

The Economist

visual styleguide

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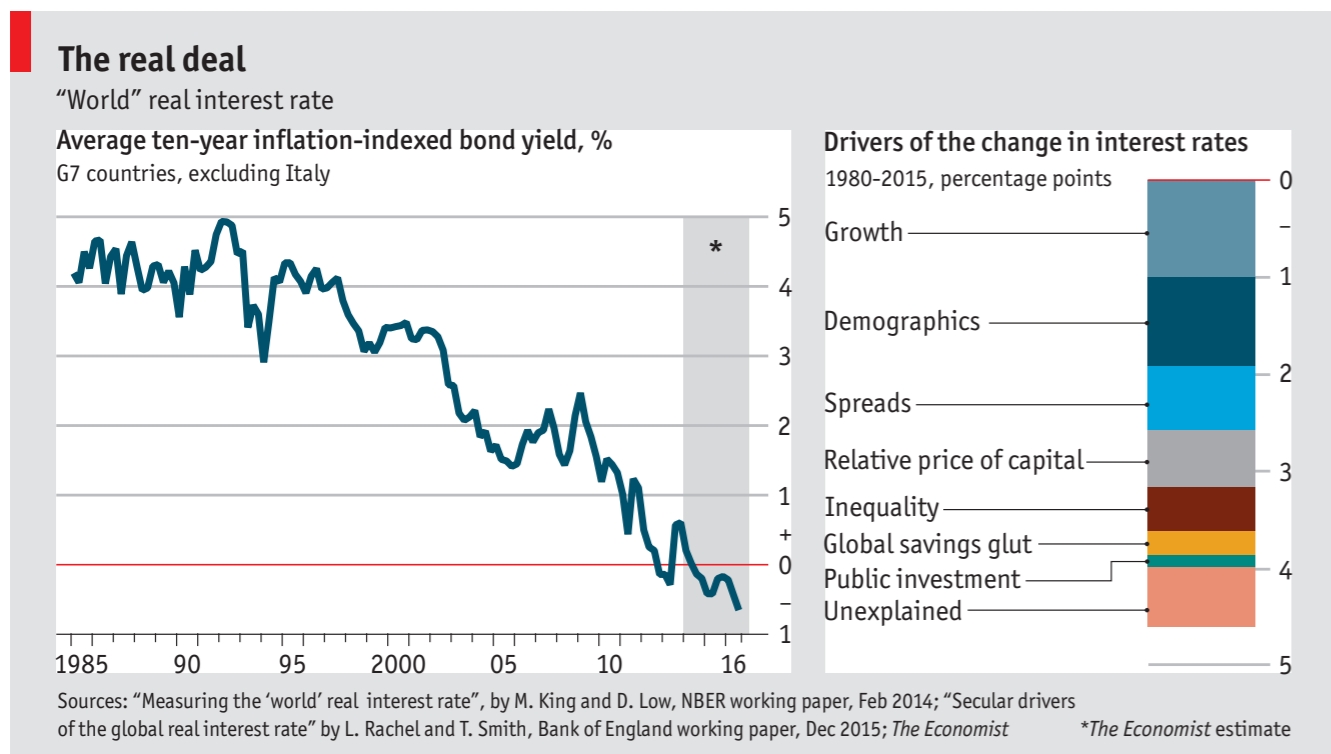
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What's changed

Web charts

OLD DESIGN



NEW DESIGN

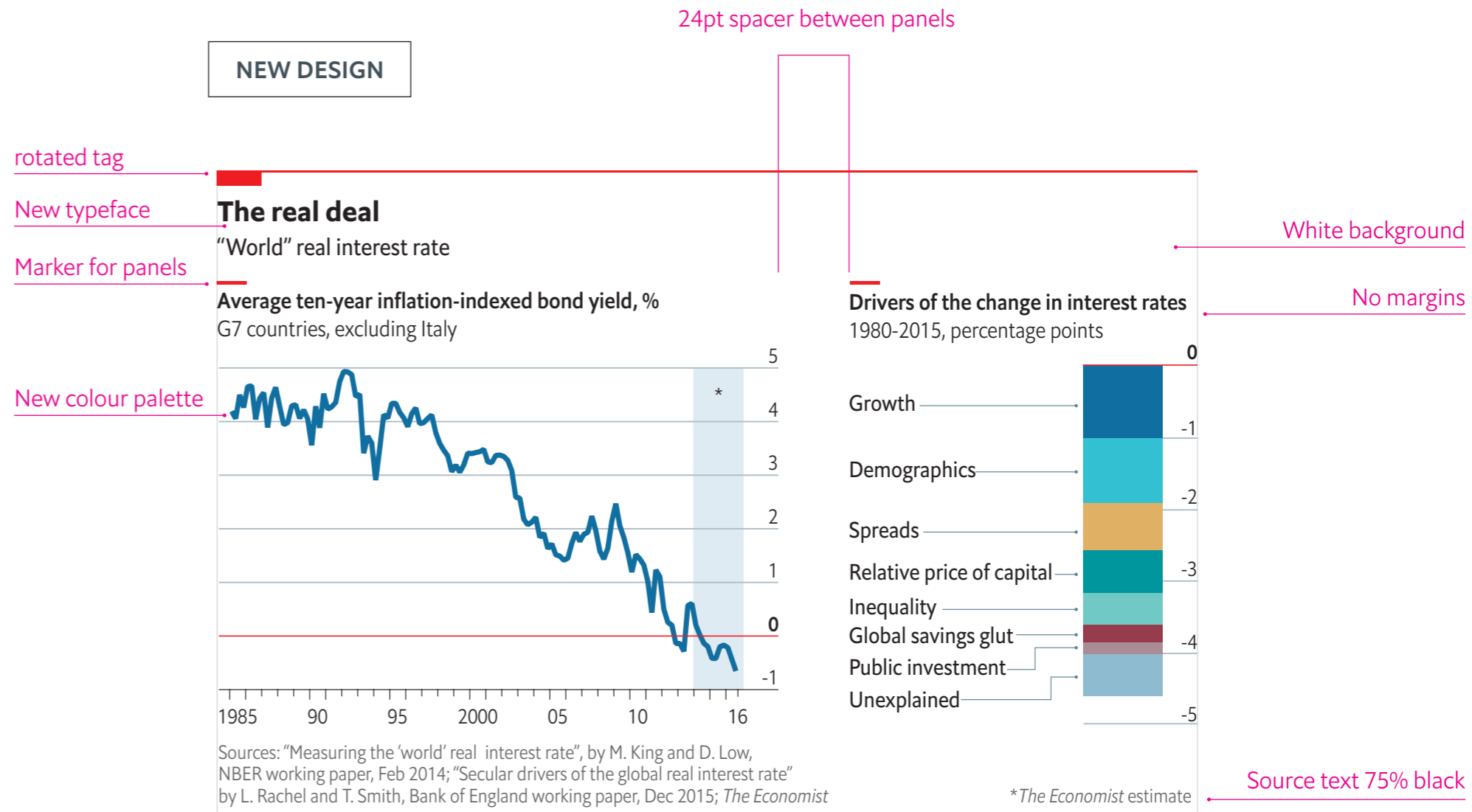
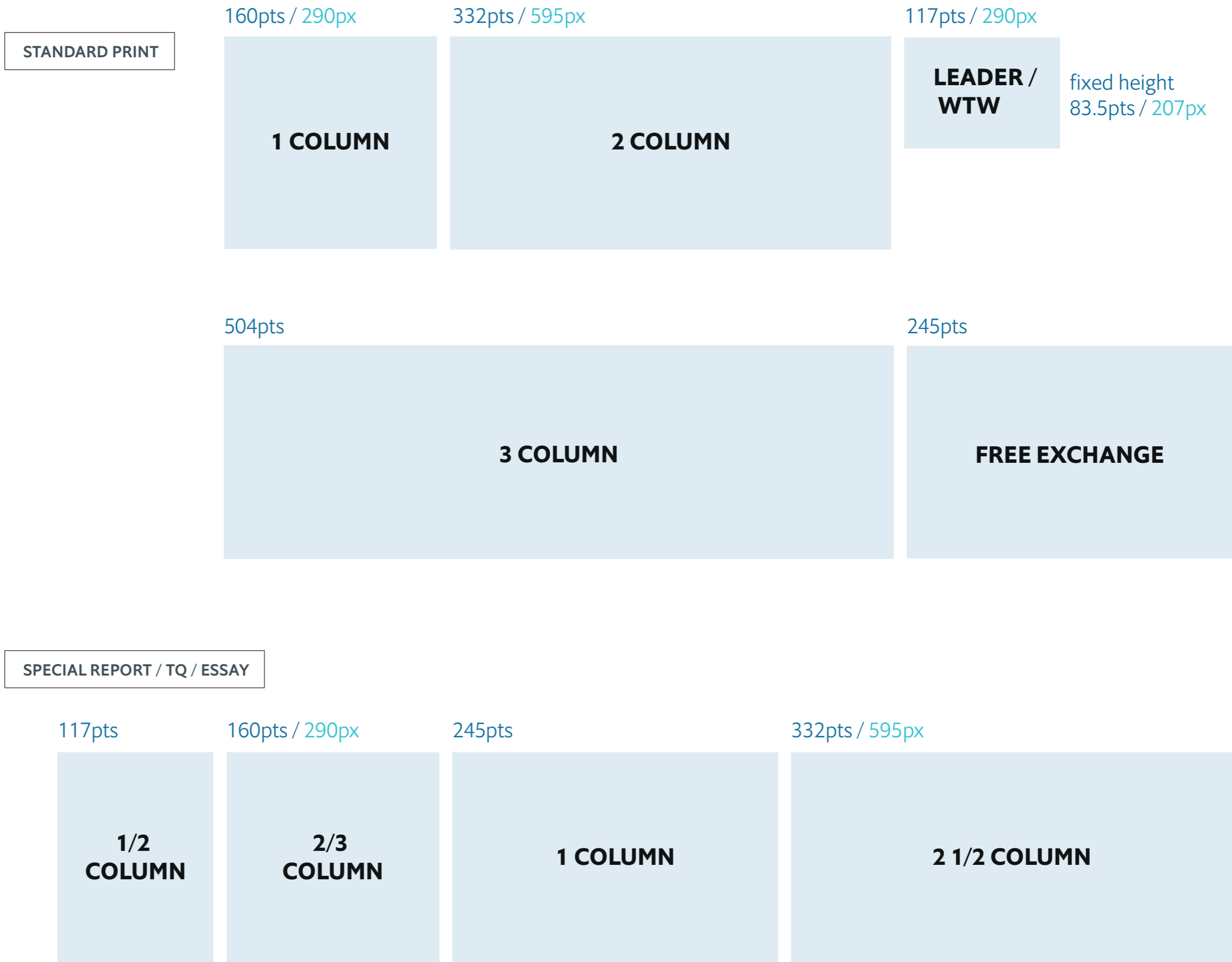


