

# Impact of Russia-Ukraine war on Nation Brands

A research report on how government responses to the Russia-Ukraine war are shaping perceptions of nations

Madrid and London, April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022

# About Bloom Consulting

## About Bloom Consulting

Established in 2003, headquarters are in Madrid, with offices in Lisbon, London and Sao Paulo. Bloom Consulting is a company exclusively dedicated to Nation and Place Branding.

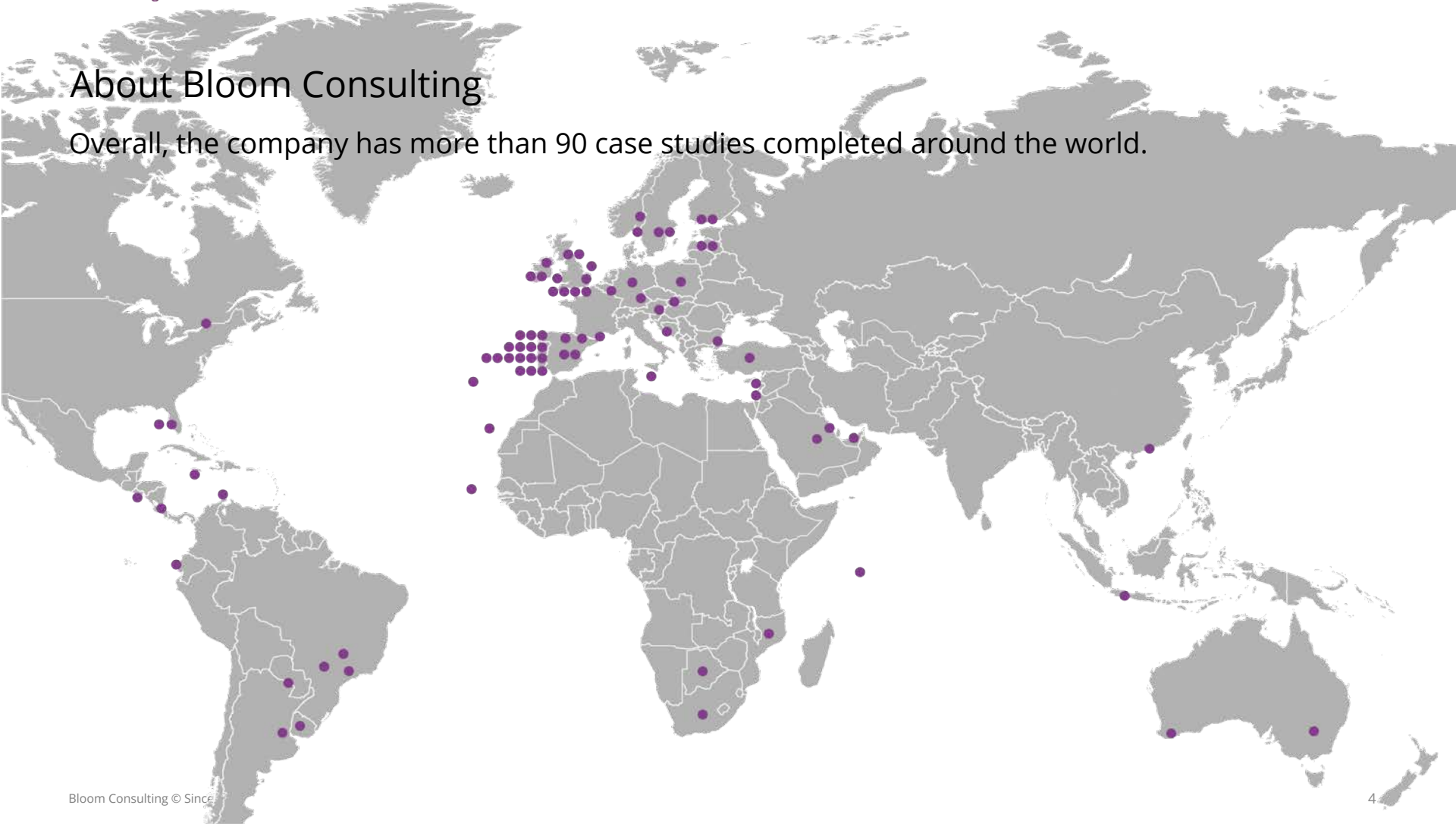


# Bloom Consulting

Countries Regions and Cities

## About Bloom Consulting

Overall, the company has more than 90 case studies completed around the world.



## About Bloom Consulting

Bloom Consulting is also an official data partner of the World Economic Forum and provide advice to the OECD. The World Bank and the European Travel Commission, use Bloom Consulting data for measurement purposes.



## Index

### **1 - Introduction and research objectives**

### **2 - Scope and methodology**

### **3 - Research results**

- Countries: winners and losers in terms of perception.
- Russia and Ukraine: comparative analysis of perceptions.
- Anti-Russia sentiment on the rise?
- Brand-Nought and impact on Prominence, Made in, Invest, Visit and Talent.

# Introduction and research objectives



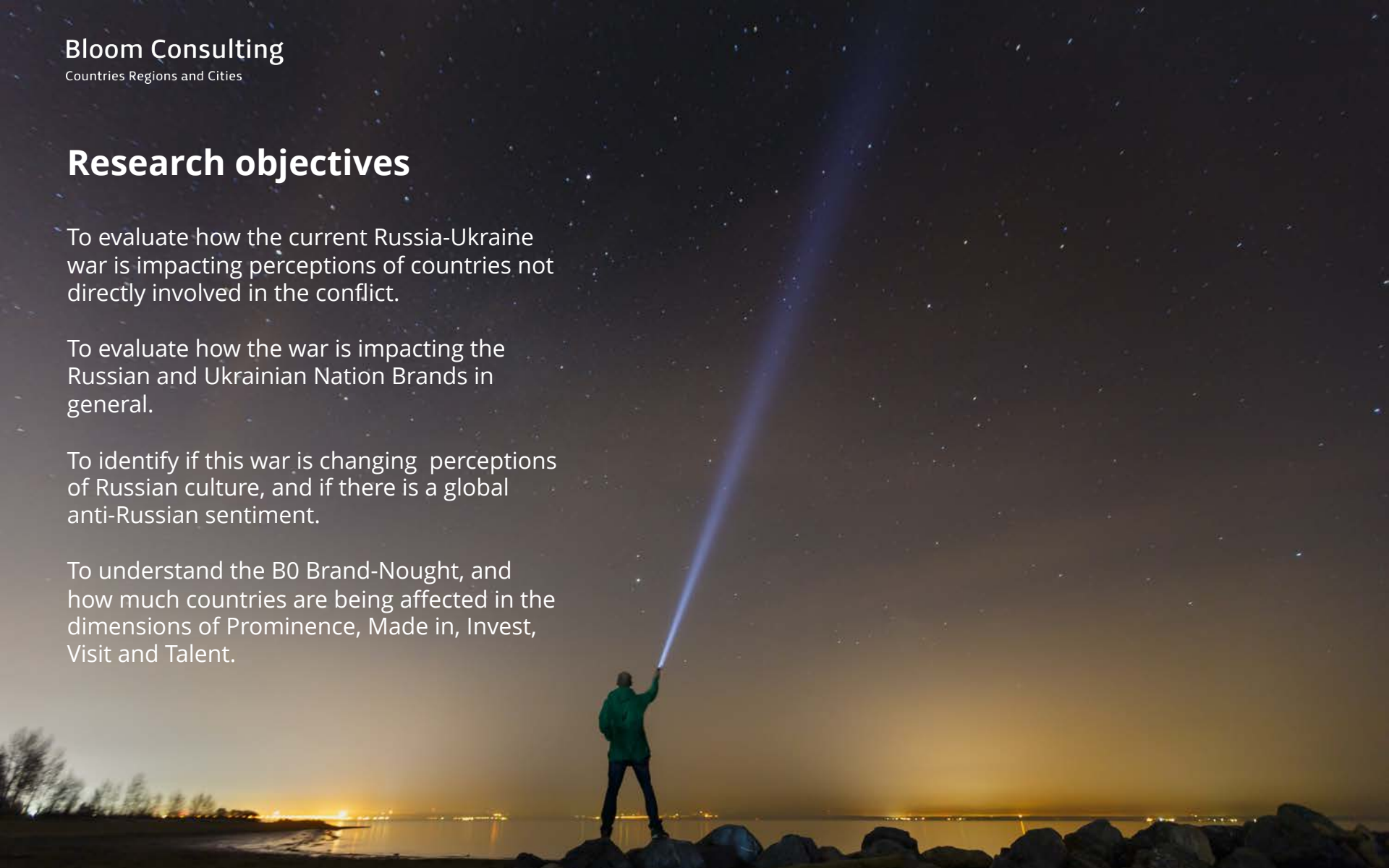
## Research objectives

To evaluate how the current Russia-Ukraine war is impacting perceptions of countries not directly involved in the conflict.

To evaluate how the war is impacting the Russian and Ukrainian Nation Brands in general.

To identify if this war is changing perceptions of Russian culture, and if there is a global anti-Russian sentiment.

To understand the B0 Brand-Nought, and how much countries are being affected in the dimensions of Prominence, Made in, Invest, Visit and Talent.





## How do we know if a crisis impacts a Nation Brand?

Generally, Nation Brands are not affected by crises unless any of the following three points occur, altogether or independently.

**Prolonged crisis.**

**High level of intensity.**

**Affects perception of the country's  
*culture, history and people.***

1. Prolonged crisis.
2. High level of intensity.
3. Affects perception of the country's *culture, history and people.*

# Scope and methodology

## Scope and methodology Demographics

Bloom Consulting launched a global survey using its D2-Live Quanti © Software to analyze if perceptions on how countries are dealing with this crisis vary according to geography. 1500 citizens from 43 countries, spread across North America, Latam, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia, took part in the survey. Russian and Ukrainian citizens were purposely not included in this study.

The survey was conducted during the last week of March until the first week of April.

Bloom Consulting software used:

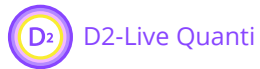
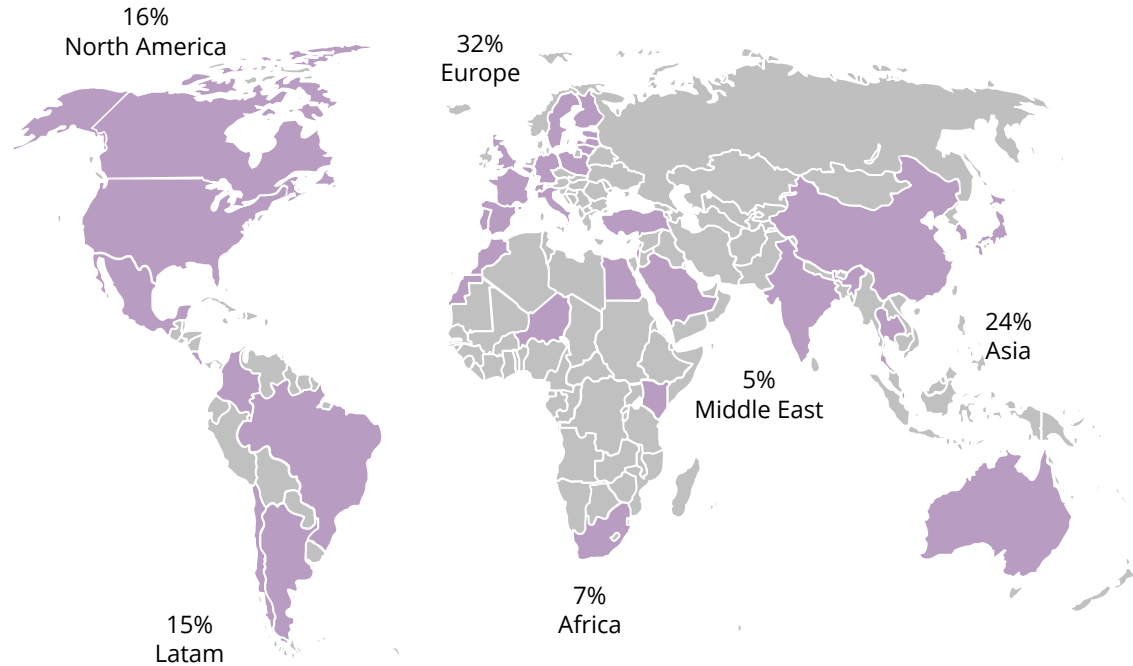


Figure 01: Sample Distribution by country of origin of the respondent



## Scope and methodology

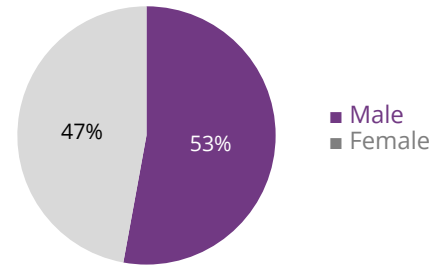
### Sample profiling

All respondents were over the age of 18, the greater share had university and postgraduate education and came from the middle and upper-middle class.

