
↑ **The** +

FutureBrand

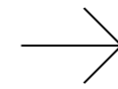
Country

→ **Index**²⁰²⁰



Welcome to the FutureBrand Country Index 2020.

In a world where little seems certain, the news cycles are dominated by the worst healthcare crisis in living memory, and many countries are riven by political division, it's easy to assume that country brands have withered on the vine.



It is 12 months since we last published the FutureBrand Country Index but, in that period, life as we know it has been turned on its head. Every day brings new headlines that report poor management of Covid-19 cases and floundering governments, as well as an exodus from cities and dissatisfaction with lockdowns and social distancing.

But what if the 24/7 news agenda doesn't reflect what real people think and feel? The FutureBrand Country Index 2020 reveals just that: our carefully considered research found that a country's brand is deeply resilient, even at a time when so much seems temporary and changeable.

As nations adjust to the 'new normal', there has never been a better – or more important – time to examine the value of a country's brand and determine what makes it robust in the eyes of the world. These are strange and challenging days but many countries are standing firm, not least those we might have expected to falter and fall.

How do we know this? Well, while countries have traditionally been measured and judged on factors such as population size and GDP, at FutureBrand we look beyond the obvious statistics. Our Index scrutinises where people want to live, visit, invest in, and buy goods and services from. Quality of life is crucial and its value system is key.

In short, there's a reality gap between what the headlines tell us and what we, as nations, actually believe.



01



Resilience and Reality 06-15

- 08 Confidence
- 10 My Country as a Brand
- 14 Methodology

More →

02



The Top 75 Countries 16-25

More →

03



The Key Results 26-41

- 28 Reading Between the (Head)Lines
- 32 What a Difference a Year Makes – Or Does It?
- 34 Top 5 Risers In Ranking
- 36 Top 5 Fallers In Ranking
- 38 Who's In, Who's Out
- 40 The Covid-19 Effect

More →

04



Crucial Stories for Critical Times 42-51

- 44 Resilience
- 46 Economic Dominance vs Country Appeal
- 48 The Life Pursuit
- 49 Environmental Friendliness
- 50 The Way We Used to Live

More →



05



New for 2020 52-67

- 54 Overview
- 56 How Have They Done?
- 60 Up to the Job?
- 62 On the Inside Looking Out
- 64 Where They Would Most Like to Live

More →

06



Country by Country 68-121

- 72 Japan
- 78 Switzerland
- 84 Norway
- 94 Germany
- 98 Canada
- 102 Denmark
- 106 Finland
- 110 Sweden
- 114 UAE
- 118 New Zealand

More →

07



Other Top Stories 122-143

- 124 The US, the UK, and China
- 130 Moving On Up: The Middle East Story
- 134 On the Rise: The Africa Story
- 140 Slipping Down: The LATAM Story

More →

08



Regions 144-153

- 146 Asia Pacific
- 148 Europe
- 150 Middle East
- 151 Africa
- 152 LATAM
- 153 North America

More →

09



Cities 154-159

More →

10



Notes and Methodology Detail 160-163

More →

→ **01**

→ **Resilience and Reality**

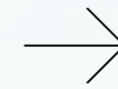


Our Country Index 2020 clearly shows that countries who properly invest in their brand reap the benefits.

We identify the main drivers for success and explore how effective country branding, and confidence in what that country has to offer, can provide a tangible competitive advantage.

Put simply, building a country brand is a very good thing to do. In a Covid-19 world, country brands matter more than ever – we can't control events but we can control our country's resilience. It's all about the long-term picture.

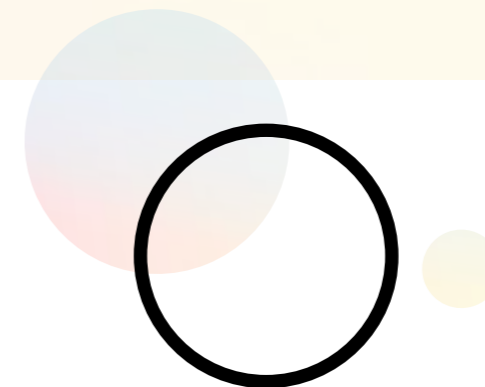
With that in mind, not only do we have year-on-year results, we also have a six-year scenario thanks to our 2014 Index. We prioritise the calibre of the people we speak to and place great emphasis on the longevity of our data. Now we can share that with you.

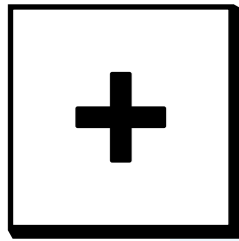


Confidence in the stability & reputation of a country:

We know from experience in previous qualitative research on country branding that confidence in the stability and reputation of a country has an enormous impact on the way that a country is perceived, and impacts on major decisions regarding:

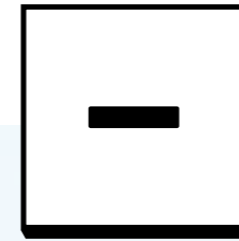
- Whether or not to Invest in a Country
- Whether or not to Buy Products from a Country
- Whether or not to Visit a Country for Business or Pleasure





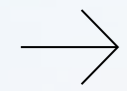
For a country to be viewed successfully as a country brand it is seen as:

- Confident
- Influential
- Politically Stable
- Economically Progressive
- Innovative
- Trustworthy
- Respected
- Tolerant
- Reliable
- Safe
- Honest
- Well Developed
- A Leader
- Good for Business
- Independent
- Authentic and with a Good Quality of Life

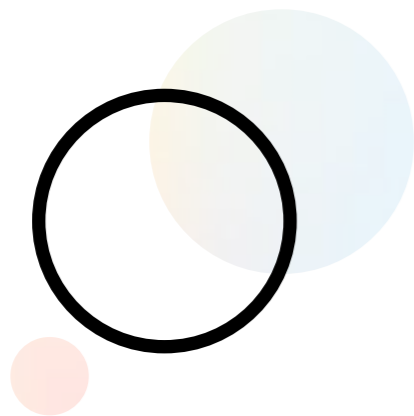


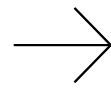
For a country to be viewed unsuccessfully as a country brand it is seen as:

- Untrustworthy
- Unreliable
- Weak
- Outdated
- Corrupt
- Economically & Politically Unstable
- Unsafe
- Aggressive
- Bad for Business
- Slow
- Unfriendly/Intolerant and Lacking Respect



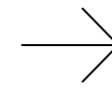
In a Covid-19 world, country brands matter more than ever — we can't control events but we can control our country's resilience. →



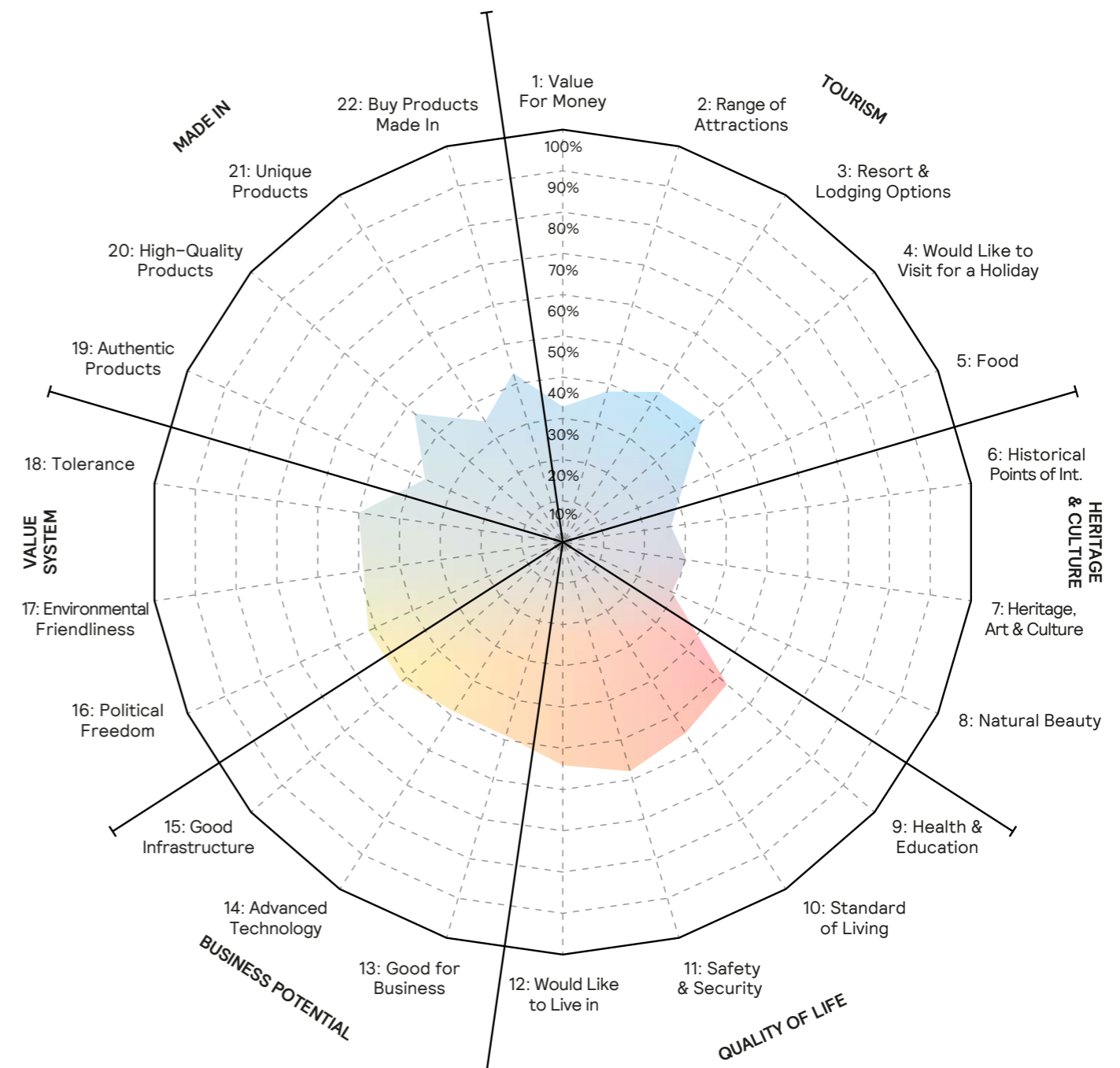


Unlike other surveys, we don't send out random questionnaires in a scattergun approach. Instead, we talk to leading professionals who are in key positions and have compelling and pivotal opinions.

For the Country Brand Index 2020, we worked with QRI Consulting, our international research partner who has more than three decades of experience in brand strategy. As such, the research is generated from a globally informed audience of frequent flyers who evaluated the image and reputation of the World Bank's top 75 countries by GDP.



As we entered the sixth month of Covid-19, some 2,500 interviews were conducted with — among others — CEOs, C-suite, MDs and top level civil servants from across the world, each of whom rated seven countries they were familiar with, making this report uniquely informed and invaluable.



→ **02**

→ **The Top 75 Countries**

The Top 75 Countries



Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position	Region
1 -	Japan	3	Asia Pacific
2 1↑	Switzerland	20	Europe
3 1↓	Norway	30	Europe
4 2↑	Germany	4	Europe
5 3↑	Canada	10	North America

01 –15



Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position	Region
6 1↑	Denmark	38	Europe
7 2↓	Finland	44	Europe
8 4↓	Sweden	23	Europe
9 7↑	UAE	29	Middle East
10 1↑	New Zealand	52	Asia Pacific
11 4↑	Australia	14	Asia Pacific
12 3↓	Austria	27	Europe
13 1↓	US	1	North America
14 3↑	France	7	Europe
15 1↓	Italy	8	Europe

The Top 75 Countries



Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position	Region
16 4↑	South Korea	12	Asia Pacific
17 1↑	Singapore	34	Asia Pacific
18 8↑	Qatar	53	Middle East
19 9↓	Luxembourg	72	Europe
20 1↓	United Kingdom	6	Europe
21 8↓	Netherlands	17	Europe
22 =	Israel	31	Middle East
23 =	Spain	13	Europe
24 1↑	Portugal	48	Europe
25 6↑	Oman	69	Middle East

16—35



Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position	Region
26 7↑	Ireland	32	Europe
27 1↑	Kuwait	58	Middle East
28 2↑	Saudi Arabia	18	Middle East
29 8↓	Belgium	24	Europe
30 15↑	Malaysia	36	Asia Pacific
31 4↓	Russia	11	Europe
32 37↑	Angola	66	Africa
33 4↓	China	2	Asia Pacific
34 26↑	Algeria	55	Africa
35 1↓	Greece	51	Europe

The Top 75 Countries



Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position	Region
36 —	Ghana	74	Africa
37 25↑	Puerto Rico	62	LATAM
38 11↑	Myanmar	71	Asia Pacific
39 —	Thailand	22	Asia Pacific
40 16↓	Hong Kong	35	Asia Pacific
41 9↓	Czech Republic	47	Europe
42 7↓	Slovakia	61	Europe
43 15↑	Sri Lanka	68	Asia Pacific
44 8↑	Ethiopia	64	Africa
45 6↑	South Africa	37	Africa

36—55



Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position	Region
46 17↑	Kenya	65	Africa
47 10↑	Guatemala	70	LATAM
48 2↓	Panama	75	LATAM
49 10↑	Kazakhstan	54	Asia Pacific
50 21↑	Bangladesh	41	Asia Pacific
51 11↓	Turkey	19	Europe
52 4↑	Indonesia	16	Asia Pacific
53 —	Bulgaria	73	Europe
54 1↑	Egypt	40	Africa
55 11↓	Poland	21	Europe

The Top 75 Countries



Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position	Region
56 18 ↓	Hungary	56	Europe
57 10 ↓	Brazil	9	LATAM
58 10 ↓	Cuba	63	LATAM
59 6 ↓	Ecuador	60	LATAM
60 24 ↓	Argentina	25	LATAM
61 7 ↑	Nigeria	26	Africa
62 20 ↓	Romania	46	Europe
63 4 ↑	Philippines	33	Asia Pacific
64 2 ↑	Morocco	59	Africa
65 28 ↓	Peru	50	LATAM

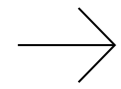
56 —75



Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position	Region
66 5 ↓	Vietnam	45	Asia Pacific
67 26 ↓	India	5	Asia Pacific
68 2 ↑	Dominican Republic	67	LATAM
69 3 ↑	Iran	28	Middle East
70 16 ↓	Colombia	39	LATAM
71 3 ↑	Ukraine	57	Europe
72 8 ↓	Mexico	15	LATAM
73 20 ↓	Chile	42	LATAM
74 1 ↓	Pakistan	43	Middle East
75 =	Iraq	49	Middle East

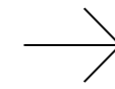
→ **03**

→ **The Key Results**



Turmoil, troubled times and populist politics: 2020 will go down as one of the most extraordinary years in modern history.

In different corners of the globe, racial tensions are running high and political divisions dominate popular debate. Countries are struggling with a worldwide pandemic and adapting their healthcare systems to cope with a huge influx of patients. Meanwhile, job security can't be relied upon and many people have lost their livelihoods. Against this backdrop, it is not appropriate to measure country strength using financial might alone. Indeed, has it ever been?



Using 22 attributes, we examined what matters when it comes to a country's reputation, how it is perceived both internally and externally, and what constitutes a country worth investing in.

Contrary to our expectations, time and again one theme emerged: **resilience**.

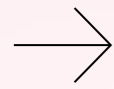
In simple terms, resilience means knowing how to cope despite of setbacks and barriers. It's a measure of how much you are willing to do (and how hard you are willing to work) to overcome obstacles and difficulties. Resilience is about strength. Resilience is about spirit.

“I think it [Japan] looks like it has a high brand power.”

Japanese respondent on how the world views their country as a brand

“They see us [America] as a leader, and the envy of most of the world.”

American respondent on how the world views their country as a brand



In the context of country branding, resilience at its most fundamental is a sign of durability.

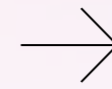
Countries that consistently invest in their brand are better placed to withstand shocks and maintain their place in the world despite more ‘front of mind’ waves of economic uncertainty, polemic news headlines, populist politics, and even pandemics.

And so, in 2020, both the US and the UK, beset respectively by a controversial presidency and ongoing negotiations over Brexit, retained their top 20 slots in the FutureBrand Country Index, only slipping by one spot each.

And there were no major surprises in the top ten with Japan holding on to no. 1 for the third time. In addition, as far as regions were concerned, both the Middle East and Africa increased their scores in most attribute areas.

Pessimism and negativity may be 2020’s watchwords but they aren’t the real story.

The real story is resilience.



The 6 FutureBrand Country Index attribute dimensions



Made In

Authentic; Quality; Unique; Desire



Tourism

Attractions, Value for Money, Desire, Resorts/Lodging, Food



Heritage & Culture

Heritage, Historical Points of Interest, Art & Culture, Natural Beauty



Value System

Political Freedom, Tolerance, Environmental Friendliness



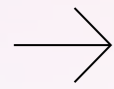
Business Potential

Good Infrastructure, Advanced Technology, Good for Business

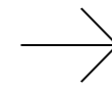


Quality of Life






Health & Education, Standard of Living; Safety & Security, Live/Study There

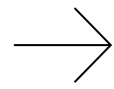


To really get to the heart of a country's branding success, we need to see which nations have kept their places at – or near – the top, and look at the biggest risers and fallers.



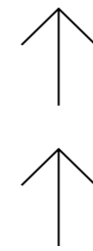
The FutureBrand Country Index top 5 2020

Country Index Ranking 2020 2020 vs 2019	Country	World Bank GDP 2020 Position
1 –	 Japan	3
2 1↑	 Switzerland	20
3 1↓	 Norway	30
4 2↑	 Germany	4
5 3↑	 Canada	10



An examination of today's rankings compared to 2019 shows that the top risers are Angola (having climbed 37 slots to reach 32), Algeria (up 26 places to 34), as well as Puerto Rico (with a rise of 25), Bangladesh (a climb of 21), and Kenya (17 places higher).

As for the six-year statistics, Ghana has soared by 34 places, landing at 36, while Bangladesh is up by 22 to 50. Kenya follows, then Slovakia and Sri Lanka.



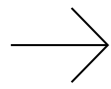
The top 5 risers in ranking 2020 vs 2019

Country	2020	2014	2020 vs 2014
Angola	32	69	37↑
Algeria	34	60	26↑
Puerto Rico	37	62	25↑
Bangladesh	50	71	21↑
Kenya	46	63	17↑

The top 5 risers in ranking 2020 vs 2014

Country	2020	2014	2020 vs 2014
Ghana	36	70	34↑
Bangladesh	50	72	22↑
Kenya	46	65	19↑
Slovakia	42	59	17↑
Sri Lanka	43	60	17↑





When comparing 2020 to 2019, of the biggest fallers Peru takes the unwanted top spot, slipping by 28 places to 65. India is hot on its heels with a fall of 26 places to the 67th ranking. Next are Argentina (a drop of 24), Romania (a loss of 20 places), and Hungary (down by 18 slots).

Meanwhile, the six-year picture reveals that Chile has slumped by 27 places to 73rd place, Argentina is down by 18, followed by Mexico and India (both dropped by 17), with Peru recording a fall of 16 slots.

“I do not know how to see it with good eyes, not even to invest, it is very unstable economically, political interests are rubbish.”

Argentinian respondent on how the world views their country as a brand.



The top 5 fallers in ranking 2020 vs 2019

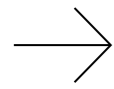
Country	2020	2019	2020 vs 2019
Peru	65	37	28 ↓
India	67	41	26 ↓
Argentina	60	36	24 ↓
Romania	62	42	20 ↓
Hungary	56	38	18 ↓

The top 5 fallers in ranking 2020 vs 2014

Country	2020	2014	2020 vs 2014
Chile	73	46	27 ↓
Argentina	60	42	18 ↓
Mexico	72	55	17 ↓
India	67	50	17 ↓
Peru	65	49	16 ↓

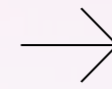


The Key Results



As you can see from the table – which is taken from the World Bank top 75 countries by GDP for that year – since 2019 we have lost Costa Rica and Sudan. Therefore, there are two new entrants: Ghana and Bulgaria.

Who's In, Who's Out

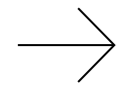


Changes 2020 vs 2019

Fell Out	New Entrants
 Costa Rica	 Ghana
 Sudan	 Bulgaria

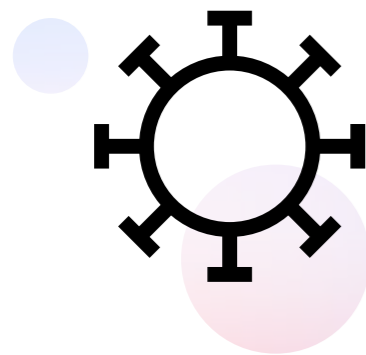
Changes 2019 vs 2014

Fell Out	New Entrants
 Ghana	 Algeria
 Zimbabwe	 Angola
 Cambodia	 Ethiopia
 Fiji	 Sudan
 Taiwan	 Hong Kong
 Bulgaria	 Kazakhstan
 Croatia	 Myanmar
 Estonia	 Philippines
 Iceland	 Luxembourg
 Malta	 Cuba
 Uruguay	 Dominican Republic
 Bahrain	 Ecuador
 Jordan	 Guatemala
 Lebanon	 Iraq
 Jamaica	 Kuwait



As our research was conducted six months into the global pandemic, we are in a unique position to assess the effect of Covid-19 on countries.

Our in-depth analysis later in the report will examine this in fine detail and reveal — among other things — that some citizens believe that actions taken by various countries have helped to deal with the crisis. But others are angry at what they perceive as a clear lack of leadership and direction, both of which, they say, has cost lives.

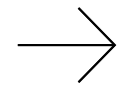


“It made social distancing earlier and more effective, the governments of the country worked together, applied mass testing and had a health system that was already prepared and that improved with the pandemic.” quote about Germany

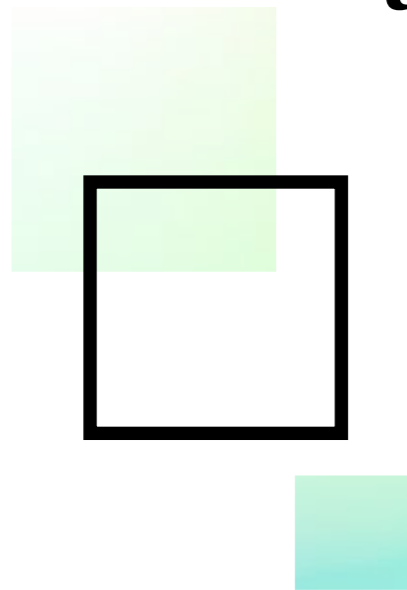


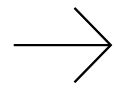
→ **04**

→ **Crucial Stories
for Critical Times**



Resilience: As we have already revealed, nations which have invested in their country's brand are weathering our turbulent times. And, in some cases, are stronger in the eyes of the world than in 2019.

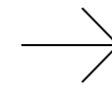




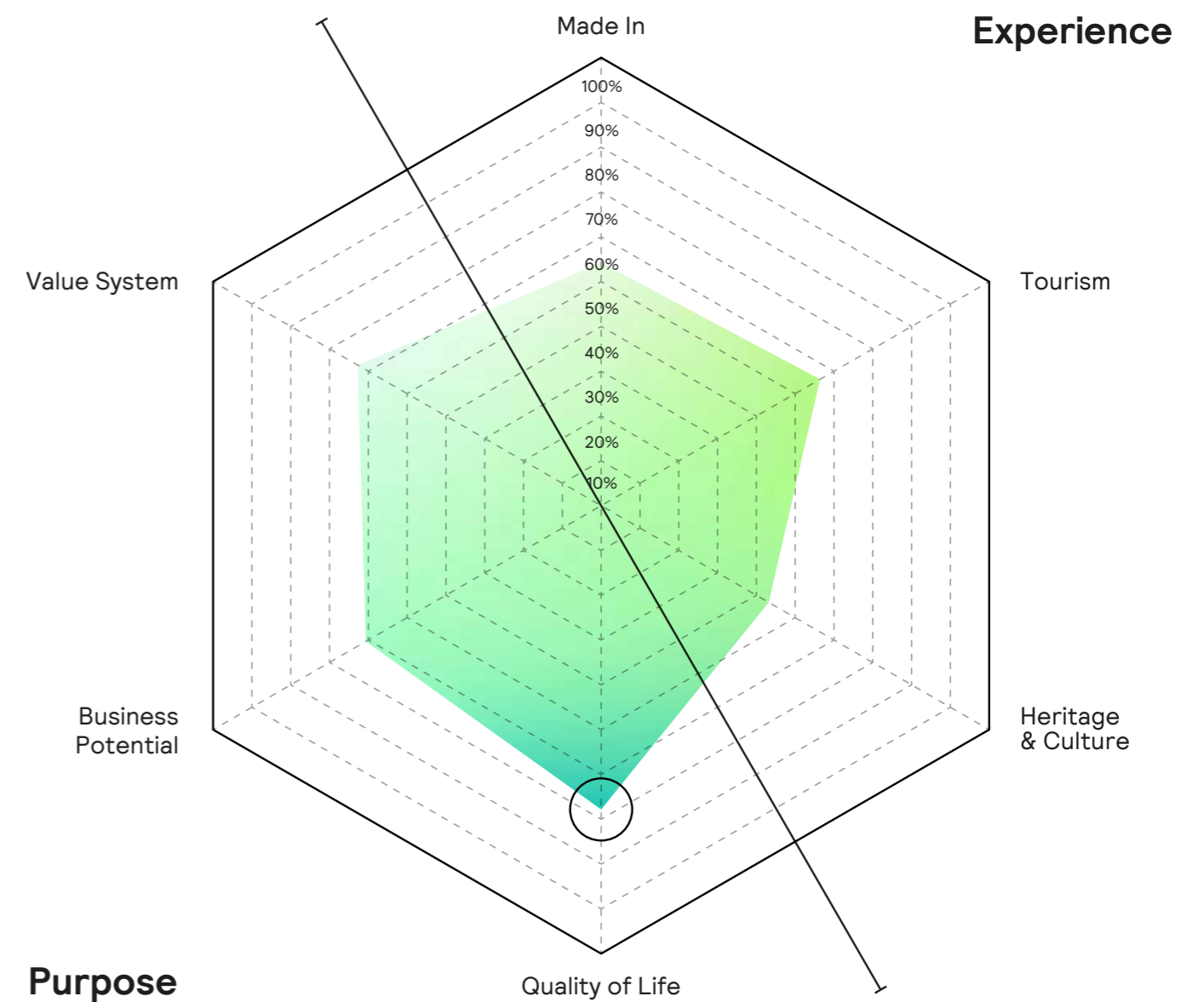
Economic Dominance vs Country Appeal:

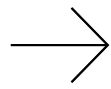
Our research clearly demonstrates that an individual's confidence in a country does not rest solely on GDP. Rather, perception ranges across a variety of very different factors including:

- **Value System** – Does it have a tolerant society with freedom?
- **Business Potential** – Is there a good infrastructure and does it have advanced technology?
- **Quality of Life** – Is there a good standard of living and would I like to live there?
- **Heritage and Culture** – Are there historical points of interest and a thriving cultural scene?
- **Tourism** – Is it an attractive holiday destination?
- **Made In** – Does it have high quality products, and would I like to buy products made in that country?
- **Stability and Security** – How safe would I feel there, and does it have a good reputation for a stable government and society?
- **Covid-19** – Is it handling the pandemic adequately and effectively?



All in all, this means that countries with smaller GDPs can challenge traditional financially dominant nations. It's less about monetary value and more about how countries react, strike a balance, and thrive in the 21st century.





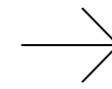
The Life Pursuit

Gone are the days of Wall Street's Gordon Gekko and his "greed is good" mantra. Today, it's all about living a richer life rather than living richer. We identified this trend in last year's Index and, perhaps not surprisingly given the state of the world, 'quality of life' is 2020's top driver of confidence in a country brand.

The term 'quality of life' has taken on renewed significance and greater importance. Individuals are no longer waiting until retirement to enjoy the good life, they want a higher standard of living now.

This includes:

- **Decent and Accessible Healthcare and Education Systems**
- **A Safe Society**
- **An Affordable Cost of Living**
- **Places of Cultural and Historical Value to Visit**
- **Natural Beauty**
- **A Work/Life Balance**
- **Freedom of Expression**
- **Reliable Infrastructure and Technology**

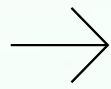


Environmental Friendliness

When we last published the Country Brand Index in 2019, the world had witnessed some of the most devastating natural disasters in living memory. Sadly, the past 12 months have seen even more catastrophes. From the Australian bushfires which wiped out millions of hectares and cost many lives, to tropical cyclones, cataclysmic flooding, locust swarms and, lest we forget, Covid-19. Our environment is beset on all sides.

It's therefore no surprise that a country's environmental friendliness continues to drive perceptions. We expect this to increase in importance in future years. The countries that get their climate change policies right, and are seen to be taking action, will benefit in terms of the long-term strength of their brand and reputation.





The Way We Used to Live

Covid-19 has irrevocably changed the way we live and work. Major companies have said that home-working will continue in some form once the world is back to normal, and being confined to their home during lockdown has transformed the way some people think about where they want to live.

While the news headlines have been awash with stories of government incompetence and mishandling of Covid-19, there are, nevertheless, various countries whose citizens believe they are handling the crises well. According to our respondents, each of these countries used various coping strategies:

Japan — Placed the country under infection control quickly and efficiently, showed strong and trustworthy leadership, and the people took a disciplined approach to advice.

Canada — A sense of everyone coming together to take on Covid-19. The Government, the provinces and the people all working as one in a national collective effort.

Germany — The Government acted very fast, focused on preventative methods, communicated constantly and provided actionable advice. It showed a level-headed approach, calm and no panic.

UAE — Its leaders placed strict and unbreakable rules and regulations to deal with Covid-19 which were heavily enforced. Also proactively provided masks and sanitiser in many public places.

Thailand — The Thais claim the people themselves were responsible for taking on and defeating Covid-19, a sense of real collaboration and national unity.

China — Solid leadership and decision-making, effective control, strong quarantine measures, timely response plan.

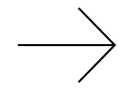
How my country has dealt with Covid-19

From the evidence gathered it would appear that citizens feel there are a number of actions taken by various countries which have helped deal with the crisis:

- **Acting Swiftly and Rapidly**
- **Preventative Measures Put in Place**
- **Clear And Actionable Guidance**
- **Consistent Guidelines**
- **Strict Rules And Regulations**
- **Borders Shut Down**
- **Equipment Provided**
- **National Unity/Togetherness**
- **Everyone's Responsibility**
- **Financial Support Given**
- **Calm and Level Headed Approach**

→ **05**

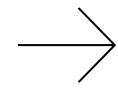
→ **New for 2020**



At the beginning of the year, no one could have predicted that, as we near the end of 2020, the world would be completely transformed, perhaps forever. From the wildfires which devastated large swathes of land to a global pandemic that shows no sign of abating, these are extraordinary times.

But our data, collected during social distancing, reveals the key perceptions when it comes to Covid-19, how country brands are perceived by the rest of the world, and where people would most like to live.





As one of our respondents so aptly noted, “no country was prepared for this”. Nevertheless, there is a lot of goodwill towards various countries on how they have handled the pandemic.

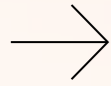
Our respondents have shown admiration for New Zealand’s Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and her government during these turbulent days, and noted other positive things about China and Germany.



“They have hardly any cases and when they got a second wave they had an action plan ready to go and immediately implemented it. And Jacinda speaks to the people as an equal without condescension.”

quote about New Zealand



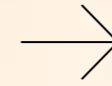


But perhaps most telling is that 'don't know' ranked at number five when people were asked which country had been the most successful at dealing with Covid-19. These are uncharted waters with new advice and new research being revealed on a regular basis.

