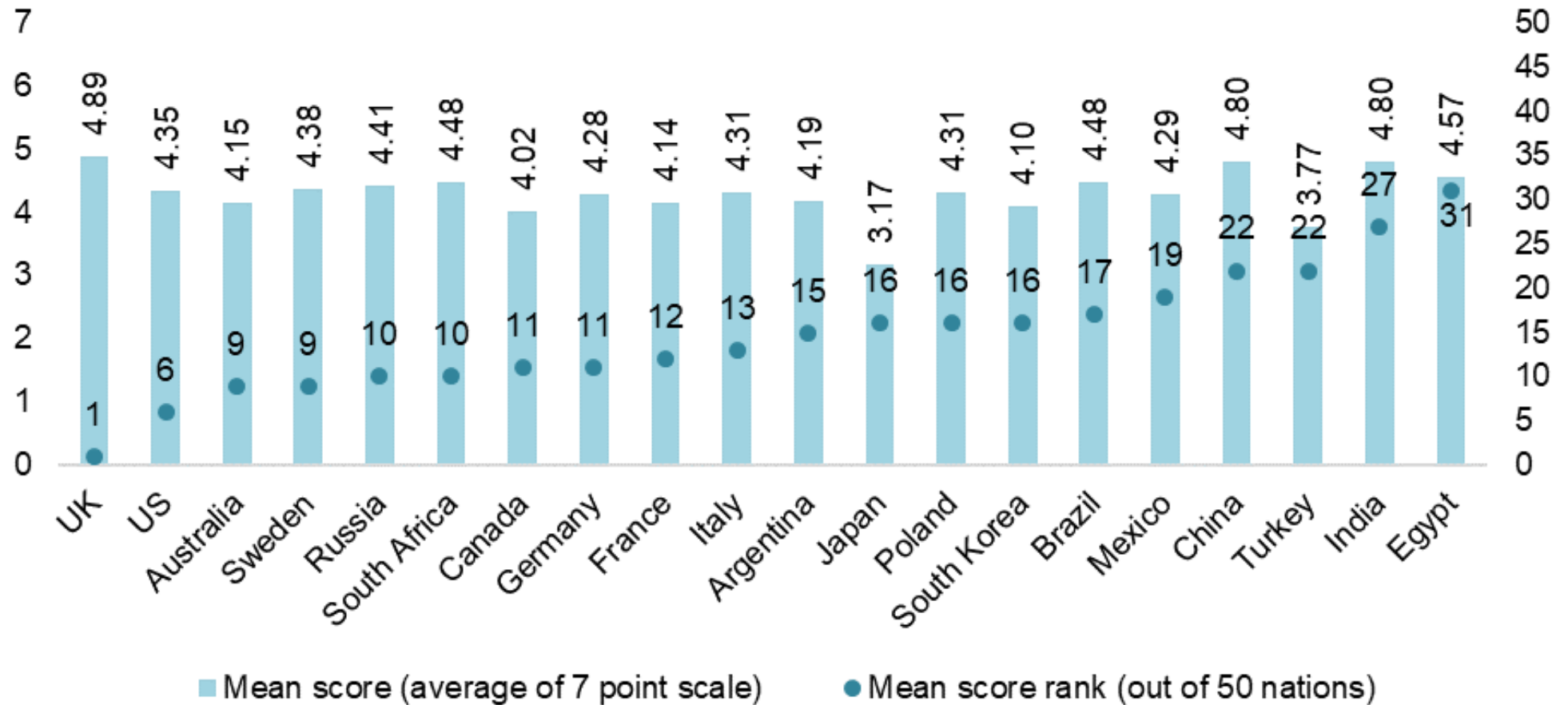
## Comfort in visiting Scotland in the next five years – by country

Based on respondents' perception of health crises management (such as COVID-19, Ebola, Zika), six countries include Scotland in their top 10 (see Figure 4). Scotland is ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the United Kingdom, 6<sup>th</sup> in the United States, 9<sup>th</sup> in Australia and Sweden, 10<sup>th</sup> Russia and South Africa. Across the 20 panel countries, Scotland was ranked within the top half of all 50 NBI<sup>SM</sup> nations, with the exception of India (27<sup>th</sup>) and Egypt (31<sup>st</sup>). For all other panel countries, Scotland was ranked at least 22<sup>nd</sup> (China and Turkey) and for all other remaining 16 countries at least 17<sup>th</sup>.

