Graphic detail

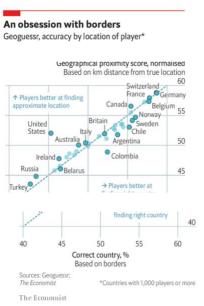# Which is the most recognisable country?

Japan, according to our analysis of an online geography game

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them best. With this in mind, *The Economist* obtained some 1.2m guesses from the online geography quiz, submitted by 223,942 people in 192 countries and territories between January and August 2020. We then used these data to compile a "recognisability index" for each country, defined as the share of players who guessed correctly where they were dropped minus the share who guessed incorrectly. (We excluded games in which a player was dropped into his or her own country and countries that appeared in the dataset fewer than 20,000 times).

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An obsession with borders
Geoguessr, accuracy by location of player*

Geographical proximity score, normalised
Based on km distance from true location

Sources: Geoguessr;
The Economist   *Countries with 1,000 players or more

The Economist

According to our analysis, Japan is by far the most recognisable country.

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correctly guessed their location 64% of the time; those dropped elsewhere incorrectly guessed Japan just 9% of the time. In second place is America, which players guessed correctly 79% of the time and incorrectly 40% of the time. Russia ranks third, followed by Italy, Brazil and Britain (see chart). As for

which countries were most often confused for one another, 18% of players who reckoned they had been dropped in America were actually in Australia. Spain and Mexico were also frequently mixed up. Not all of the guesses made sense: at least one person mistook Luxembourg for Mongolia.

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Germany and Switzerland are home to the best Geoguessr players, followed by France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. At the bottom of our list is Turkey, followed by Russia and America, where players correctly guessed their location

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Such results should be taken with a big pinch of salt. Not all countries are included in Google Street View. Of those that are, many have incomplete coverage. Most streets in Germany, for example, are missing from Google Maps because of privacy concerns; China is also missing, with the exceptions of