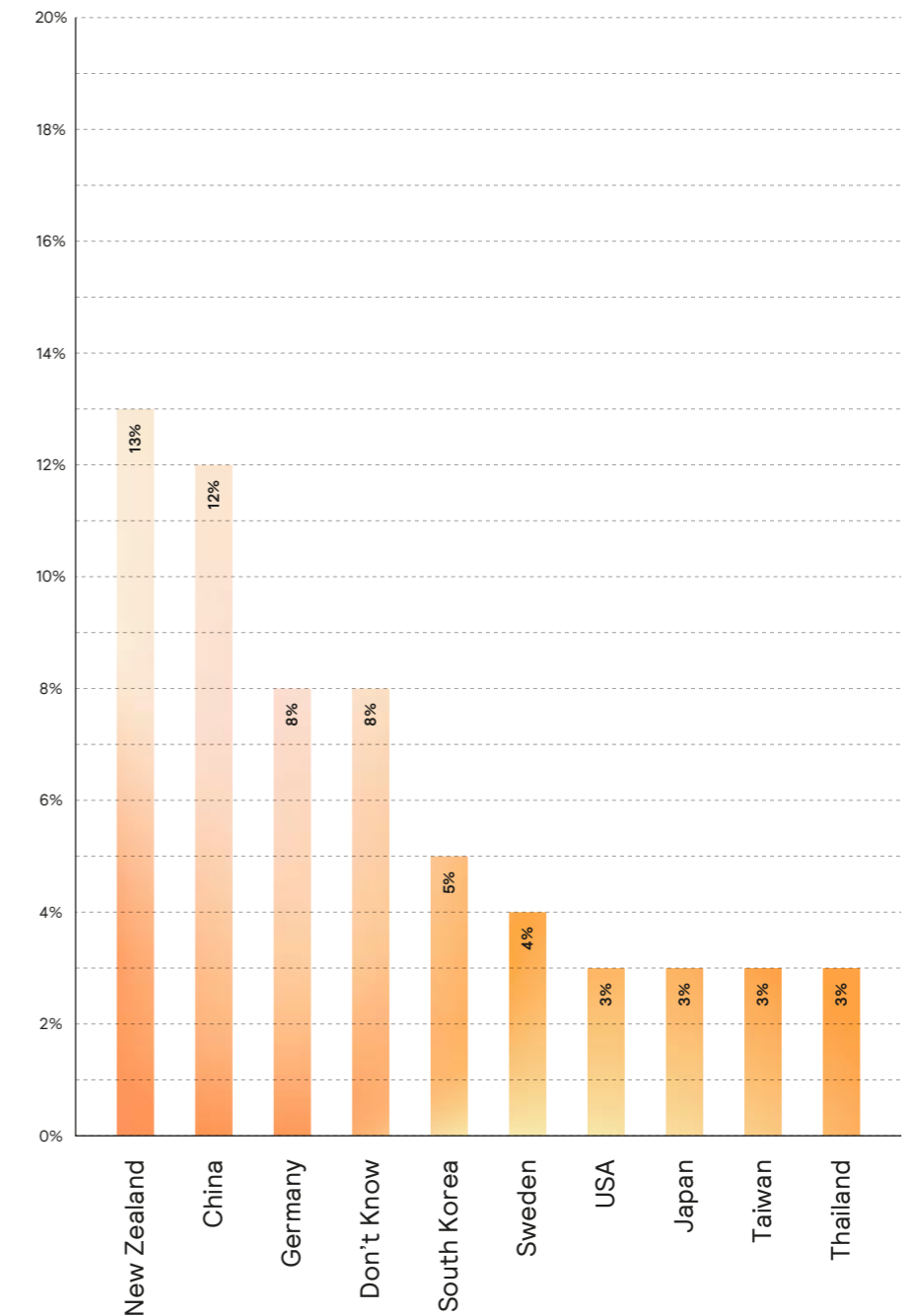
There are also rumblings of unease. With second waves and fresh lockdowns, confusion is a common emotion and some respondents reported a perceived lack of direction from their leaders. And, of course, many are anxious about how it will impact the economy both in the short and the long term.

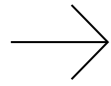
“I don't think any country has handled this problem in the best way. They did have a lot of good intentions to take care of us, but unfortunately no country was prepared for all this that continues to happen with Covid-19.”

“It is still an ongoing subject without anyone offering any permanent solution.”



Our respondents felt these countries handled Covid-19 the best





How has the country our respondents live in handled the pandemic? Unsurprisingly, residents have mixed feelings about how their own country has tackled Covid-19.

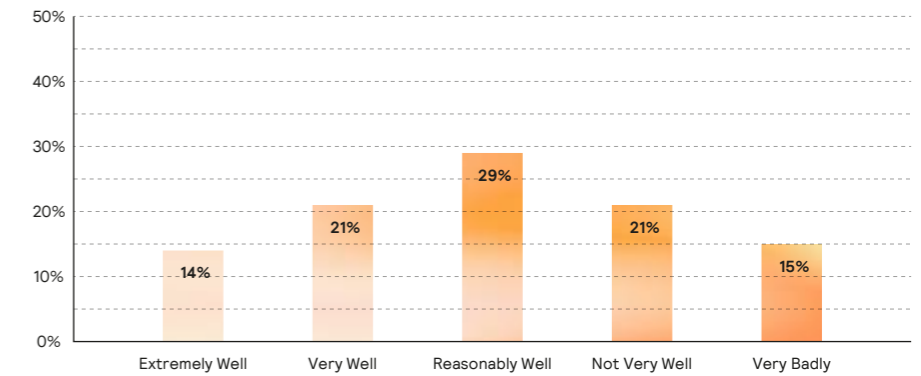
Taking the US as an example, some believe that America is leading the fight, utilising advanced technology and conducting a lot of testing. Others are angry at the slow speed of response from their leaders and criticise a lack of clear guidance.

“South Korea’s response to Covid-19 stands out because it flattened the epidemic curve quickly without closing businesses, issuing stay-at-home orders, or implementing many of the stricter measures adopted by other high-income countries.”

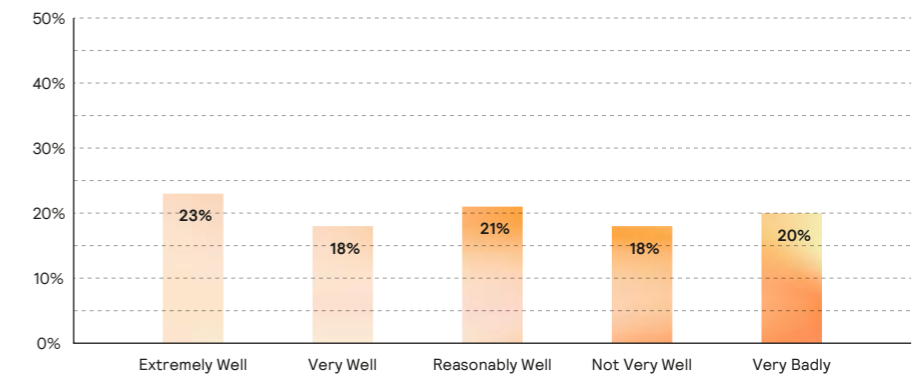
“After the initial outbreak they [China] have managed to control the situation.”



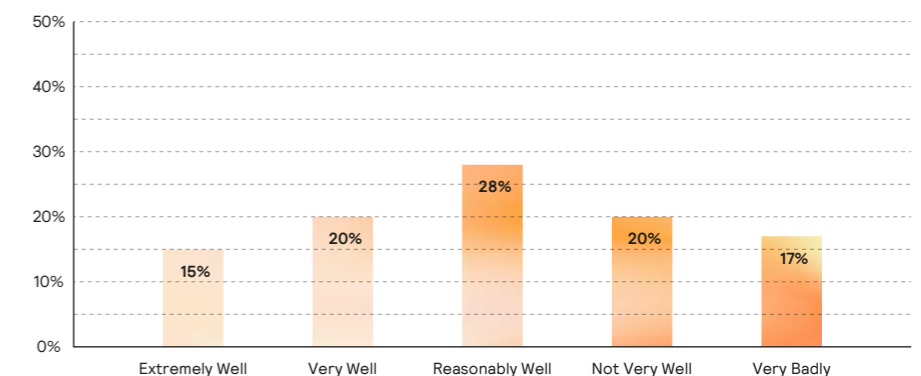
US – Countries that have handled Covid-19 the best

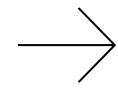


Japan – Countries that have handled Covid-19 the best



UK – Countries that have handled Covid-19 the best



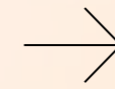


**My country as a brand:
“Confident”, “influential”,
“economically progressive”,
“politically stable”, and
“respected” are just some
of the words and phrases
used by respondents when
asked what a country
needs to be seen as to
be viewed successfully
as a country brand.**

In terms of perceptions of a lack of success, we heard various descriptions including “untrustworthy”, “unreliable”, “outdated”, “unsafe”, and “politically unstable”.

“Right now, if America were a brand, I think countries would boycott us due to unrest and poor leadership.”

America as perceived by an American



For the most part, people were either very positive or very negative – there was very little in-between.

- The following countries feel that the rest of the world perceives them very positively as a country brand: Japan, China, Australia, Canada, Germany, India, Thailand, and UAE.
- The next set of countries feel that the rest of the world has mixed feelings about them as a country brand: US, UK, Brazil, France, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, and Turkey.
- But Argentina feels that the rest of the world is negative about them as a country brand.

“Once good quality but slipping over the last few years.”

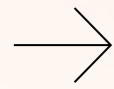
UK as perceived by a British citizen

“Other countries will feel that this brand is developing very rapidly and its influence is greatly enhanced.”

China as perceived by a Chinese citizen

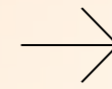
“People see Brazil as a cheerful, festive and very receptive country.”

Brazil as perceived by a Brazilian



In the days of Covid-19, and in a world where you might expect people to be thinking that a change is as good as a rest, we found that a significant proportion of citizens the world over are content with their current living arrangements. Yes, there are those who are contemplating a move to the countryside but they are very much in the minority.

Furthermore, in the majority of cases, the ambition to relocate to another country is far outweighed by a desire to stay put.

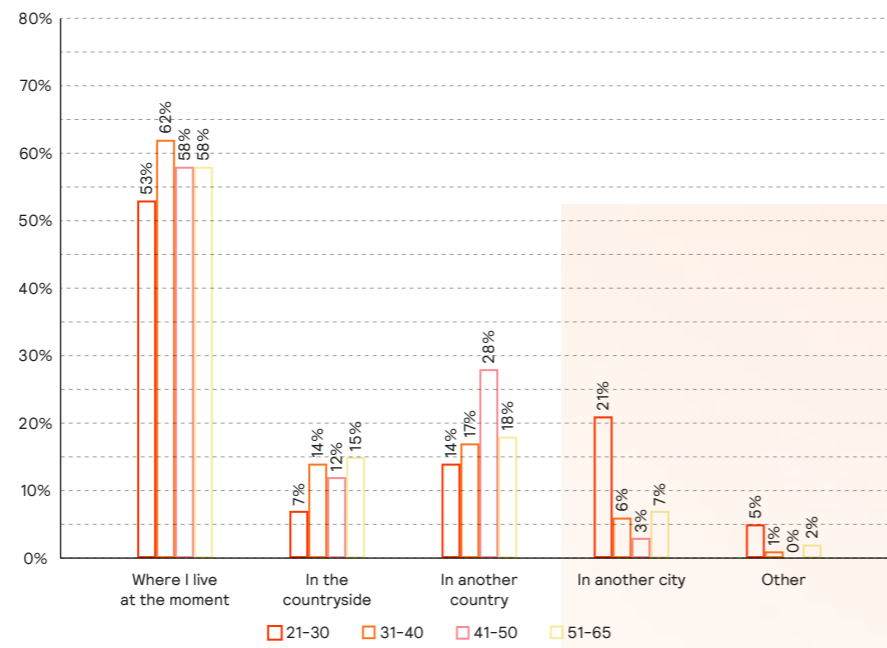


Where would you most like to live?

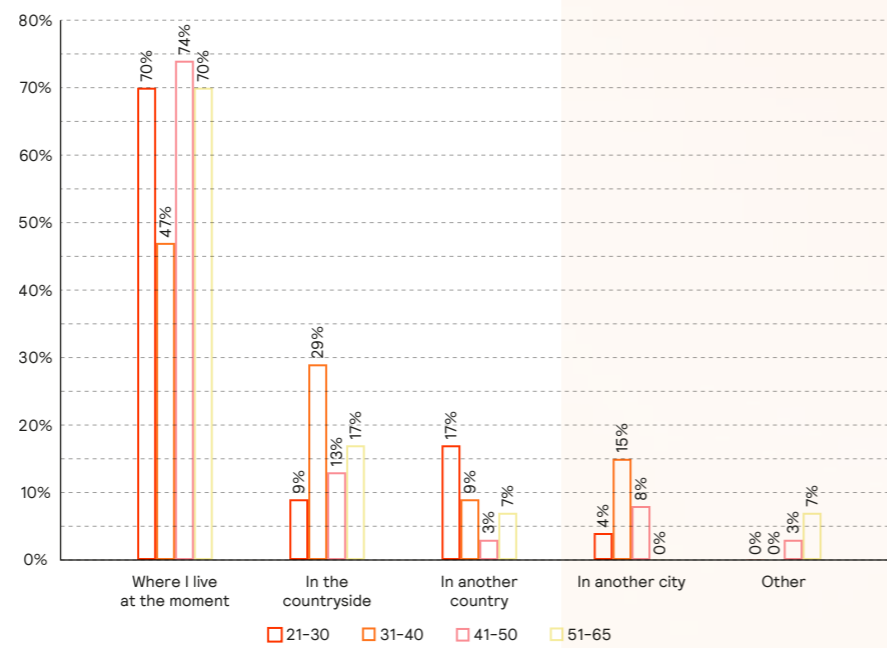
	Where I live at the moment	In the countryside	In another country	In another city	Other
Australia	69%	10%	15%	5%	1%
Japan	52%	21%	15%	12%	0%
Thailand	74%	12%	11%	2%	1%
China	81%	5%	7%	7%	0%
India	72%	18%	4%	6%	0%
UAE	65%	13%	19%	3%	0%
South Africa	42%	13%	39%	6%	0%
Turkey	44%	11%	39%	5%	0%
Russia	44%	11%	41%	4%	1%
France	47%	28%	12%	12%	1%
Germany	56%	20%	17%	3%	4%
UK	50%	28%	15%	7%	0%
Mexico	43%	7%	38%	12%	1%
Argentina	26%	10%	51%	12%	2%
Brazil	32%	7%	55%	6%	1%
Canada	65%	18%	8%	7%	2%
USA	58%	13%	19%	9%	2%



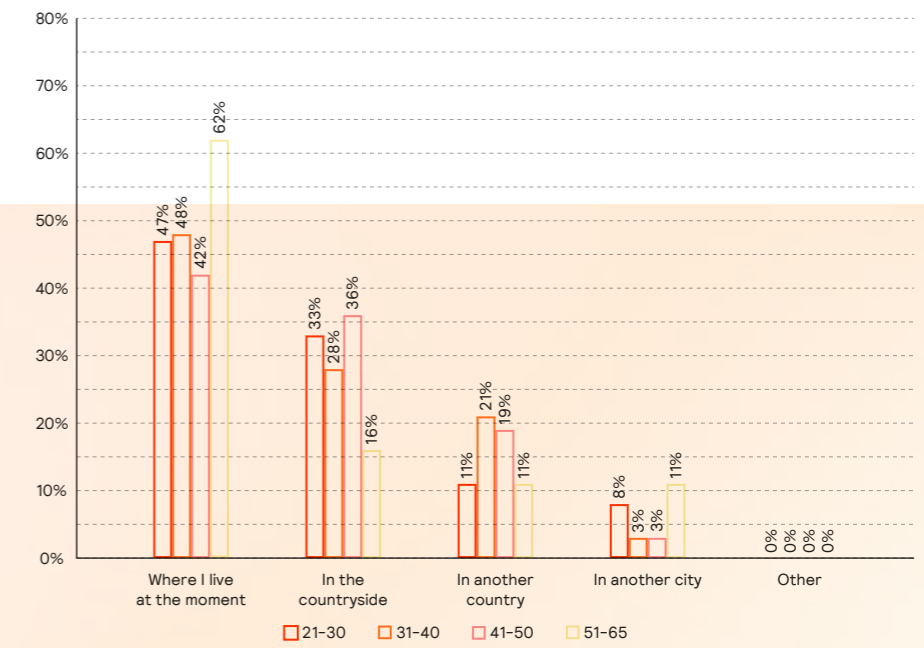
US – Where would you most like to live?



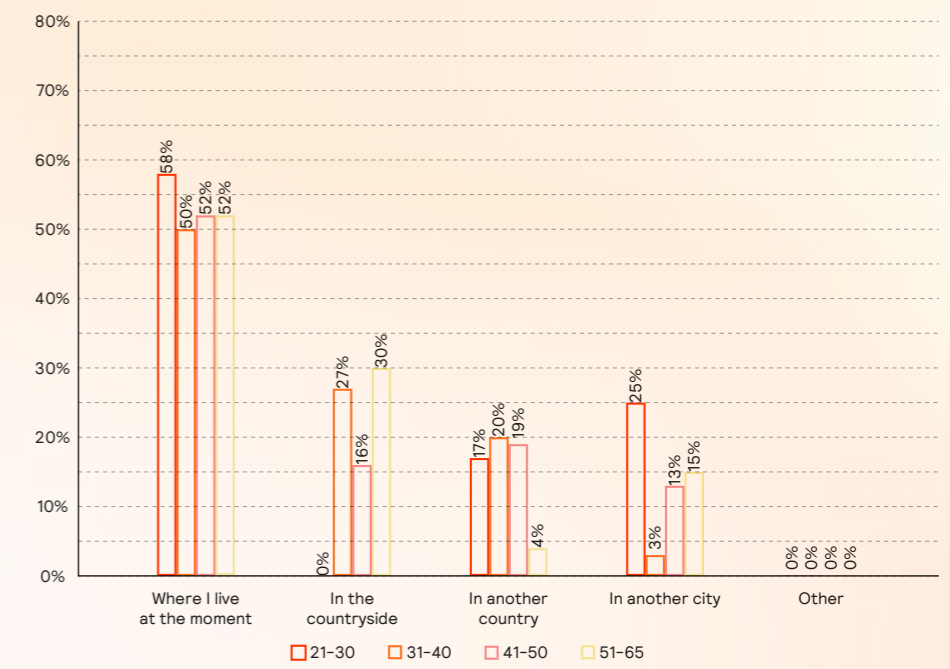
Canada – Where would you most like to live?



UK – Where would you most like to live?

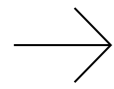


Japan – Where would you most like to live?



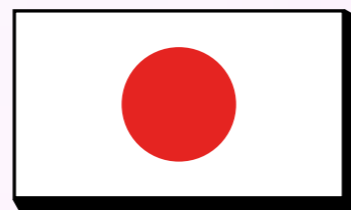
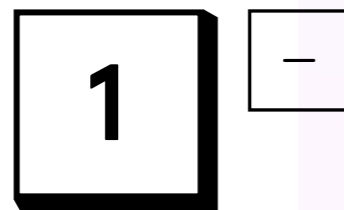
→ 06

→ **Country by Country**



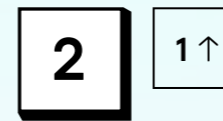
“I think it [Japan] looks like it has a high brand power.”

Respondent on Japan



Japan (Asia Pacific)

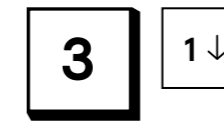
More →



Switzerland (Europe)



More →



Norway (Europe)



More →



Germany (Europe)



More →



Canada (N. America)



More →



Denmark (Europe)



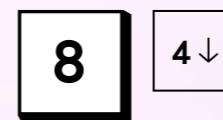
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Finland (Europe)



More →



Sweden (Europe)



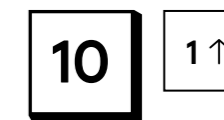
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UAE (Middle East)



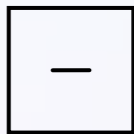
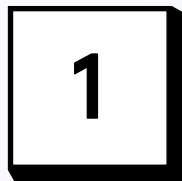
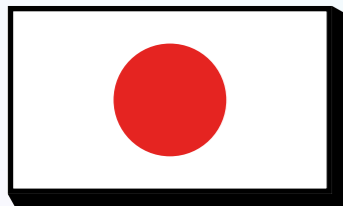
More →



New Zealand (Asia Pacific)



More →



While perceptions of all the top ten countries in our Index contracted somewhat as the pandemic took hold, Japan held onto the number one spot for the third time.

It also came in eighth for ‘country that has best handled Covid-19’. Nearly a quarter of citizens felt that Japan had handled the virus extremely well but it must be noted that there is now a perceived lack of leadership and many are concerned about how all this will affect the economy.

However, when we asked the Japanese how they felt the world viewed it as a brand, they were overwhelmingly positive. Phrases used included “culturally fascinating”, “state of the art”, “high tech” and “successful”. Only a small amount had negative things to say (“outdated”, “conservative”, “inflexible”). This is borne out by the fact that – according to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation – over the past decade Japan was the fastest growing major destination.



It may have struggled after the Fukushima nuclear disaster in 2011 but, since 2013, annual arrivals have soared, outstripping its rivals.

“A very respectful and welcoming culture. Forward-thinking, technologically advanced and unique. Understands its place in the world. Understands what its people need, and in turn the people are willing to abide by rules for a harmonious environment.”

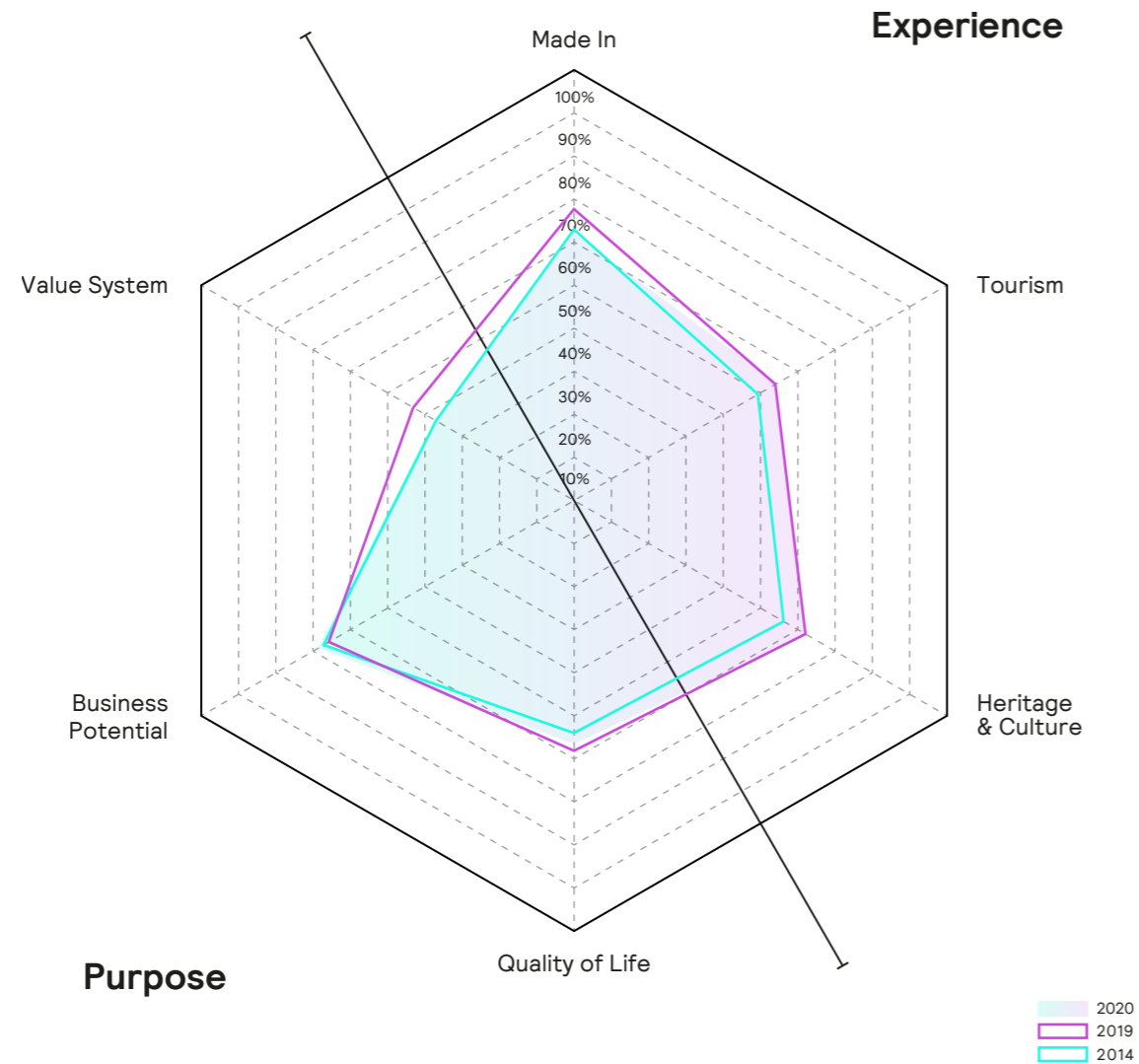
Far East, Female

Japan has been consistent and steady over the years and despite being weak on a value system, its strongest attribute is clearly advanced technology. The Japanese incorporate technology into their everyday lives. Whether it’s automatic doors that shift according to your body shape or vending machines containing shoes and clothes, the Japanese believe that innovation will resolve future issues, and they have taken this to heart.

And consider the globally known – and respected – Japanese brands, from Toyota, Honda and Nissan, to Sony. The phrase ‘Made in Japan’ shrugged off its negative connotations years ago.



How does Japan perform by dimension?



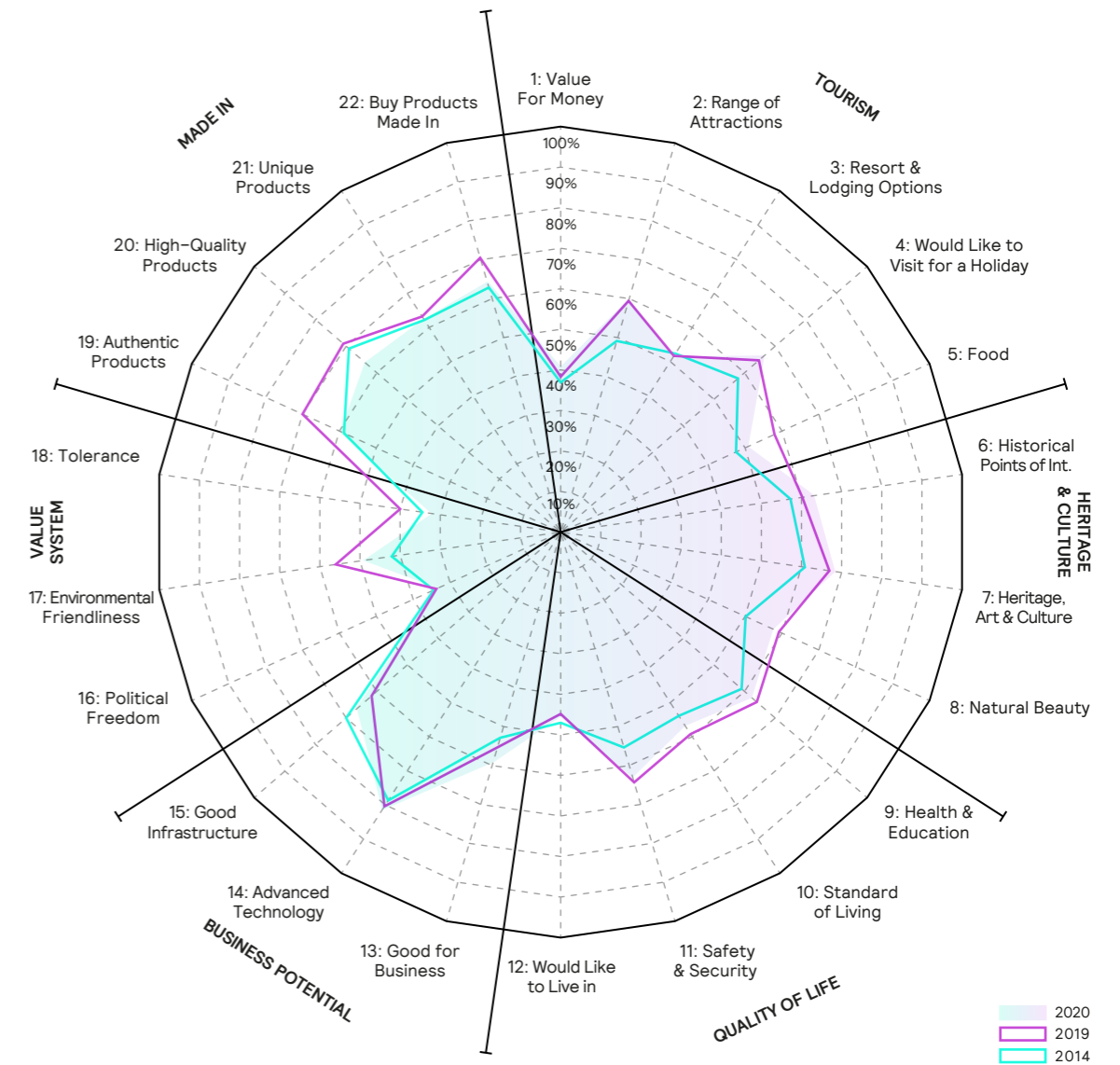
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with Japan?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Business Potential

- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Value System

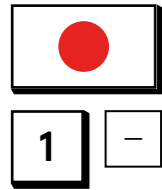
- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

Quality of Life

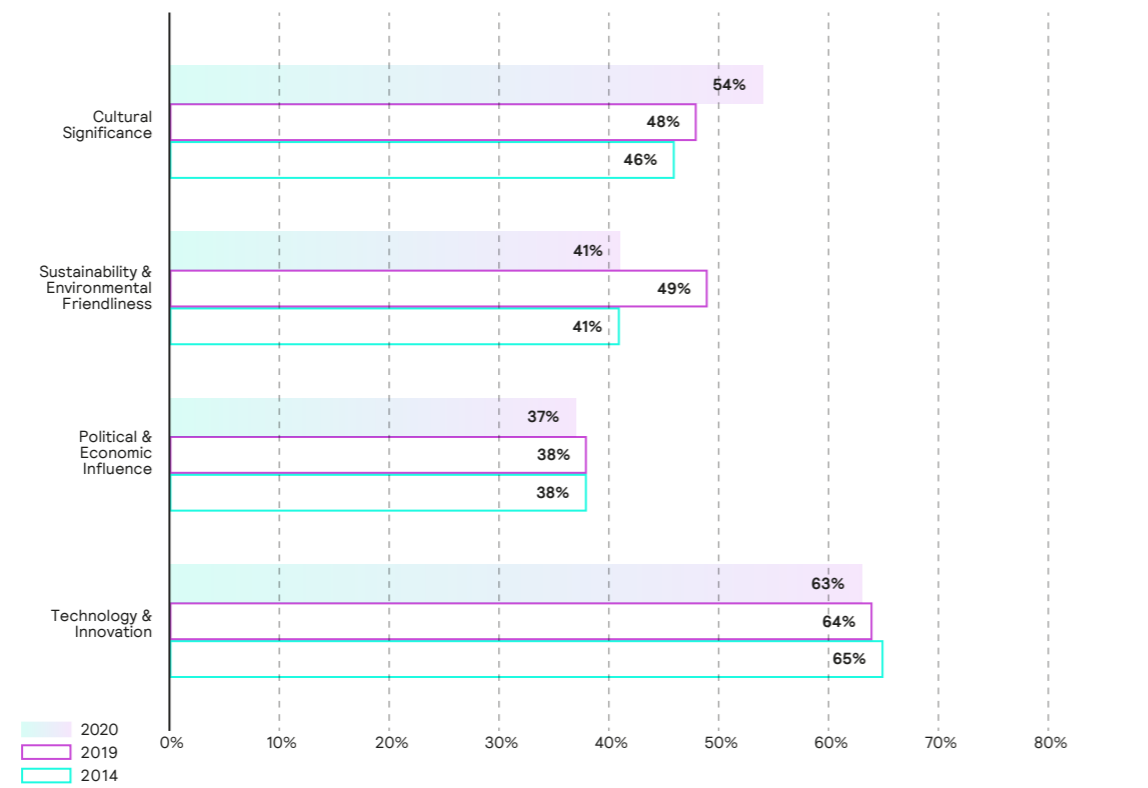
- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Made In

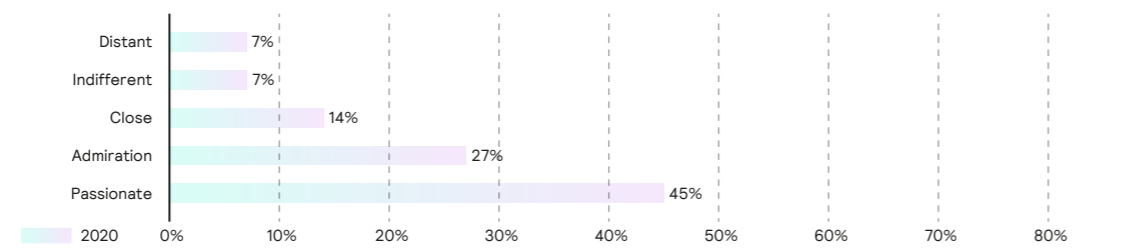
- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In



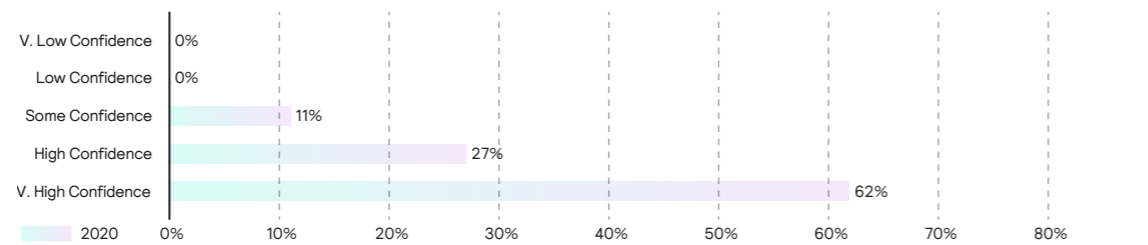
Japan current momentum



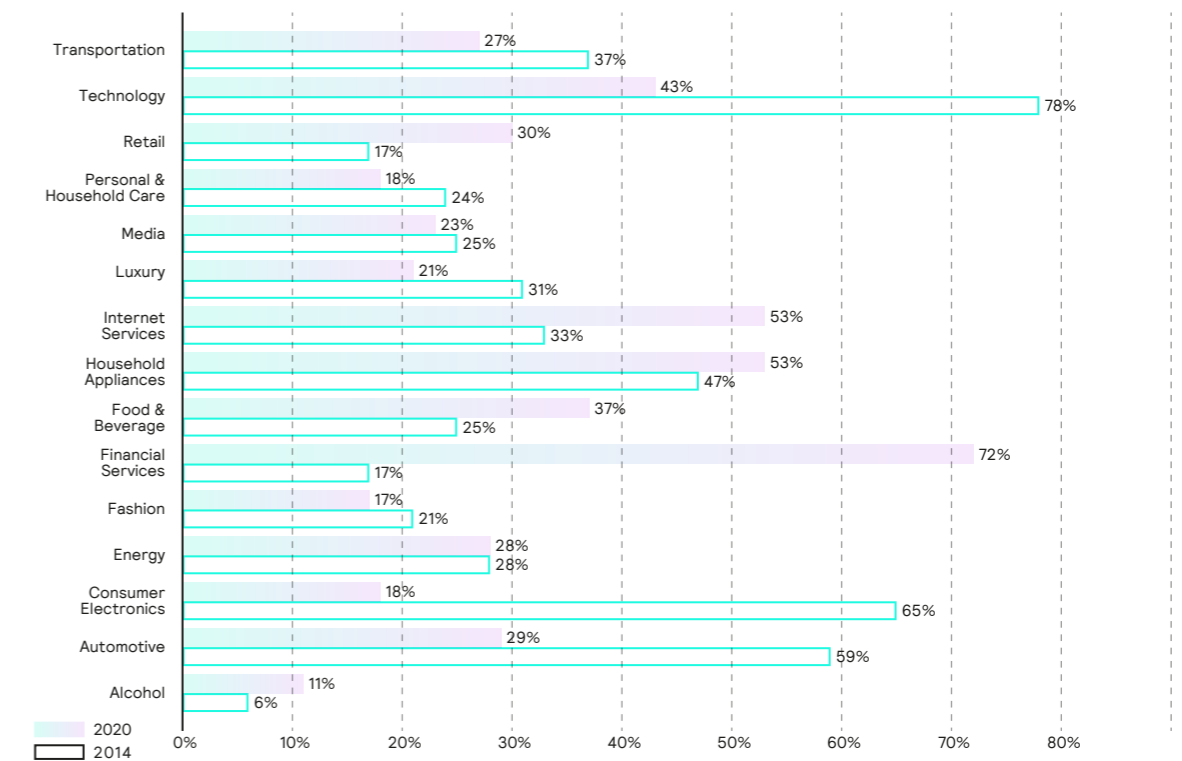
Emotional connection



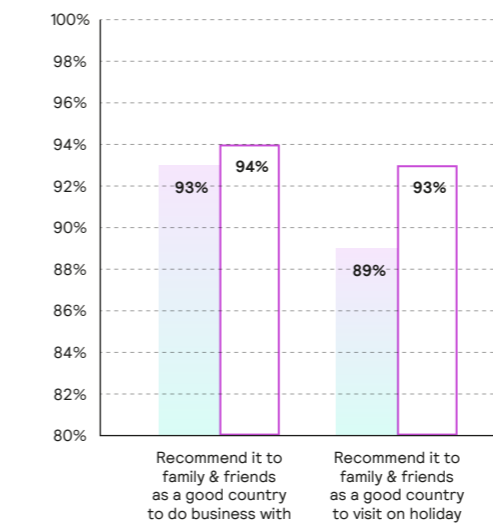
Confidence in stability & reliability



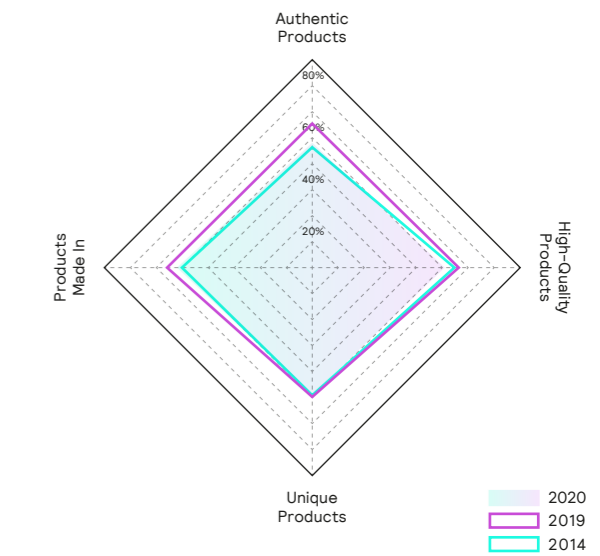
What is Japan most expert at?