Chart sizes

print width (pts)
web equivalent (px)



Typefaces

USE FOR

Chart headlines.
Oversize numbers and labels.
Use rarely.

Use rarely - prominent
labelling only

Top-level chart labels
Panel headings
coloured text

Sub title
standard chart labelling

Axis labels
source text

Footnote symbols

order of use

Econ Sans bold

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

Econ Sans Cnd bold

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

Econ Sans Cnd medium

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

Econ Sans Cnd regular

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

Econ Sans Cnd light

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890!@£\$%^&()?

1 * 2 † 3 ‡ 4 § 5 ** 6 †† 7 ‡‡ 8 §§

Chart dimensions

Standard print

ACTUAL SIZE



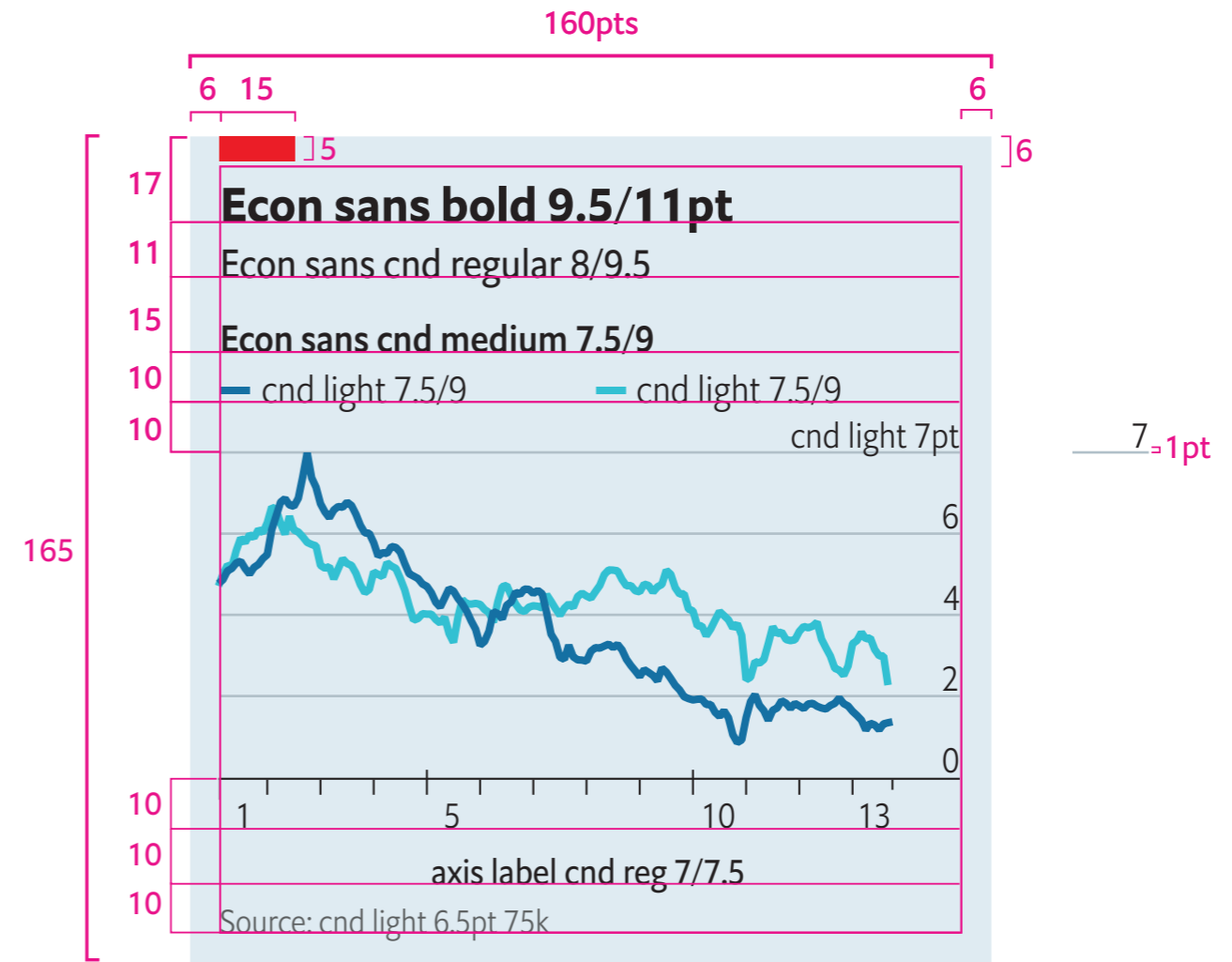
With sub-subtitle



Where possible, put units and date information on a second line at smaller font size

Econ sans bold 9.5/11pt
Econ sans cnd regular 8/9.5
light 7.5/9

DIMENSIONS AND TYPE SIZES



TICKMARKS

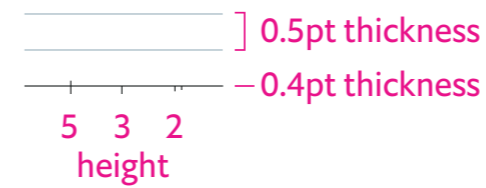
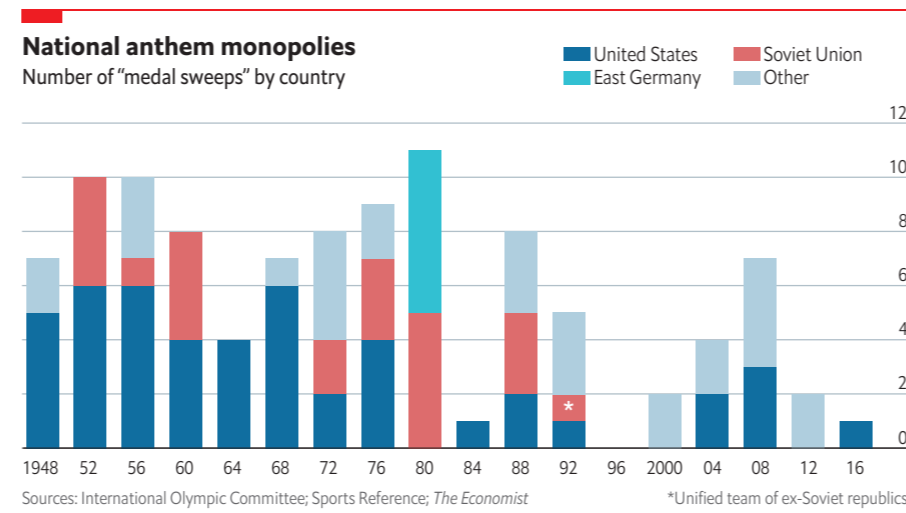