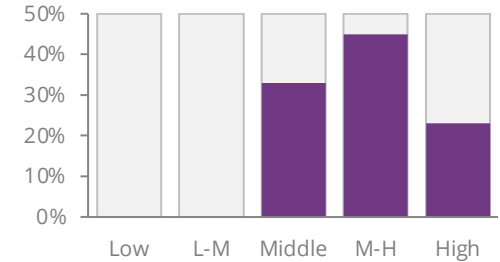
As the objective of the study was to measure external perceptions, **all domestic opinions were removed from local markets.**

Figure 02: Sample distribution

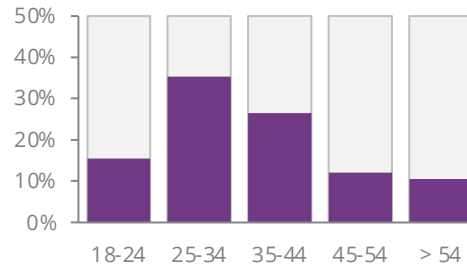
Gender distribution



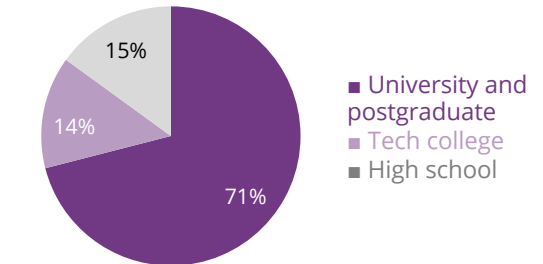
Income level



Age distribution



Level of education



## Scope and methodology

### Level of familiarity

The methodology included the *familiar vs non-familiar approach*.

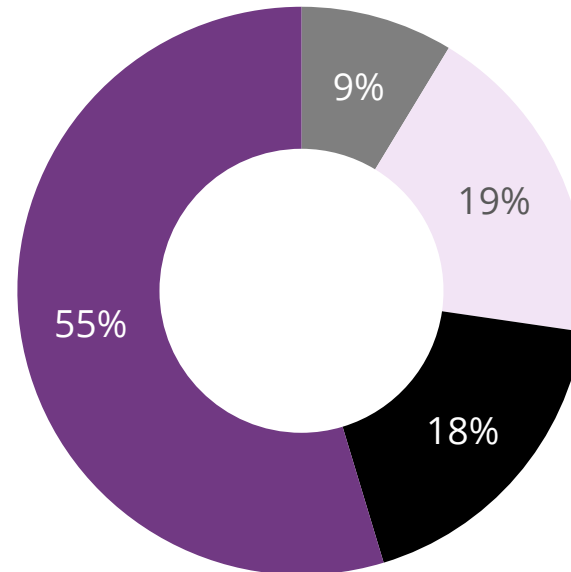
*Familiarity* refers to whether a person has visited, lived or worked in, or somehow interacted with the reality of a country.

Thus, *familiarity* may be treated as the closest indicator of *reality*. In this study, Bloom Consulting asked respondents whether they have friends or relatives in/from Ukraine or Russia to track the correlation between the level of *familiarity* and change in the perception of countries.

Usually, perceptions tend to be better among *familiar*s than *non-familiar*s. However, as further data will show, this crisis may be an exception to the rule.

Figure 03: Distribution by the level of familiarity with Russia and Ukraine: having friends or relatives in/from

■ Neither Russia nor Ukraine ■ Ukraine ■ Both Russia and Ukraine ■ Russia



## Sample and methodology Comparative analysis

Bloom Consulting divided the sample analysis into two tiers:

**Tier one:** Perceptions about countries in general, excluding Ukraine and Russia.

**Tier two:** Perceptions about Russia and Ukraine and the specific types of perceptions in which the two countries win or lose.

This division was created in order to avoid distorted views of the two predominant countries vs the rest of the world.

Figure 04: Comparative analysis

The world

---



Ukraine and Russia

---



# Research results

- Winners and losers in terms of perception



### High intensity on *top of mind*

One of the questions asked was for global audiences to name which countries (excluding their own country, Russia or Ukraine) dealt well and not so well with managing this crisis.

More than 65 countries were mentioned at least twice by global citizens. This denotes a high intensity and exposure to Nation Brands.

65 countries  
were mentioned at least  
twice (domestic excluded)





















## Winning: Poland Losing: China

Among the 65 mentioned countries mentioned, the Nation Brands that are currently being impacted positively from this crisis are **Poland, USA, UK, Germany, France, Turkey, Romania, Switzerland** and **Canada** with a special mention for **Moldova** which performed extremely well.



















The ones being affected negatively are **China, Belarus** and **India** and therefore account for the biggest negative impact.

Figure 05: Ranking of the impact of the Russia - Ukraine war perceptions on Nation Brands

### Winning

#	Country	Net score
01.	 Poland	
02.	 United States	
03.	 United Kingdom	
04.	 Germany	
05.	 France	
06.	 Turkey	
07.	 Romania	
08.	 Switzerland	
09.	 Canada	
10.	 Moldova	

### Losing

#	Country	Net score
01.	 China	
02.	 Belarus	
03.	 India	
04.	 North Korea	
05.	 Venezuela	
06.	 Pakistan	
07.	 Syria	
08.	 Serbia	
09.	 Iran	
10.	 Cuba	

## Analyzing the crisis management data

To analyze how the the 65 mentioned countries scored during this crisis, Bloom Consulting created a matrix with two AXIS.

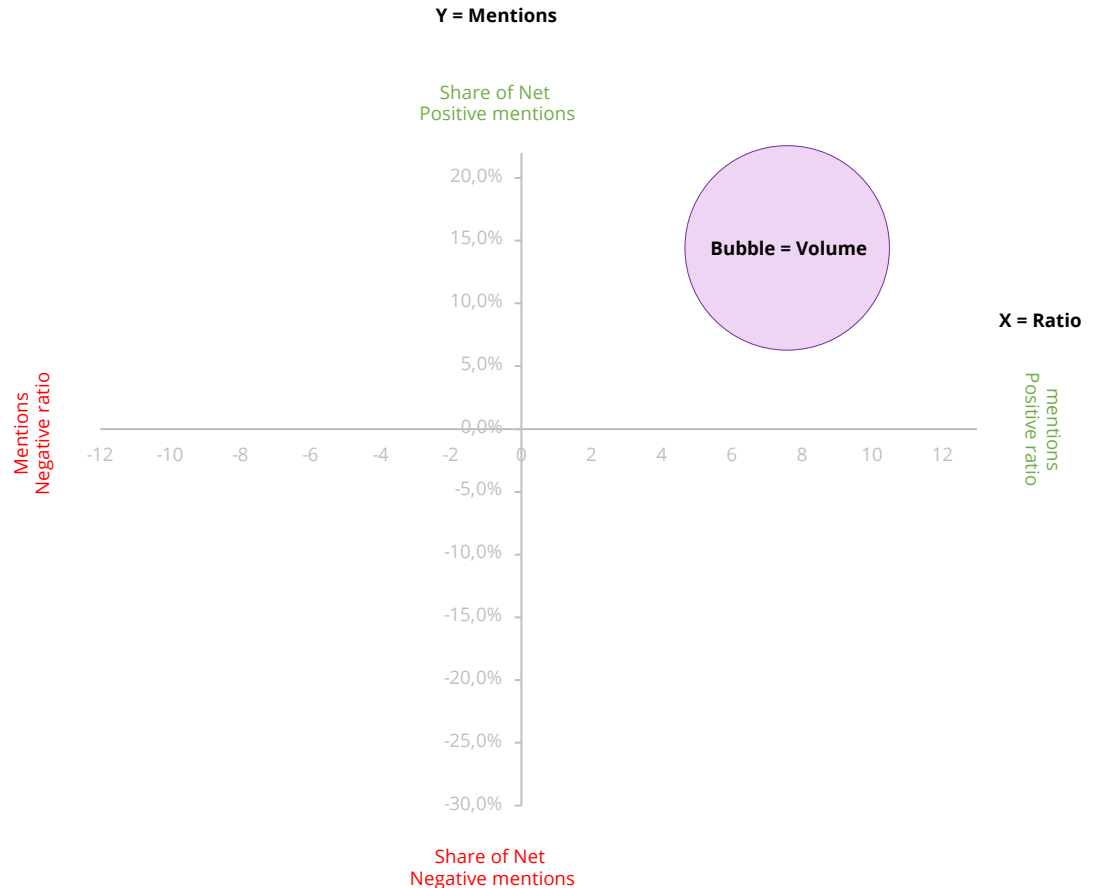
**X** (Ratio) vs **Y** (Mentions)

**X** (Ratio) represents the proportion of Negative opinions/perceptions vs Positive ones.

Countries that appear on the right side of the Ratio axis can be considered the winners of this crisis, because they had no negative mentions.

**Y** (Mentions) represent the net positive minus negative volume of mentions for each country. This axis will allow countries to understand the "effect" of the crisis.

Finally, the "**Bubble**" shows the total volume of mentions of every country. This indicator gives you a sense of the crisis' reach in a particular country.