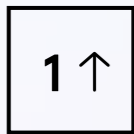
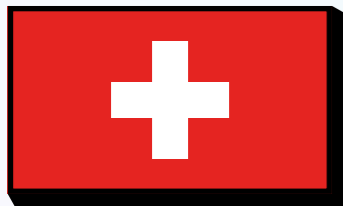
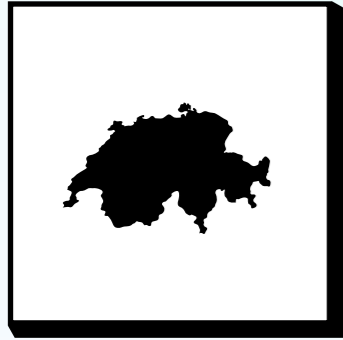


Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





Up one place to take the number two slot, the land known for its cheese, chocolate and stunning scenery has once again punched above its weight. Switzerland continues to impress across a number of key markers, despite the fact that all of its attributes have decreased slightly over time.

'Quality of Life' remains its strongest set, with confidence in its stability and reliability very high.

Meanwhile, its 'Swiss Made' moniker is still very much a mark of quality. Swiss luxury goods brands (dominated by watchmakers) attract all ages and are in high demand, increasingly among millennials exercising their global spending power. After all, a Rolex never goes out of fashion. And don't forget Richemont whose stable of companies includes Cartier, Jaeger-LeCoultre, and Van Cleef & Arpels.



Much like a Swiss Army Knife has all manner of uses and applications, Switzerland possesses a variety of attractions, not just its luxury goods. Respondents rated it highly for its financial services and automotive industries, and 50% said they would consider visiting in the next five years. It seems that those ski chalets and white slopes never lose their lustre.

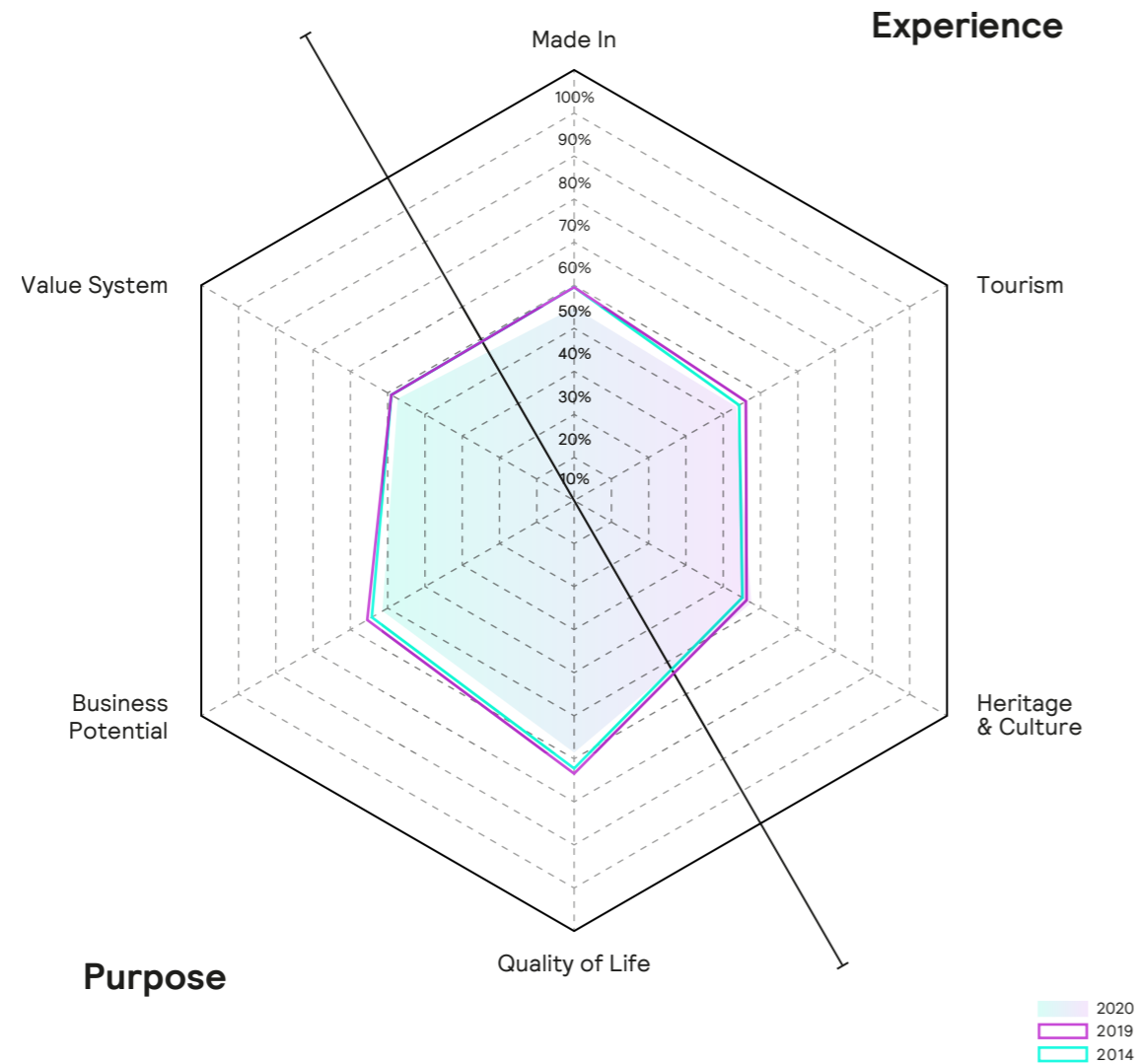
“Civilised, democratically safe, politically neutral, clean, progressive, beautiful hotels, outstanding nature with mountains and lakes, good food, quickly accessible, no health risks.” Europe, Male

“Absolute stability in almost all areas of the country's life for many decades. The economy is not prone to crises. A stable political system thanks to a powerful financial system, the country has the highest international prestige.” Asia Pacific, Female



2 1↑

How does Switzerland perform by dimension?



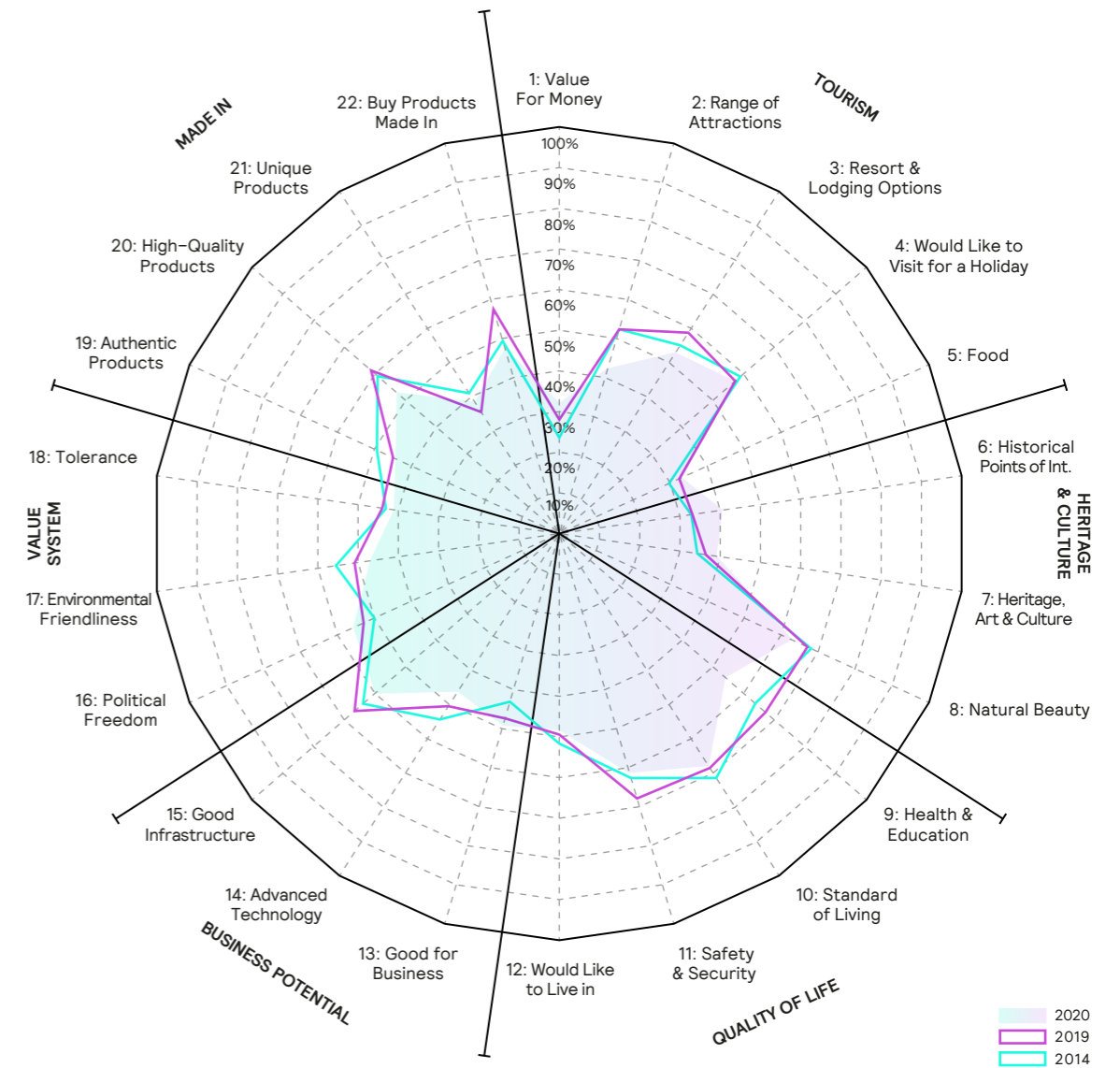
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with Switzerland?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

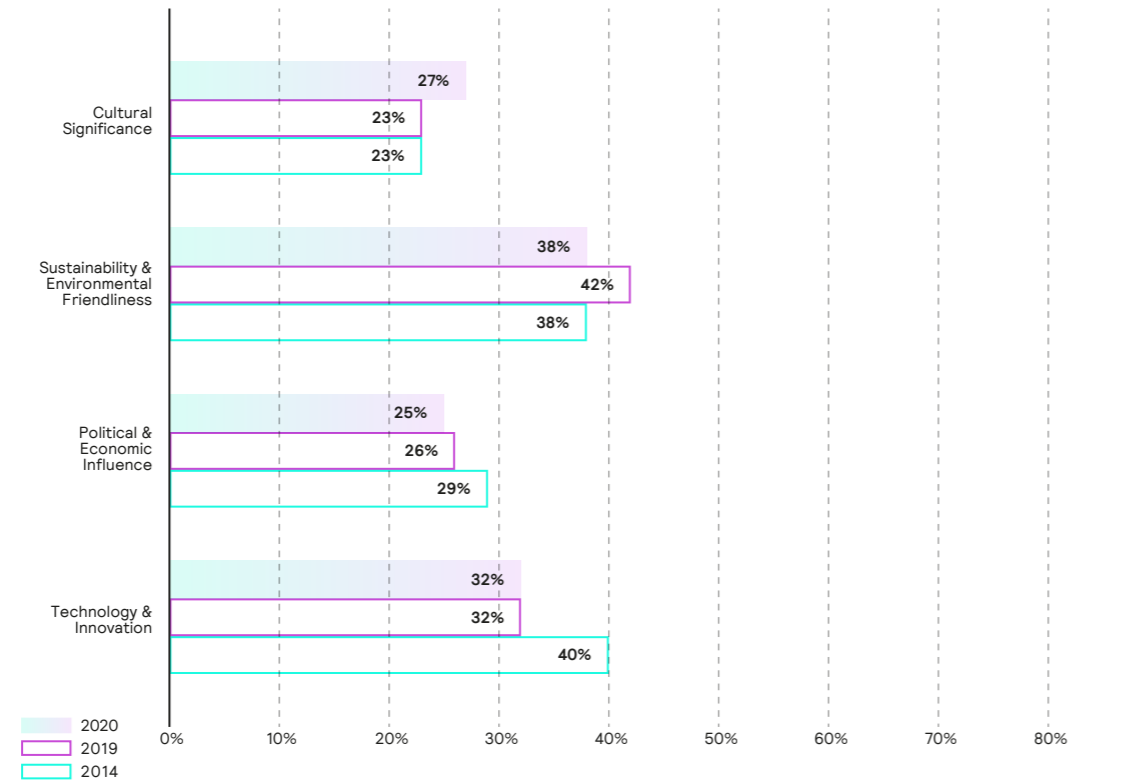
Made In

- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In

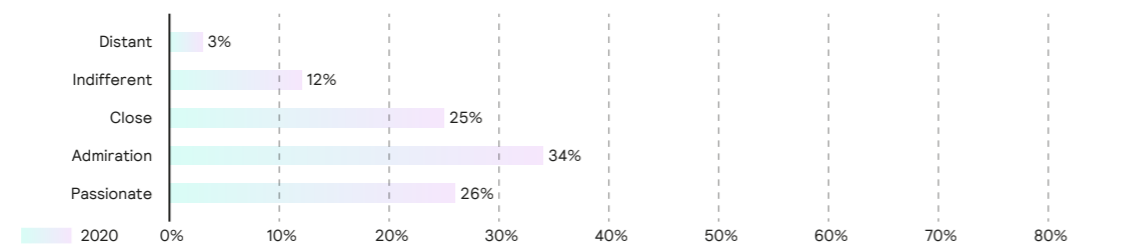


2 1↑

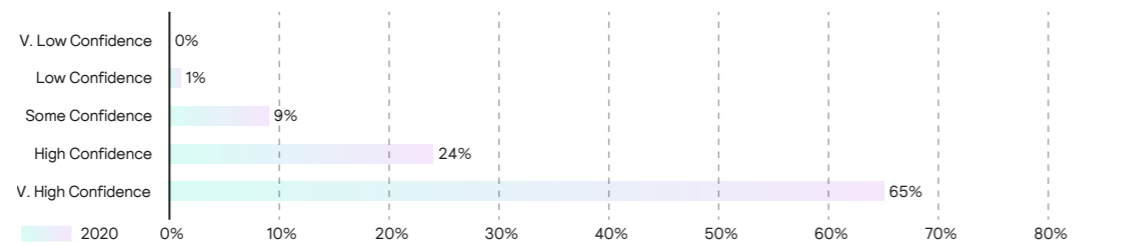
Switzerland current momentum



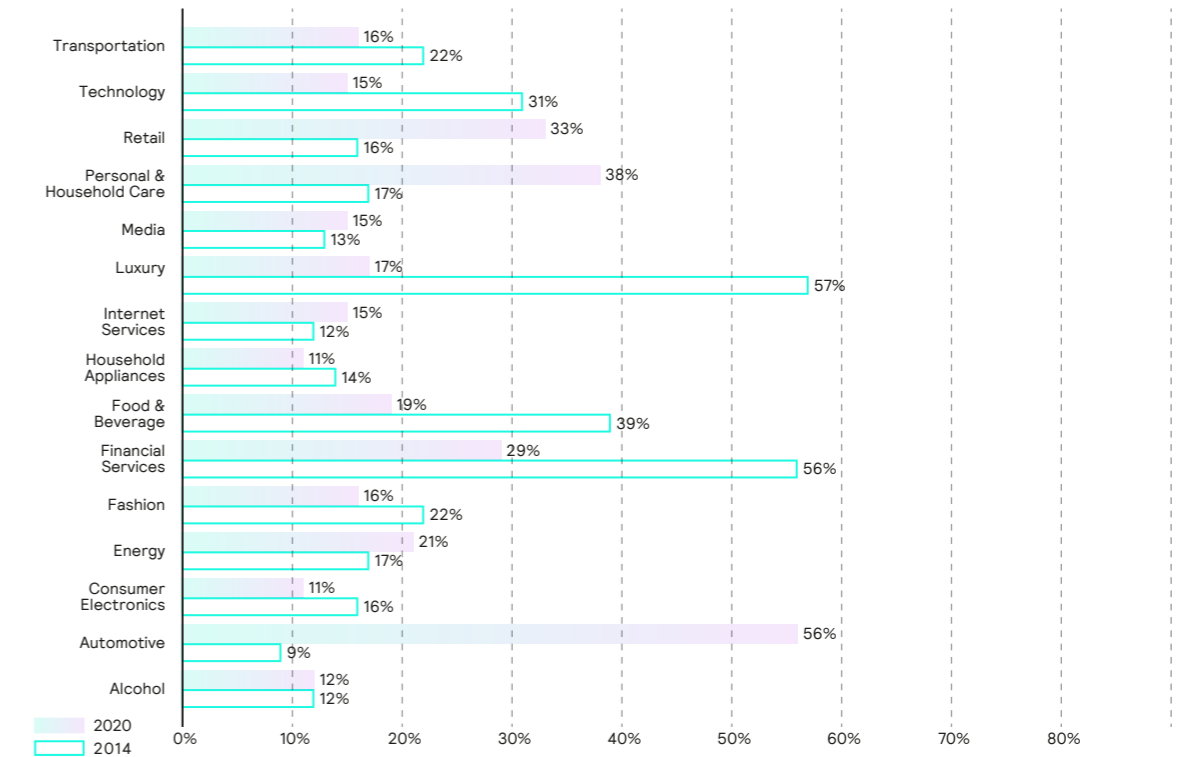
Emotional connection



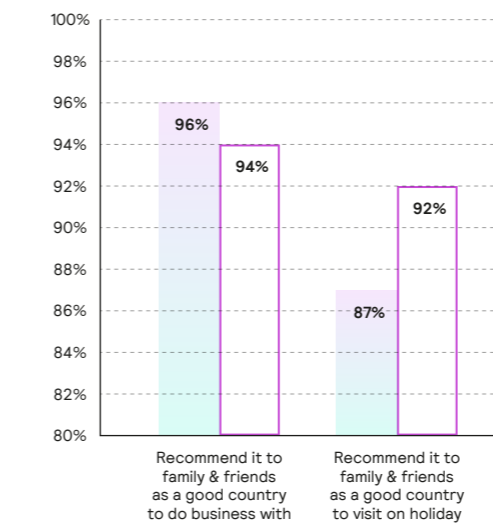
Confidence in stability & reliability



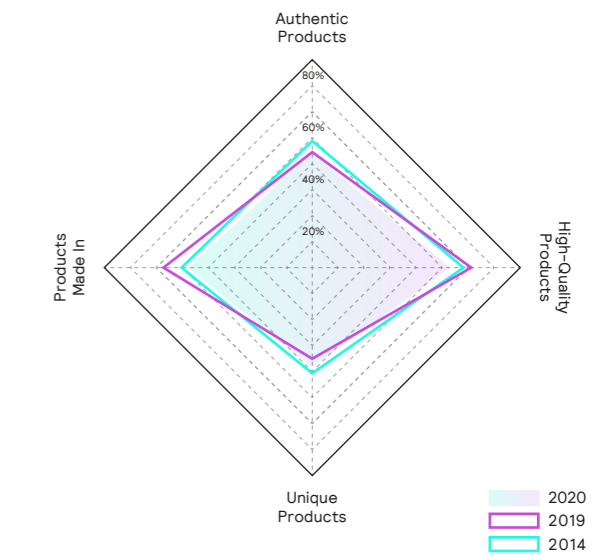
What is Switzerland most expert at?

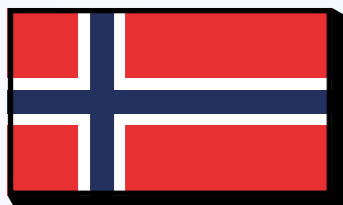


Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





3

1 ↓

Nudged out of second place by Switzerland, Norway has slipped one ranking down to number three. However, like Switzerland, this Scandinavian gem famed for its fjords continues to confound its global GDP rating (it is currently 30th, according to the World Bank) and maintain its brand strength.

How does a nation of fewer than 5.5 million do this? Is it the appeal of its majestic beauty, admiration for its economic opportunity and equality, or respect for its successful industries, among them environmentally sustainable commercial salmon fishing and petroleum exports? Most likely, it's all of the above.

An examination of its data shows that (again, like Switzerland) 'Quality of Life' is its top performing measure. While, according to our survey, people don't want to live there, they definitely want to visit (two thirds would consider visiting in



the next five years). An amazing 95% would recommend a visit to their family and friends. That's word of mouth worth investing in.

Solidity is a common theme here (not a million miles away from 'resilience') and it ticks all the most-wanted boxes: politically stable, economically progressive, socially advanced, educated people, full of natural beauty and scenery. Then there are the Northern Lights: just like Norway, you can't take them for granted but you can experience the magic.

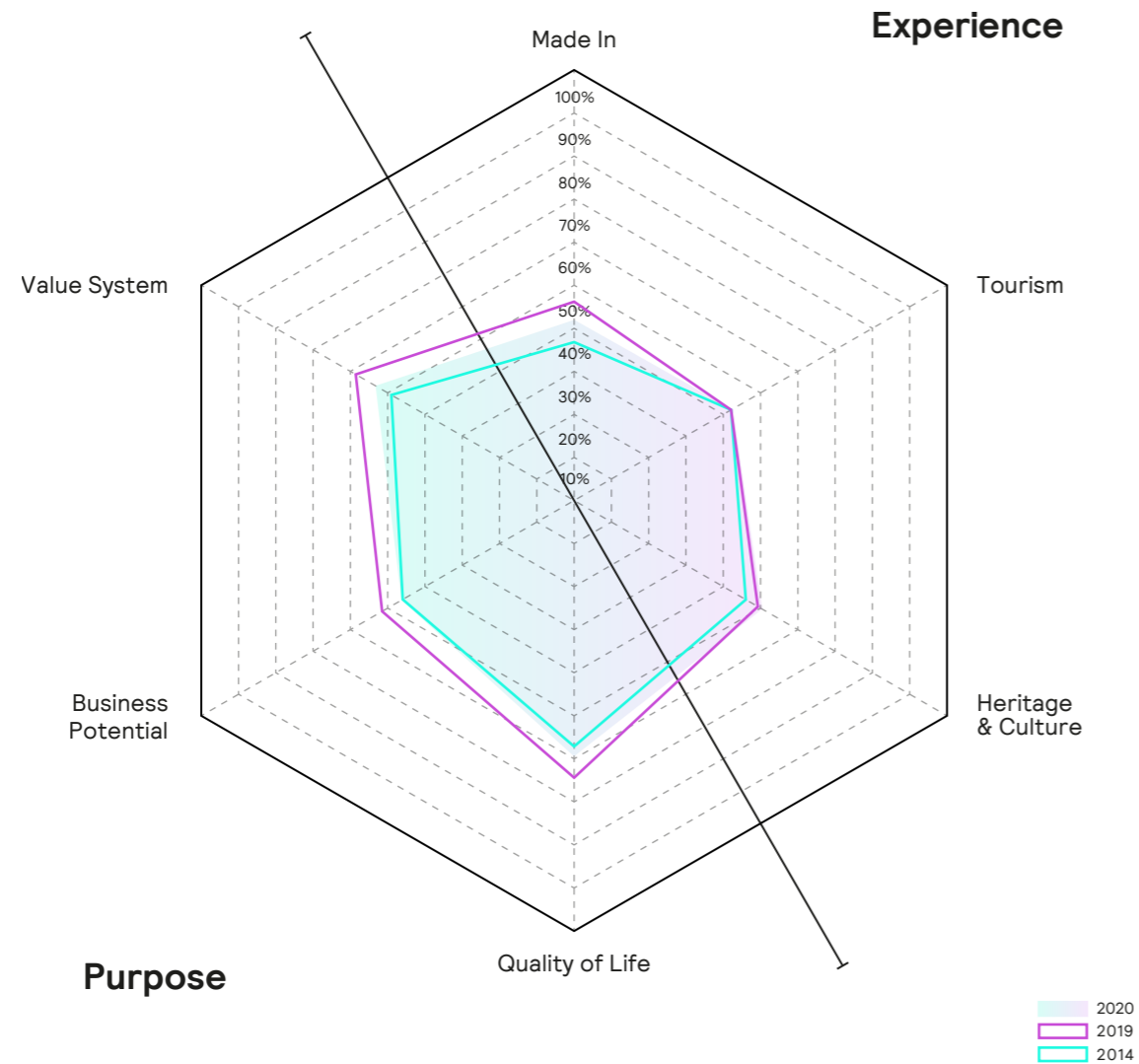
“Norway, in addition to being a beautiful and safe country, is the country with the highest HDI in the world with an excellent life expectancy. It has beautiful tourist spots and is anyone's travel dream.” LATAM, Female

“The beautiful scenery and historic locations to visit. The people are very forward thinking and there is a good balance in government. Although expensive you still get good value for money spent.” US, Female



3 1↓

How does Norway perform by dimension?