Chart dimensions

Standard web

ACTUAL SIZE



Web charts are built at standard print widths and then exported at 179.22%

BUILT AT
332pts



APPEARS AT
595px



DIMENSIONS AND TYPE SIZES

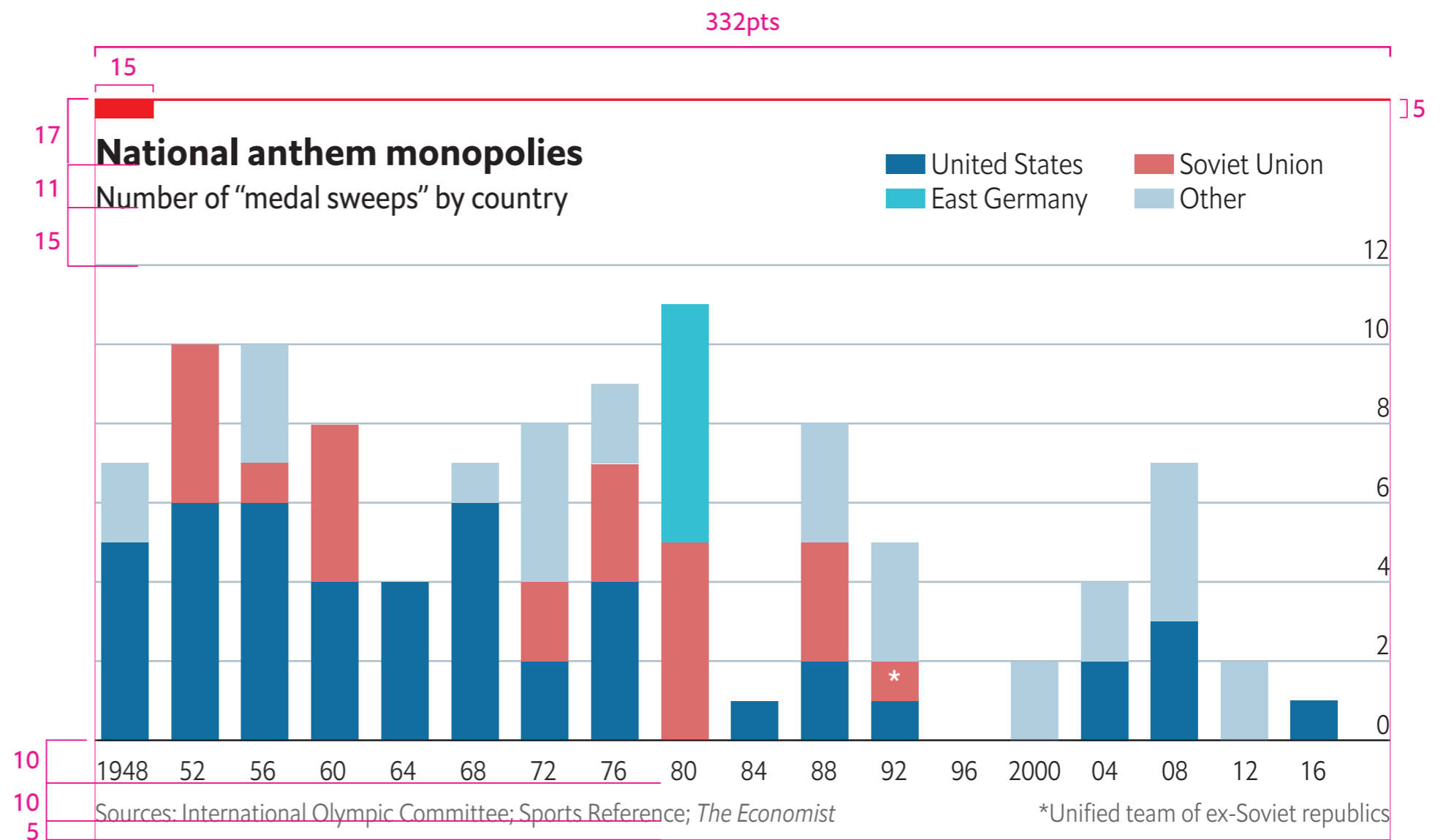
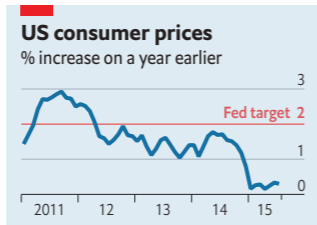


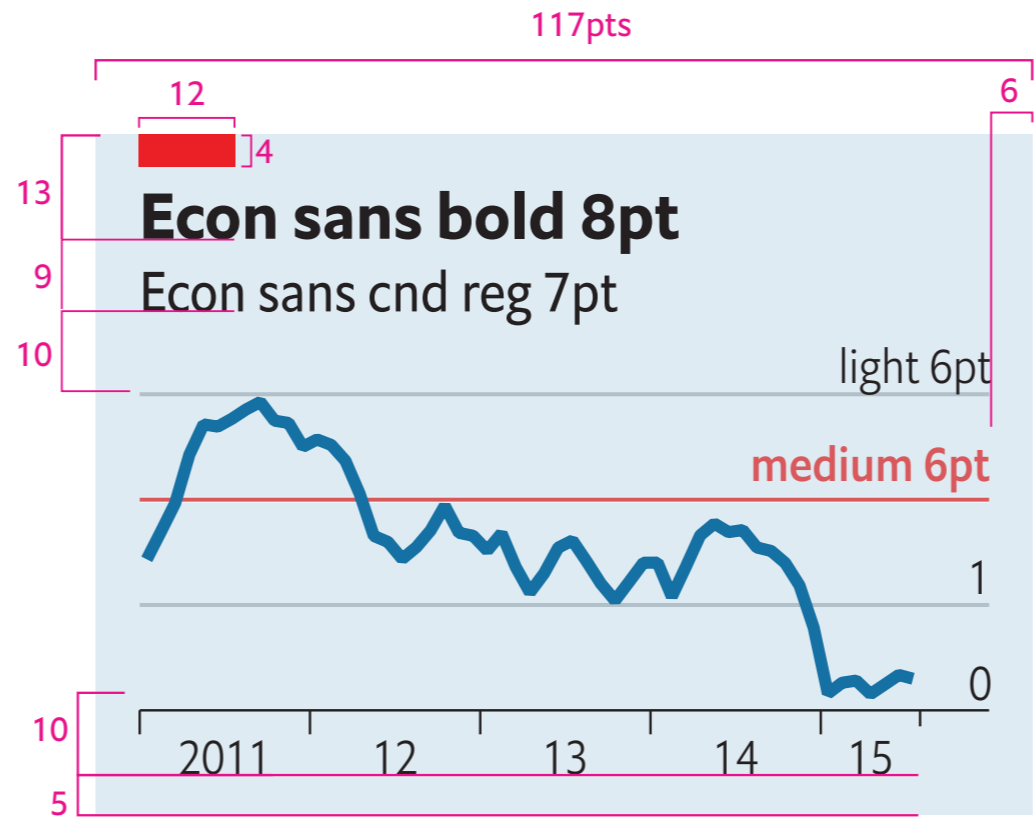
Chart dimensions

leader block / world this week

ACTUAL SIZE



DIMENSIONS AND TYPE SIZES



leader charts are exported for the web at 247.86%

BUILT AT 117pts

83.5

APPEARS AT 290px

208

83.5pts
(Leader block fixed height)

Leader blocks should be simplified as much as possible, with minimal grid lines and tick-mark labelling. Emphasis should be on showing a clear overall message, rather than identifying values for every data point.

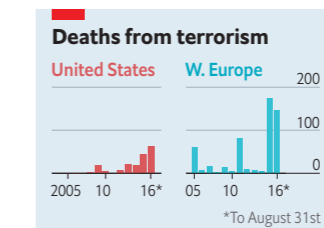
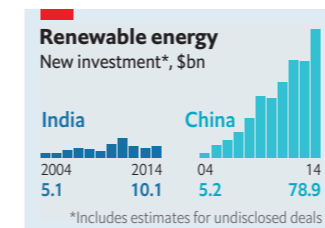
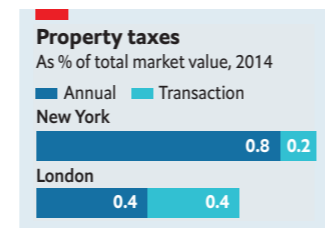
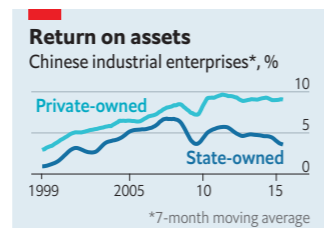