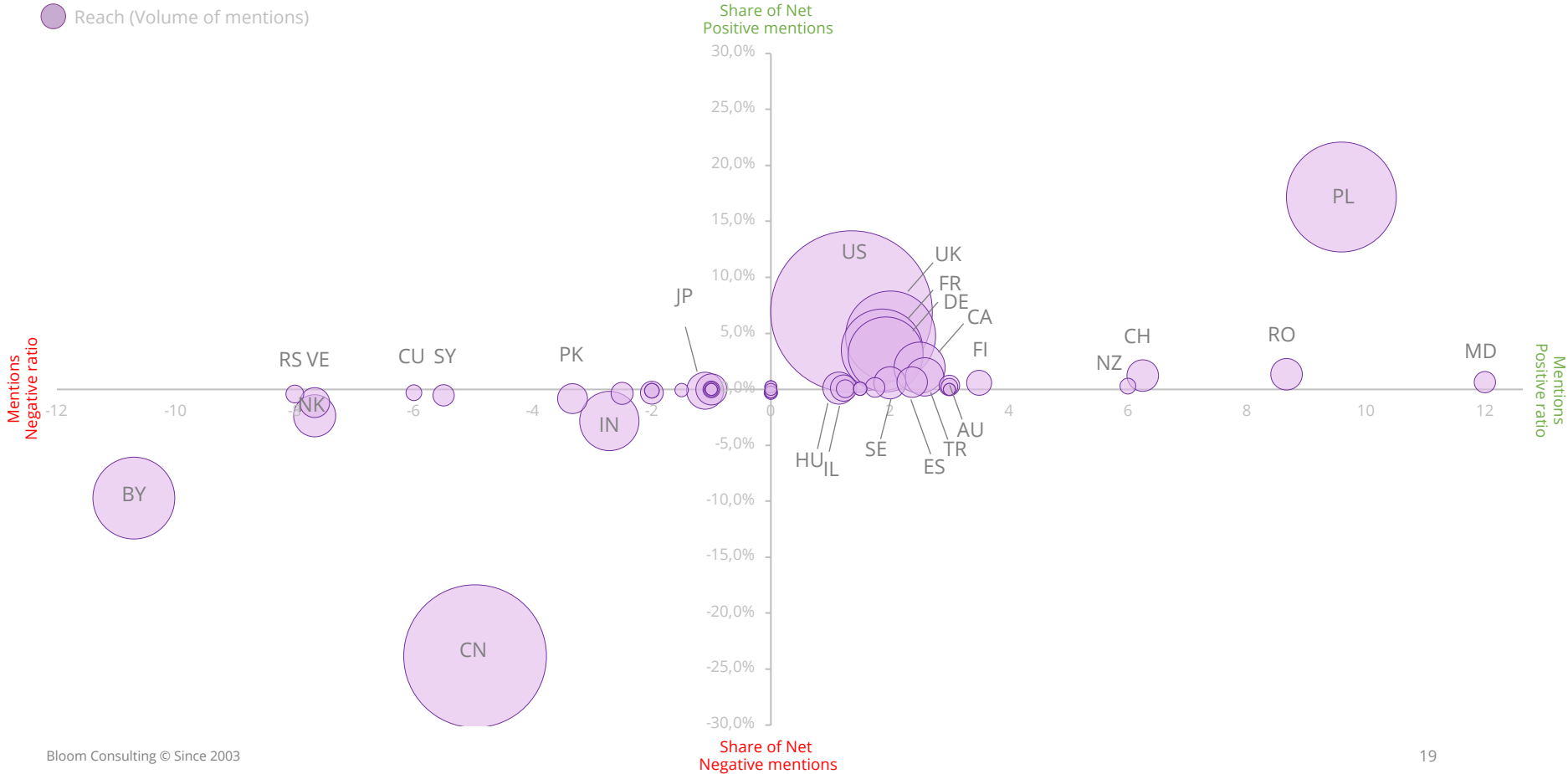


# Bloom Consulting

Countries Regions and Cities

## Global sentiment towards countries

Figure 06: Impact of the countries' positions towards the war on perceptions

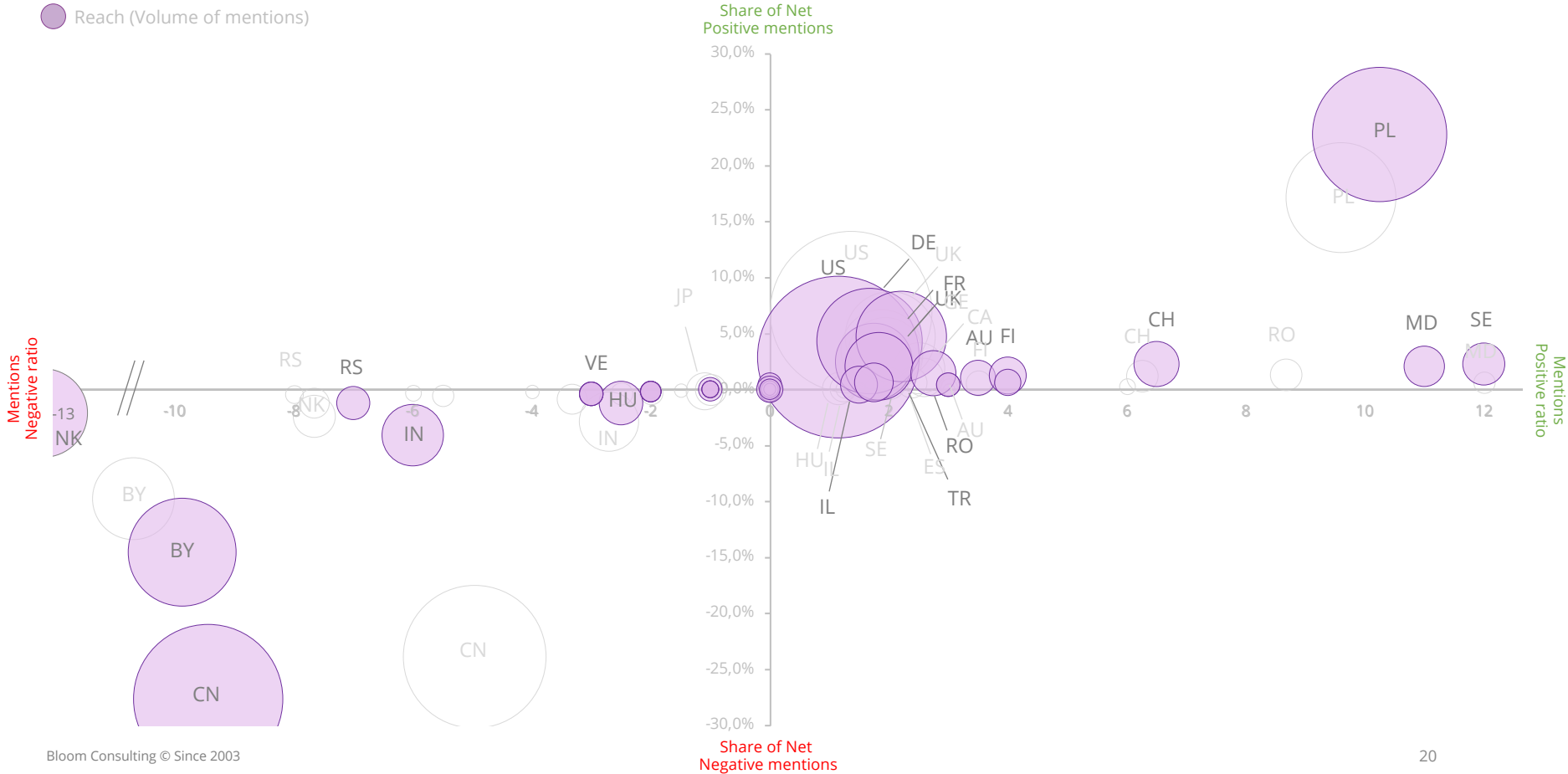


# Bloom Consulting

Countries Regions and Cities

## European sentiment towards countries

Figure 07: Impact of the countries' positions towards the war on perceptions

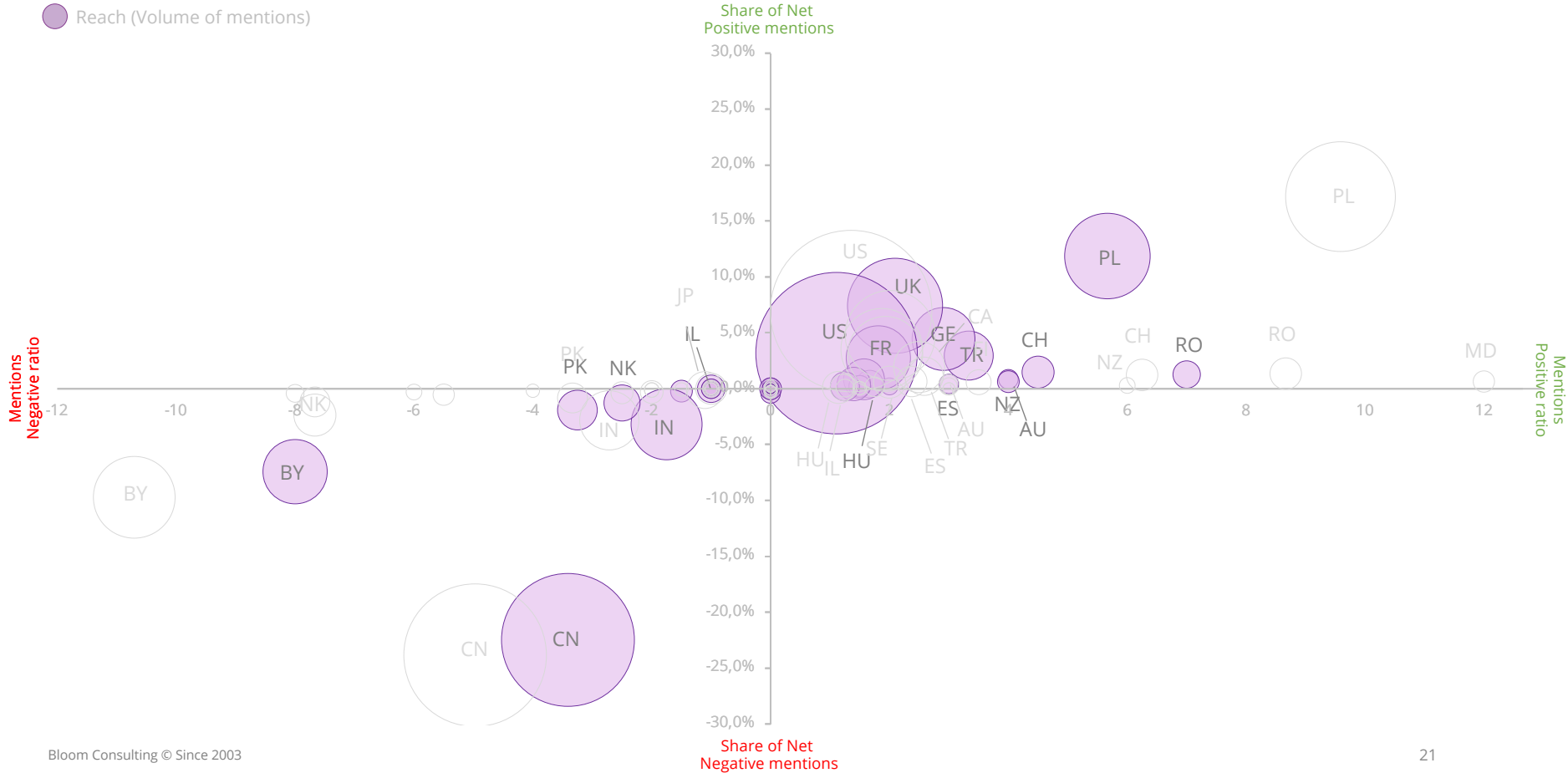


# Bloom Consulting

Countries Regions and Cities

## Asian and Middle Eastern sentiment towards countries

Figure 08: Impact of the countries' positions towards the war on perceptions

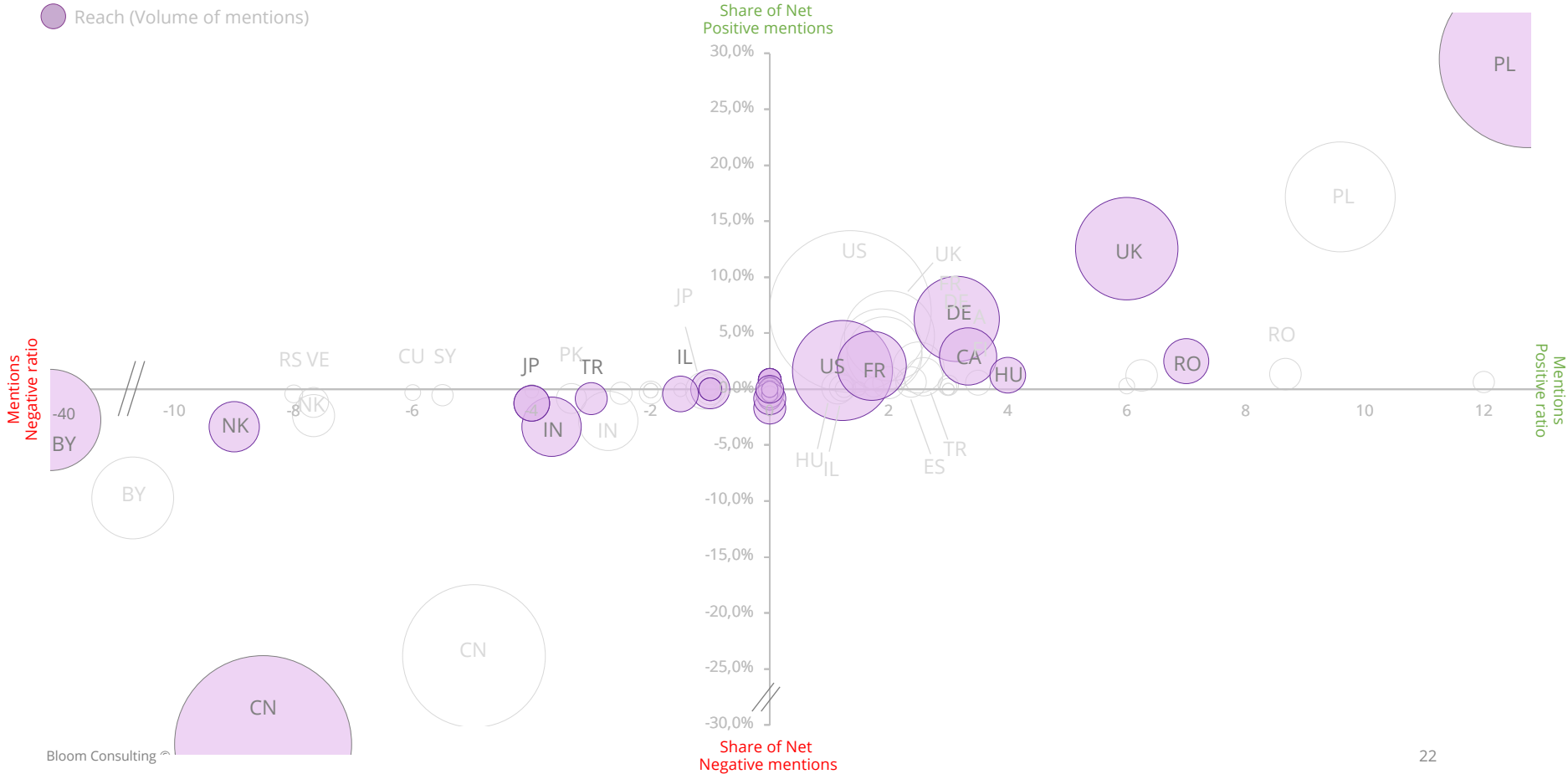


# Bloom Consulting

Countries Regions and Cities

## USA and Canadian sentiment towards countries

Figure 10: Impact of the countries' positions towards the war on perceptions



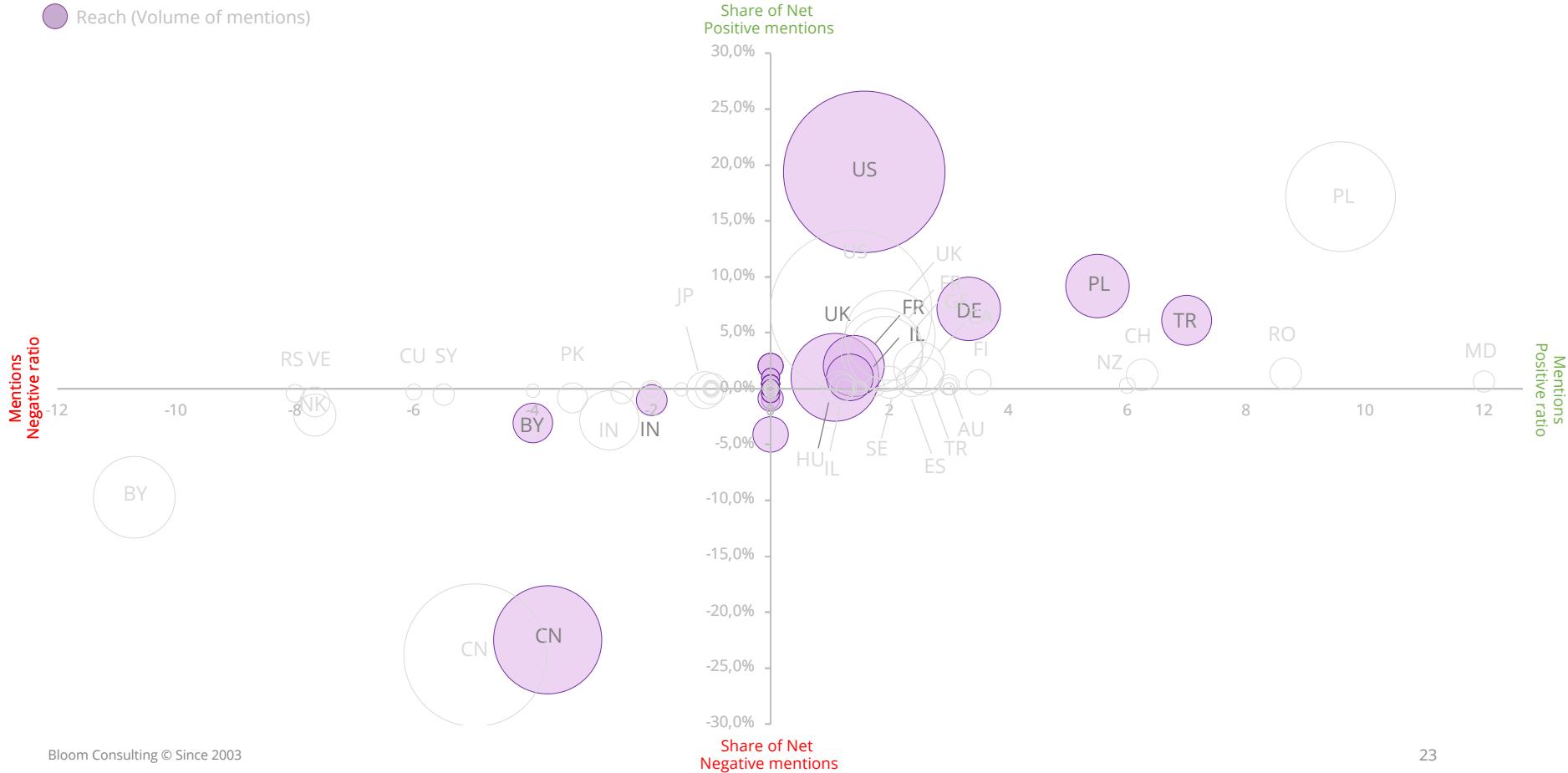


# Bloom Consulting

Countries Regions and Cities

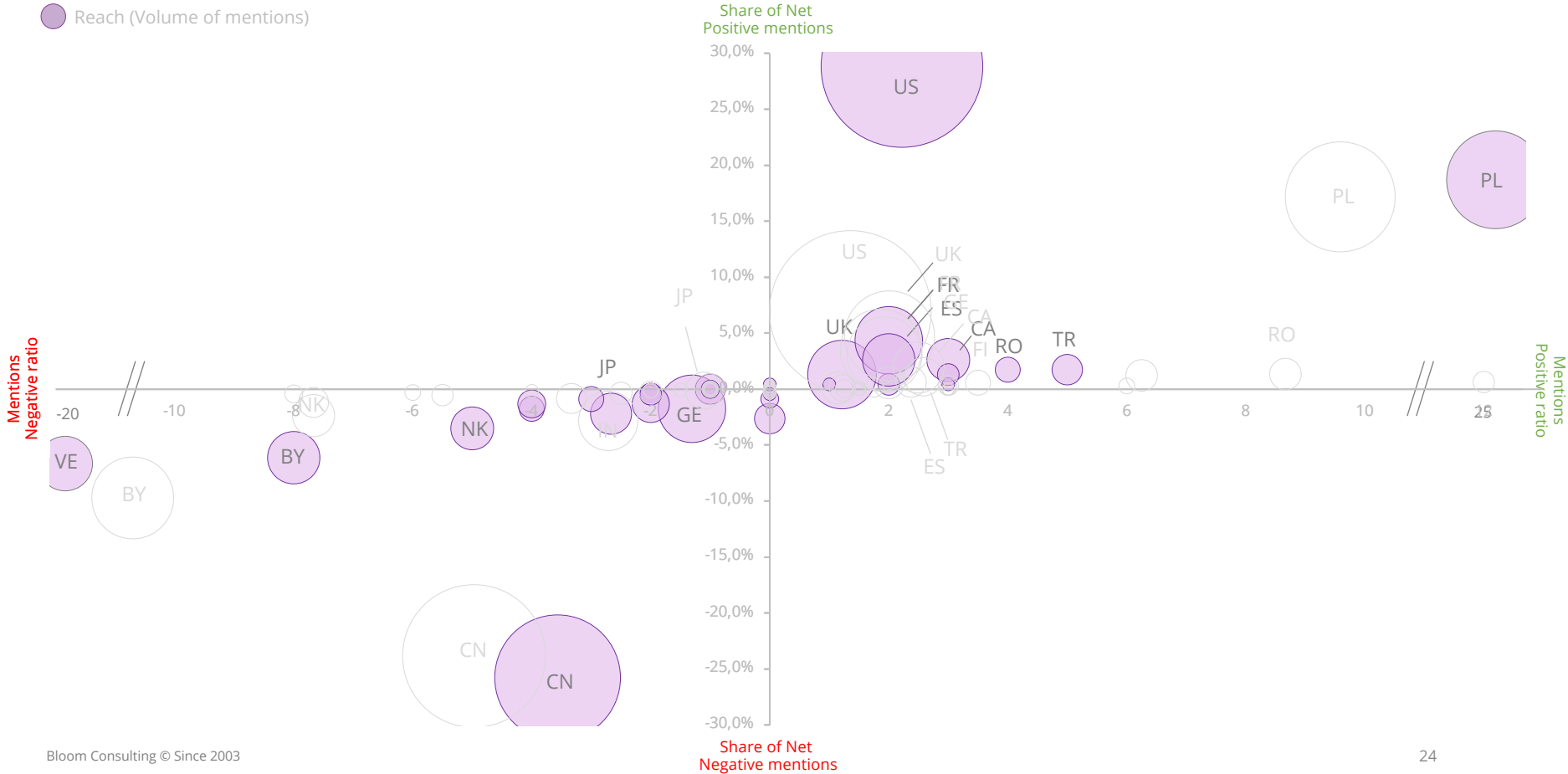
## African sentiment towards countries

Figure 11: Impact of the countries' positions towards the war on perceptions



## Latin American sentiment towards countries

Figure 12: Impact of the countries' positions towards the war on perceptions



## Impact of the war on Nation Brands Factors

A myriad of factors, from a country's political stance, culture, and history, may influence the perception of the country and its Nation Brand.

The study did not intend to observe closely every political and historical interweaving, but we highlight several possible factors that usually have a positive or negative impact on perceptions.