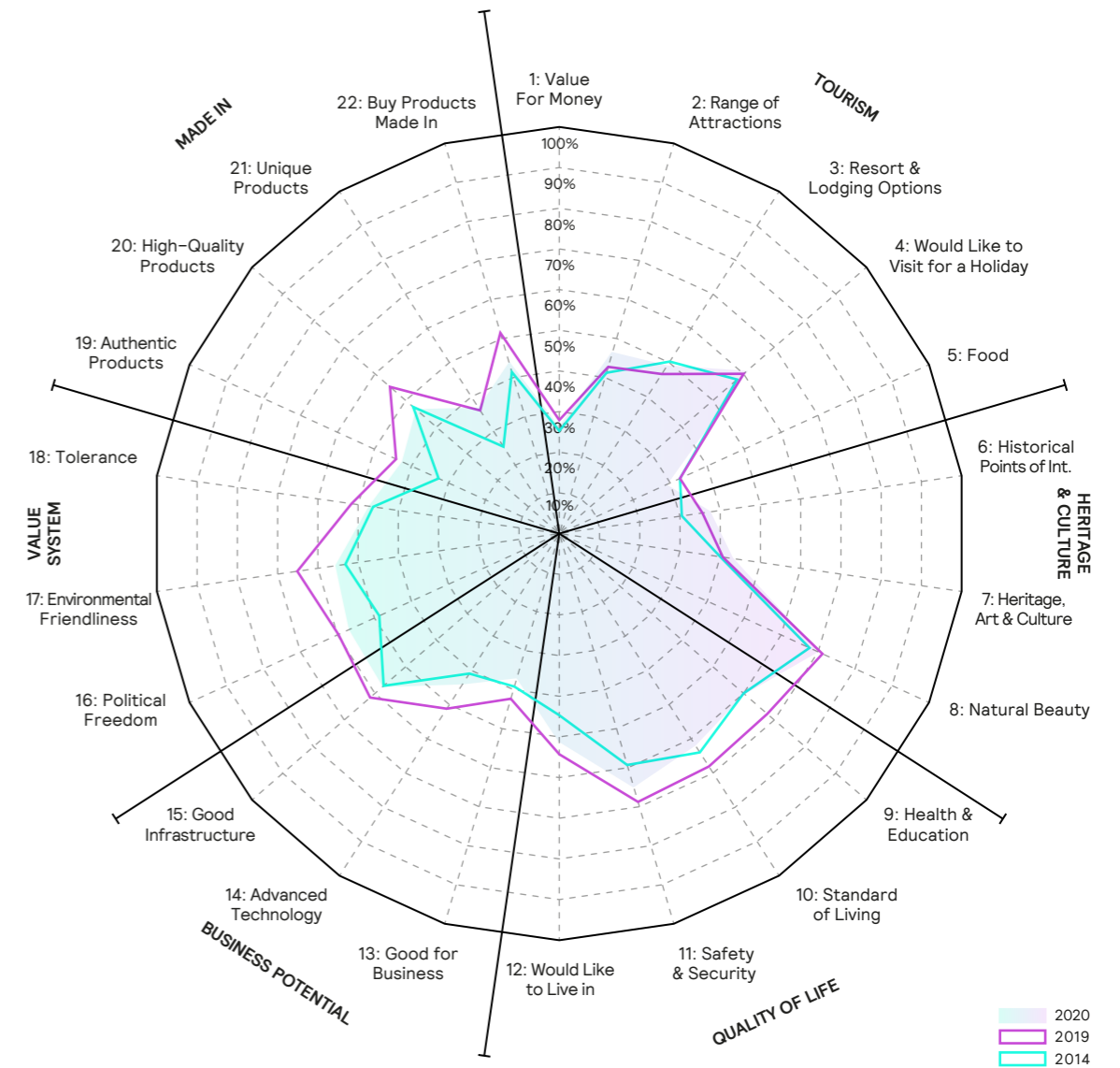
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with Norway?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

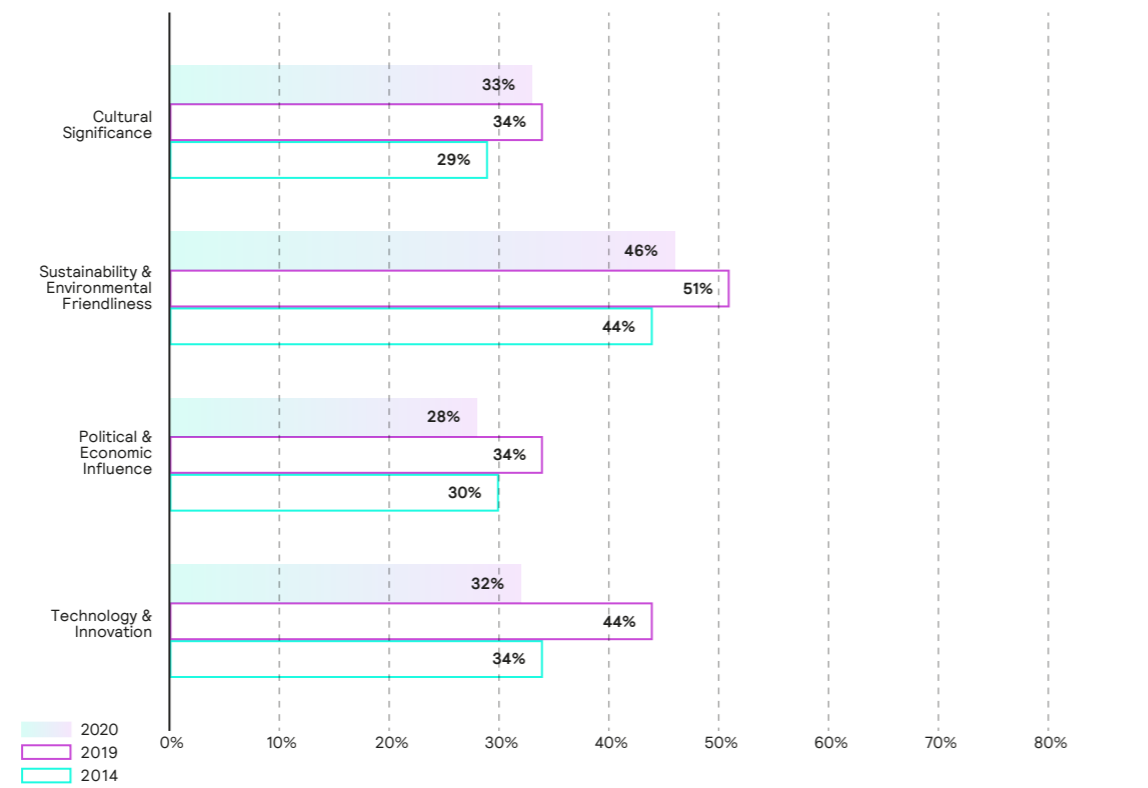
Made In

- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In

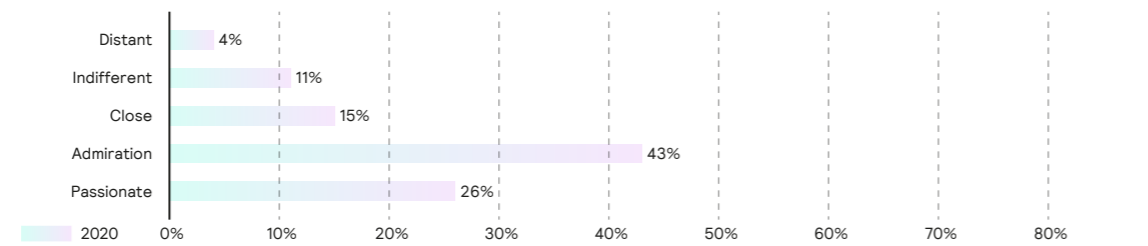


3 1↓

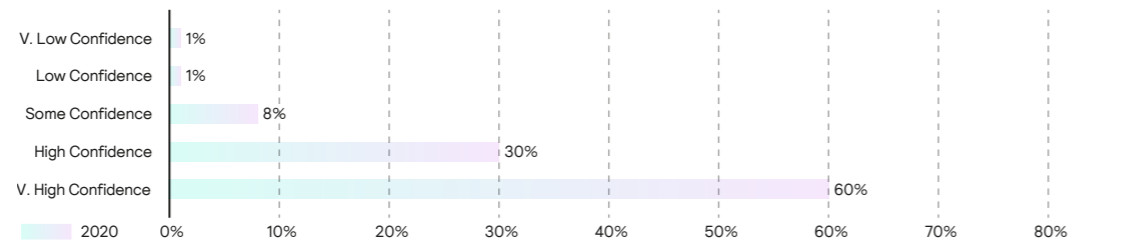
Norway current momentum



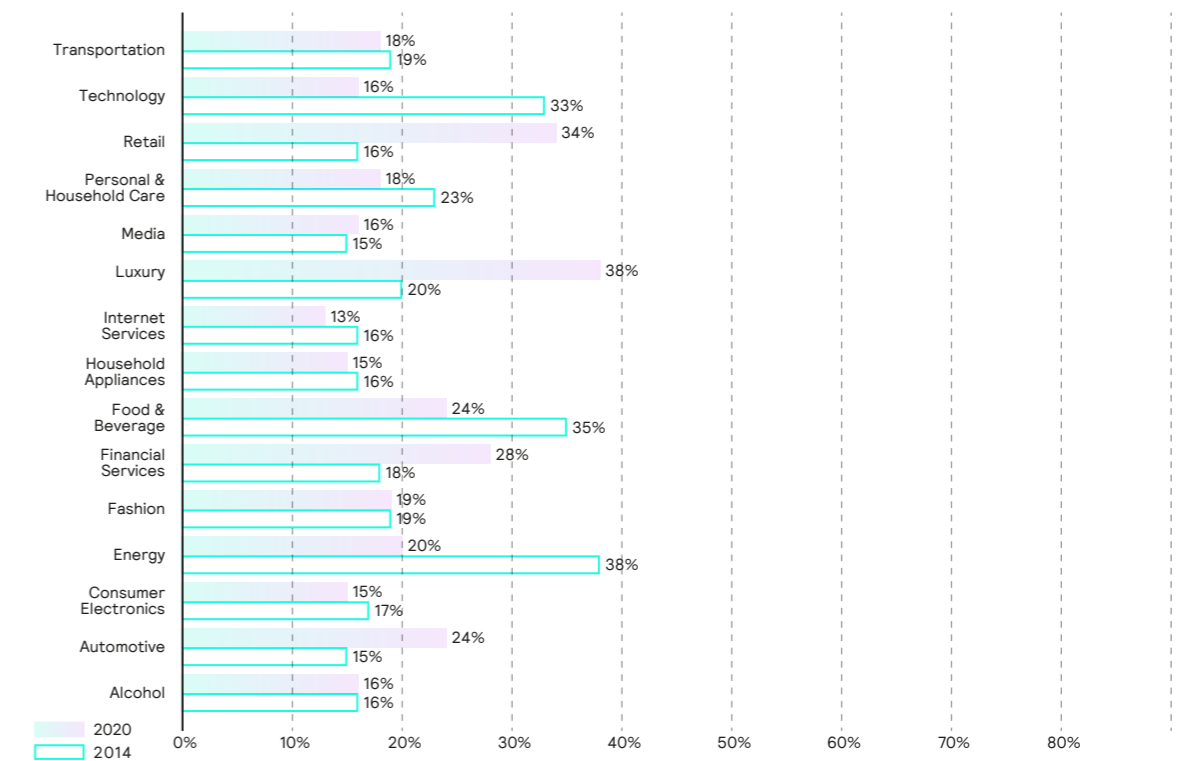
Emotional connection



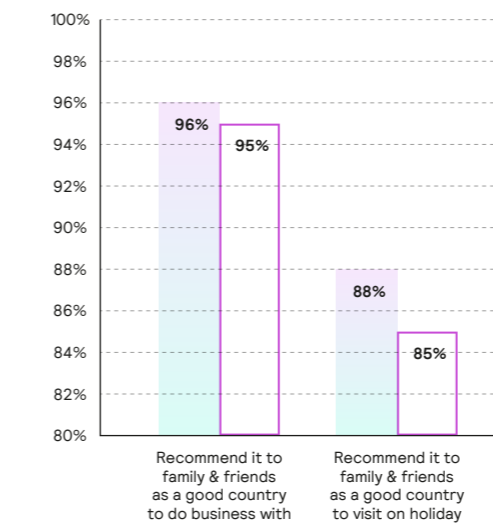
Confidence in stability & reliability



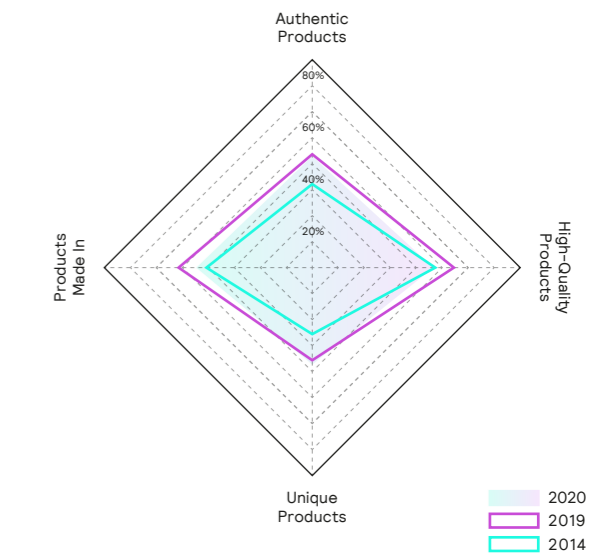
What is Norway most expert at?

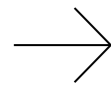


Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





They may not have reached the coveted top three, but in the very worthy spots of four to ten are respectively: Germany, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, UAE, and New Zealand.

Although there wasn't a great deal of movement in the higher echelons of the Country Index this year, it's still important to shine a spotlight on the remaining countries that made it into the top ten. In a year of climate crises and a devastating worldwide virus, managing to maintain status is worth writing home about.



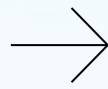
We'll get to the UAE (number nine) and the story of the Middle East shortly. In the meantime, let's consider Germany, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and New Zealand.

That last one isn't hard to fathom. Jacinda Ardern's government has received plaudits at home and abroad for its successful tackling of the pandemic (as Ardern said recently, "while there was no playbook for Covid-19, we went hard and early"). She was also praised for her handling of last year's shooting by a white supremacist at two mosques.

"New Zealand has been a champion in the fight of Covid-19. Their government has opened the eyes of the rest of the world that New Zealand is a player."

North America, Female

Furthermore, New Zealand's natural beauty is renowned the world over (and, in 2020, remains its strongest association). It was no accident that filmmaker Peter Jackson chose the country to represent Middle-earth in his Lord of the Rings trilogy. Even conservative estimates suggest that this decision has brought millions of extra tourists to the island.



Back in Europe, Germany gained ground in 2020, climbing by two places to four. It remains best known for its business potential and is regarded as a strong, confident and powerful country with strong leadership and a solid economy. In these challenging times, Chancellor Angela Merkel and her government have battled with increasing nationalism and a ravaging virus but confidence in the nation continues to be very high.

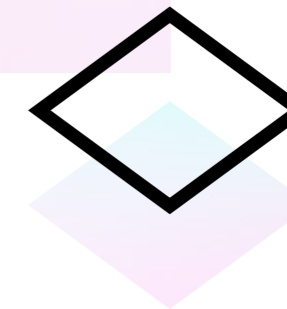
“[Germany is a] European economic leader and with France the only other country of the old continents to be able to counter the economic policy of the US.” Europe, Female

Over in Scandinavia, Denmark (six), Finland (seven, and often referred to as Scandinavian while, geographically speaking, it isn't), and Sweden (eight), the Scandi-noir nations are still scoring highly.

“I lived in this country [Denmark]: it is really safe, environmentally friendly, clean, and technologies are developing there. A country with a pleasant climate, developed and rich in culture. No political strife and economic downturns.” Europe, Female

In Canada, up three places year-on-year to number five, it looks like Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has put his adverse press behind him. The country famous for its breathtaking Rockies may have decreased in business potential this year but, all told and since 2014, its scores have been very consistent. Respondents admired a well-governed country that is politically and economically stable, also citing its open-mindedness to immigrants and strong environmental attitude.

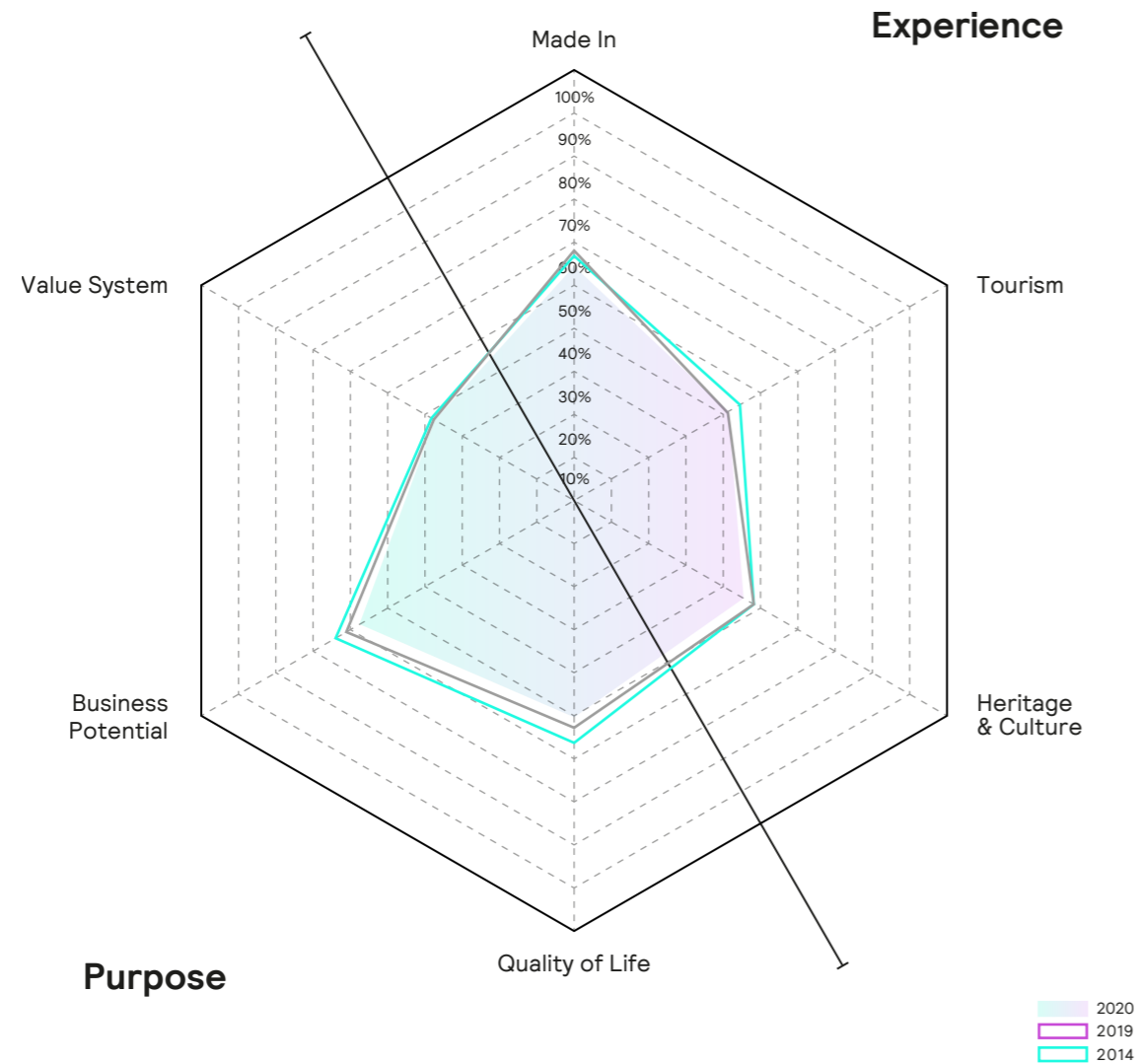
“Canada is a beautiful country, with a lot of business opportunities, good government, great infrastructure. I’ve lived there for one year, and my biggest dream is to definitely return.” LATAM, Male





4 2↑

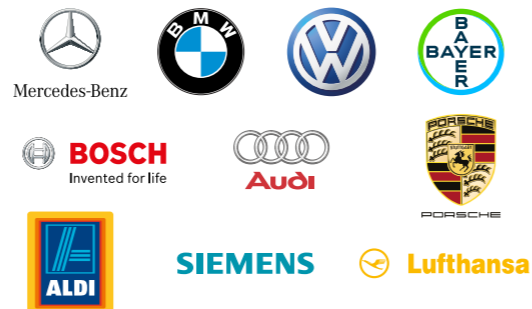
How does Germany perform by dimension?



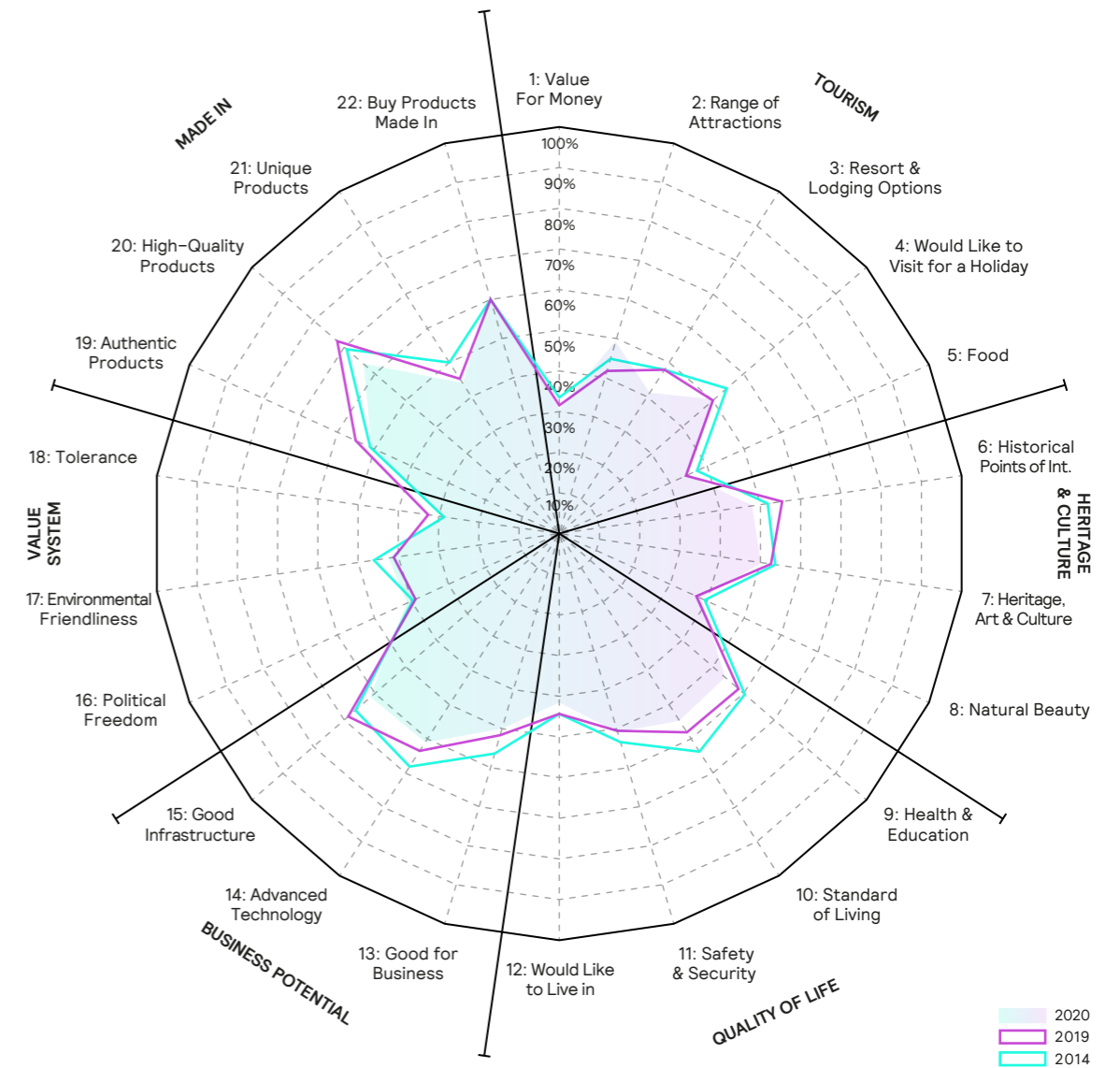
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with Germany?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

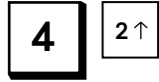
- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

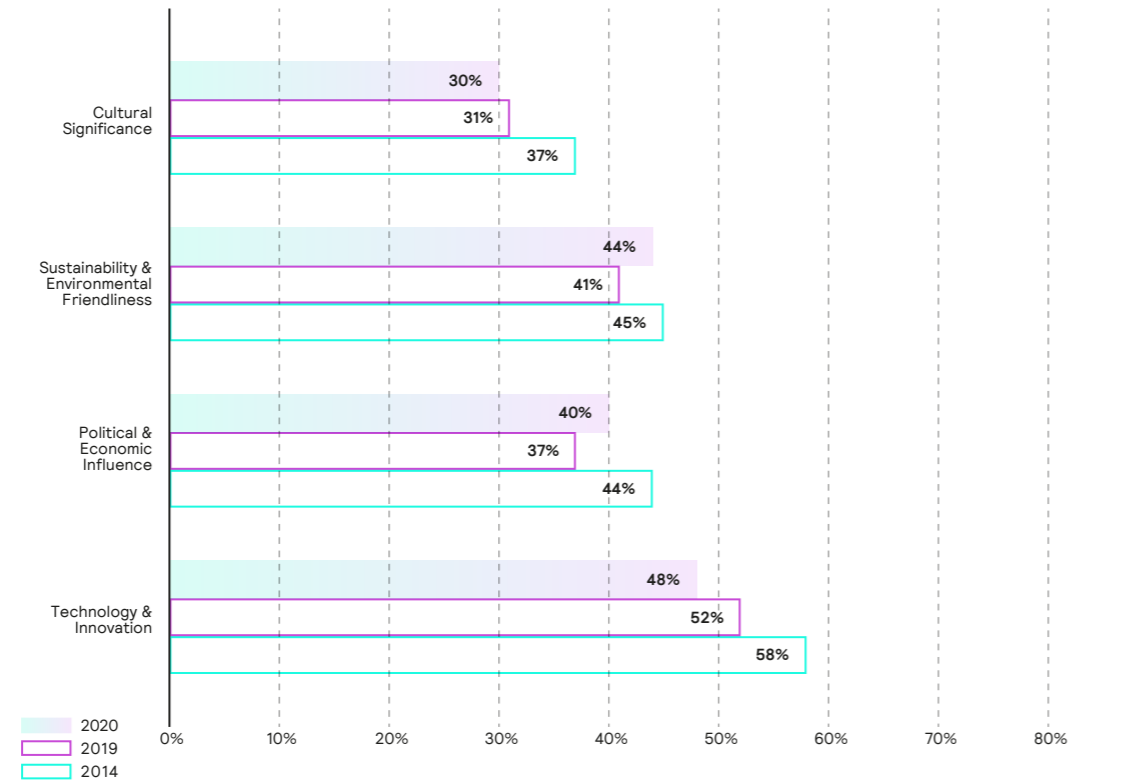
- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

Made In

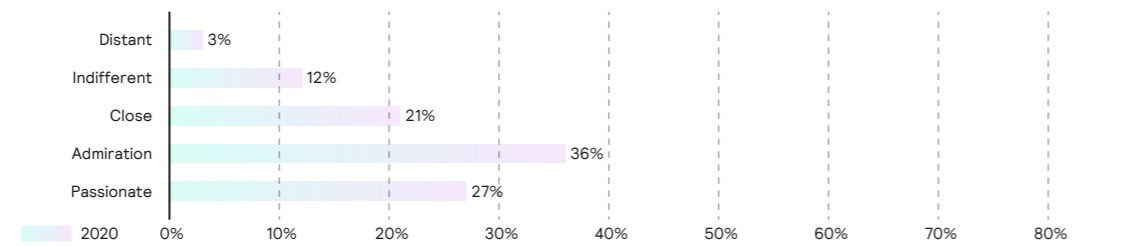
- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In



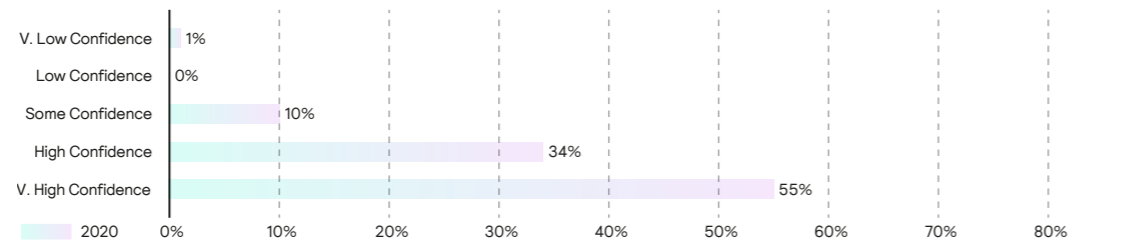
Germany current momentum



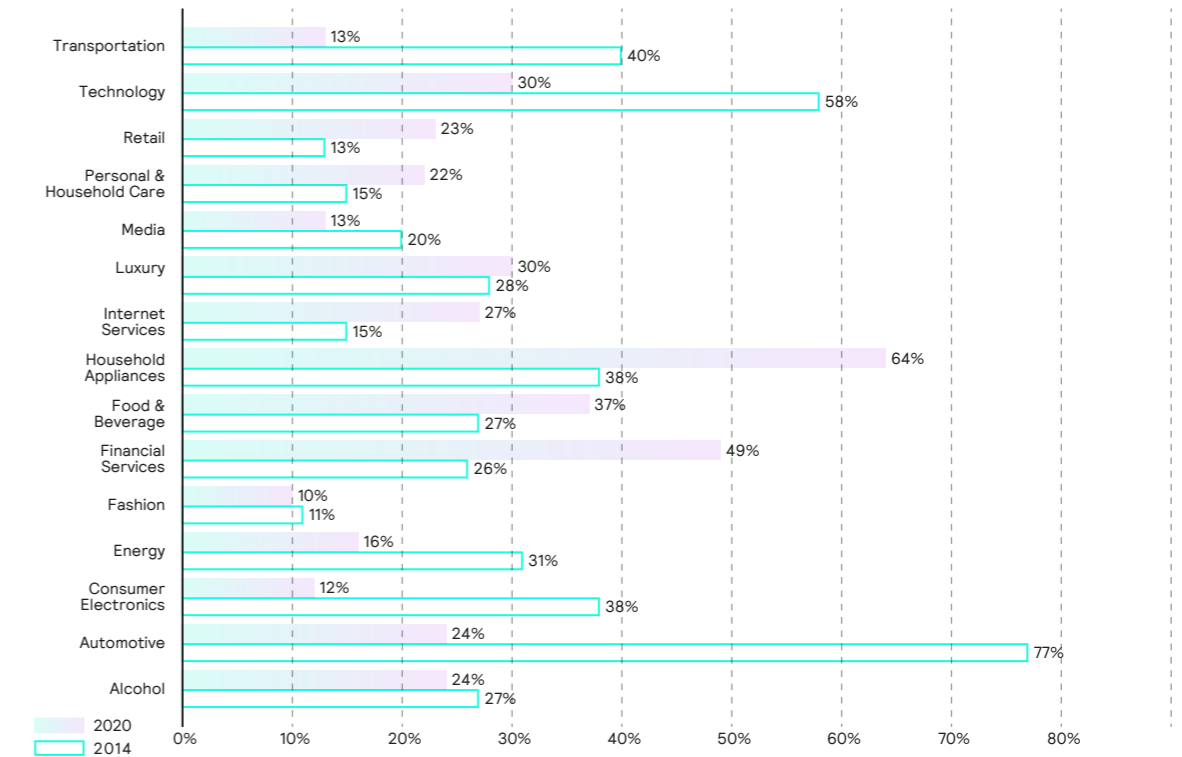
Emotional connection



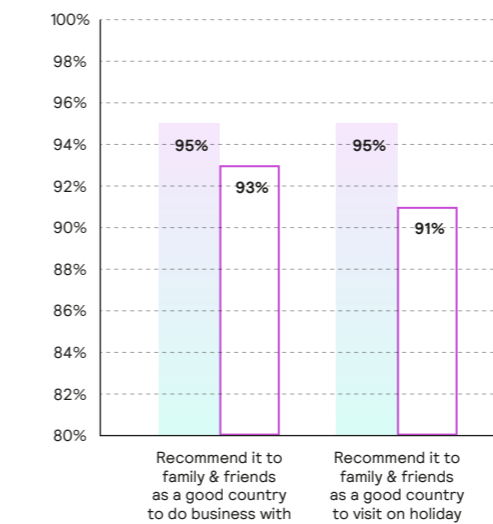
Confidence in stability & reliability



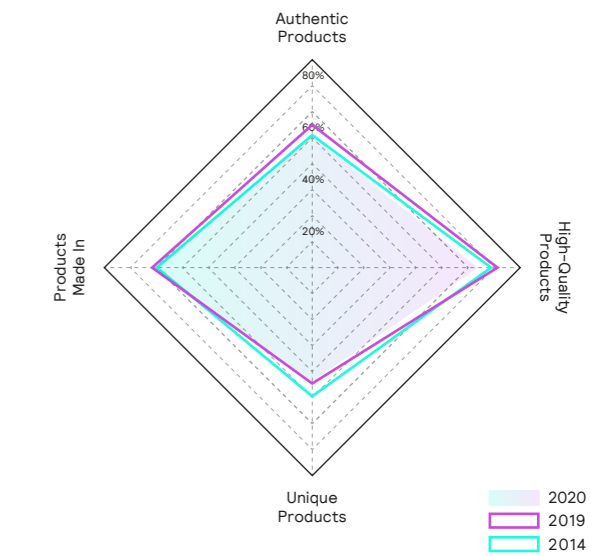
What is Germany most expert at?



Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



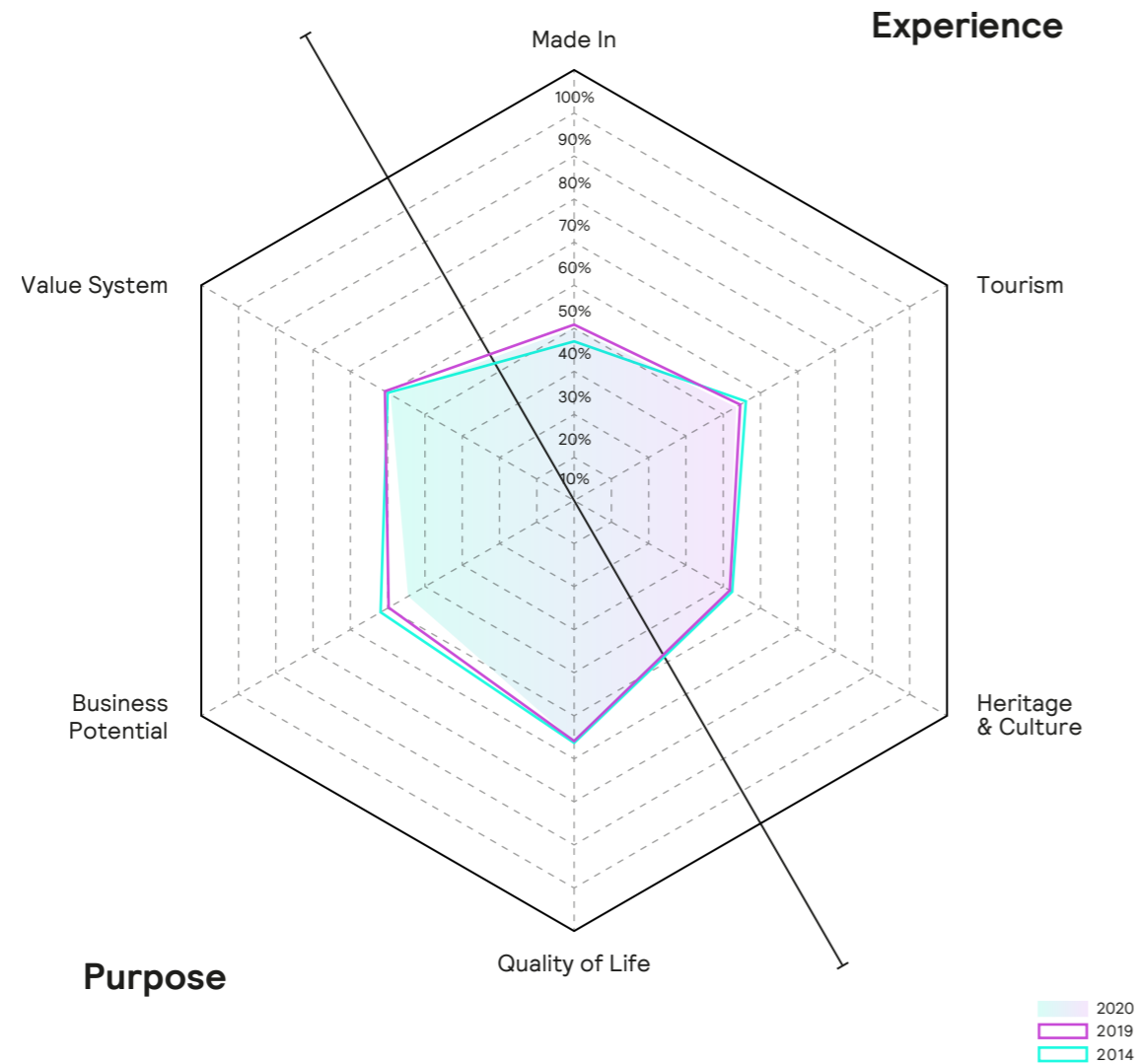
Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





5 3 ↑

How does Canada perform by dimension?