Chart dimensions espresso

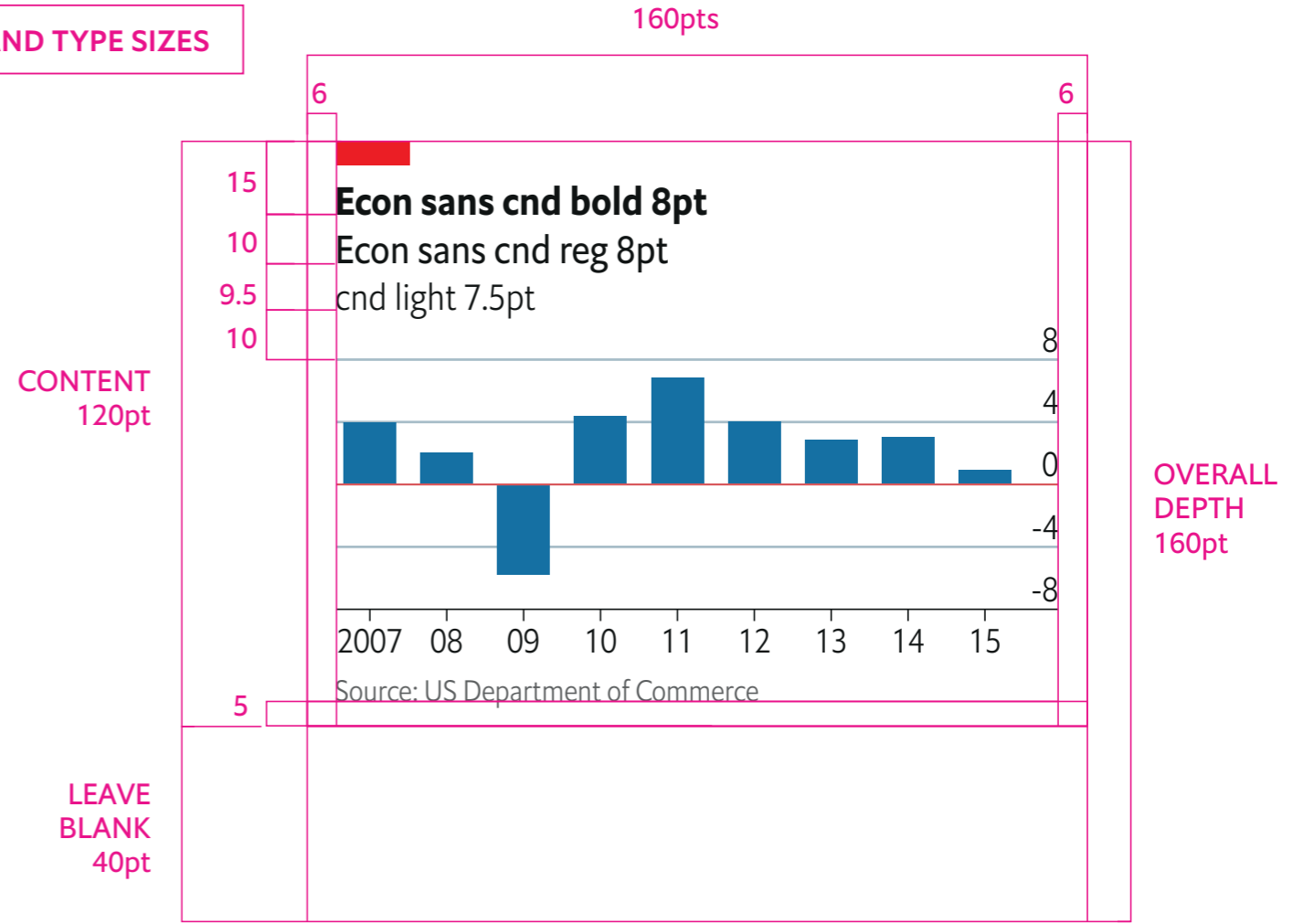
ACTUAL SIZE

LA (CHART AS LEAD IMAGE)

Fixed depth, blank spacer at bottom of chart



DIMENSIONS AND TYPE SIZES



DA (CHART IN ARTICLE BODY)

No fixed depth - same type sizes as standard chart

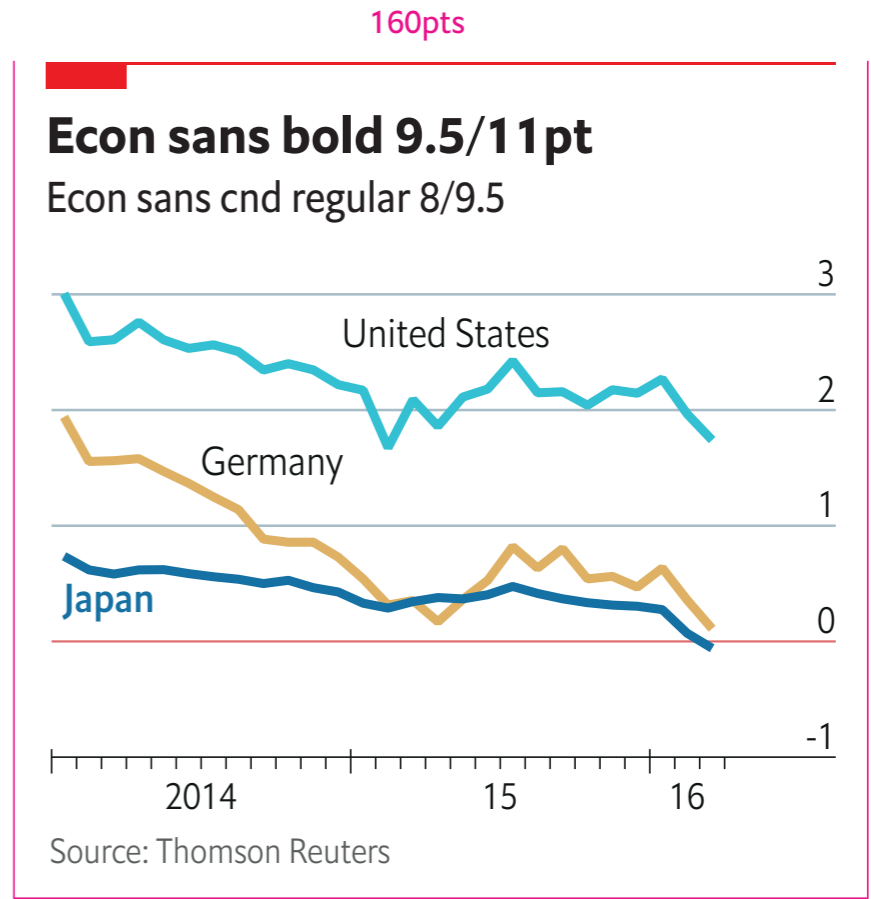
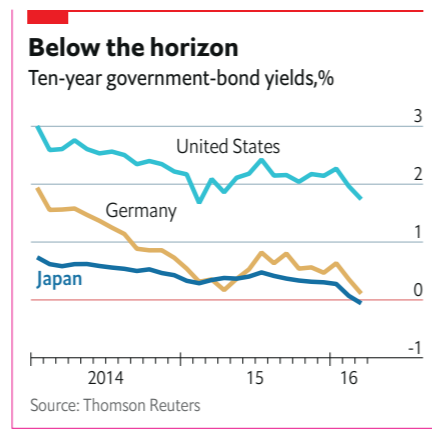
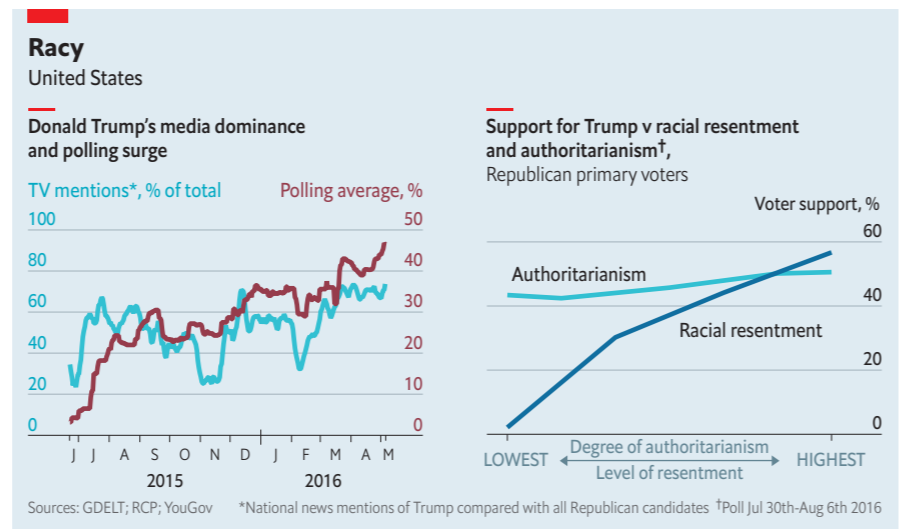