This chart represents two types of actions, activities and policies, **Legacy** (historical factors) and **Proactive** (factors countries had an action on).

Figure 13: Plausible "reasons why"

Positive influence (+)

Negative influence (-)

Legacy

- Nation Brand performance
- Historical, cultural and social ties

- Nation Brand performance
- Historical, cultural and social ties

Proactive

- Social media influence
- Good and credible media coverage
- Military support
- Diplomatic support
- Economic sanctions
- Absence

- Social media influence
- Poor and negative media coverage
- Military support
- Diplomatic support
- Economic sanctions
- Absence

- Active voice and leadership
- Supporting refugees
- Financial and humanitarian aid

# Research results

## - Russia and Ukraine

## Russia and Ukraine Global support position

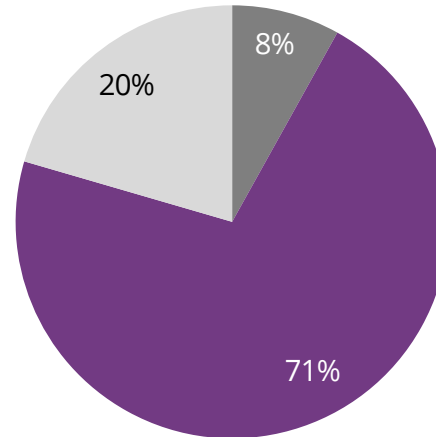
The majority of the world (70%) supports Ukraine in this war, while a minority (8%) supports Russia and 20% is indifferent.

For the comparative analysis of Russia and Ukraine in terms of perceptions of the countries, we selected two variables: *the level of familiarity with the countries* and *world regions* that respondents represent.

Figure 14: Position towards the Russia-Ukraine war worldwide

■ Support Ukraine ■ Support Russia ■ Neither

World



## Russia and Ukraine Regional support position

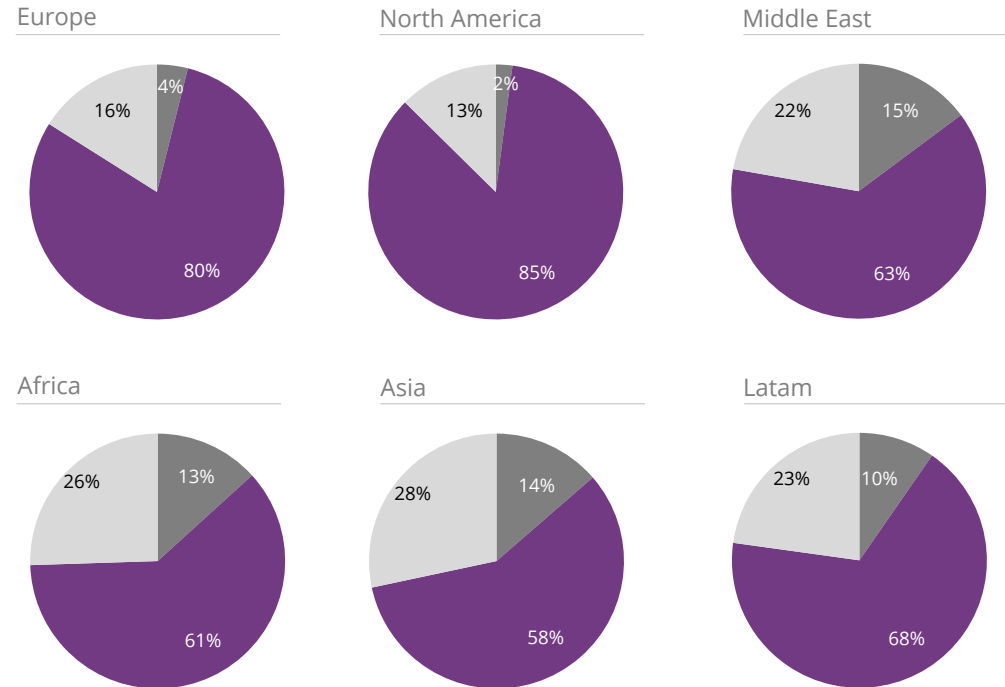
From a regional perspective, the opinions are practically the same across the world.