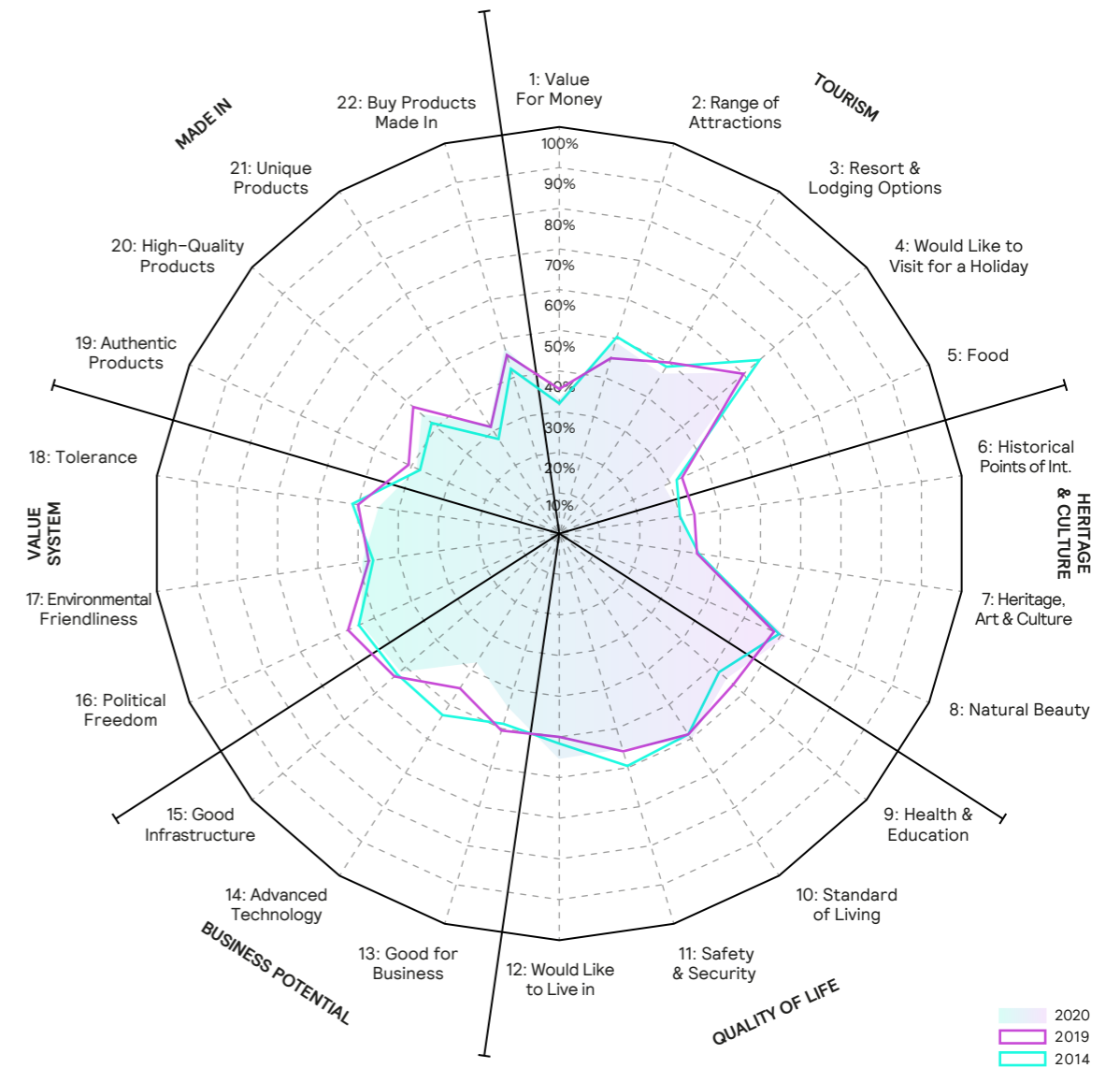
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with Canada?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

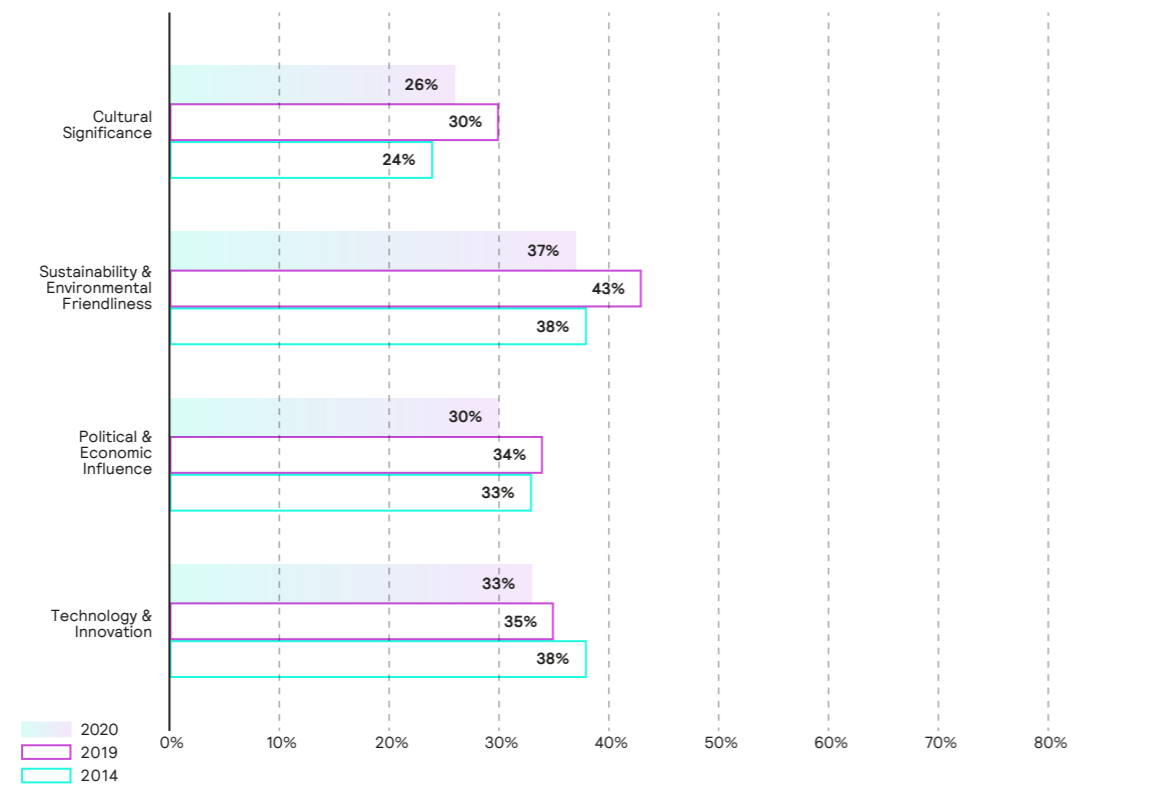
Made In

- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In

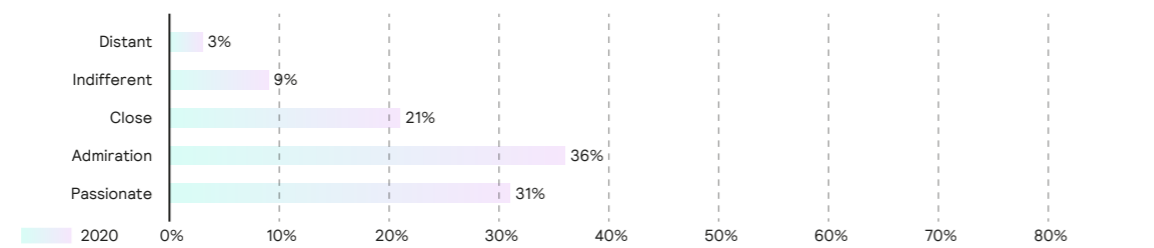


5 3↑

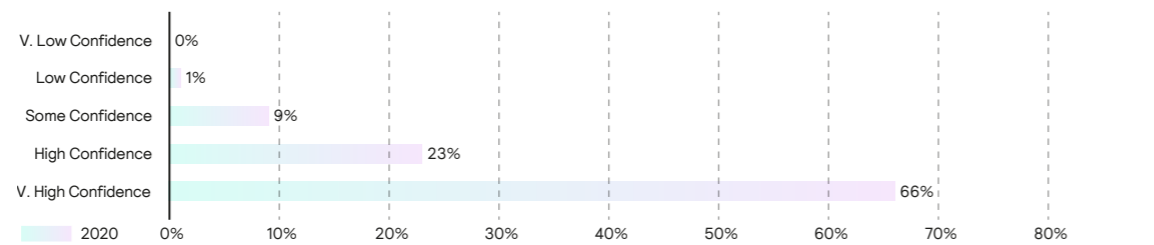
Canada current momentum



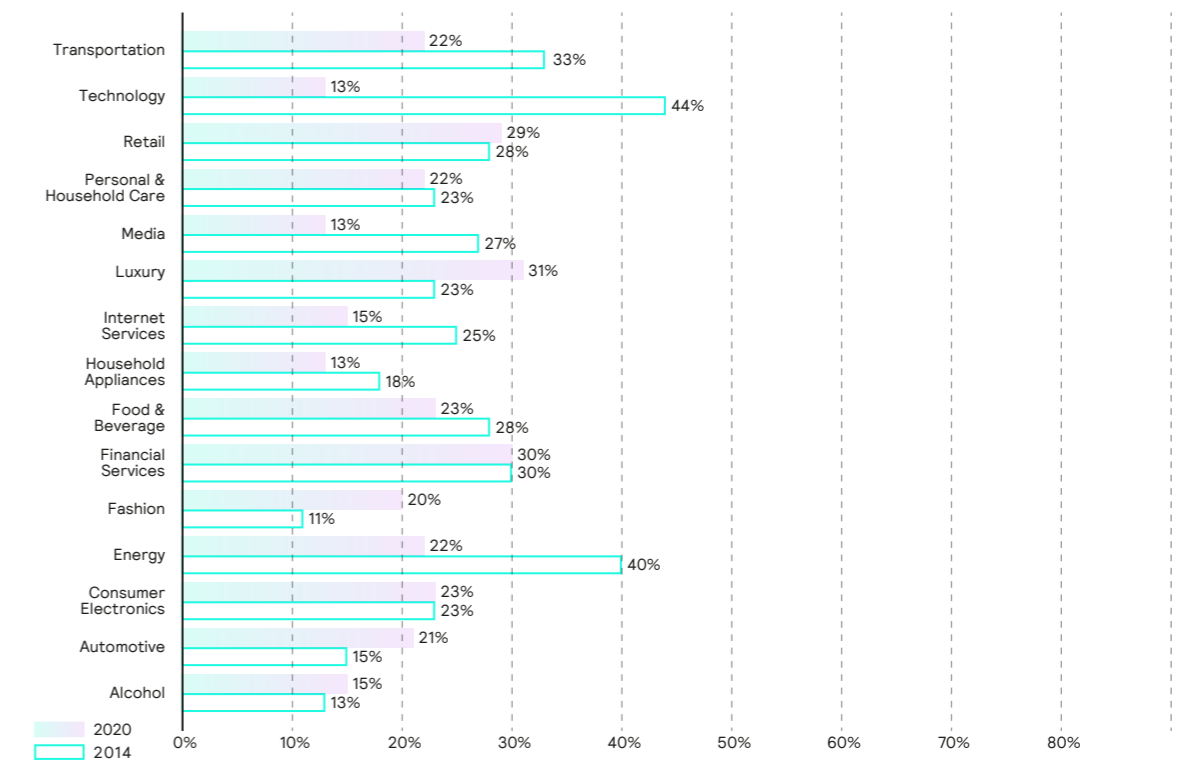
Emotional connection



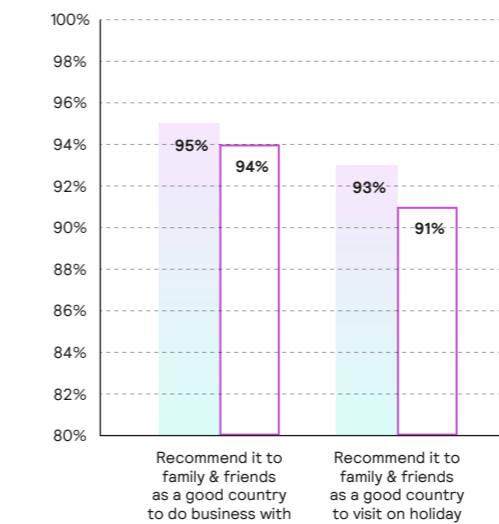
Confidence in stability & reliability



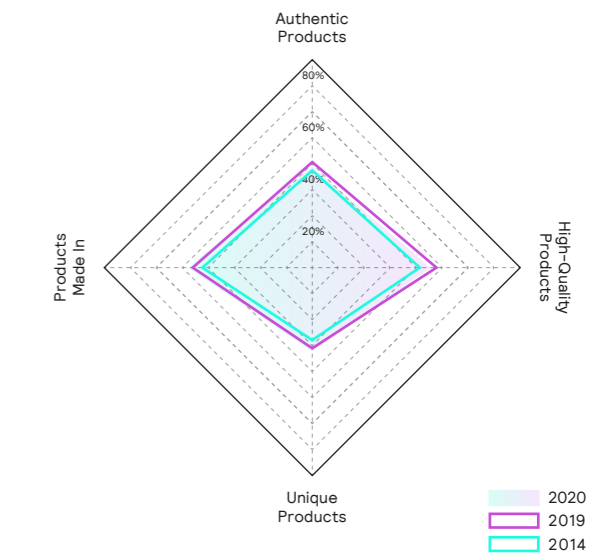
What is Canada most expert at?



Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



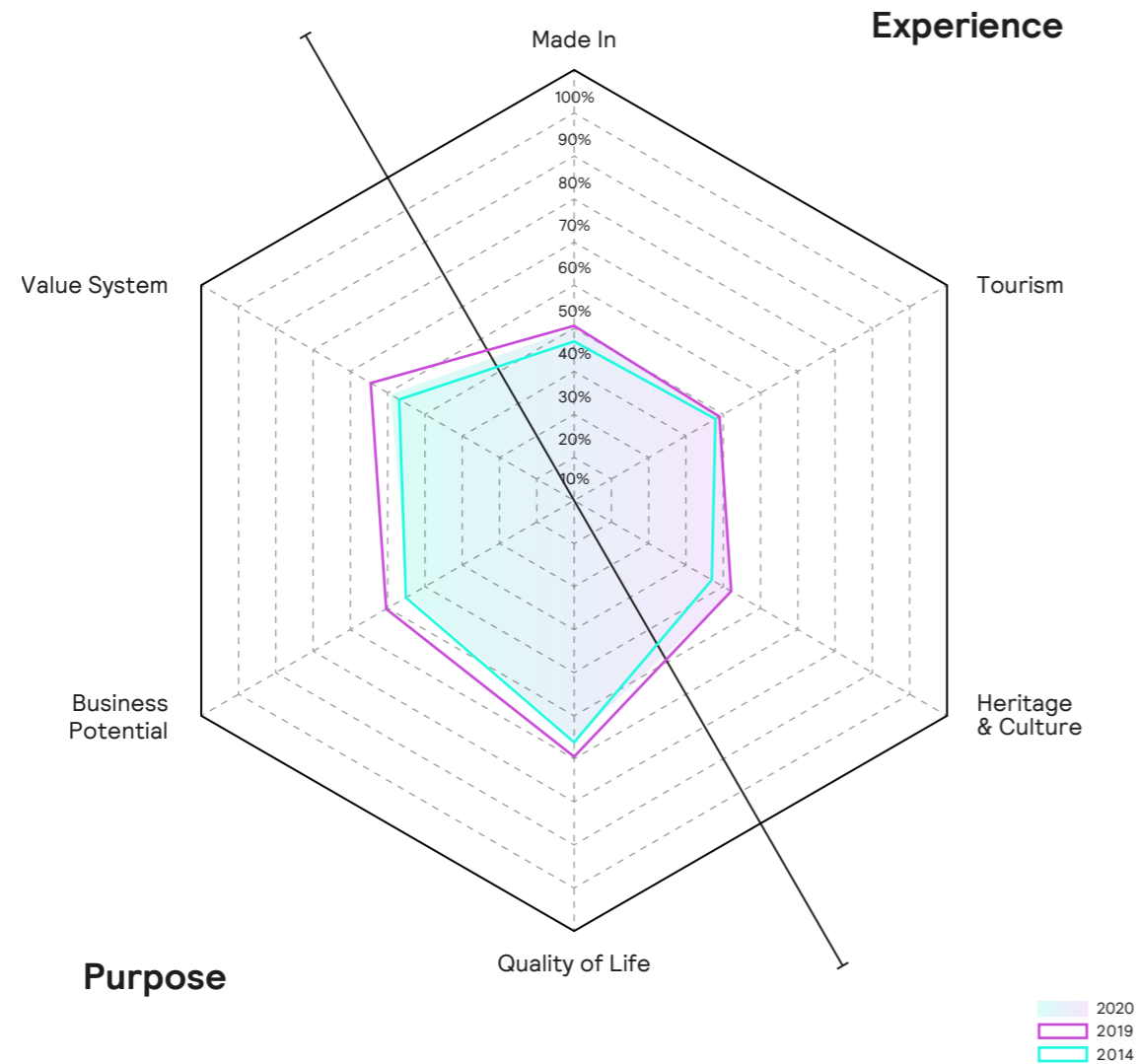
Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





6 1↑

How does Denmark perform by dimension?



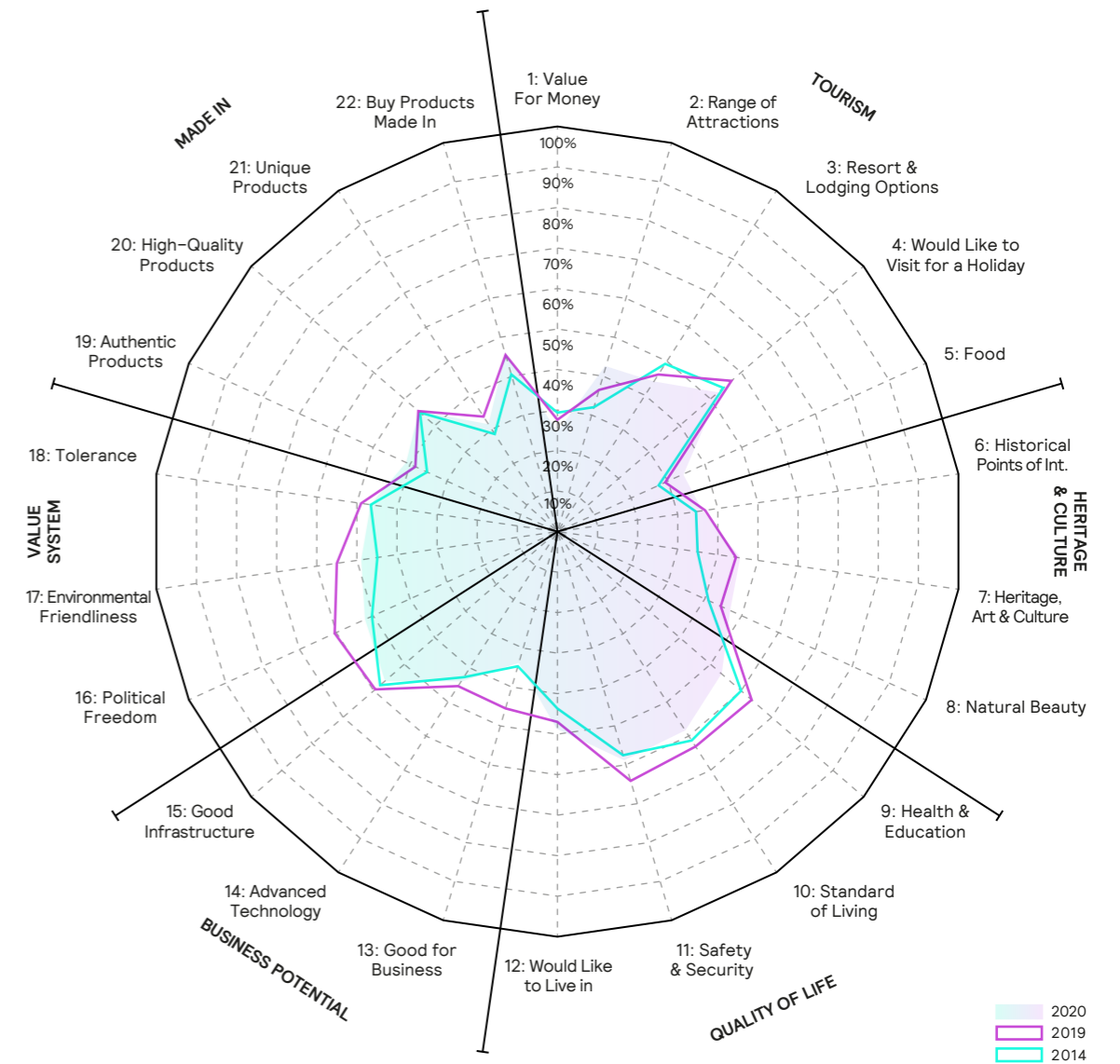
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with Denmark?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

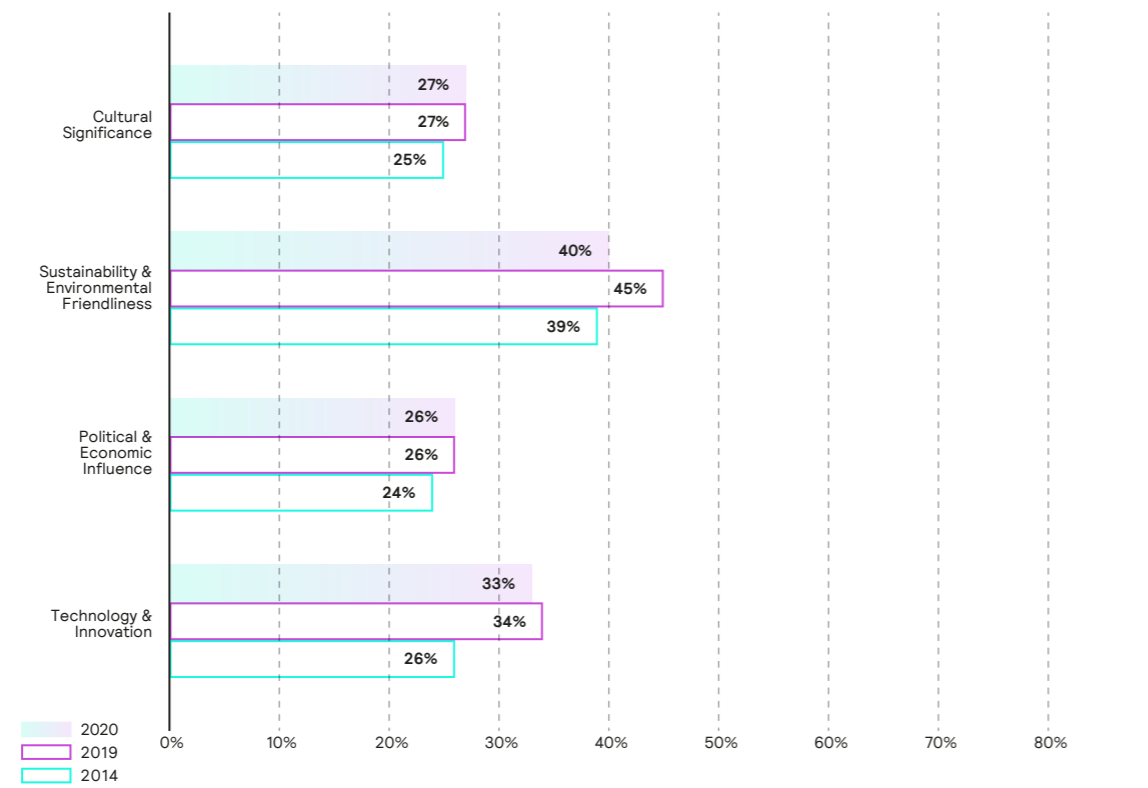
Made In

- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In

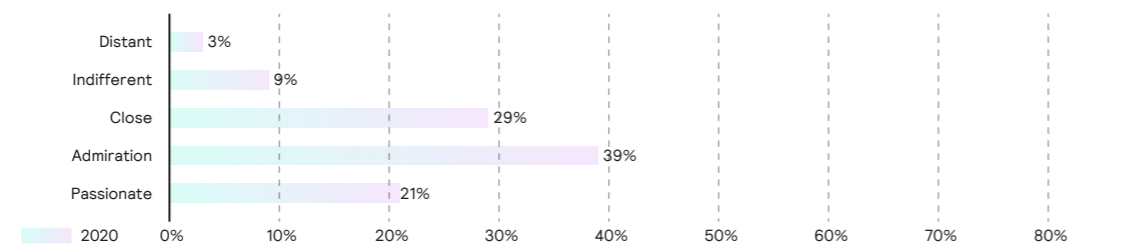


6 1↑

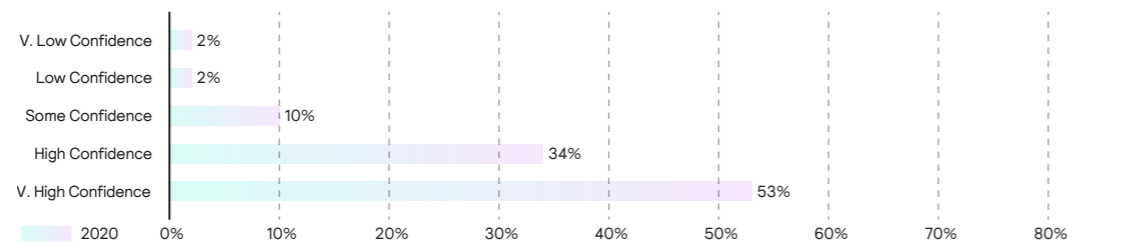
Denmark current momentum



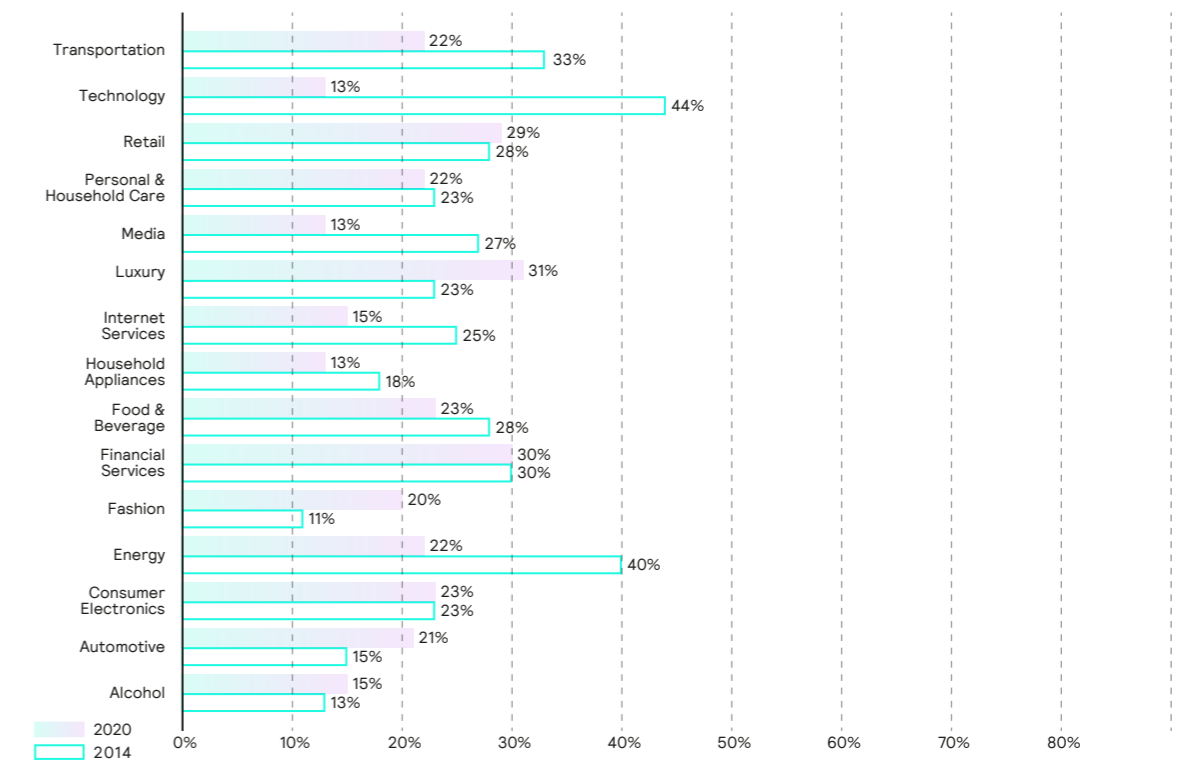
Emotional connection



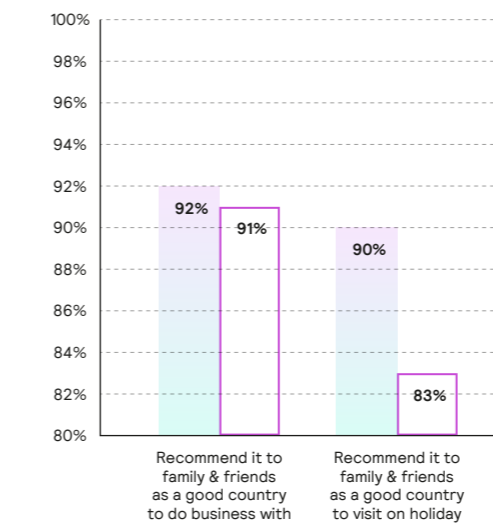
Confidence in stability & reliability



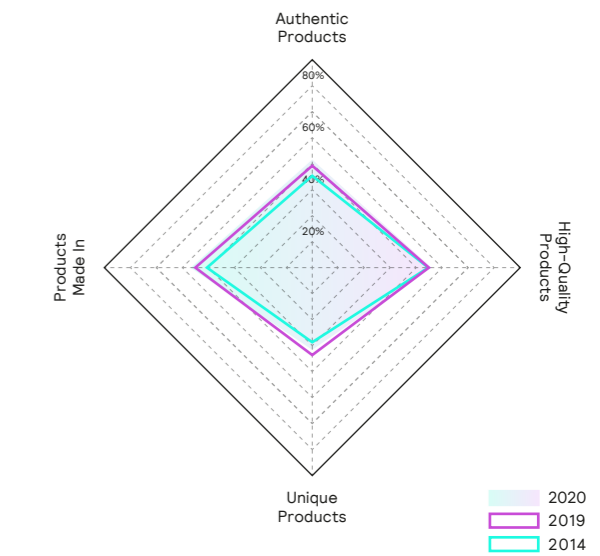
What is Denmark most expert at?



Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



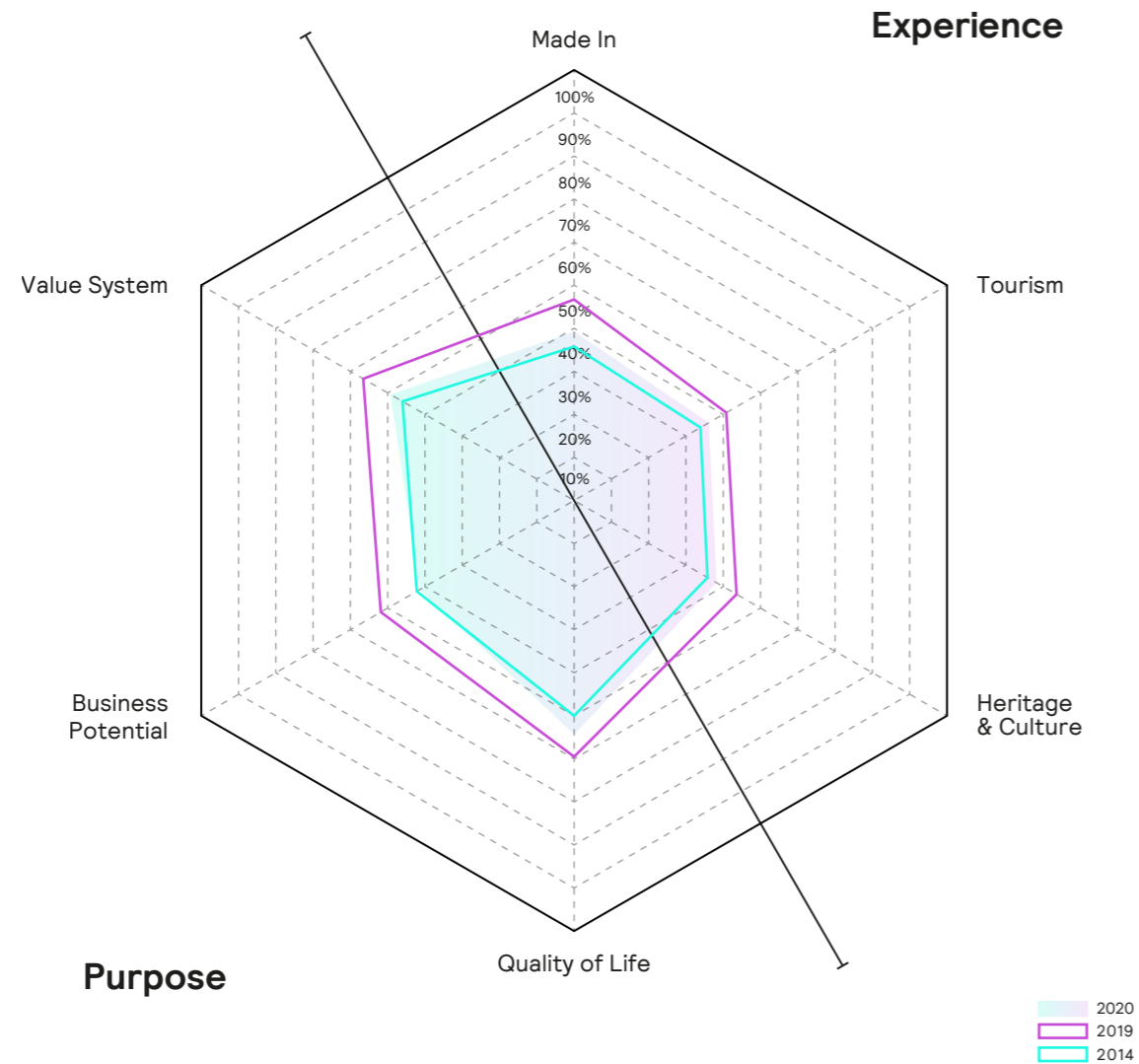
Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





7 2↓

How does Finland perform by dimension?