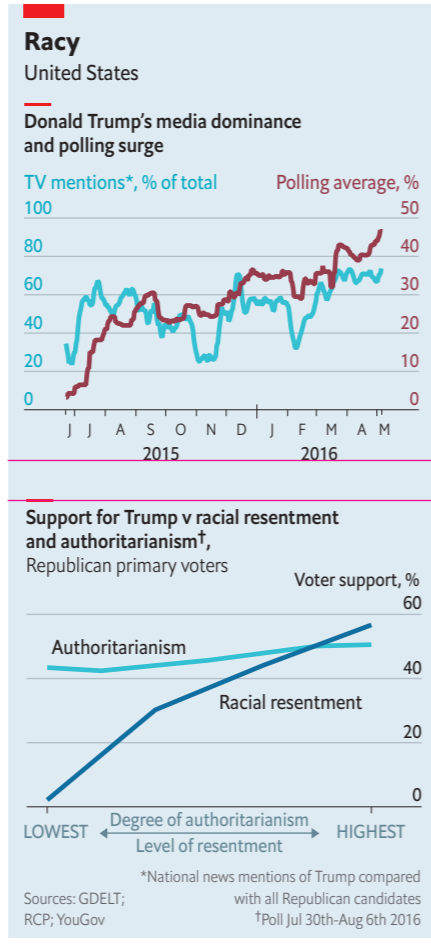
Chart dimensions panel charts

ACTUAL SIZE

LANDSCAPE



PORTRAIT



DIMENSIONS AND TYPE SIZES

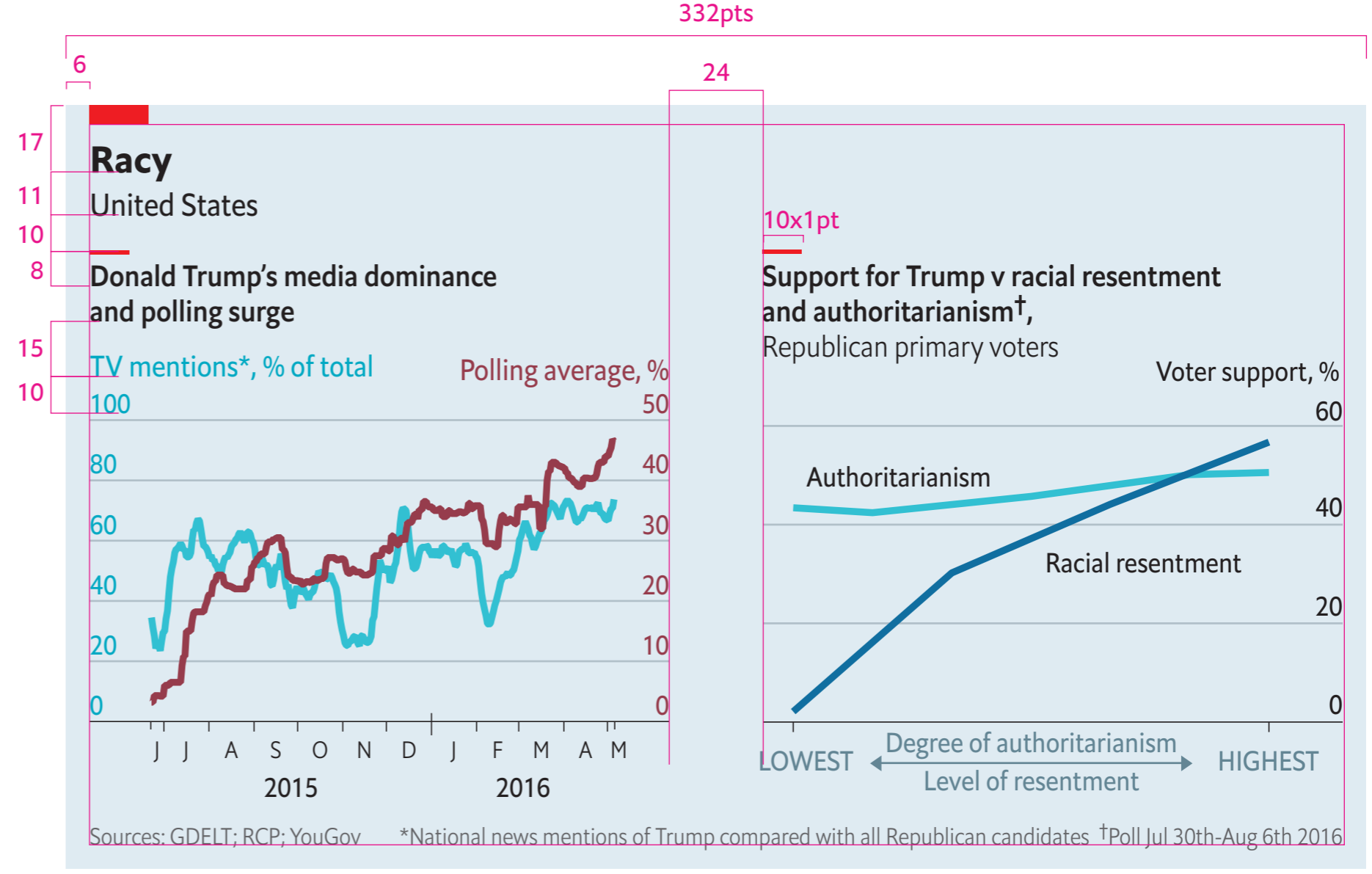


Chart palette PRINT

MAIN

ECON RED	RED1	RED TEXT	BLUE1	BLUE2	BLUE2 TEXT
C 0	C 10	C 12	C 90	C 67	C 82
M 100	M 70	M 80	M 50	M 0	M 0
Y 100	Y 50	Y 60	Y 15	Y 18	Y 18
K 0	K 0	K 0	K 5	K 0	K 8

SECONDARY

C 12	C 0	C 27	C 85	C 53
M 30	M 75	M 42	M 0	M 0
Y 70	Y 35	Y 25	Y 30	Y 26
K 0	K 45	K 10	K 20	K 0

SUPPORTING Use for multi-category charts where high contrast is needed

BRIGHT

C 40	C 0	C 6	C 33
M 70	M 68	M 40	M 13
Y 30	Y 73	Y 100	Y 95
K 6	K 0	K 0	K 2

DARK

C 85	C 80	C 38
M 10	M 25	M 30
Y 0	Y 50	Y 43
K 58	K 50	K 26

BACKGROUND

PRINT BKGD	HIGHLIGHT	NUMBER BOX
C 7.5	C 15	C 22.5
M 0	M 0	M 0
Y 0	Y 0	Y 0
K 5	K 10	K 15

NEUTRAL

GRID LINES	GREY BOX	GREY TEXT	BLACK PALETTE
C 10	C 30	C 20	C 0
M 0	M 0	M 0	M 0
Y 0	Y 0	Y 0	Y 0
K 25	K 50	K 80	K 25
			K 50
			K 75
			K 100

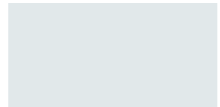
Chart palette WEB

ECON RED


 E3120B

BLACK

 0C0C0C

BOXES/NAV

 E9EDF0











 B7C6CF


 758D99























































TEXT

 3F5661

MAIN

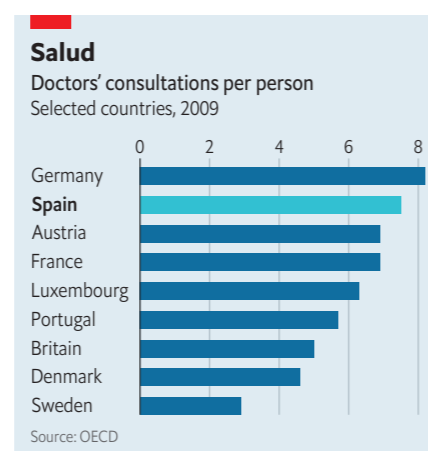
RED	BLUE	CYAN	GREEN	YELLOW	OLIVE	PURPLE	GOLD	GREY
								
DB444B	006BA2	3EBCD2	379A8B	EBB434	B4BA39	9A607F	D1B07C	758D99

EQUAL LIGHTNESS COLOUR SCALES

								
A81829	00588D	005F73	005F52	714C00	4C5900	78405F	674E1F	3F5661
								
C7303C	1270A8	00788D	00786B	8D6300	667100	925977	826636	576E79
								
E64E53	3D89C3	0092A7	2E9284	AA7C00	818A00	AD7291	9D7F4E	6F8793
								
FF6B6C	5DA4DF	25ADC2	4DAD9E	C89608	9DA521	C98CAC	B99966	89A2AE
								
FF8785	7BBFFC	4EC8DE	69C9B9	E7B030	BAC03F	E6A6C7	D5B480	A4BDC9
								
FFA39F	98DAFF	6FE4FB	86E5D4	FFCB4D	D7DB5A	FFC2E3	F2CF9A	BFD8E5

Bar / column Side-by-side

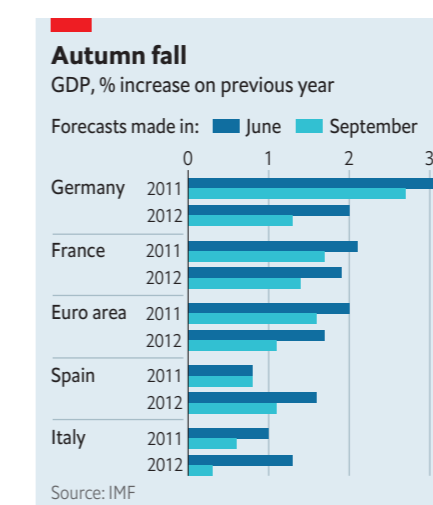
1 trace with highlight



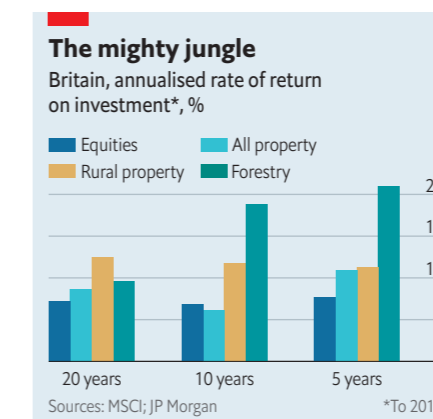
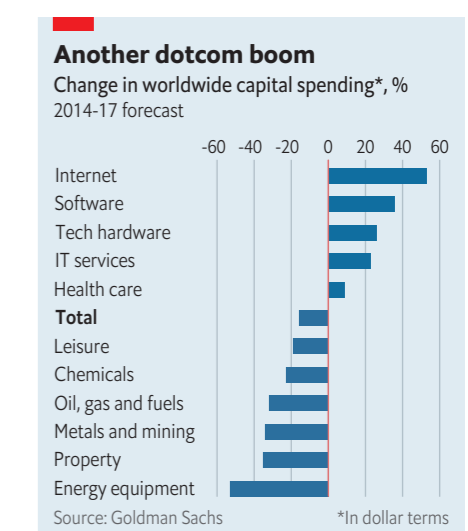
2 traces