Europe and North America, have a similar split of 80% favourability towards Ukraine and roughly 15% upholding “neutrality”.

In comparison with Europe and North America, “neutrality” rose in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latam, representing roughly 25% on average. *Support for Russia* also increases in these four regions, but never surpasses 15%, while *support for Ukraine* reaches up to 68%.

Figure 15: Position towards the Russia-Ukraine war by world regions

■ Support Ukraine ■ Support Russia ■ Neither



## Russia and Ukraine Support by familiarity

When segmented by the level of familiarity the *support* distribution changes, but not dramatically, except for the group that have friends or relatives only from/in Ukraine.

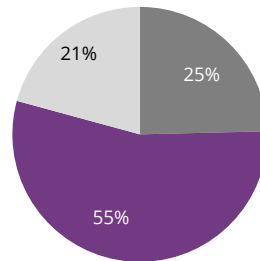
The most striking result is the case of Russia. Although a greater share of familiars exclusively with Russians (have Russian relatives or friends) support the country comparing to other groups, the majority supports Ukraine (55%).

This tends to indicate that there is no consensus in Russian society about this war.

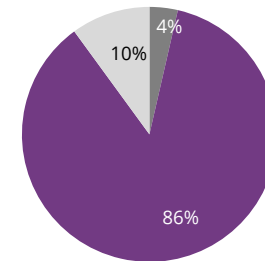
Figure 16: Position towards the Russia-Ukraine war. Split by the level of familiarity

■ Support Ukraine ■ Support Russia ■ Neither

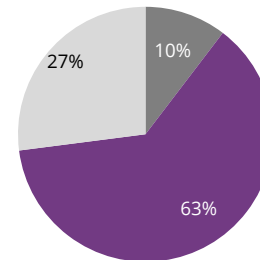
Russian familiars



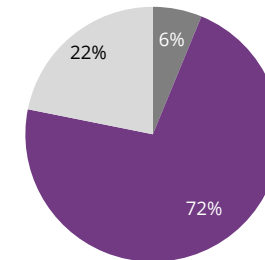
Ukrainian familiars



Both Russian and Ukrainian familiars



Neither Russian nor Ukrainian familiars





## Russia and Ukraine

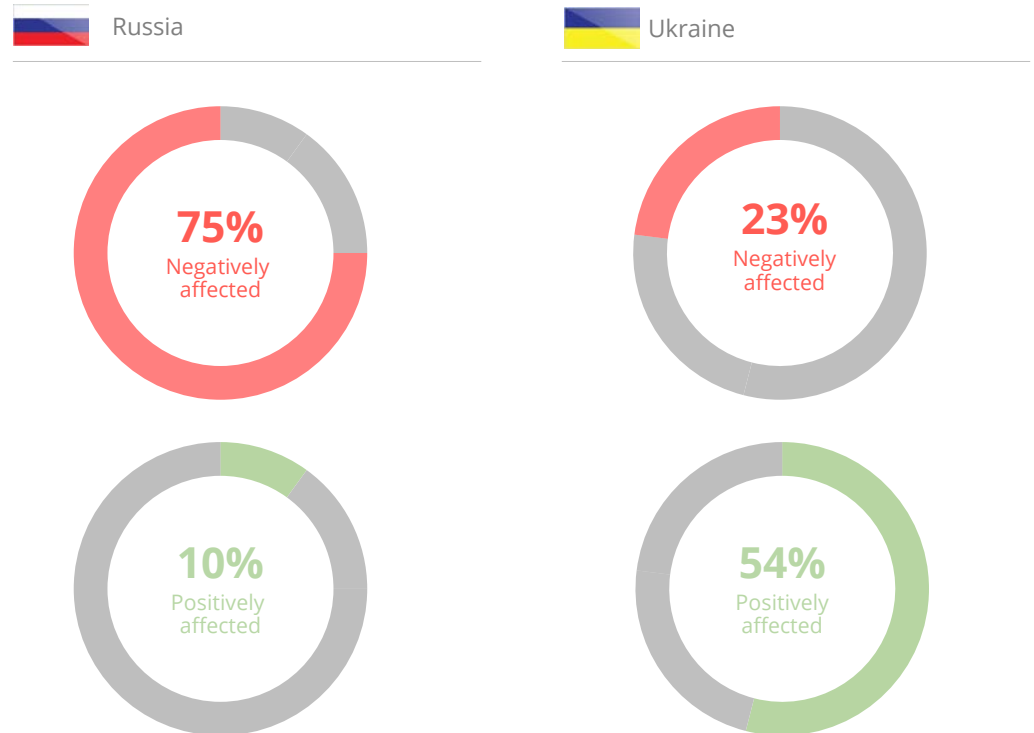
### The impact of the war on the perception of the countries

The change in perceptions of Russia and Ukraine follows the same trend of polarization in the war. Ukraine as a country has improved its perception, while Russia gravely damaged its general reputation.

Moreover, the share of the negative impact on the perception of Russia is greater than the share of the positive impact on Ukraine. This means that in the context of the crisis, the “loser” loses more than the “winner” wins.

Figure 17: How the war affected the overall perception of Ukraine and Russia as a country

■ Positive ■ Negative

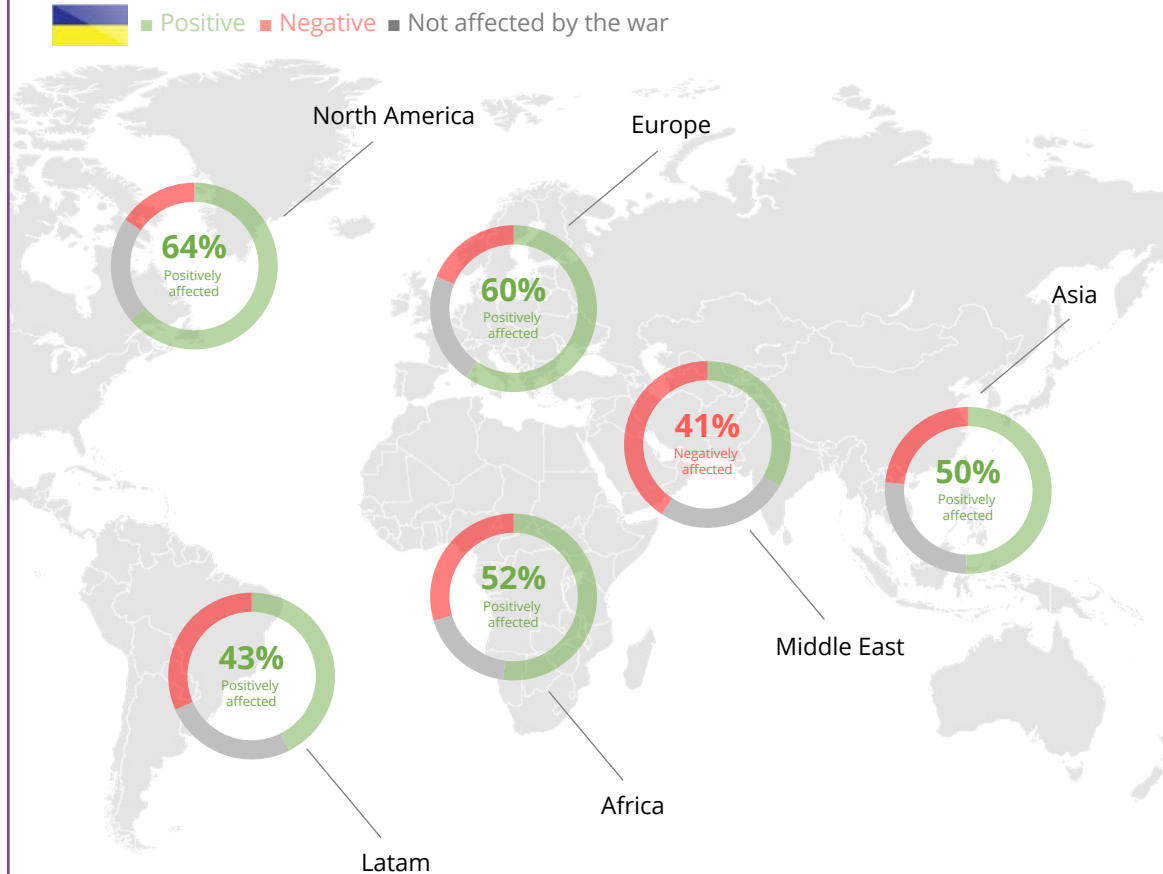


## Impact on Ukraine Nation Brand Regional outlook

Perceptions of Ukraine and Russia vary across world regions, but not dramatically. North America and Europe stand out in the share of respondents who changed positively their perception of Ukraine in the context of the war, followed by Asia and Africa.

In the Middle East and Latam less than 50% rated the perception as positively affected by the war.

Figure 18: How the war affected the overall perception of **Ukraine** as a country across the world regions

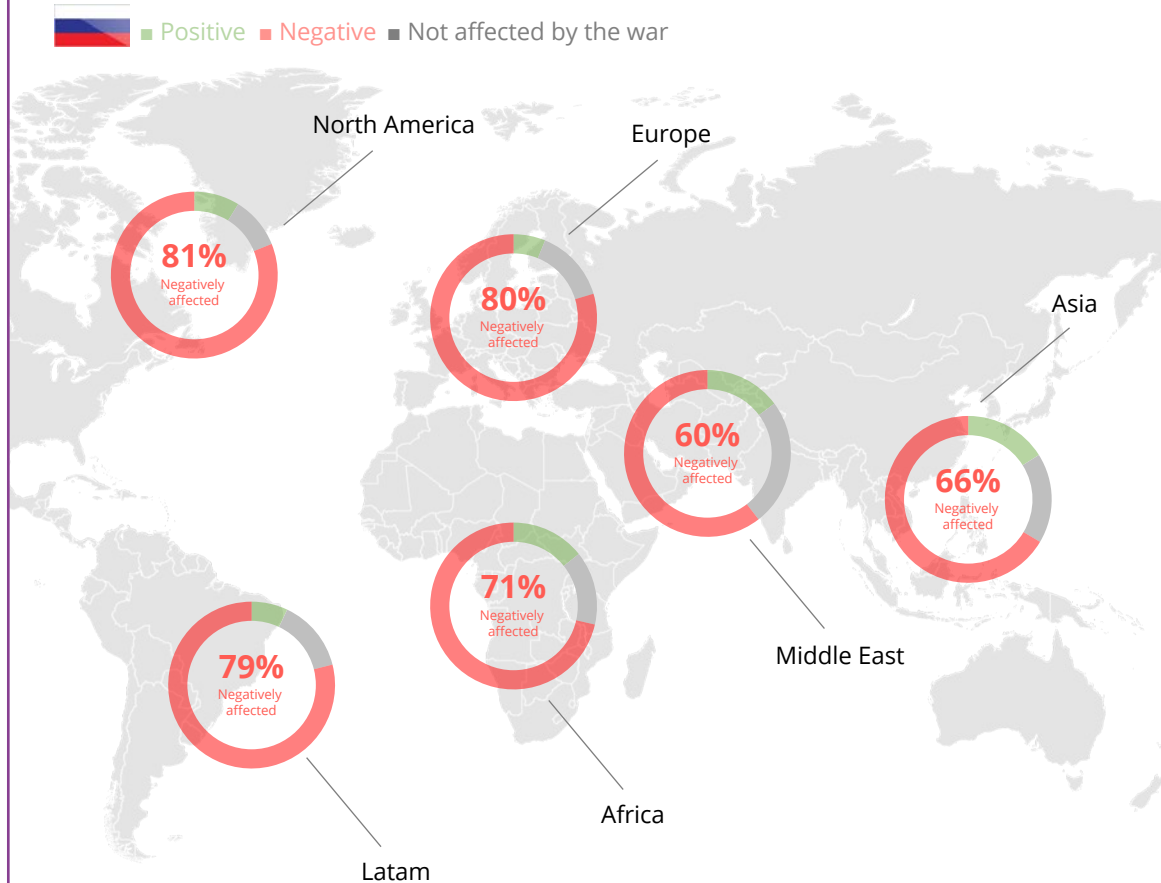


## Impact on Russia Nation Brand Regional outlook

The paramount conclusion of the comparative analysis is that perceptions work like interconnected vessels in the context of war — whenever Russia loses positive attitude, Ukraine gains it, but the loss is always greater in comparison to any gains.