Looking at the scores, respondents in 18 out of the 20 panel countries are comfortable with visiting Scotland in the next five years. There are only two countries with a mean score below 4.00, suggesting respondents there are uncomfortable visiting Scotland – Japan (3.17) and Turkey (3.77). The remaining 18 countries have a mean score of 4.00 or more, with the highest scores received from the United Kingdom (4.89), India and China (4.80).

Whilst Scotland received its highest score from the United Kingdom (4.89) and also comes 1<sup>st</sup> in the United Kingdom's ranking of 50 countries, it received high average scores in India (4.80), China (4.80), Egypt (4.57), South Africa (4.48) and Brazil (4.48). This again reflects that, on average, China, India and Egypt score countries relatively highly.

Figure 1: How comfortable are respondents in visiting Scotland in the next 5 years, based on how it responds to the health crises (by country)?



## About this survey

The Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index<sup>SM</sup> (NBI<sup>SM</sup>) is an international nation brand survey, run by Ipsos, that attempts to measure and rank a country's broad reputation along six dimensions of national competence. The six dimensions are: Exports, Governance, Culture, People, Tourism, and Investment and Immigration. The Scottish Government has subscribed to the NBI<sup>SM</sup> since 2008 and uses the NBI<sup>SM</sup> to measure Scotland's reputation as part of its National Performance Framework<sup>7</sup>.

The NBI examines the perceptions of around 50 nations<sup>8</sup> each year, by conducting online interviews with approximately 20,000 adults<sup>9</sup> aged 18 and over, in 20 core panel countries<sup>10</sup>. Data is weighted to reflect key demographic characteristics including age, gender, and education of the online population in that country each year. Additionally, race/ethnicity is used for sample balancing in the U.S., United Kingdom, South Africa, India, and Brazil. Fieldwork was conducted from July through August 2020.

The data used in this bulletin have come exclusively from two additional questions that were included in this year's iteration of the NBI<sup>SM</sup> survey in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The questions asked were:

1. Based on anything you know or have heard, please indicate your overall opinion of how each of the following countries handles healthcare crises (such as COVID-19, Ebola, Zika).
2. Thinking about your travel in the next 5 years, how comfortable do you feel about visiting the following countries based on how it responds to health crises (such as COVID-19, Ebola, Zika)?

Respondents were asked to state their opinion on a scale from 1.0 to 7.0<sup>12</sup>. Responses ranging from 5.0 to 7.0 were aggregated into a "favourable" view, 4.0 represented "neither favourable nor unfavourable" and responses ranging from 1.0 to 3.0 were combined into an "unfavourable" view. This is in line with the approach suggested by Ipsos and which has also been followed by the Government of Northern Ireland in its NBI<sup>SM</sup> 2020 COVID-19 bulletin<sup>13</sup>.

Whilst this bulletin sets out the key findings, the full list of average scores and ranks for Scotland are available<sup>14</sup>. Comparisons to other participating nations' scores and ranks are

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<sup>7</sup> [National Performance Framework](#)

<sup>8</sup> See Annex A for a list of the 50 nations measured.

<sup>9</sup> The number of respondents who were asked about Scotland was 9,766.

<sup>10</sup> See Annex A for a list of the 20 core panel countries.

<sup>11</sup> The 20 panel countries and the 50 nations examined overlap. For the main NBI survey, the Scottish Government pays for Scotland to be added as an additional core panel country to explore what Scottish respondents think of Scotland.

<sup>12</sup> 1.0 being the lowest and worst and 7.0 being the highest and best

<sup>13</sup> [The Executive Office \(Northern Ireland\) - NBI 2020 Covid-19 bulletin](#)

<sup>14</sup> See the The Anholt-Ipsos Nation Brands Index<sup>SM</sup> 2020: International Perceptions of Scotland's Response to Covid-19 – Tables and Figures Workbook found in the supporting files, alongside this report.

not possible, as each nation is contractually permitted to publish its own scores and rank only. However, Ipsos has published some top line findings in its press release<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> [Ipsos press release - Handling of health crises impacts overall favourability towards nations](#)