2 traces with sub-categories

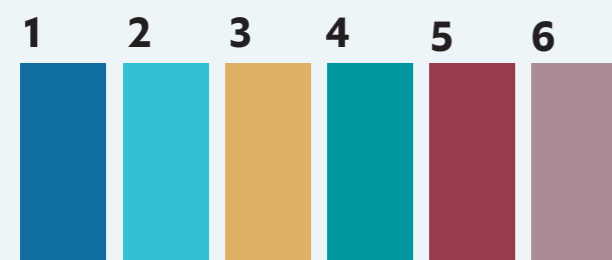


1 trace with +/- axis



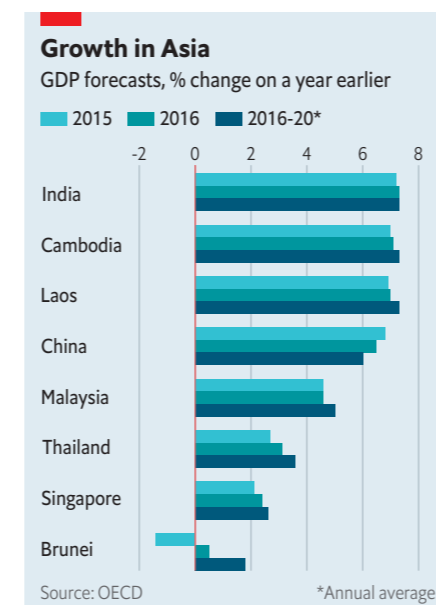
Differentiate positive/negative values by colour only where there is a meaningful difference i.e. imports / exports

COLOUR ORDER

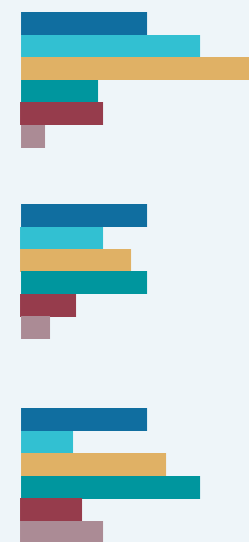
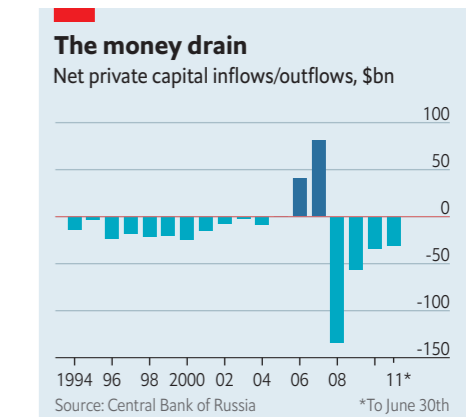
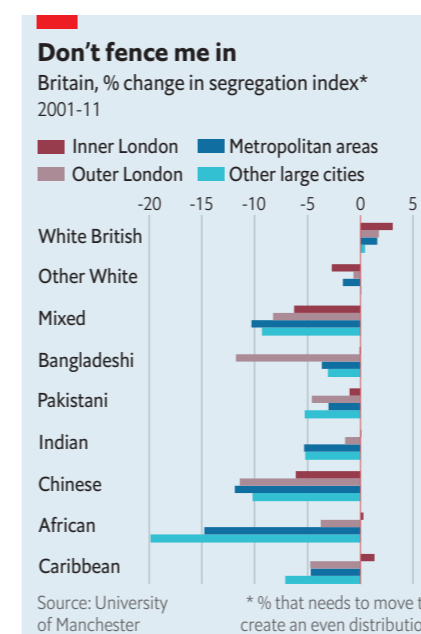


COLOUR OVERRIDES

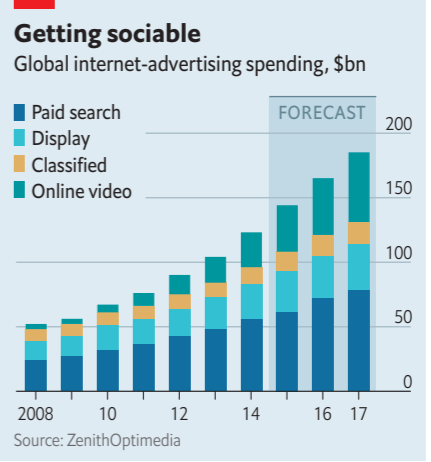
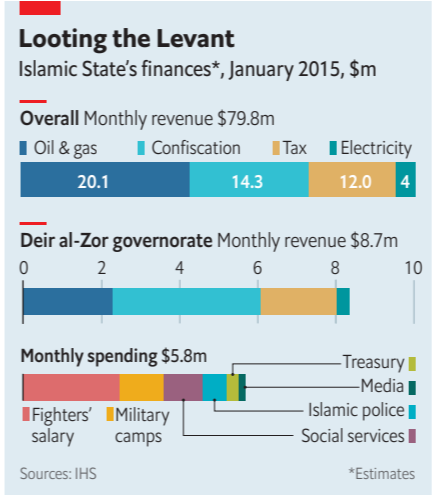
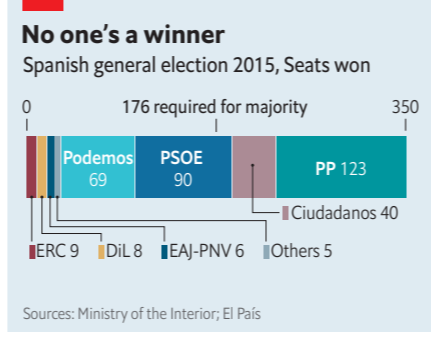
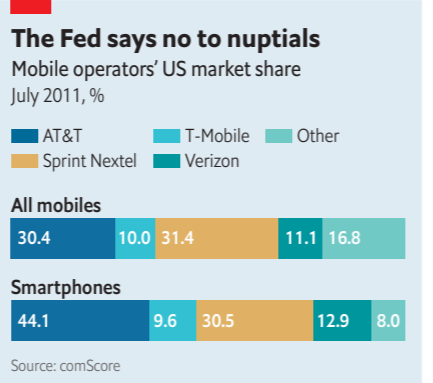
Where categories are chronological, use light-to-dark scale



If categories form meaningful groups, use colour to reinforce that

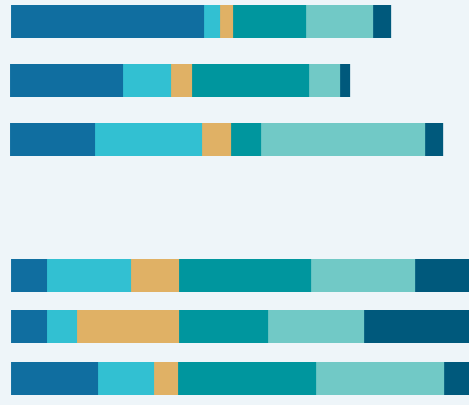
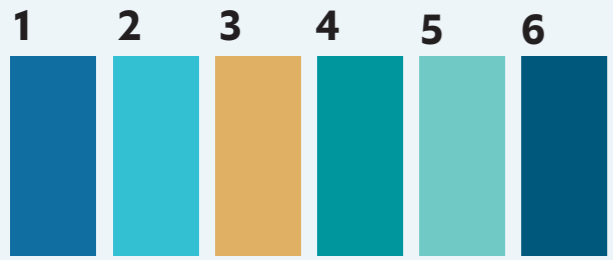


Bar / column Stacked

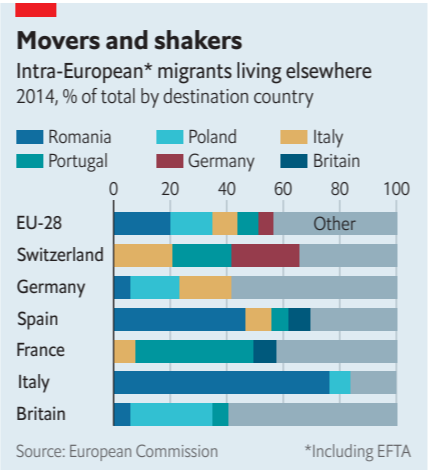


For stacked bars with few categories or labelling issues, consider removing tick marks and labelling each segment value.