In the case of Russia, roughly 80% of respondents across almost all world regions rated the perception as negatively affected by the war. In Asia and the Middle East, the share of negative attitude is smaller, but still represents the majority of answers.

Figure 19: How the war affected the overall perception of **Russia** as a country across the world regions



## Impact of war on perceptions Russia vs Ukraine

In general, Russia has lost more in terms of perceptions than Ukraine has won - a distinctive feature of such types of crisis.

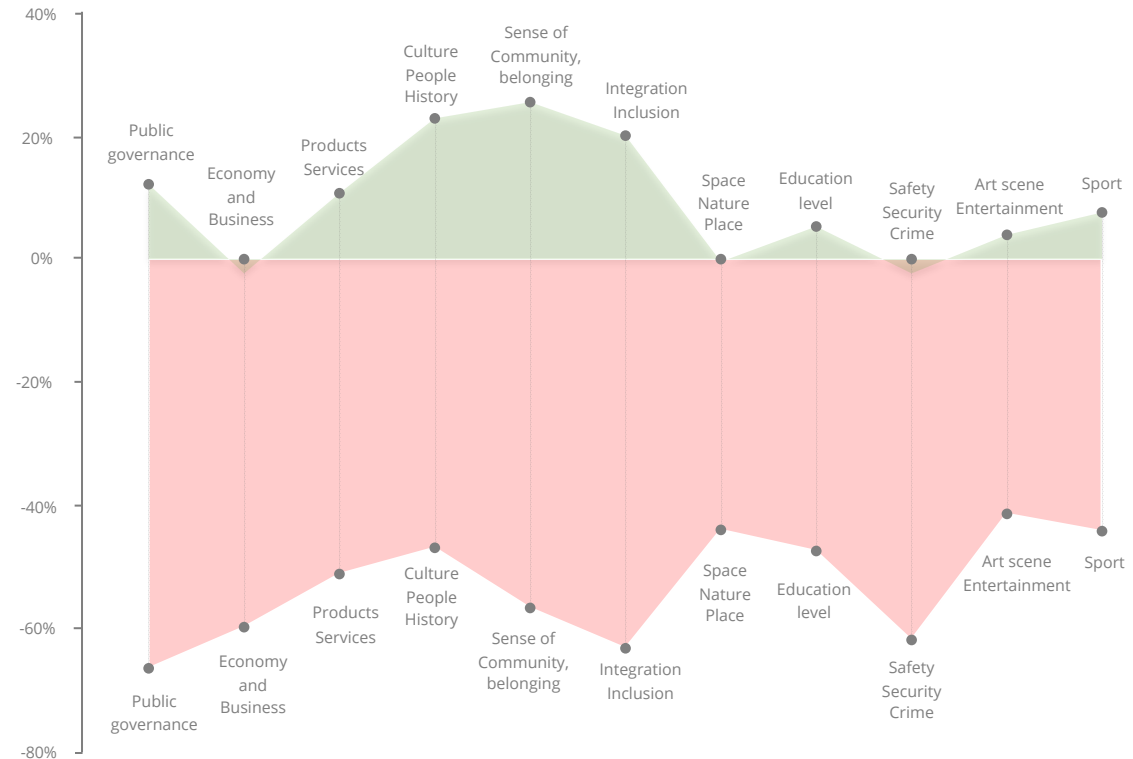
For both Russia and Ukraine, *sense of community, integration and inclusion, culture, people and history* perceptions stand out. This owes a lot to the popular war narratives about social and spiritual cohesion against an enemy.

Moreover, for Russia, *public governance, safe security, and crime* along with *safety, crime, security* are the most negatively affected by the war.

Whereas Ukraine improved in *public governance, products and services, and education level* most of all.

Figure 20: How the war affected specific types of perceptions of Russia and Ukraine

■ Ukraine ■ Russia



## Impact of war on perceptions Russia vs Ukraine familiar

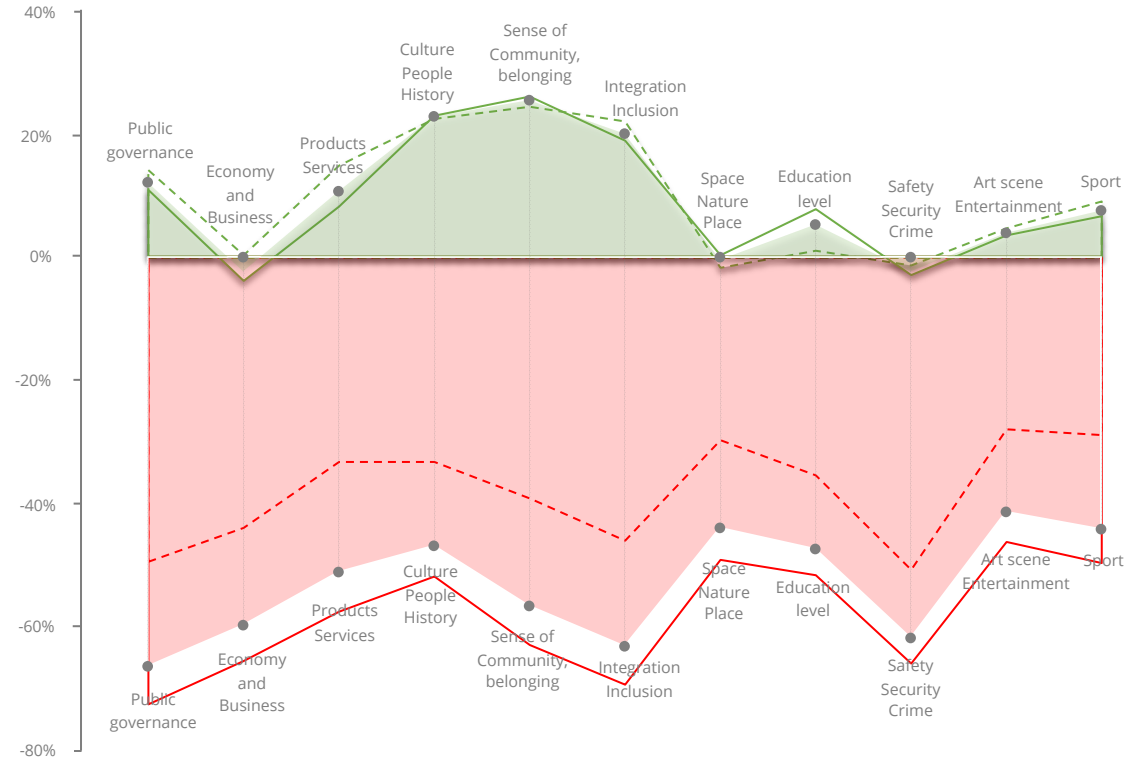
The level of familiarity contributes significantly to the change in perceptions of Russia, while for Ukraine the results by familiarity change only slightly.

For Russia, not familiars rate the country much worse than familiars across all types of perceptions.

In case of Ukraine, the highlight is on *education level* that is higher among **not familiars** than **familiars**. This unusual correlation may have occurred due to the exposure of Ukrainian culture and assets during the war, when masses started to learn more about the country.

Figure 21: How the war affected specific types of perceptions of Russia and Ukraine

■ Ukraine --- familiar — not familiar ■ Russia --- familiar — not familiar



# Research results

- *Anti-Russia sentiment*

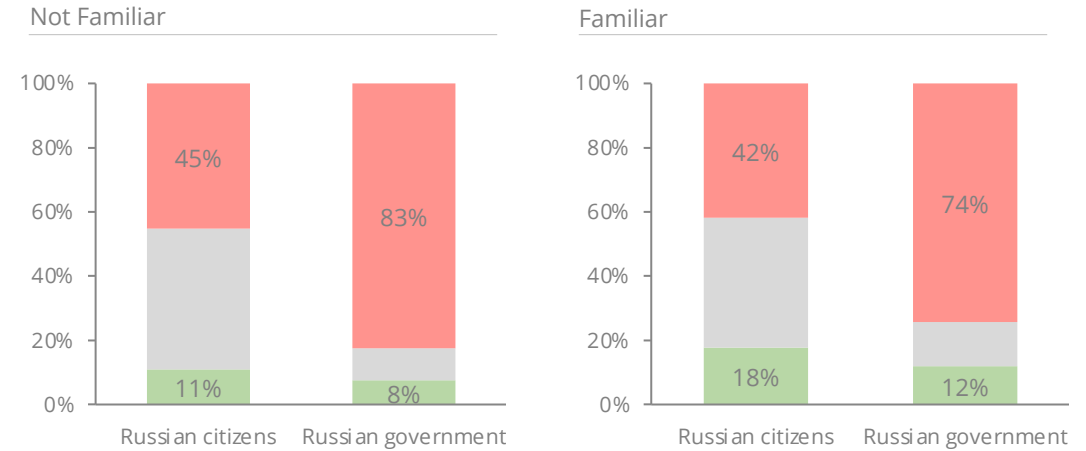
## “Anti-Russia sentiment” by familiarity

The level of familiarity, in this case, is not a contributing factor to the change of perceptions. The perceptions both of Russian citizens and the government almost do not change when comparing answers of the familiars and not familiars.

Although the share of the negative impact on citizens is twice lower than the share of the negative impact on government, the study confirms that the anti-Russian sentiment is increasing during the war.

Figure 22: How the war is affecting perceptions of Russian citizens and the Russian government

■ Positive ■ Negative ■ Not affected by the war





## “Anti-Russian sentiment” by world regions and level of familiarity

The trend doesn't differ dramatically across the continents. In general, familiarity with Russians almost doesn't influence the worsening image of citizens and government.

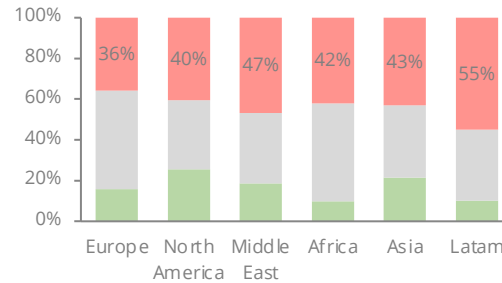
Thus, this research identified a high risk of a new wave of *anti-Russia sentiment*.

Clearly, there is a “contamination” of the Russian government's actions into the perception of Russian culture as a whole. This results in the world's belief that Russian citizens support this war.

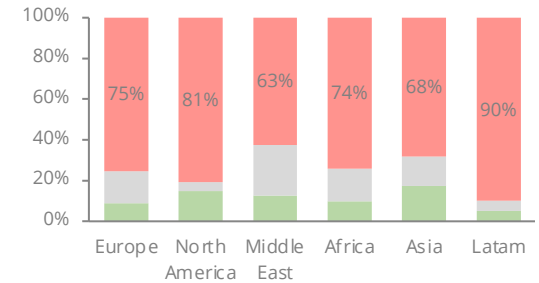
Figure 23: How the war is affecting perceptions of Russian citizens and the Russian government

■ Positive ■ Negative ■ Not affected by the war

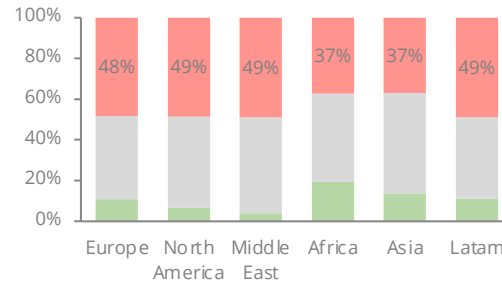
Perception of Russian citizens familiar



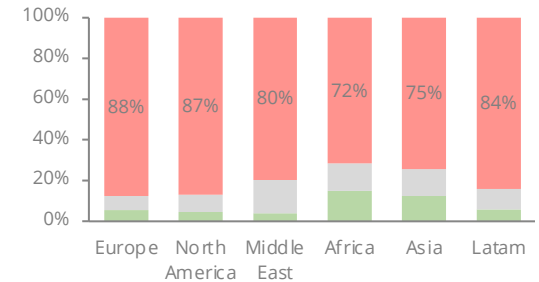
Perception of Russian government familiar



Perception of Russian citizens not familiar



Perception of Russian government not familiar



# Research results

- Brand-Nought and impact on Reputation, Made in, Invest, Visit and Talent.