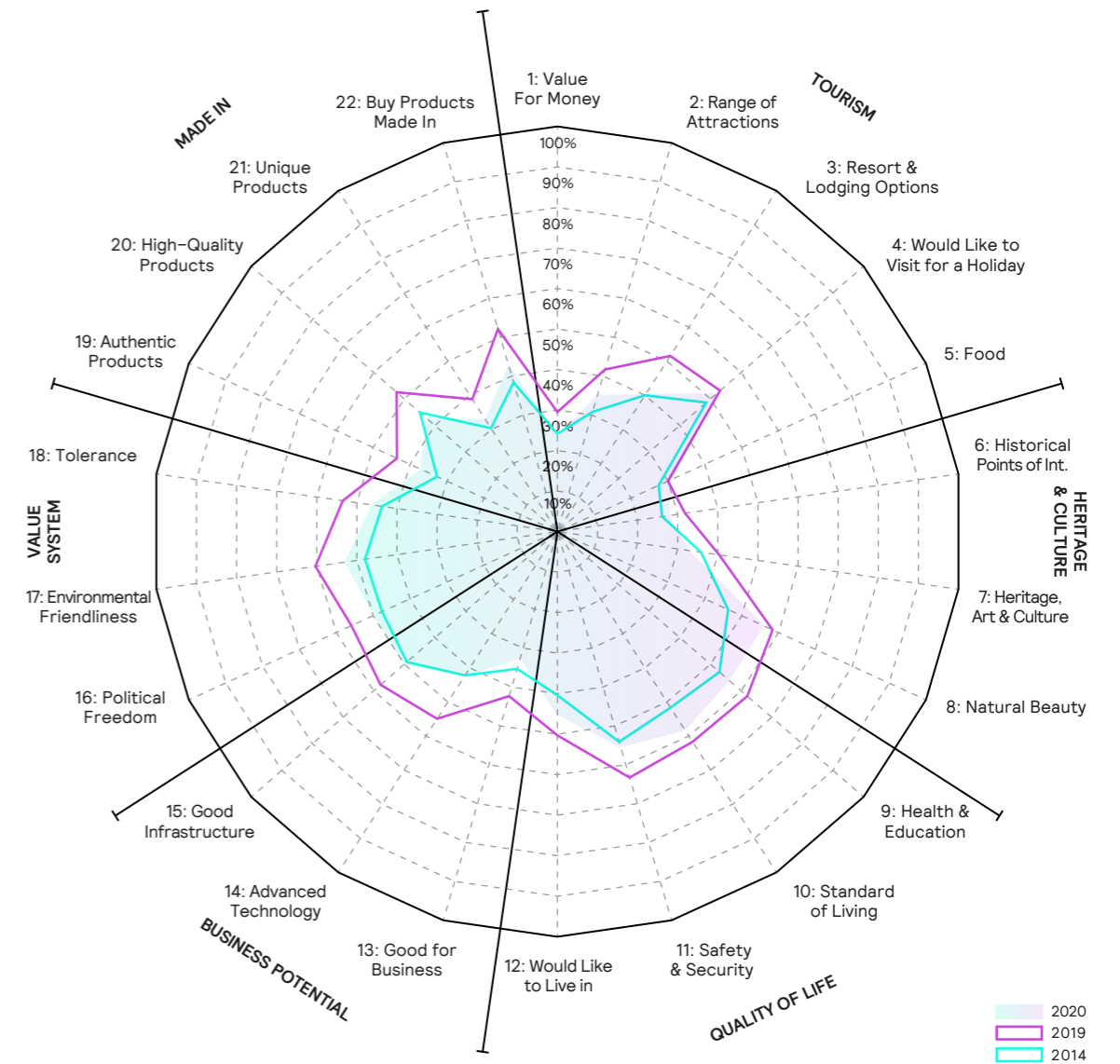
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with Finland?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

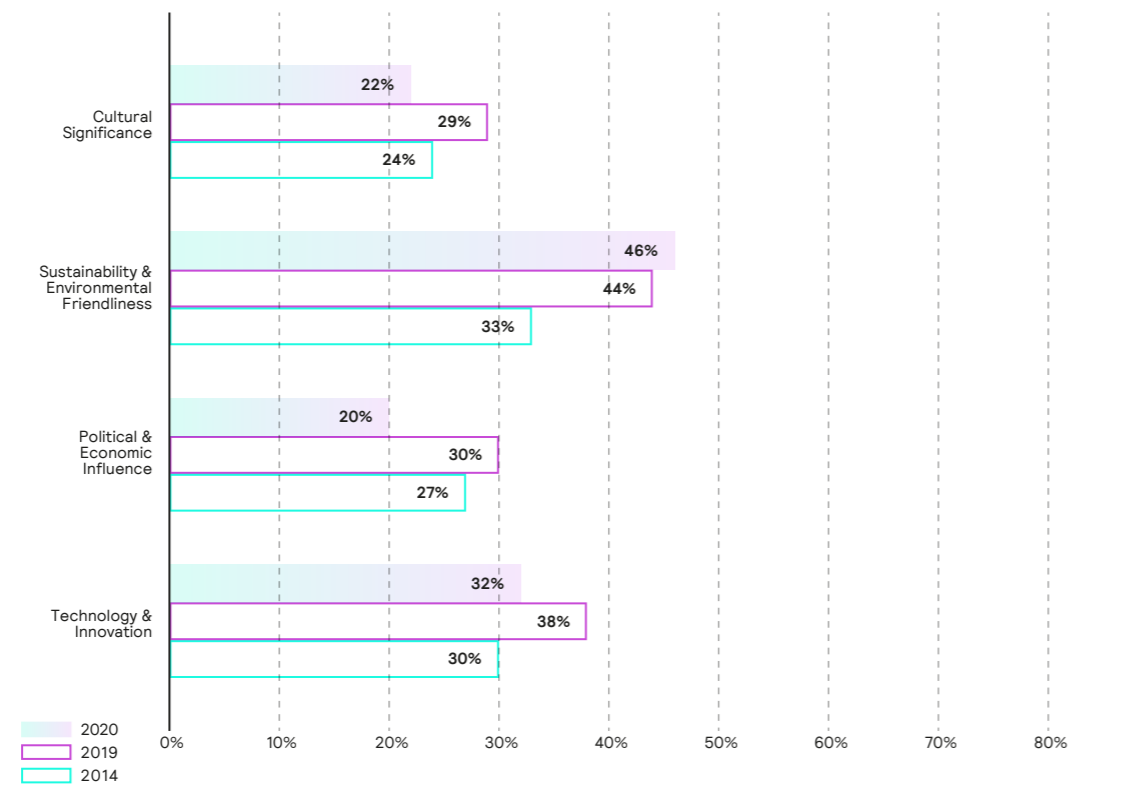
- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

Made In

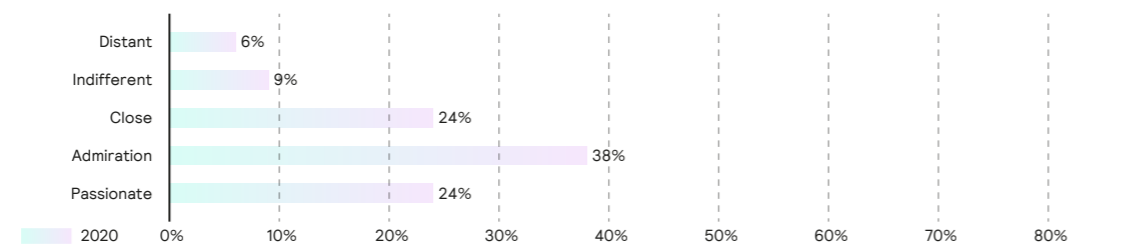
- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In



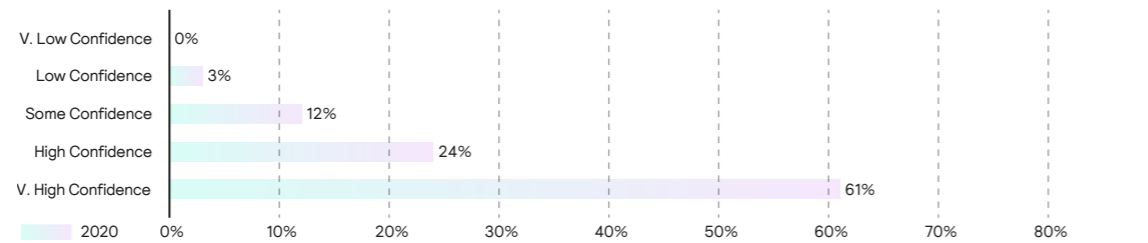
Finland current momentum



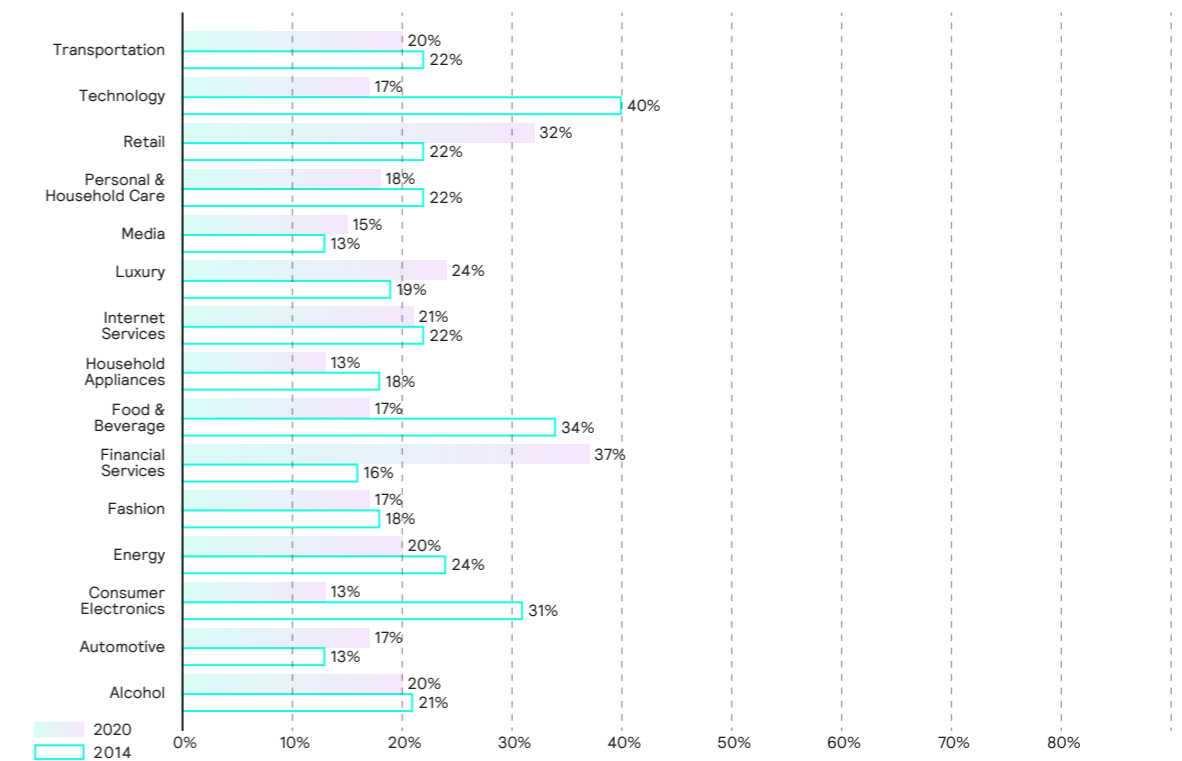
Emotional connection



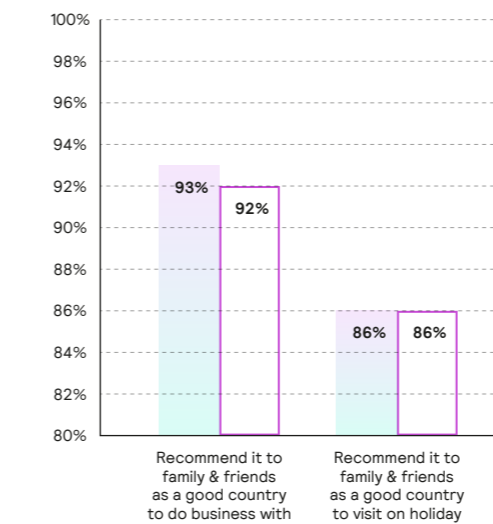
Confidence in stability & reliability



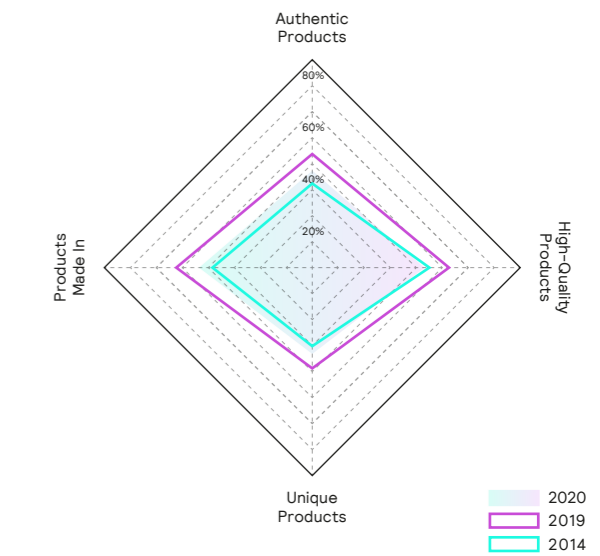
What is Finland most expert at?



Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



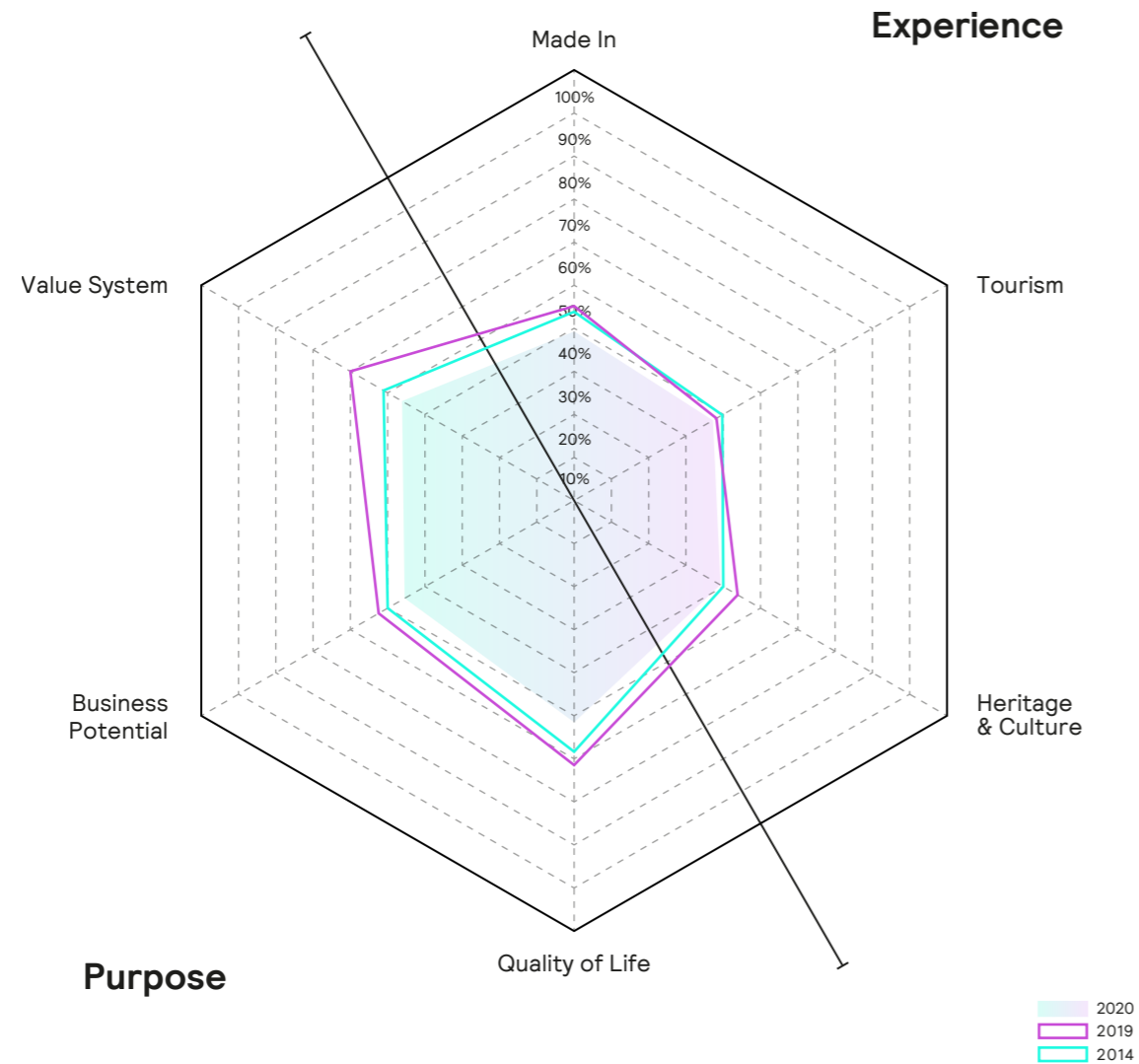
Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





8 4 ↓

How does Sweden perform by dimension?



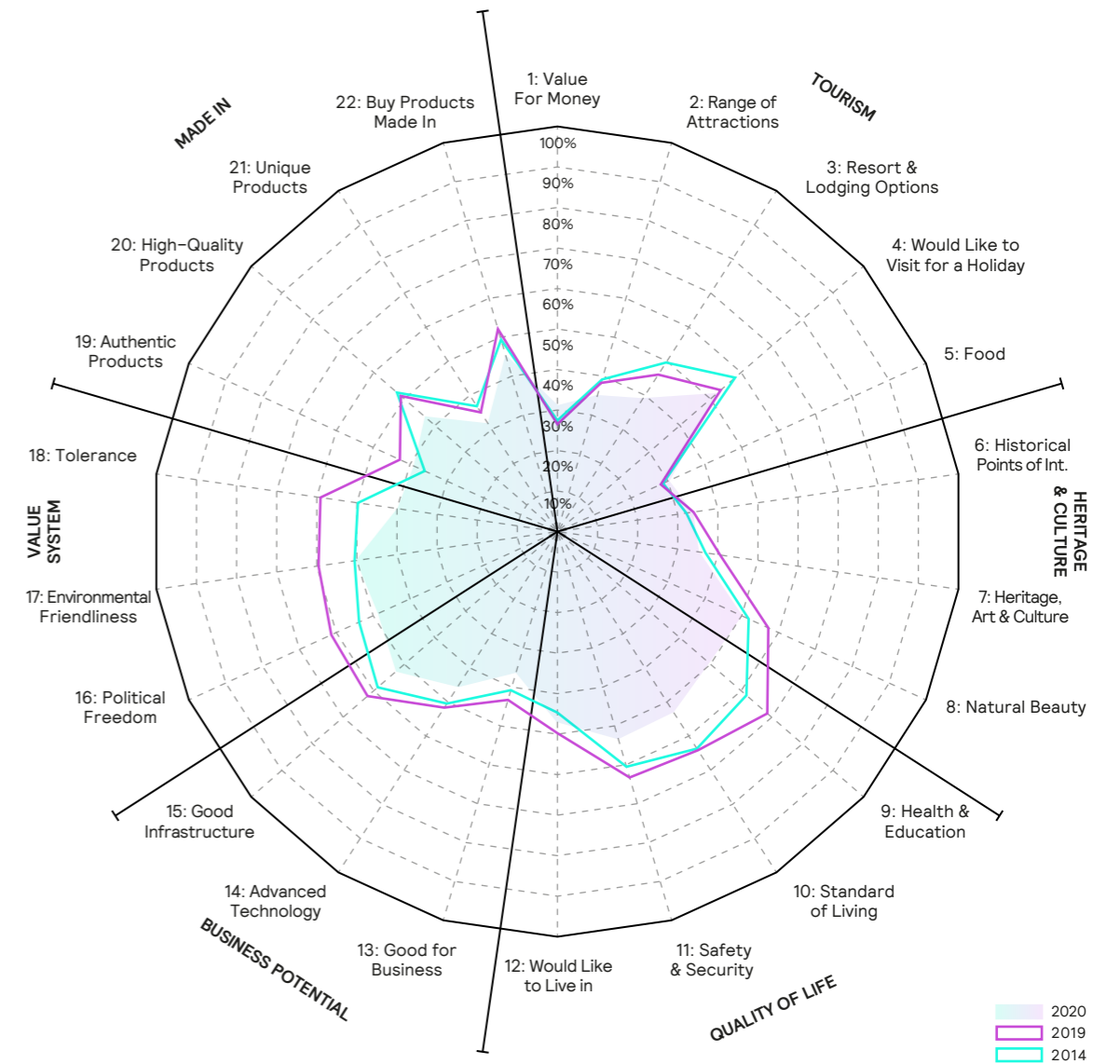
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with Sweden?



Tourism

- Value for Money
- Range of Attractions
- Resort & Lodging Options
- Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- Food

Heritage & Culture

- Historical Points of Interest
- Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- Health & Education
- Standard of Living
- Safety & Security
- Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

- Good for Business
- Advanced Technology
- Good Infrastructure

Value System

- Political Freedom
- Environmental Friendliness
- Tolerance

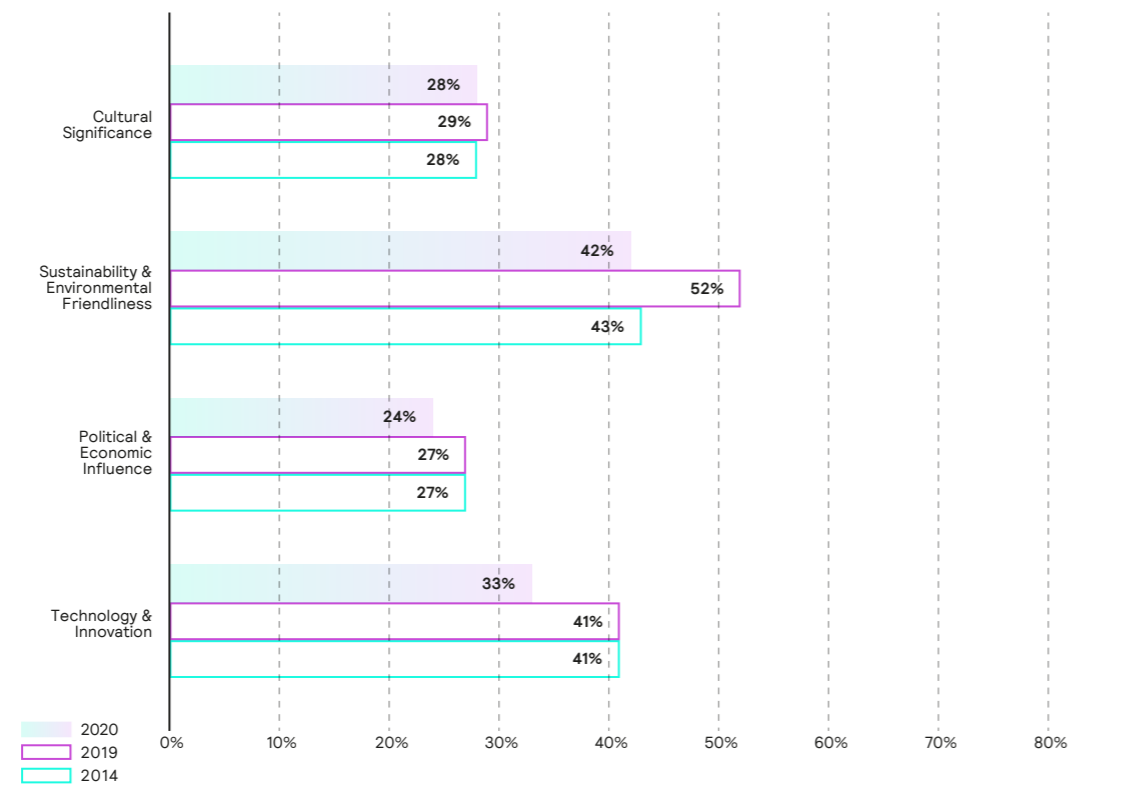
Made In

- Authentic Product
- High-Quality Product
- Unique Products
- Buy Products Made In

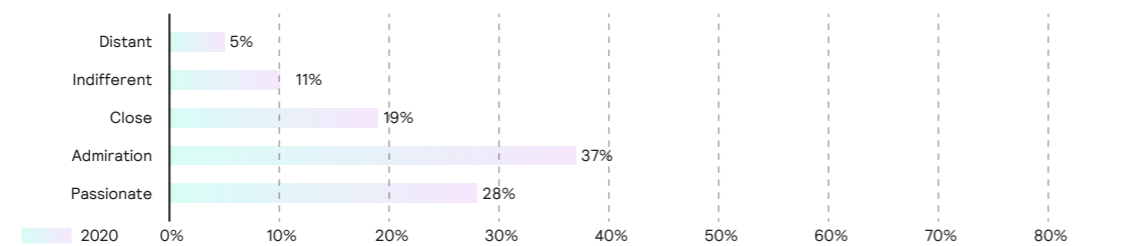


8 4↓

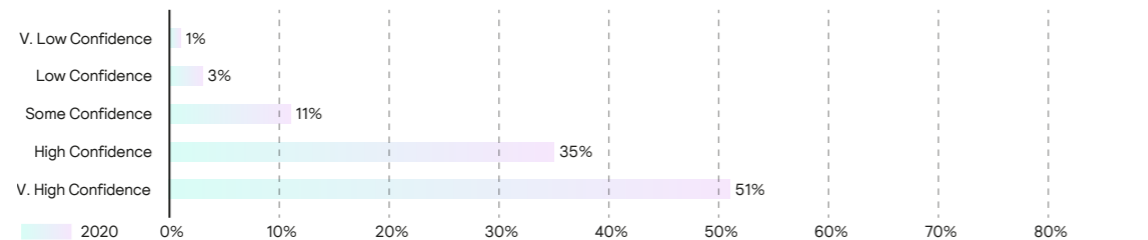
Sweden current momentum



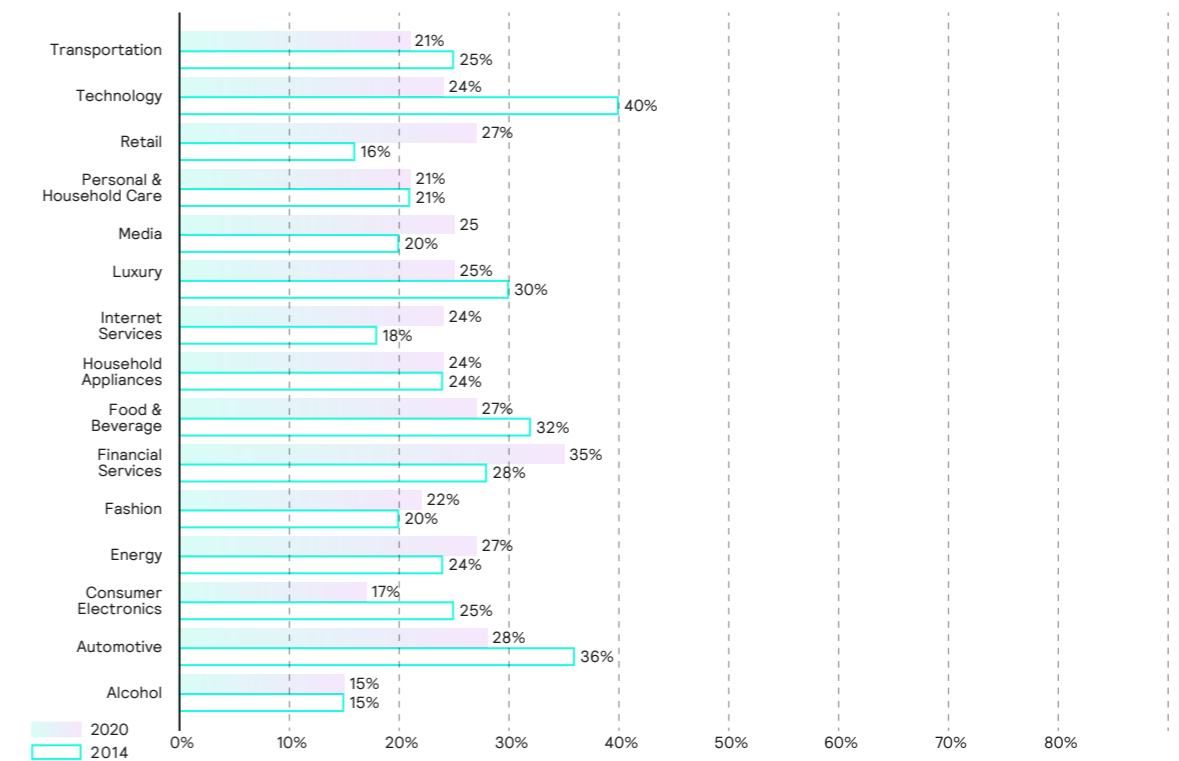
Emotional connection



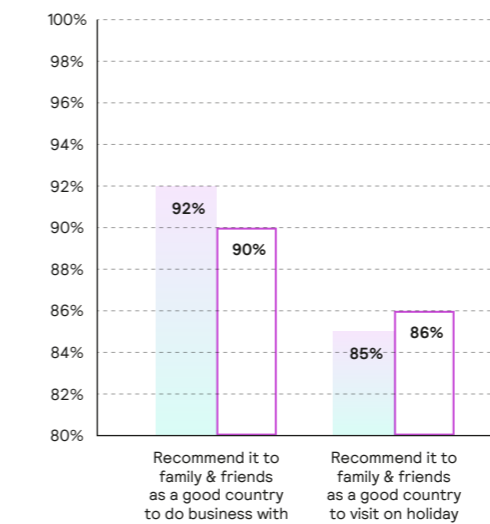
Confidence in stability & reliability



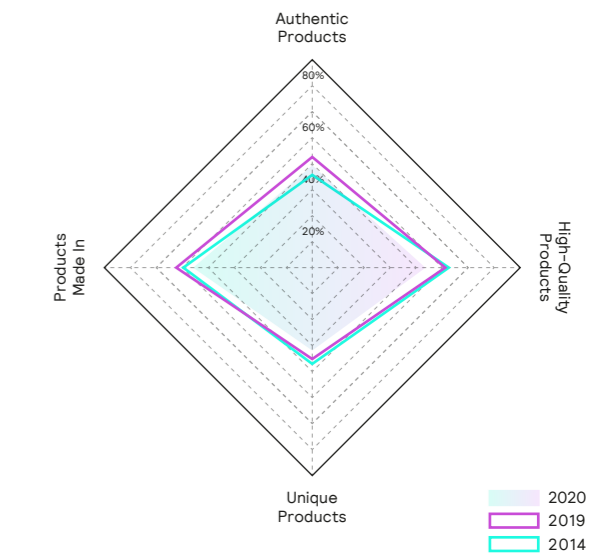
What is Sweden most expert at?



Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



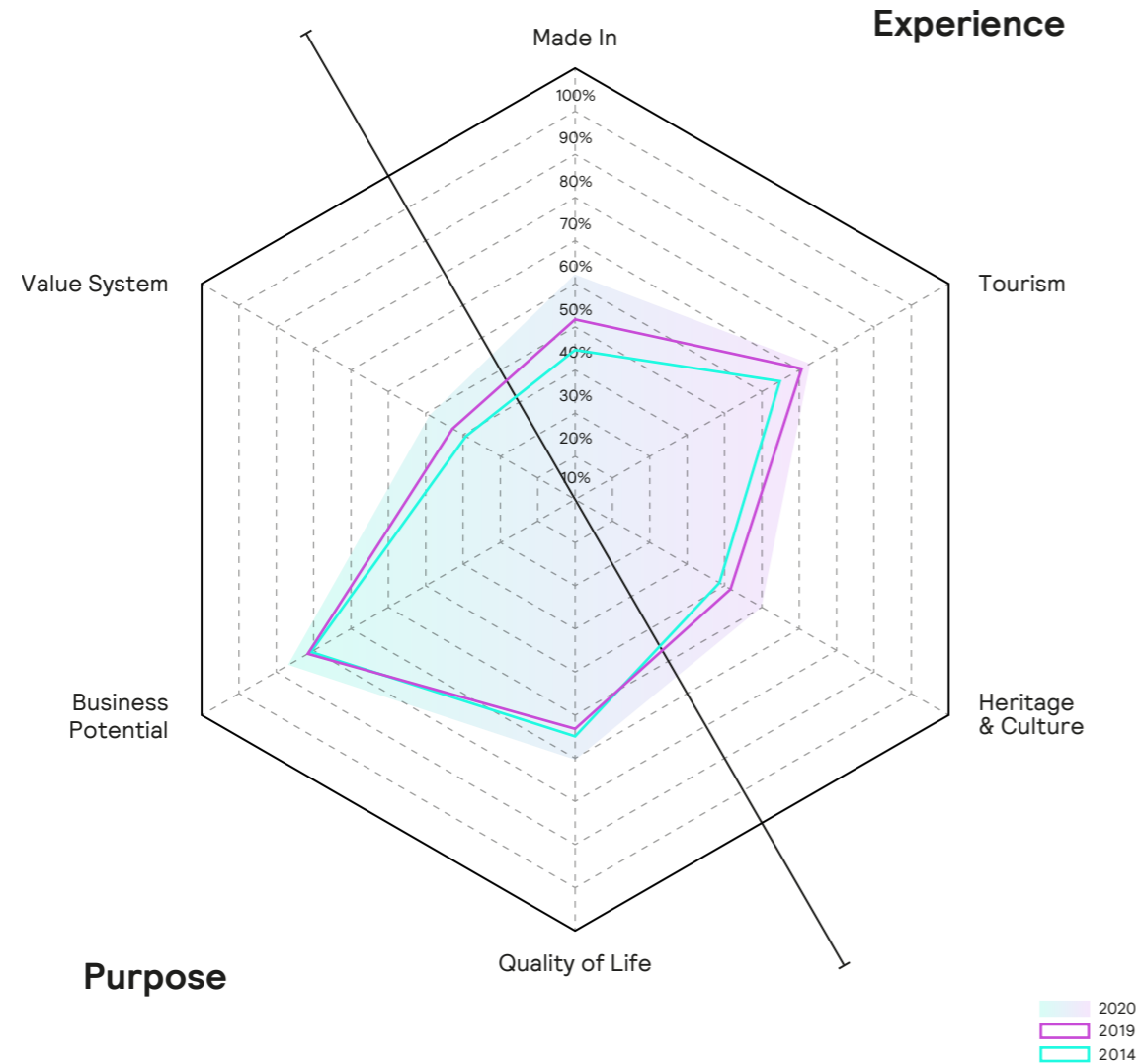
Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





9 7↑

How does UAE perform by dimension?



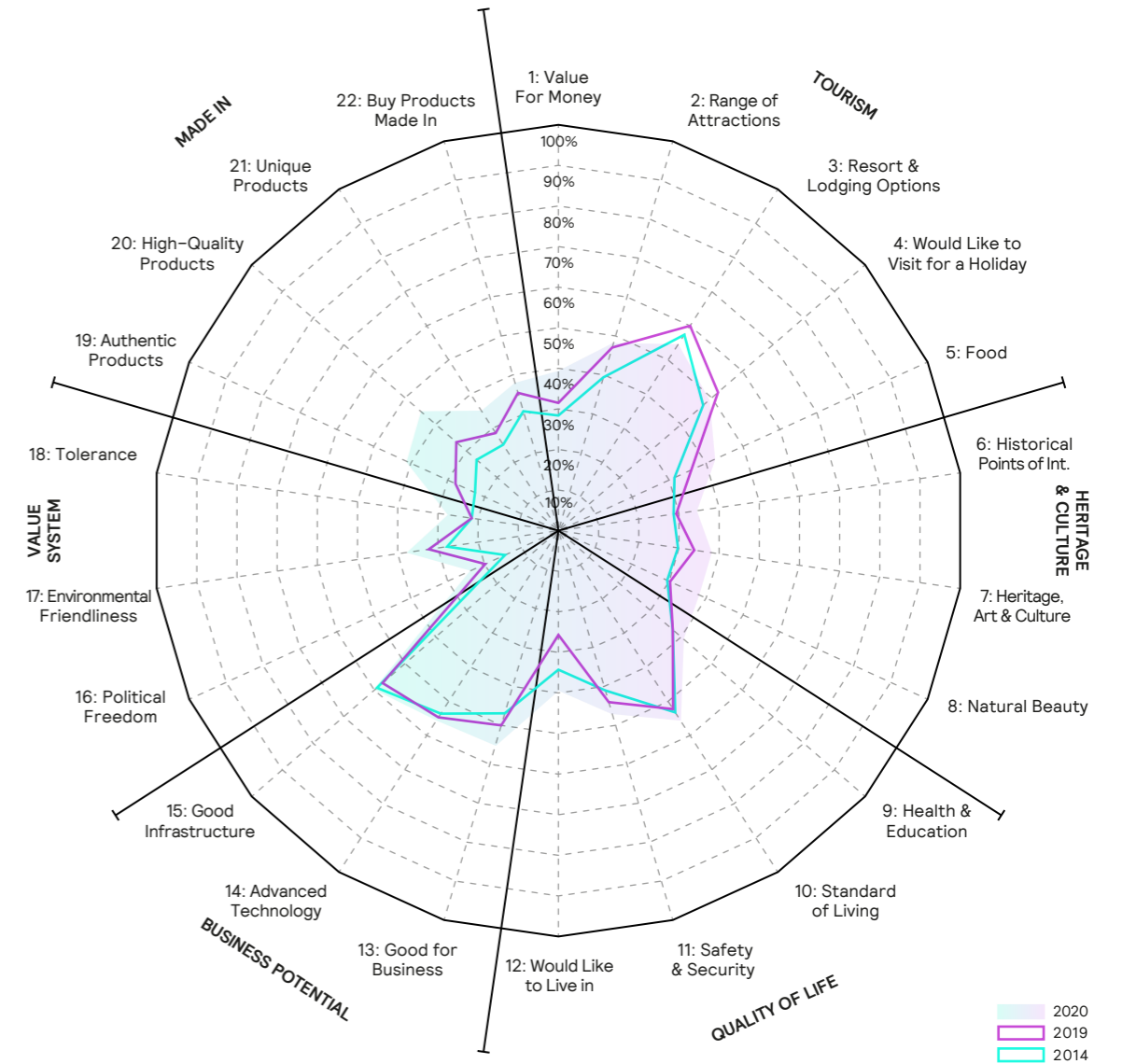
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with UAE?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

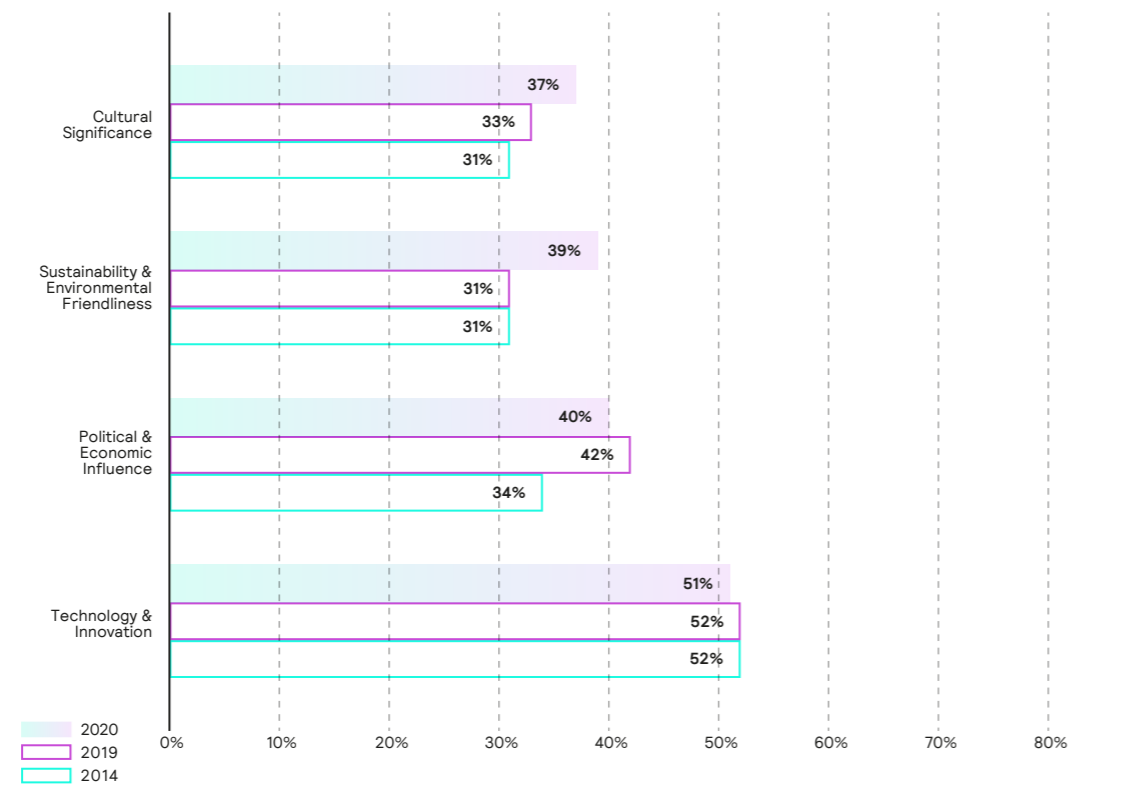
Made In

- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In

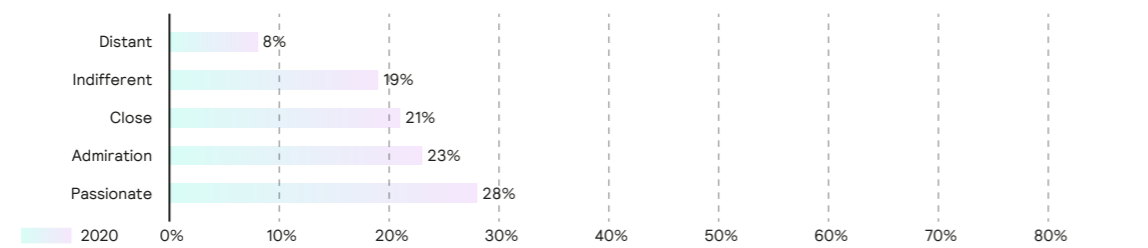


9 7↑

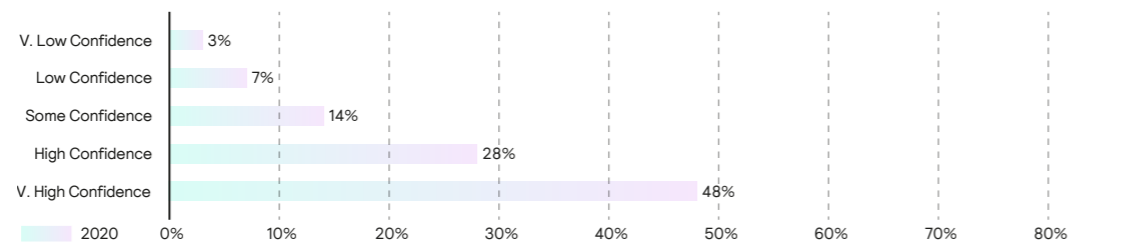
UAE current momentum



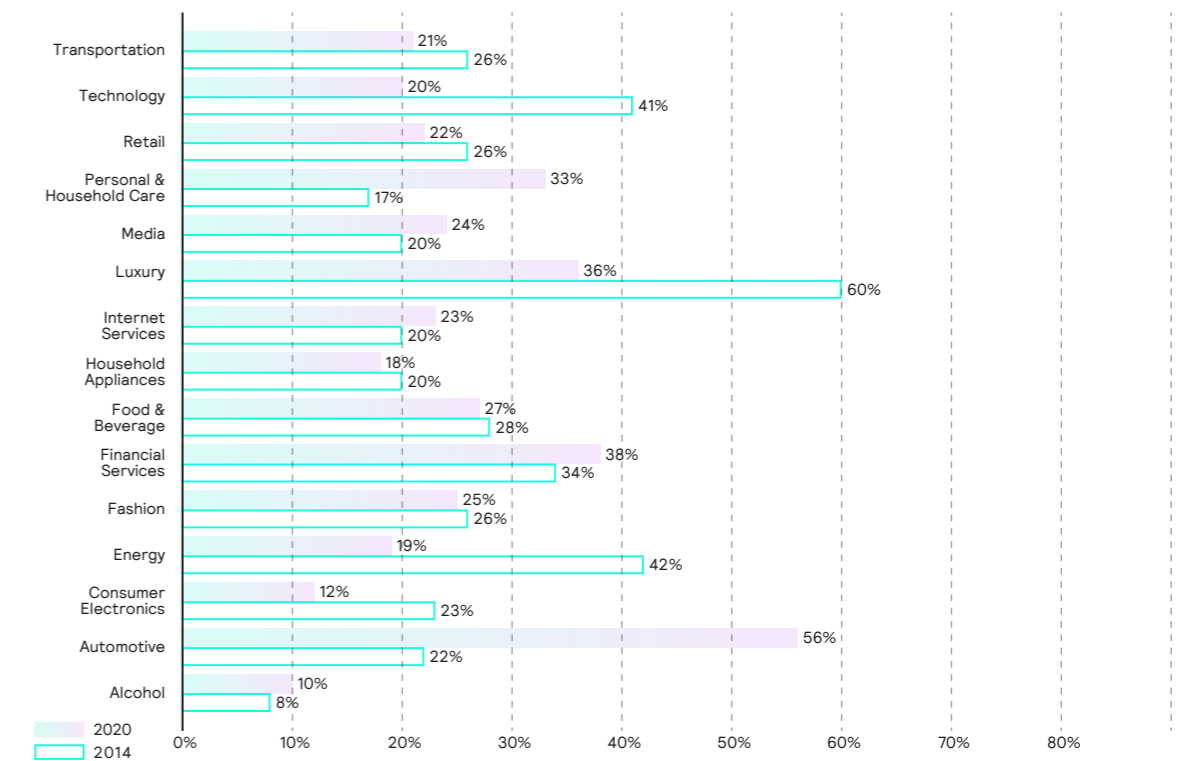
Emotional connection



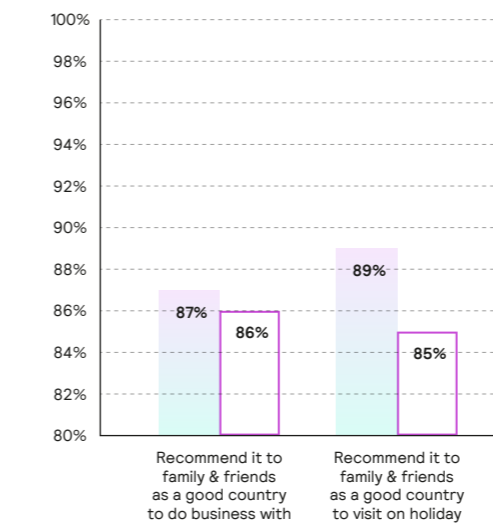
Confidence in stability & reliability



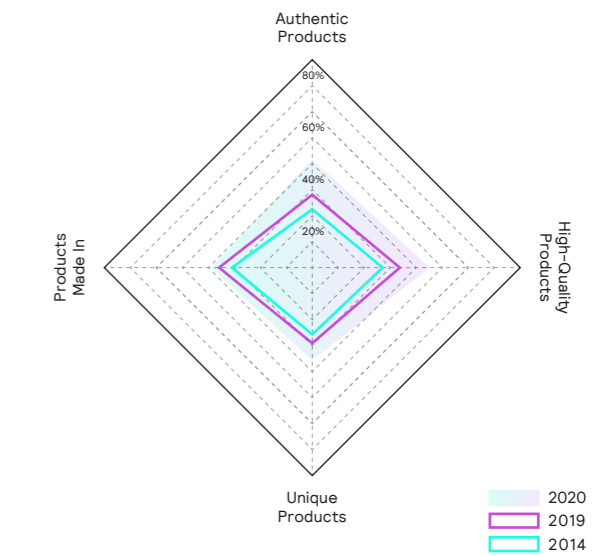
What is UAE most expert at?



Recommend to visit / Good to do business with



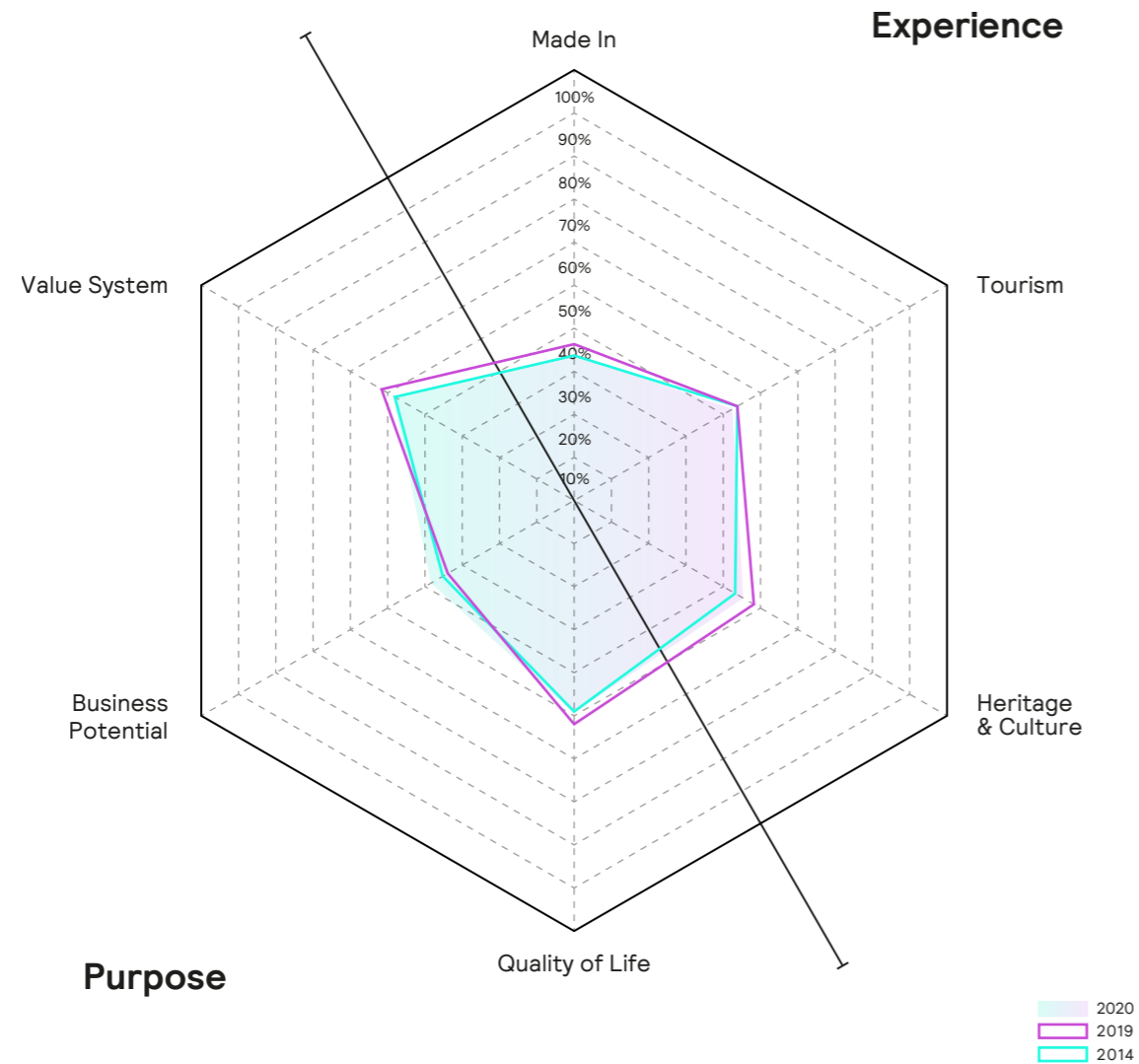
Made In product perceptions and purchase intent





10 1↑

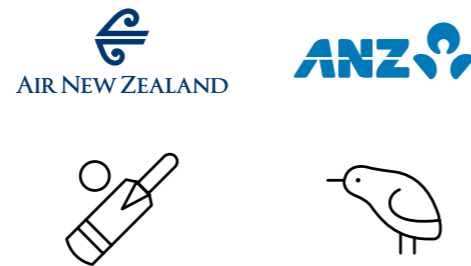
How does New Zealand perform by dimension?



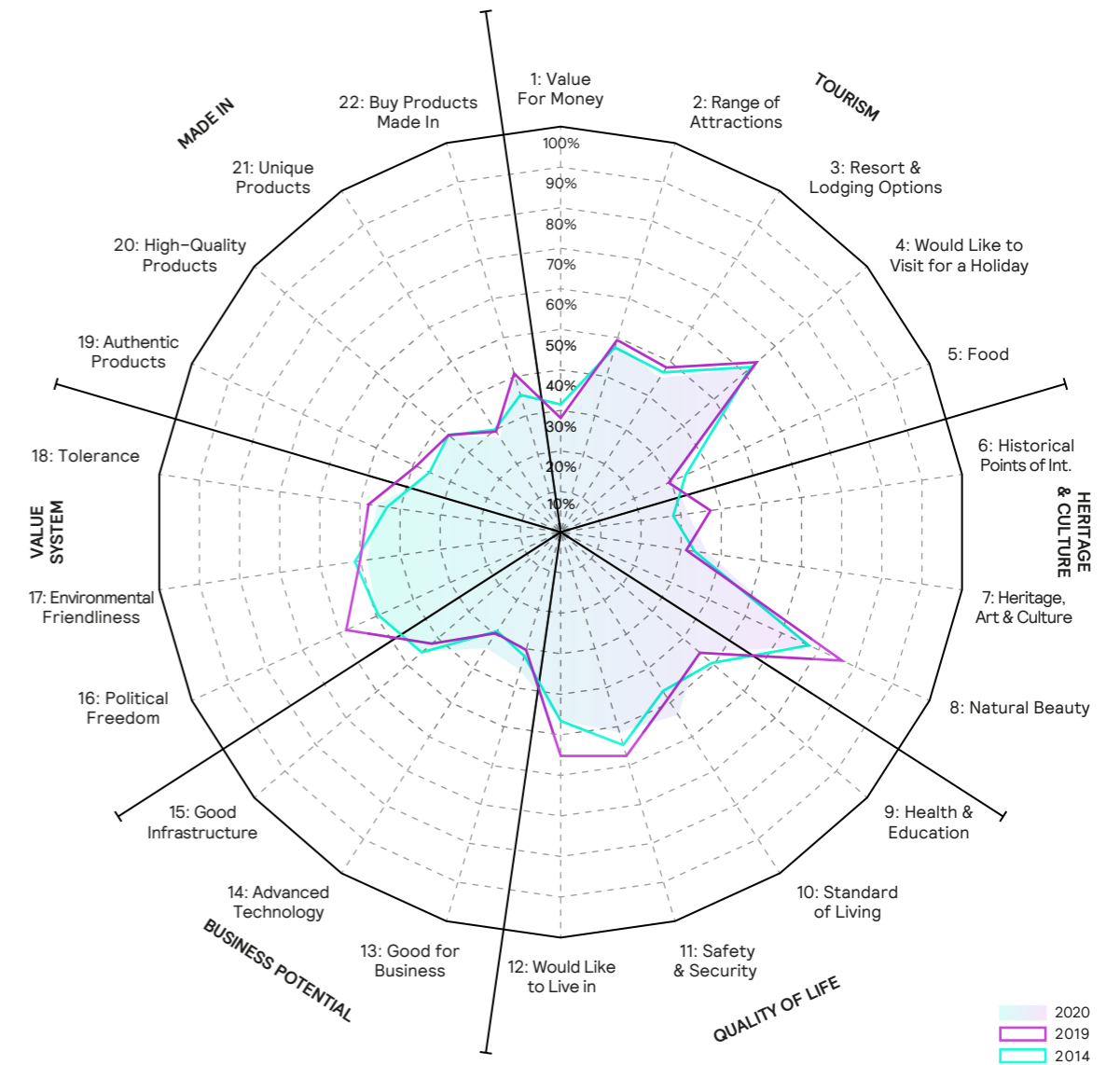
Top-of-mind associations



Brand & product associations



What are the key associations with New Zealand?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

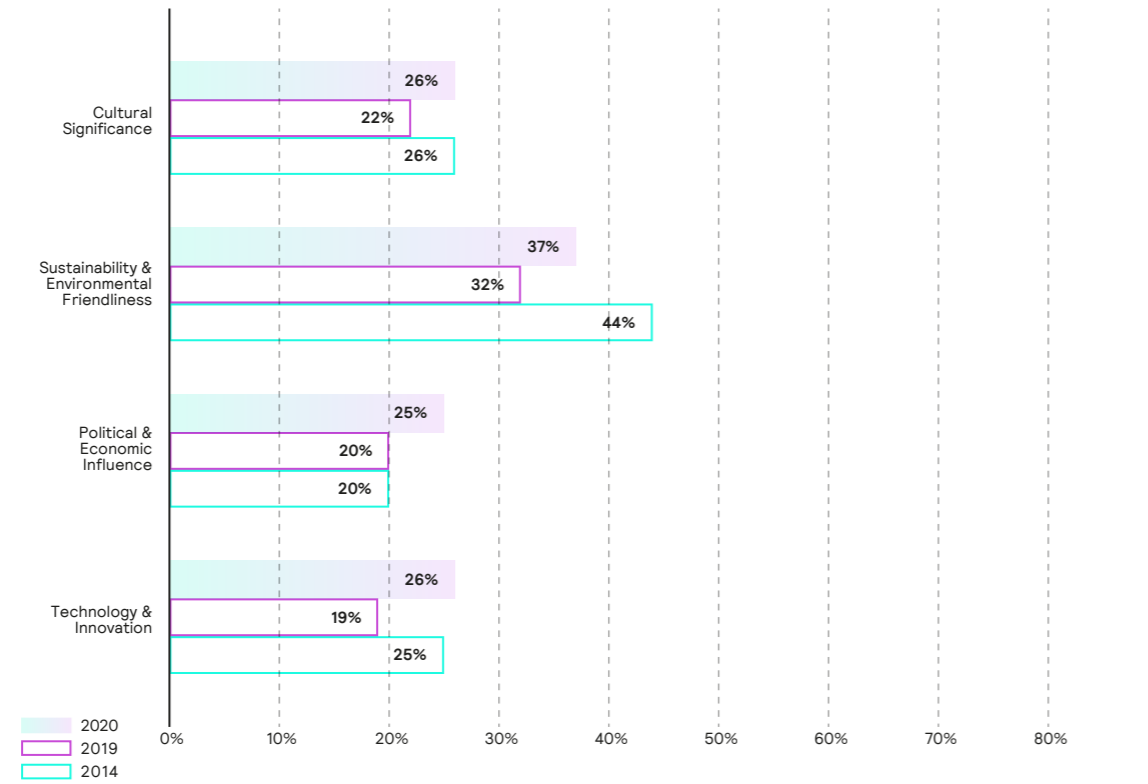
- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

Made In

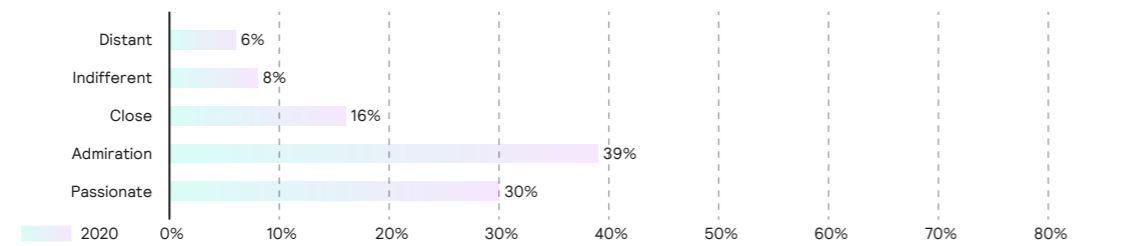
- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In



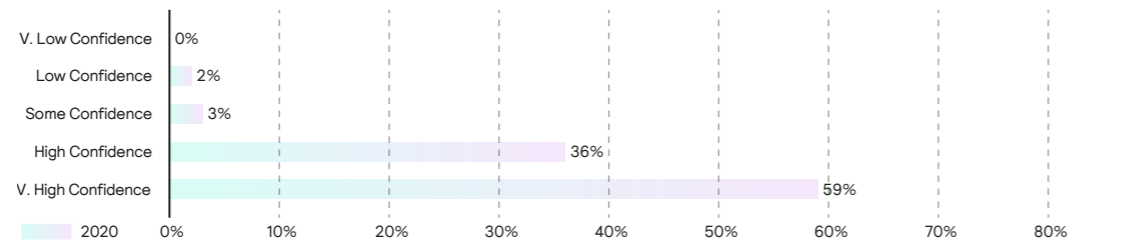
New Zealand current momentum



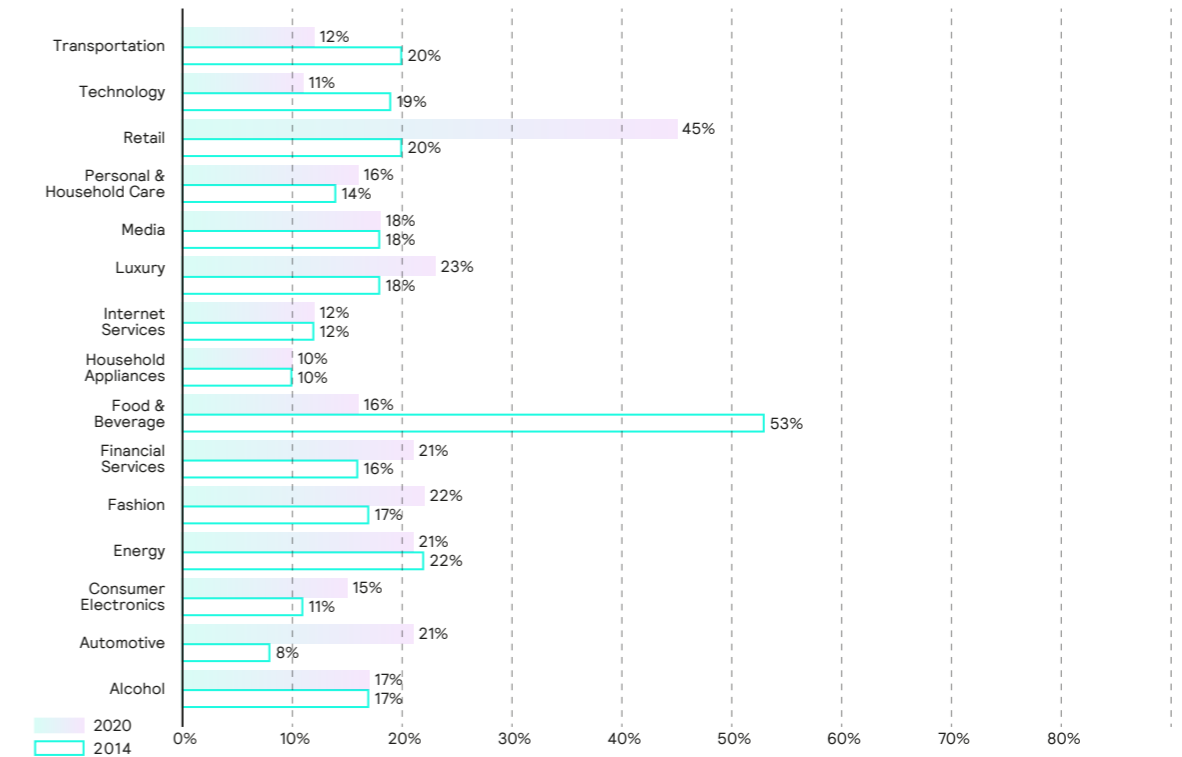
Emotional connection



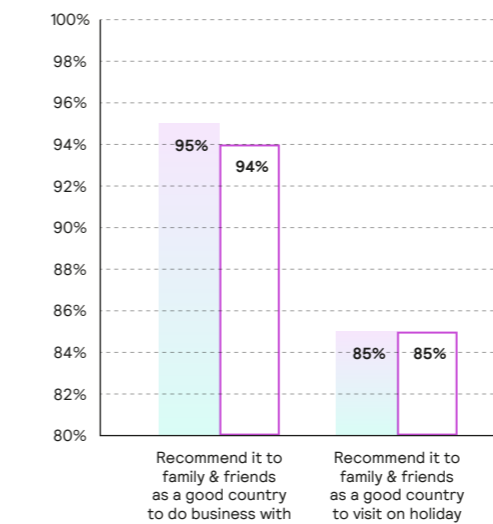
Confidence in stability & reliability



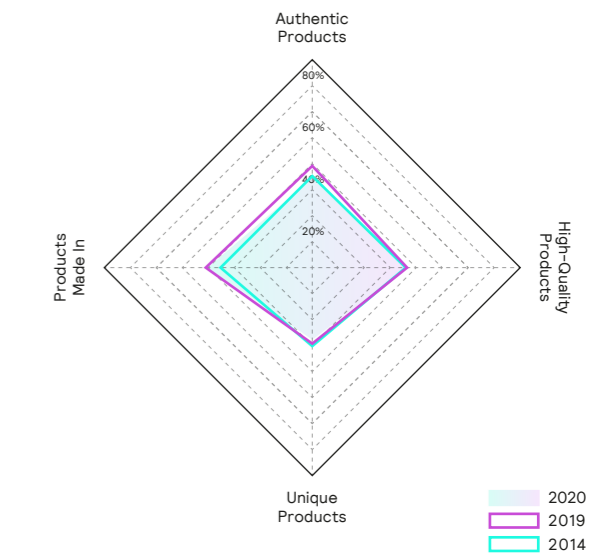
What is New Zealand most expert at?