COLOUR ORDER

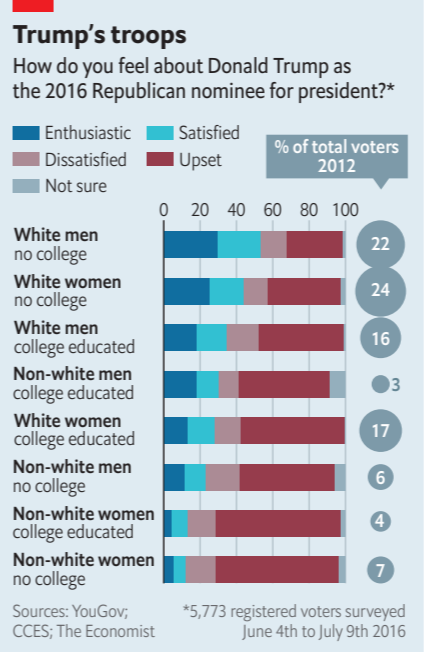


COLOUR OVERRIDES

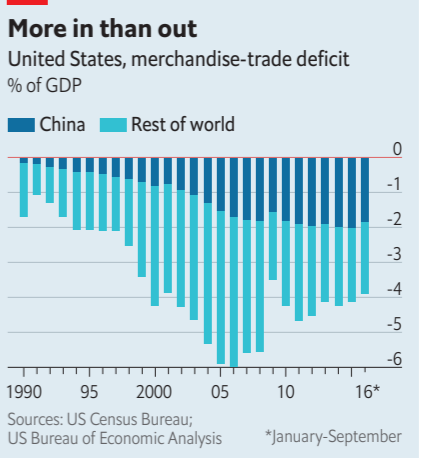


You may need to swap in other colours for charts with more than 4 categories

Use grey for 'other' / 'dont know' etc

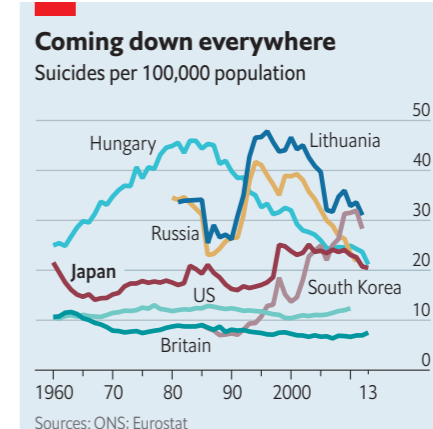
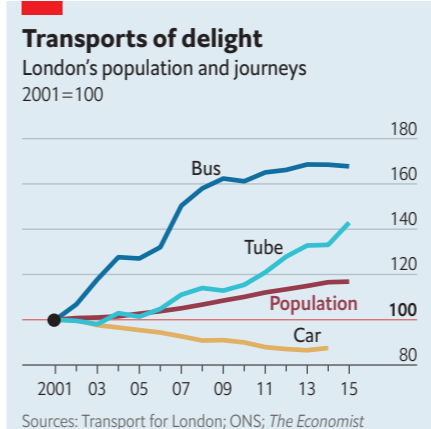
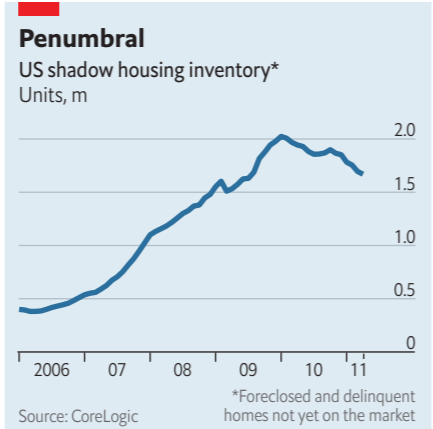


If categories form meaningful groups, use colour to reinforce that

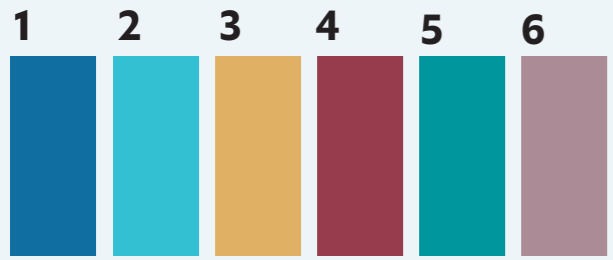


Lines

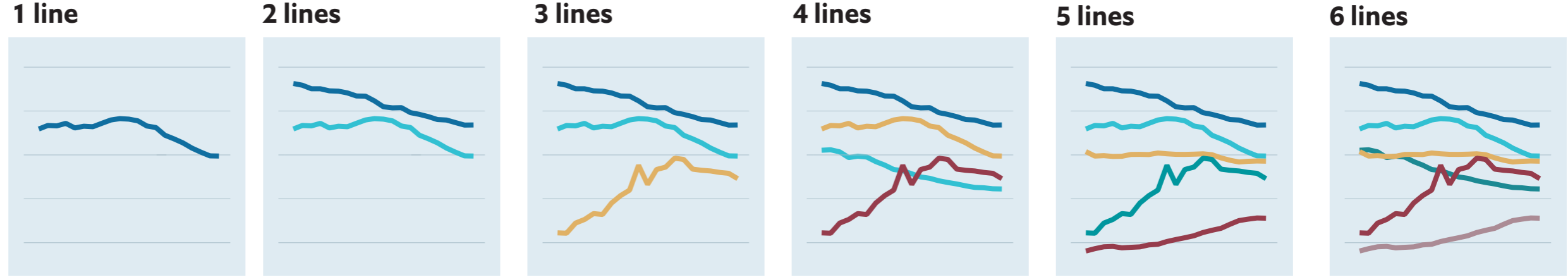
Side-by-side



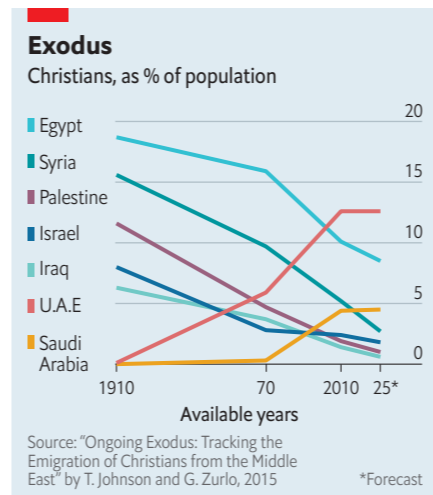
COLOUR ORDER



Standard colour order

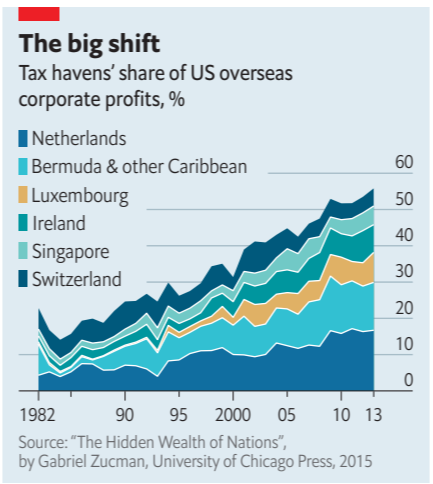


HIGH CONTRAST ALTERNATIVES

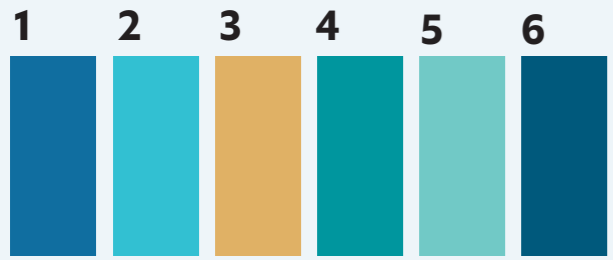


Lines

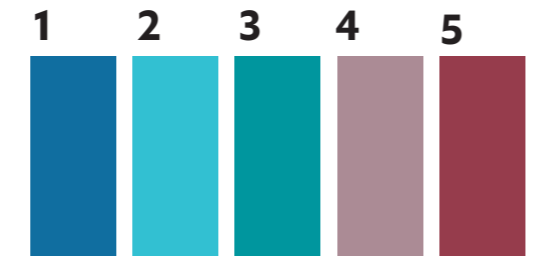
Stacked



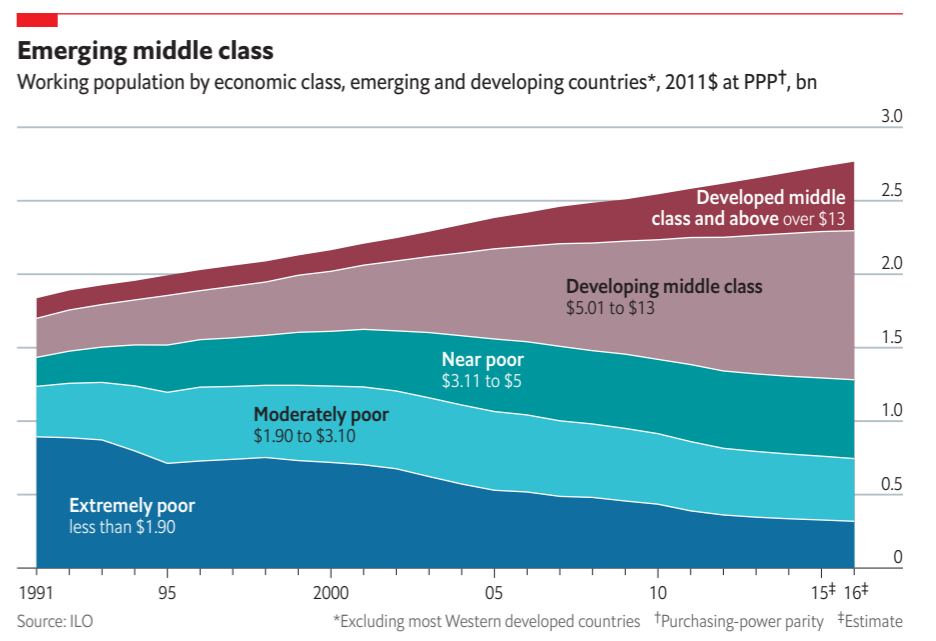
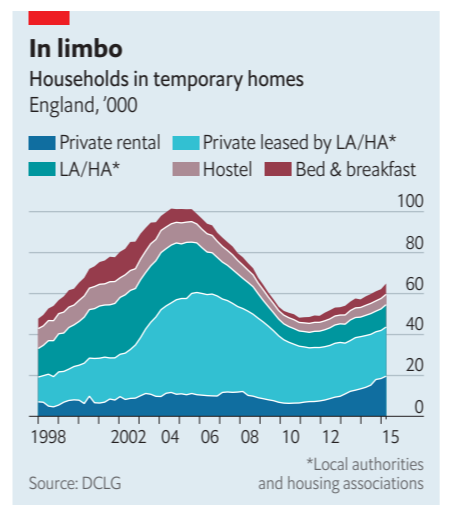
COLOUR ORDER