## The Nation Brand-Nought

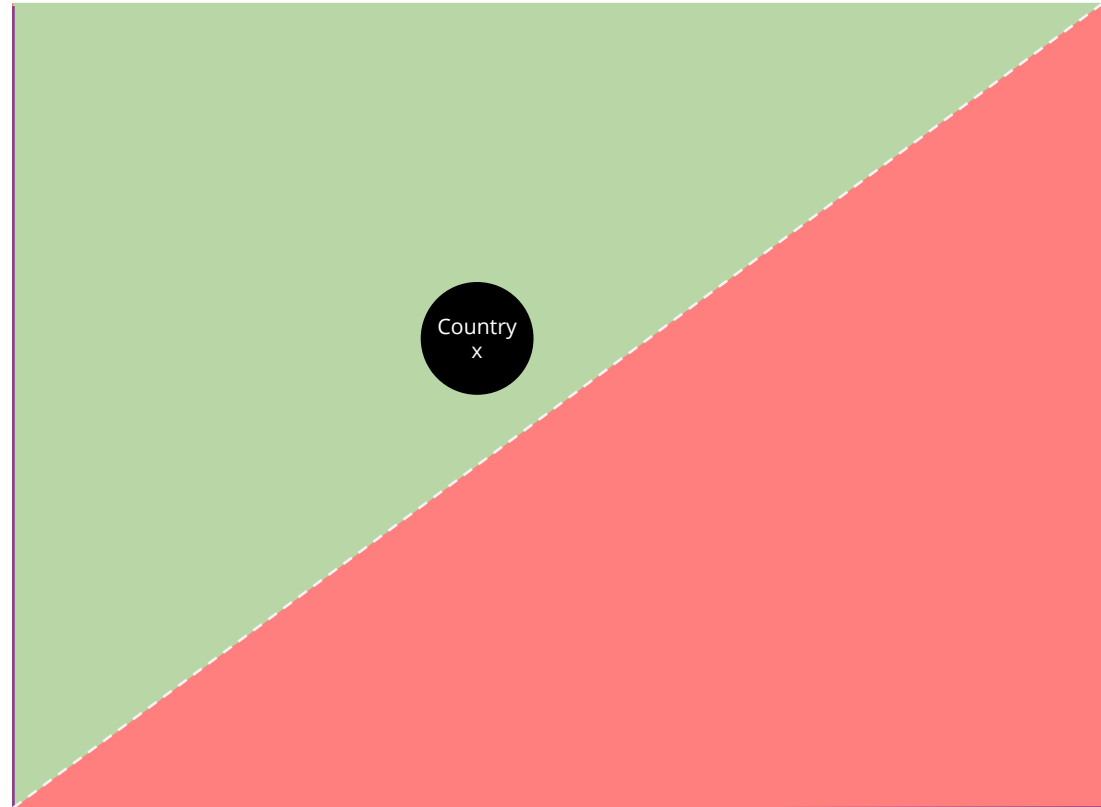
The nation *Brand-Nought* comes from the  $R_0$  logic, which is a mathematical term calculated to indicate how contagious a disease is.

If a disease has an  $R_0$  of 5, it means an infected person will infect 5 other people.

So, we applied the same logic to measure how negative crises are and how vulnerable Nation Brands are to different crises.

Figure 24: Brand-Nought methodology

■ - "negative" impact   ■ - "positive" impact



Source: Bloom Consulting

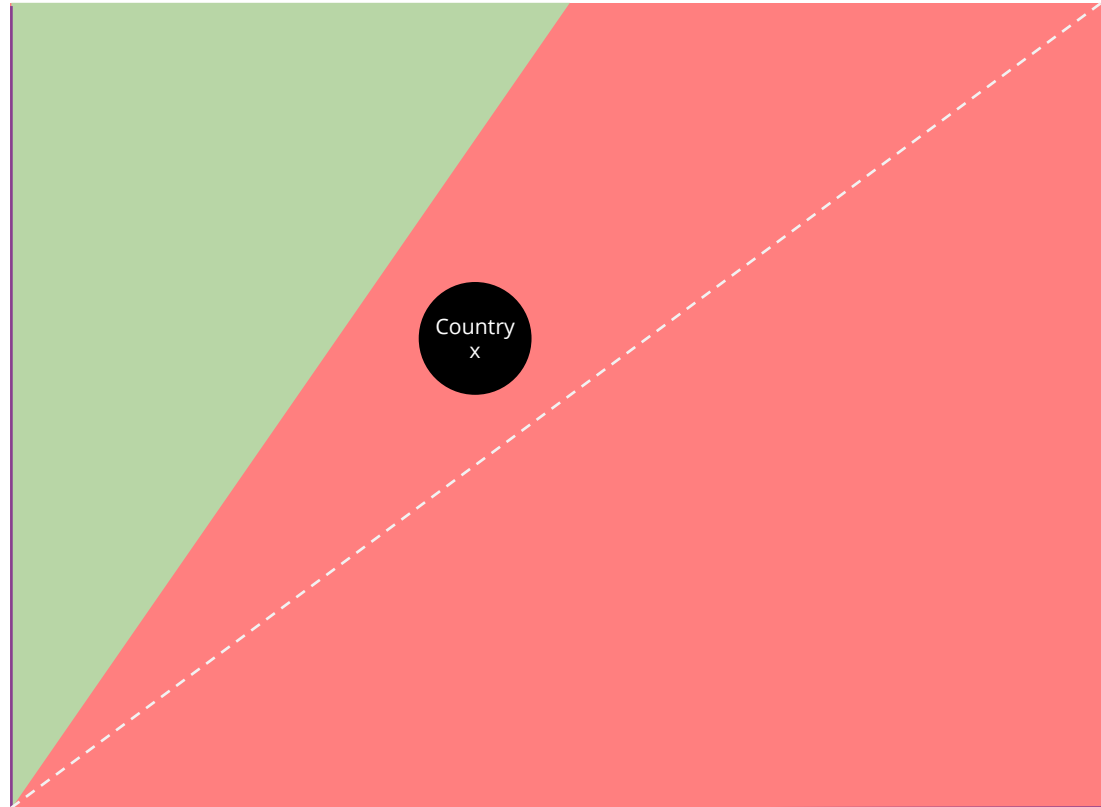
## The Nation Brand-Nought

The Brand-Nought draws the line between that countries cannot fall under, otherwise they will see their reputation affected.

Each crisis has different Brand-Noughts, and the Brand-Nought is a ratio indicating the ideal number of people with positive perceptions to eliminate the negative ones.

Figure 25: Brand-Nought methodology

■ - "negative" impact   ■ - "positive" impact



Source: Bloom Consulting

## The Nation Brand-Nought 2.0 for this crisis

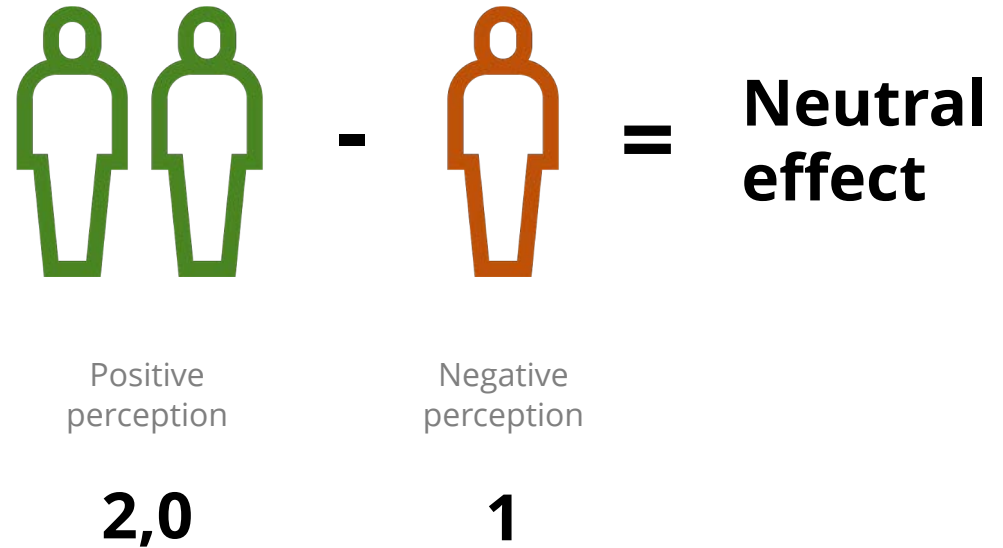
This specific crisis has a Brand-Nought of 2.

**B0= 2,0**

This means that one negative perception can only be neutralised by two positive ones. If a country exceeds its *Brand-Nought*.

As a reference, in Bloom Consulting's previous research study "Impact of Covid-19 on Nation Brands", the B0 was 1,8.

Figure 26: Ratio between positive and negative perceptions

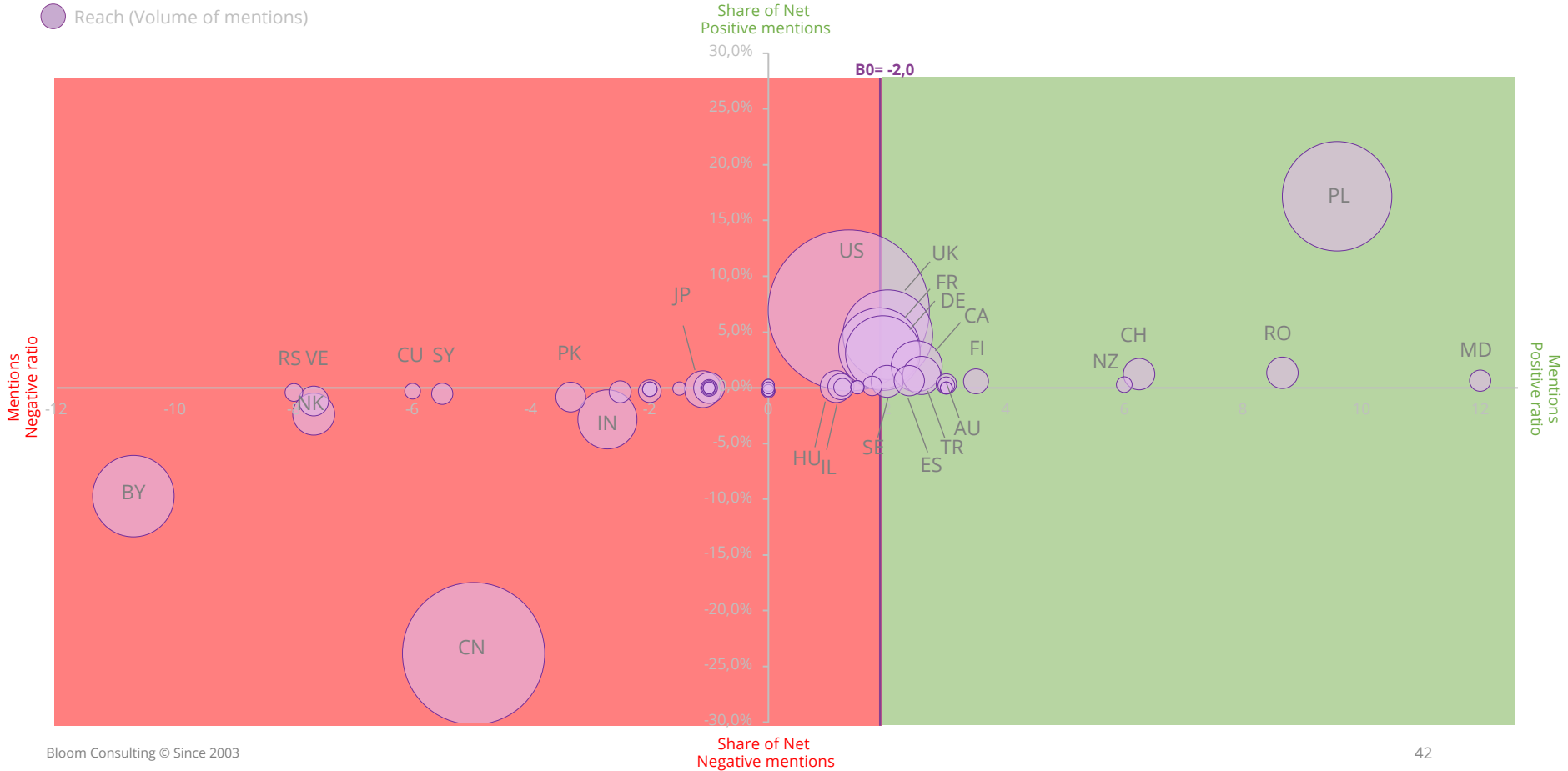


# Bloom Consulting

Countries Regions and Cities

## Global sentiment towards countries

Figure 27: **Brand-Nought** applied to the impact of the countries' positions towards the war on perceptions