Recommend to visit / Good to do business with

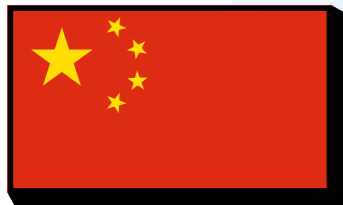
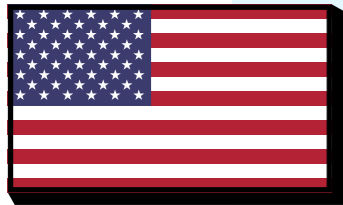


Made In product perceptions and purchase intent

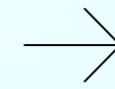


→ **07**

→ **Other Top Stories**



With a US election looming, post-Brexit trade deals hogging the headlines, and China's economy growing as others struggle during the pandemic, the phrase 'a week is a long time in politics' has never rung truer.



Given all this, we might have expected to see America, Britain and – thanks to continued uncertainty around trade – China all slump in this year's Country Index ratings. In fact, both the US and the UK fell by just one ranking (down to 13 and 20 respectively), while China was down by only four places to 33.

"The US continues to be the largest economy and continues to offer the most options out of all the countries listed. Doing business and vacationing is still higher than the rest even though political unrest is present." Canadian, Male

"[The UK is a] peaceful country, no discrimination, very good purchasing power, you can feel that you belong there." ME/Africa, Male

"Technologically [China] is very advanced, and it is a very layered country, and it is also beautiful." LATAM, Male



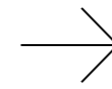
Let's take the US first. Polarised politics, social division, questions surrounding its handling of Covid-19 and one of the most highly anticipated elections in years have combined to make America somewhat of an unknown quality.

While US citizens feel that the rest of the world has mixed feelings about them as a country brand (as do UK residents about their nation), many of our respondents used patriotic language such as "I love America" while extolling the virtues of the country's safety, climate and opportunities.

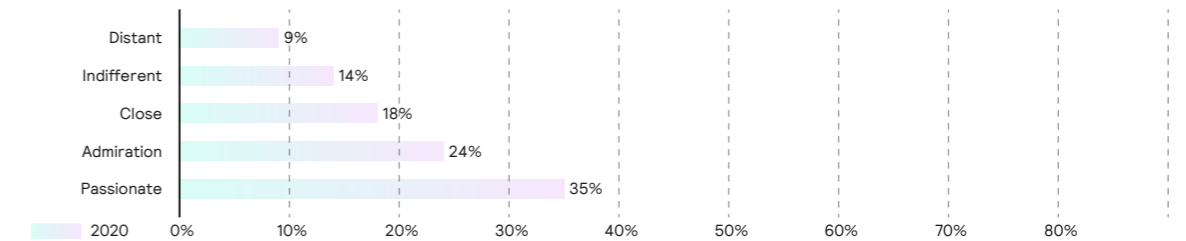
And nearly one third of Americans view their country as having dealt with the pandemic "reasonably well". One in five believe that the US has managed Covid-19 "very well". When we asked other nationalities which country they felt had handled the pandemic the best so far, the US came in at number seven.

Our sample shows that Americans are split on all manner of issues. They are either very positive or very negative, there is no middle ground. But, looking at the bigger picture, the US recorded business potential as its strongest association, as it was in 2019. Made in, tourism, heritage and culture have also remained consistent year-on-year although quality of life took a hit, as did value system, particularly since 2014.

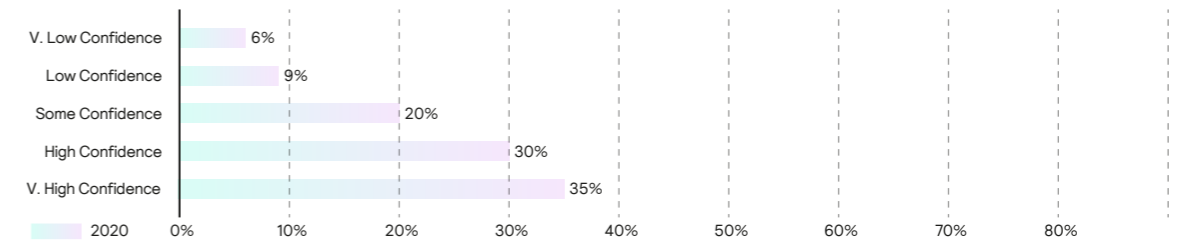
Despite national and global events, confidence in America has remained high. Is the US a Teflon brand? Time will tell but, judging by our results, the future looks bright.



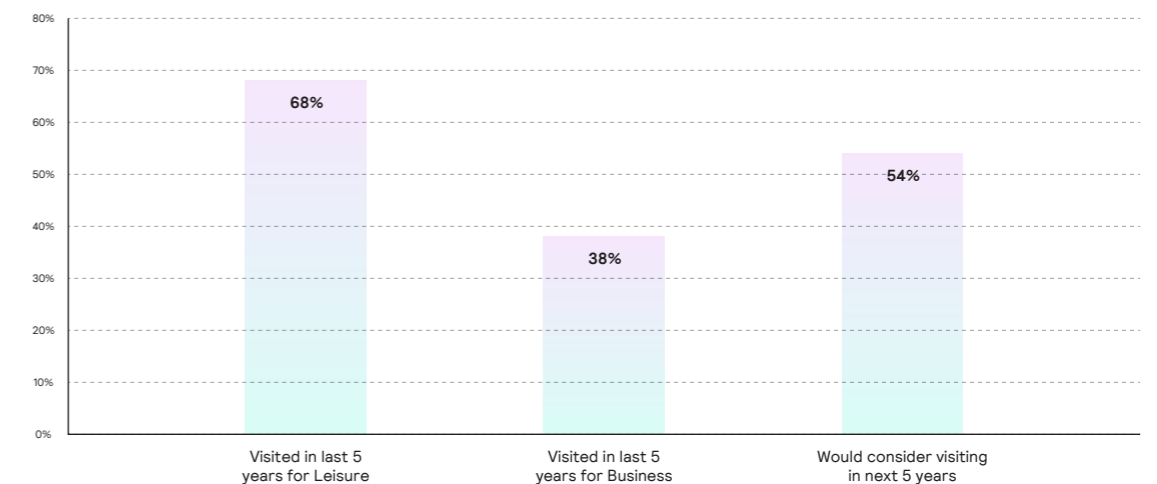
US – Emotional connection



US – Confidence in stability & reliability



US – Have visited or would consider visiting





As for the UK, its results were very similar to those recorded in 2019.

Like the rest of the world, it has been dealing with Covid-19, but with the added complication of Brexit, an issue that has split the country down the middle and shows no sign of resolving itself any time soon.

In terms of the pandemic, UK citizens are once again divided with, at opposite ends of the scale, 15% of the belief that the country has dealt with it extremely well and 17% of the opinion that it has been handled very badly.

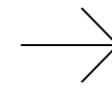
The UK's brands continue to be well-respected on the world stage, among them Range Rover, the Premier League football teams, and tourism associated with areas of outstanding natural beauty, among them the Lake District, and the Scottish Highlands.



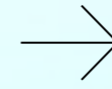
Moving on to China, it is also noted for its consistency in the various waves of the Country Index.

Not surprisingly, advanced technology is its strongest attribute and has gathered in strength over the years. Like perceptions of Japan, "Made in China" has long ceased to be an insult. After all, this is a country which counts Huawei, Ant Financial, and Alibaba among its brands.

Regarding the pandemic, none of our Chinese sample had anything negative to say about how the country has dealt with Covid-19.



UK – Top-of-mind associations



China – Top-of-mind associations

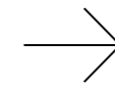




United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Oman and Saudi Arabia have all improved their overall rankings since 2019 (they now sit at number 9, 18, 25, and 28 respectively).







But UAE has the stand-out story. A new entrant to the top ten (it has risen by seven places), its weakness on value systems hasn't held it back.

Let's take a closer look at what's happening in the region. It helps to cast our minds back to the 2014 Country Index where our respondents identified that, among other nations, the UAE and Qatar were countries most likely to be moving forwards in years to come. At the time, those we surveyed reported strong perceptions around business potential and momentum in innovation as well as energy and technology – all of which correlate to country brand strength. And so this has come to pass.



“UAE is progressing forward very fast in technology, transportation, business etc. It is a tourist attractive place and people from all over the world work in the UAE. The people are friendly and welcoming.” Far East, Male

Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

Country	2020	2019	2014
 United Arab Emirates	9	16	19
 Qatar	18	26	24
 Israel	22	22	26
 Oman	25	31	34
 Kuwait	27	28	–
 Saudi Arabia	28	30	39
 Turkey	51	40	53
 Iran	69	72	71
 Iraq	75	75	–



The UAE in particular is one of the Middle East's most important economic centres.

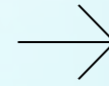
Although traditionally conservative, it is nevertheless one of the most liberal Gulf nations and, this year, became the first Gulf State to forge diplomatic relations with Israel. Now regarded as a regional powerhouse, this small but ambitious nation is most definitely one to watch.

“There is less crime [in Qatar], technology is very good, airways are the best, best in the world financially for business and leisure. Very luxurious and accommodating.” ME/Africa, Male

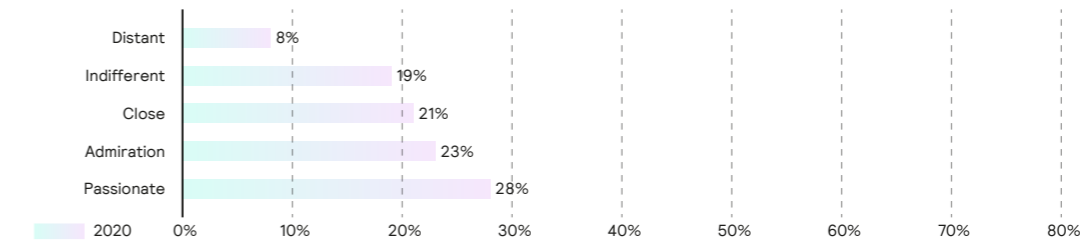


Like UAE, Qatar is known for its successful airline industry not to mention its petroleum and natural gas reserves.

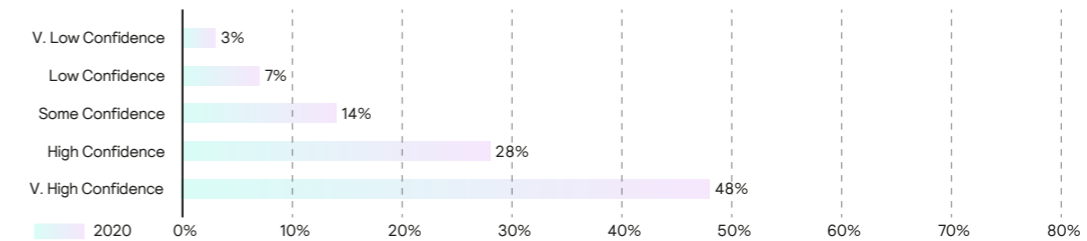
While the aviation sector has been hit hard by Covid-19, and Qatar's economy shrunk in the second quarter, the country's preparations for hosting the 2022 World Cup have progressed. Following worldwide bad press over its treatment of migrant workers, it announced changes to its labour laws in August, the latest in a series of employment reforms. Another one to watch.



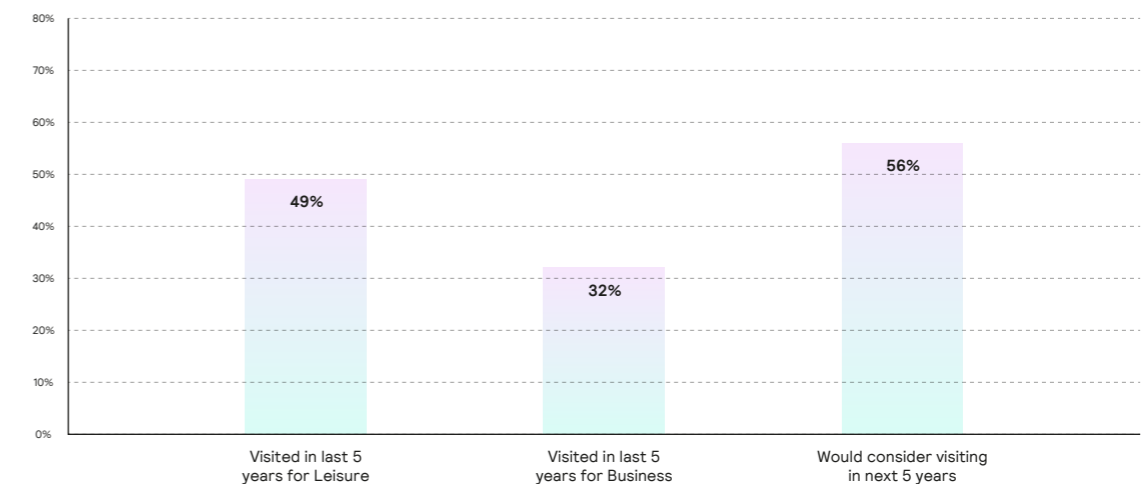
UAE – Emotional connection



UAE – Confidence in stability & reliability

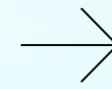


UAE – Have visited or would consider visiting





In keeping with our key theme of resilience, the research shows that all African countries increased their rankings in 2020 – and some by considerable margins.



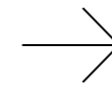
Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

Country	2020	2019	2014
Angola	32	69	–
Algeria	34	60	–
Ghana	36	–	70
Ethiopia	44	52	–
South Africa	45	51	40
Kenya	46	63	65
Egypt	54	55	54
Nigeria	61	68	75
Morocco	64	66	57



Among the unlikely heroes are Angola (soaring to 32 from a previous position of 69), Algeria (up from 60 to slot 34) and Ghana, a new entrant year-on-year, landing at number 36.

So, what is going on? If we scrutinise Angola, all attributes have witnessed significant score increases since our last report in 2019 (and, across the Country Index as a whole), Angola was our number one riser over 12 months — no small feat given its competition). In the country itself, there are some fascinating stories, not least its government's efforts to implement a series of policies to stabilise, reform and broaden the country's economy. One of the hopes is that these changes will stimulate an expansion of Angola's export market. Angola is Africa's second biggest oil exporter, so the stakes are high.



“Historically [Angola] is a rich country. [It's people] continue to overcome their challenges, and [Angola's] political organisation with honor, despite all the suffering they have already experienced. The language also catches my attention. It responded well to the investments already made by foreign capital, which indicates that it will attract more. Automatically making it more global.” LATAM, Male



Algeria, the second highest riser since 2019, has recorded higher attribute scores across all measures since 2019.

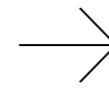
Respondents cited it as a country known for its tourism industry, vibrant streets and stunning landscapes, and described it as a place seen to be progressing and full of character. But this could be subject to change. Recent reports talk of fading hopes for a new political course in Algeria and news stories suggest that the country is expelling thousands of migrants and refugees.

“Kenya is a beacon of hope in our continent and is making great strides into the future for its people and the rest of the continent.” ME/Africa, Male

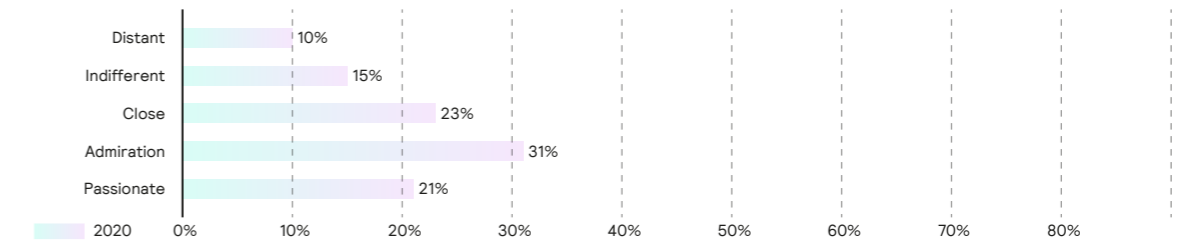


Meanwhile, Kenya, is one of our survey-wide top risers, up 17 places to 46.

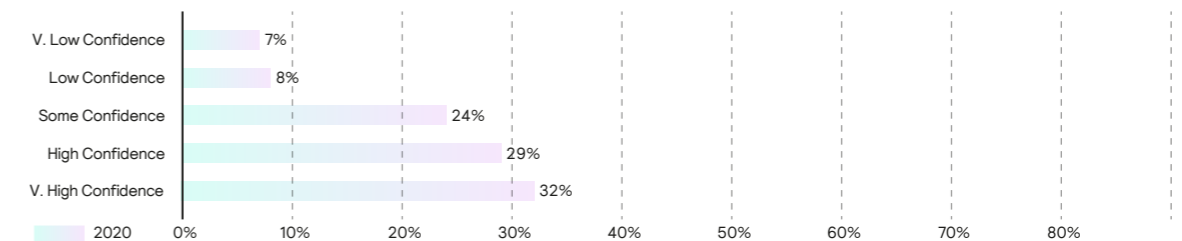
It is seen to be a country that is growing and progressing and, as it has been for many years, is associated with safaris, landscape, culture, beaches, and world heritage sites.



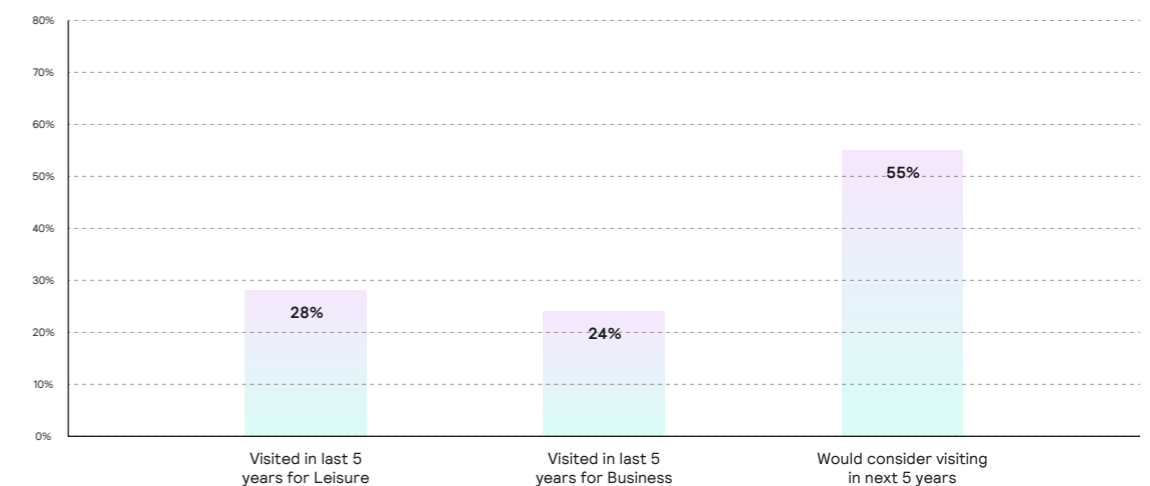
Algeria – Emotional connection



Algeria – Confidence in stability & reliability



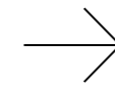
Algeria – Have visited or would consider visiting





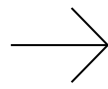
It's not been a good time for LATAM. According to our research, between 2014 and 2020, four of the top five fallers were all in this region – Chile, Argentina, Mexico and Peru. Year-on-year, both Peru and Argentina were still top fallers.

Only Puerto Rico, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic have improved (they all do well on perceptions of natural beauty, tourism, and heritage and culture) whereas the fallers share a variety of characteristics, not least being seen as poor value for money.



Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

Country	2020	2019	2014
Puerto Rico	37	62	33
Guatemala	47	57	–
Panama	48	46	41
Brazil	57	47	43
Cuba	58	48	–
Ecuador	59	53	–
Argentina	60	36	42
Peru	65	37	49
Dominican Republic	68	70	–
Colombia	70	54	63
Mexico	72	64	55
Chile	73	43	46



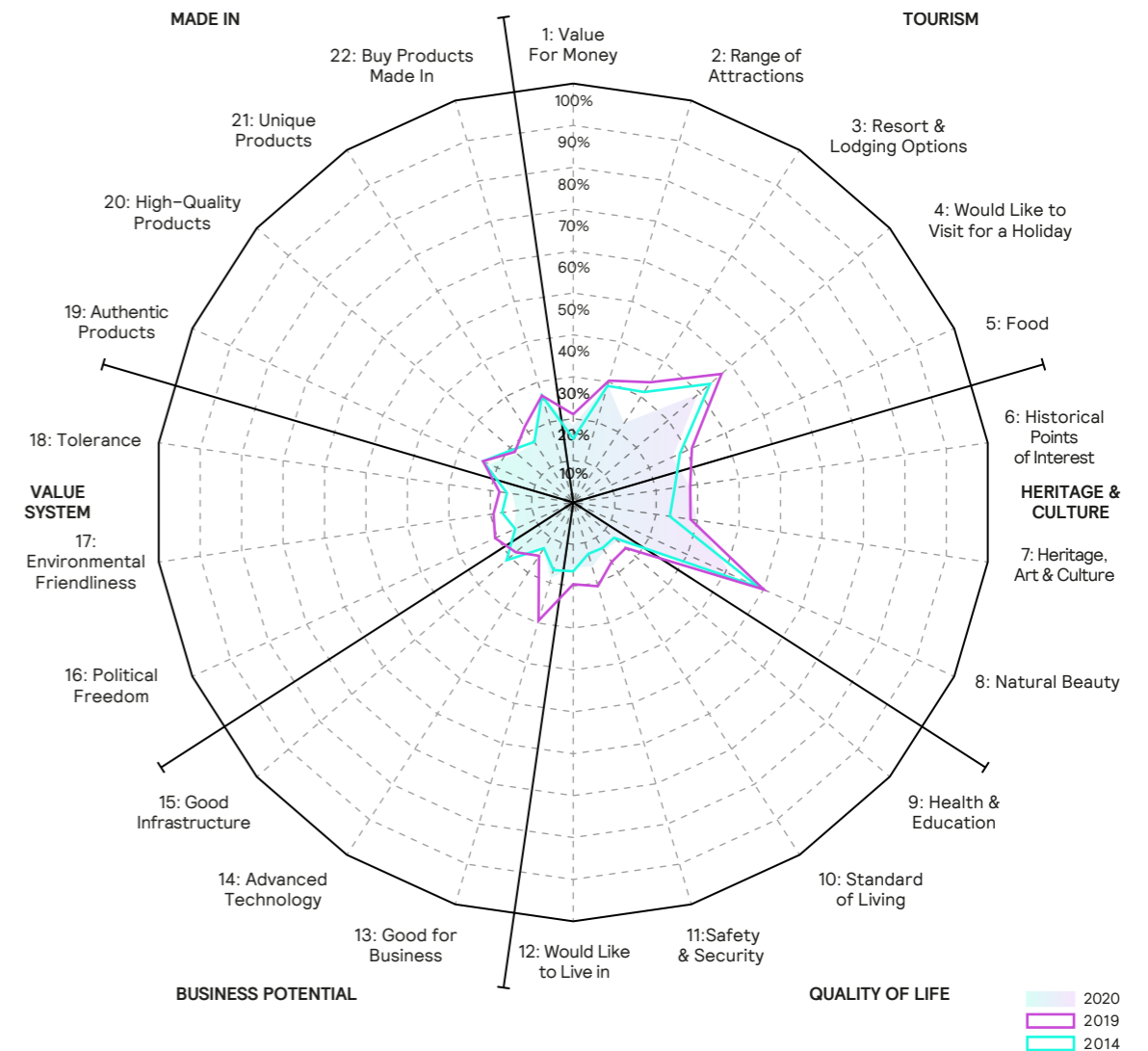
“Argentina is one of the most beautiful places I have ever seen. It has a very beautiful nature. They have advanced in technology. They have developed their culture.” ME/Africa, Male

It could be argued that Covid-19 has exposed many of Latin America’s biggest problems, from patchy access to healthcare, inequality, and a lack of trust in central government. Prior to the pandemic, the region was already struggling in various areas including street protests and widespread violence. Now it has the unwanted accolade of being home to six of the world’s ten deadliest Covid-19 outbreaks, among them Chile, Brazil, Mexico and Peru. It seems likely that the pandemic will reverse any progress made in recent years on poverty and injustice. And who knows what the future holds for LATAM leaders. Take Brazil’s Jair Bolsonaro, for example. He may be popular now thanks to emergency aid payments but foreign investment has flooded out of the country and unemployment is at record levels.

“I love the people, culture, and beauty [of Brazil].” US, Female



Chile – What are the key associations?



Tourism

- 1 Value for Money
- 2 Range of Attractions
- 3 Resort & Lodging Options
- 4 Would like to Visit for a Holiday
- 5 Food

Heritage & Culture

- 6 Historical Points of Interest
- 7 Heritage, Arts, & Culture
- 8 Natural Beauty

Quality of Life

- 9 Health & Education
- 10 Standard of Living
- 11 Safety & Security
- 12 Would Like to Live In

Business Potential

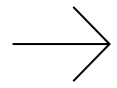
- 13 Good for Business
- 14 Advanced Technology
- 15 Good Infrastructure

Value System

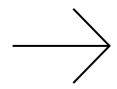
- 16 Political Freedom
- 17 Environmental Friendliness
- 18 Tolerance

Made In

- 19 Authentic Product
- 20 High-Quality Product
- 21 Unique Products
- 22 Buy Products Made In

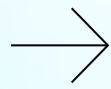


08



Regions

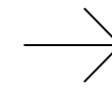
- Asia Pacific
- Europe
- Middle East
- Africa
- LATAM
- North America



Across the different regions of the world, it's a mixed bag. As we discussed earlier in the Index, many countries (and regions) have confounded expectations. The following graphics show the full picture.

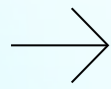
Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

Country	2020	2019	2014
Japan	1	1	1
New Zealand	10	11	11
Australia	11	15	8



Country	2020	2019	2014
South Korea	16	20	20
Singapore	17	18	14
Malaysia	30	45	48
China	33	29	28
Myanmar	38	49	-
Thailand	39	39	38
Hong Kong	40	24	-
Sri Lanka	43	58	60
Kazakhstan	49	59	-
Bangladesh	50	71	72
Indonesia	52	56	66
Philippines	63	67	-
Vietnam	66	61	64
India	67	41	50
Pakistan	74	73	73

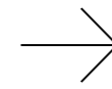
Regions



Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

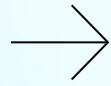
Country	2020	2019	2014
Switzerland	2	3	2
Norway	3	2	6
Germany	4	6	3
Denmark	6	7	9
Finland	7	5	13
Sweden	8	4	4
Austria	12	9	10
France	14	17	17
Italy	15	14	18
Luxembourg	19	10	—
United Kingdom	20	19	12
Netherlands	21	13	16

Europe












Country	2020	2019	2014
Spain	23	23	23
Portugal	24	25	27
Ireland	26	33	21
Belgium	29	21	22
Russia	31	27	31
Greece	35	34	30
Czech Republic	41	32	29
Slovakia	42	35	59
Bulgaria	53	—	67
Poland	55	44	45
Hungary	56	38	56
Romania	62	42	62
Ukraine	71	74	74

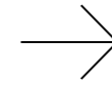
Middle East



Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

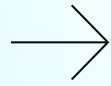
Country	2020	2019	2014
 United Arab Emirates	9	16	19
 Qatar	18	26	24
 Israel	22	22	26
 Oman	25	31	34
 Kuwait	27	28	—
 Saudi Arabia	28	30	39
 Turkey	51	40	53
 Iran	69	72	71
 Iraq	75	75	—

Africa



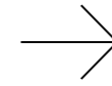
Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

Country	2020	2019	2014
 Angola	32	69	—
 Algeria	34	60	—
 Ghana	36	—	70
 Ethiopia	44	52	—
 South Africa	45	51	40
 Kenya	46	63	65
 Egypt	54	55	54
 Nigeria	61	68	75
 Morocco	64	66	57



Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

Country	2020	2019	2014
Puerto Rico	37	62	33
Guatemala	47	57	—
Panama	48	46	41
Brazil	57	47	43
Cuba	58	48	—
Ecuador	59	53	—
Argentina	60	36	42
Peru	65	37	49
Dominican Republic	68	70	—
Colombia	70	54	63
Mexico	72	64	55
Chile	73	43	46



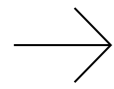
Country Index overall ranking position 2020/2019/2014

Country	2020	2019	2014
Canada	5	8	5
US	13	12	7

→ 09

→ Cities

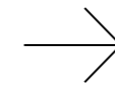




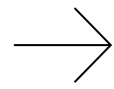
In previous Country Indexes, we've examined how cities provide a powerful sense of place and belonging, even if those cities are beset by crime, social inequality and a high cost of living.

Country Index most influential cities 2020/2019/2014

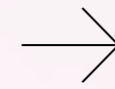
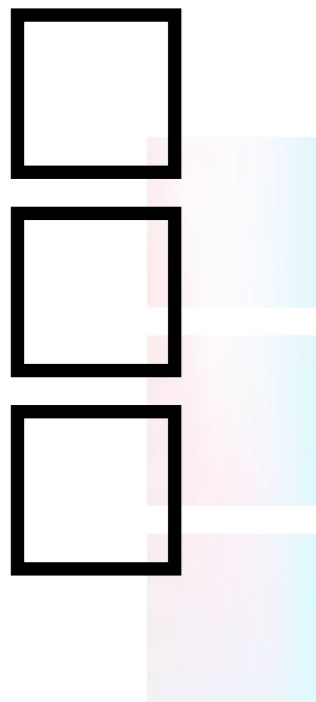
Country	2020	2019	2014
New York	1	1	1
Beijing	2	3	3
Washington	3	4	4
London	4	2	2
Tokyo	5	7	6



Country	2020	2019	2014
Paris	6	5	7
Moscow	7	6	5
Shanghai	8	9	9
Dubai	9	11	10
Berlin	10	10	8
Hong Kong	11	8	11
Istanbul	12	17	21
Singapore	13	12	12
Perth	14	-	-
Los Angeles	15	15	16
Rome	16	20	17
Seoul	17	16	19
Toronto	18	19	18
Oslo	19	-	-
Amsterdam	20	-	-



In 2020 we must also consider the effect of Covid-19 on urban living. Press reports suggest a widespread desire to escape to the country with some media outlets claiming that the exodus has already begun. Well, if that's the case, we're certainly not seeing much evidence of it in our data.



According to our Index, New York has retained its number one spot as the globe's most influential city despite a dramatic fall in visitor numbers due to Covid-19 and continuing unease over political divisions in the wider US.

Similarly, London, which has also witnessed a collapse in visitor numbers against a Covid-19 backdrop and national disagreements over Brexit, is ranked at number 4, albeit down two slots since 2019.

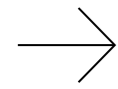
Meanwhile, Beijing has climbed one place to number 2, and Washington is also up one, landing at 3.

Tokyo completes the top 5. These are all major cities which have struggled during the pandemic in terms of outbreaks, tourism and business sustainability. Yet they are regarded as being the most influential cities over the next three years. Resilience and the long-term picture is key.

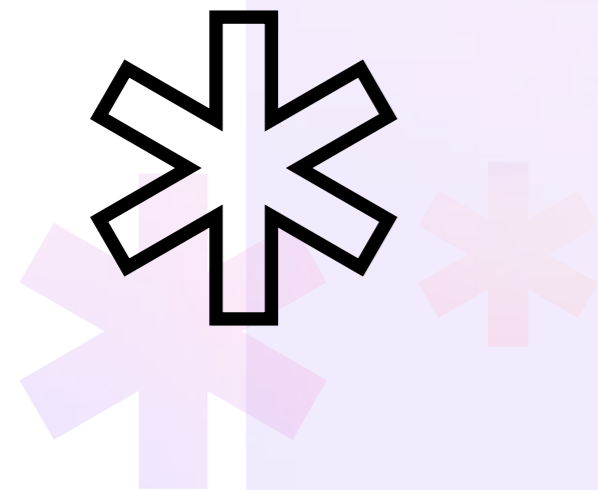
Of course, we may see a different picture in 2021 if the pandemic is still gripping the world, more people are working from home, and companies have changed their employment practices on a permanent basis. Only time will tell.

→ **10**

→ **Notes and
Methodology Detail**



Now in its third wave in its current format (previous waves were conducted in 2014 & 2019), the FutureBrand Country Index is a global study that reorders the World Bank's top 75 countries on perception rather than GDP.



This research is a globally informed audience of frequent flyers evaluating the image and reputation of the World Bank's top 75 countries by GDP.

Both the 2020 and 2019 waves were based on the World Bank ranking (2014 was not based on the World Bank ranking). All participants in the FutureBrand Country Index were interested in travelling abroad and had travelled internationally at least twice in the last two years, with a mix of business and/or leisure.

We are in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic and the research also covers attitudes towards how countries are seen to be dealing with this.

Importantly, our rankings show that a country's financial strength does not necessarily translate into perception strength.

Fieldwork took place between September 2 and September 11, 2020.

↑ **The** +

FutureBrand

Country

→ **Index** 2020

About FutureBrand

FutureBrand is a world-leading brand transformation company. With offices across the world, we unite global experts in strategy, design and innovation to futureproof businesses and countries through brand experiences that drive profitable, long-term growth.

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Our partner

QRi Consulting is FutureBrand's global research partner for the FutureBrand Country Index. Working in close collaboration with us, QRi managed questionnaire development and provided an in-depth analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data underpinning the report. This was informed by QRi's extensive research, brand and sector knowledge and experience as well as its proprietary QualiQuant methodologies.

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