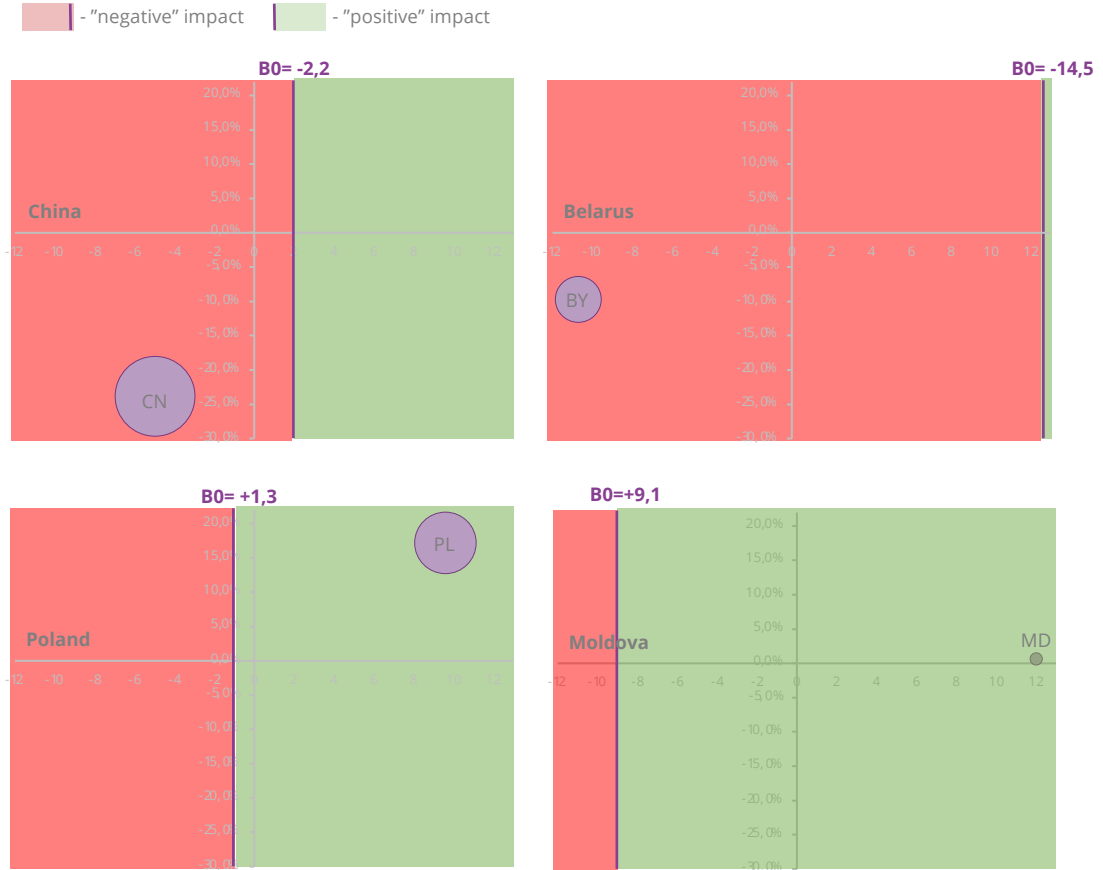
## Brand-Nought Country by country

Each country has a different Brand-Nought and a different performance facing each situation.

China and Belarus are facing a high Brand-Nought. An indicator their brand is being affected negatively by this crisis

While Poland and Moldova are benefiting from it.

Figure 28: Ratio between positive and negative perceptions

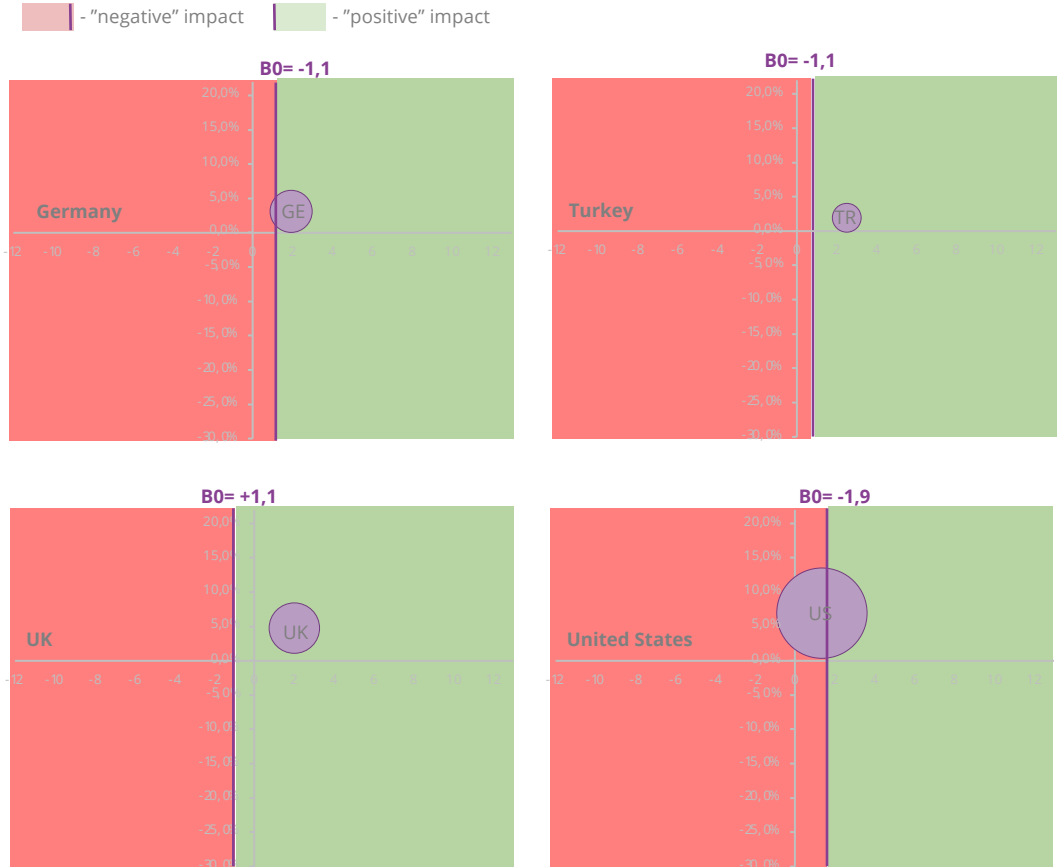


Source: Bloom Consulting

## Brand-Nought Country by country

Other countries that may look like they are in the safe zone, such as the USA, should monitor their results closely as the Brand-Nought is not favouring them overall.

Figure 28: Ratio between positive and negative perceptions



Source: Bloom Consulting



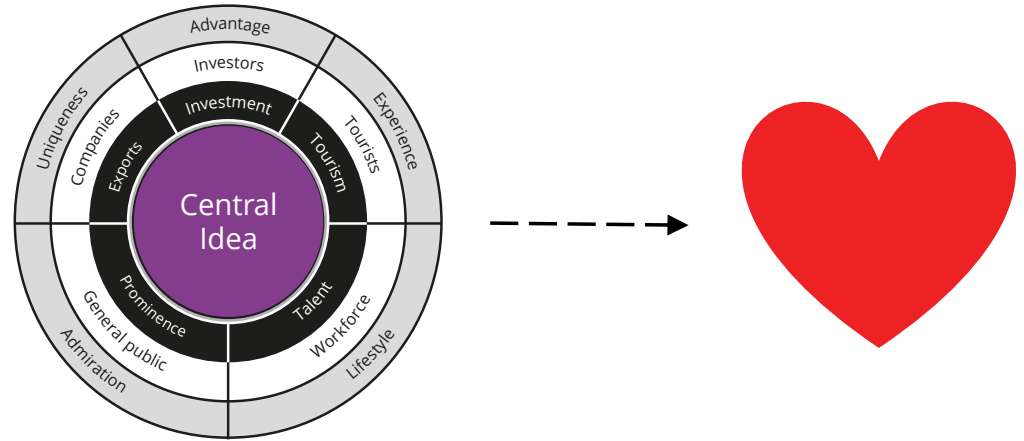
## The importance of perception

Why is it important to understand how much this crisis is affecting the overall reputation of countries?

Perceptions of nations are subjective, but they result in real actions, from daily social media posts to bookings, and overall love for a country, or in worst cases — collapsed economies, uprisings, and damaged reputations.

As depicted in the Bloom Consulting *Country Branding Wheel* there are five objectives (called dimensions). Thus, it is important to measure how changing perceptions impact the dimensions in the context of crisis.

Figure 29: The brand dimensions that may be affected by this and other crises



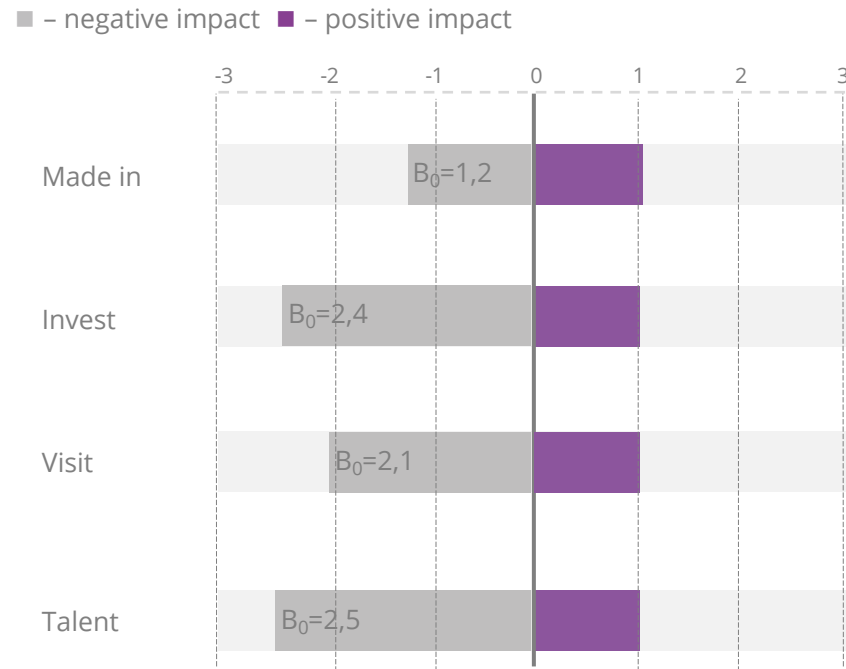
## Brand-Nought by dimensions

In general, the crisis might primarily hit the *investment* and *talent* dimensions. For Nation Brands, this means more efforts to attract investors and talent (Live, Study and Work).

Willingness to visit tends to decrease in the context of war as well. Countries with negative perceptions according to Brand-Nought might experience a lower demand from tourists.

Willingness to buy products (Made in) is the least affected by the crisis since the dimension doesn't imply direct interaction with a negatively perceived country.

Figure 30: Positive and negative perception by brand dimension



## Winning: Moldova

Moldova and Sweden are the countries with the strongest Nation Brand during this crisis and can benefit from it when exposed to a broader audience.

Moldova needs only one person with a positive perception to neutralize nine with a negative one.

Figure 31: Ranking of the strongest Nation Brands during this crisis

Winning

#	Country	B0 Brand-Nought
01.	 Moldova	9,1 : 1
02.	 Sweden	2,3 : 1
03.	 Italy	1,8 : 1
04.	 Romania	1,6 : 1
05.	 Poland	1,5 : 1
06.	 United Kingdom	1,3 : 1
07.	 Brazil	1,1 : 1
08.	 Iran	1 : 1,0
09.	 Germany	1 : 1,1
10.	 Turkey	1 : 1,2
11.	 Hungary	1 : 1,3
12.	 France	1 : 1,3

## Losing: Belarus

Belarus has an irreparable Brand-Nought of 14,5. Venezuela, Japan and China are below this crisis average. In order to mitigate their image, they all need at least three people with a positive perception to neutralize one with a negative one.

Figure 32: Ranking of the most vulnerable Nation Brand during this crisis

### Losing

#	Country	B0 Brand-Nought
01.	 Belarus	1 : 14,5
02.	 Venezuela	1 : 2,9
03.	 Japan	1 : 2,8
04.	 China	1 : 2,2
05.	 Israel	1 : 2,0
06.	 United States	1 : 1,9
07.	 Pakistan	1 : 1,6
08.	 Switzerland	1 : 1,6
09.	 Canada	1 : 1,5
10.	 India	1 : 1,5
11.	 North Korea	1 : 1,4
12.	 Finland	1 : 1,4

# Thank you

[www.bloom-consulting.com](http://www.bloom-consulting.com)

[www.bloom-consulting.com/journal](http://www.bloom-consulting.com/journal)

José Filipe Torres – CEO  
[jtorres@bloom-consulting.com](mailto:jtorres@bloom-consulting.com)