COLOUR OVERRIDES



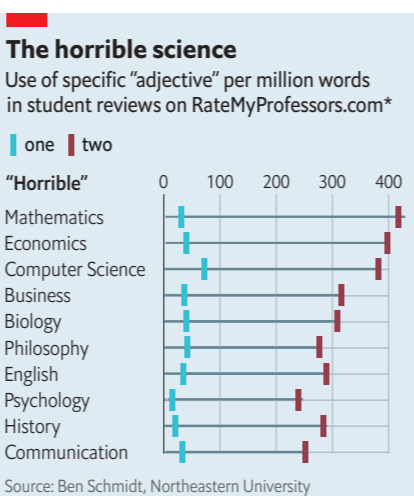
Alternative colour scheme for use where categories are chronological or where primary colour scheme doesn't work



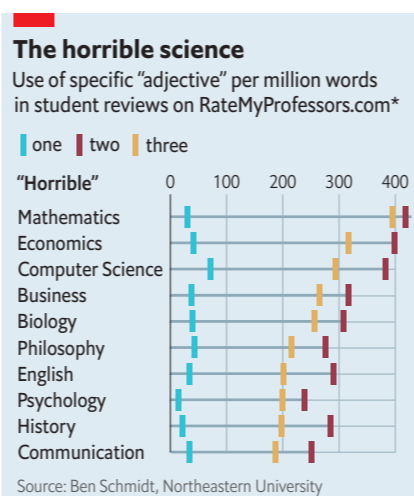
Thermometer charts

Standard colour order

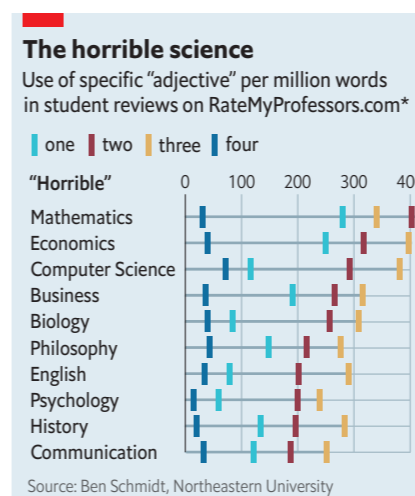
2 lines



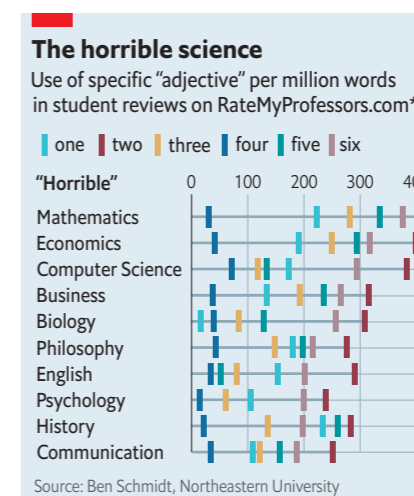
3 lines



4 lines

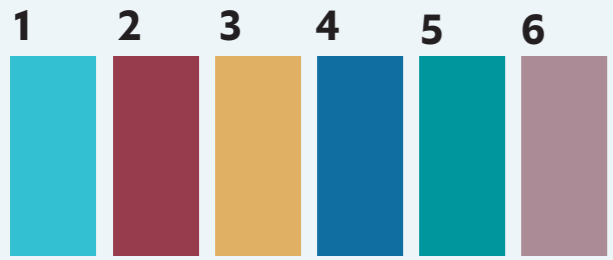


6 lines

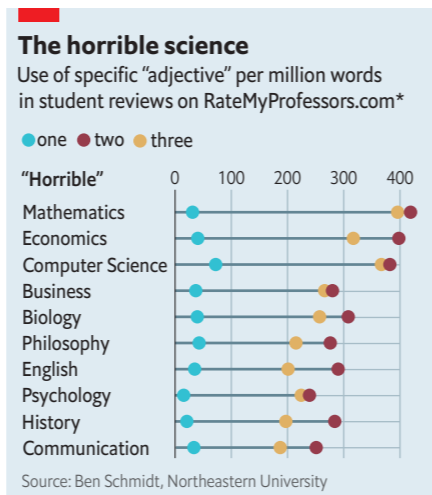


Ilex will plot up to 6 colours but any more than 4 categories is probably too many and you should have a rethink

COLOUR ORDER



dot terminals



Use as alternative when lines are unclear

Scatter plot

Chart elements

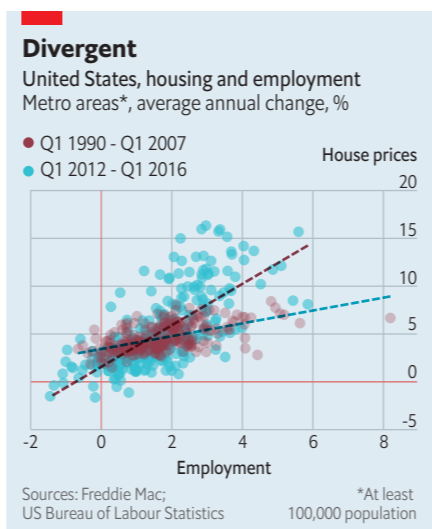
Standard dot
 4px width
 50% opacity
use where general trend is more important than individual point

highlight dot
 4px width
 100% opacity
use to label outliers / important data points

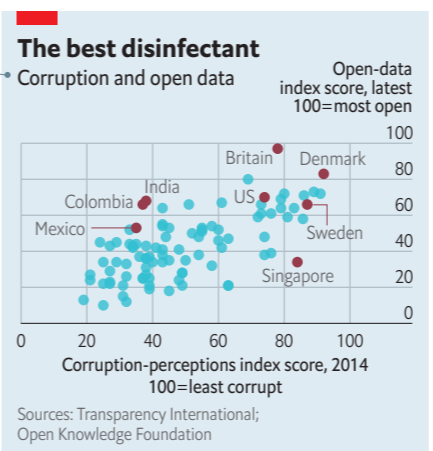
Category dot
 0.3px stroke
 50% opacity fill
use for bubble charts to differential colours

trend lines
 1px stroke
 dashed 3px, 1px

Standard scatter

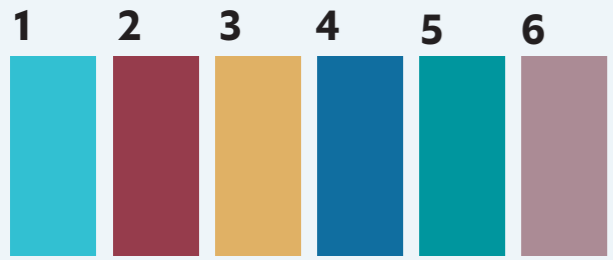


sub title should summarise chart, save specific units for axis labels

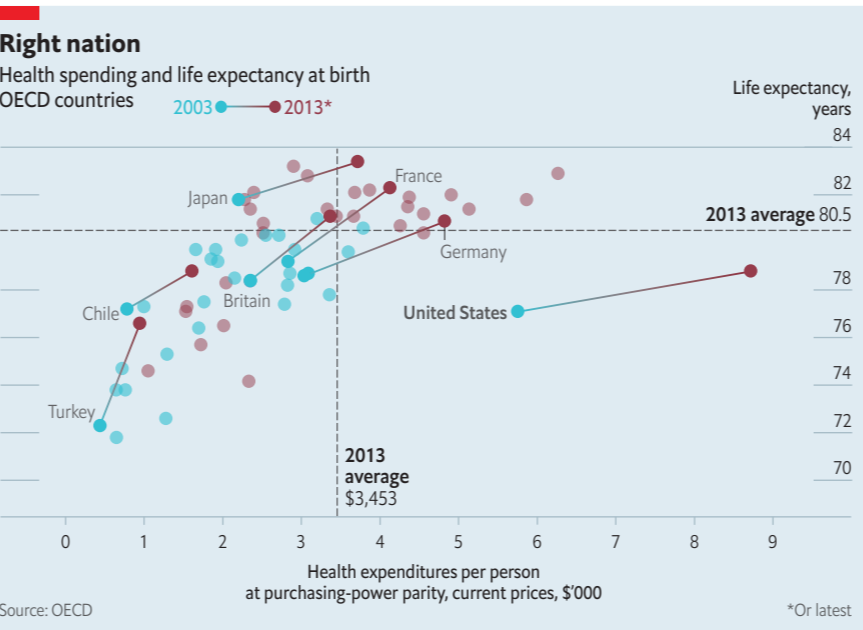


Same weight/colour for x and y ticks
 use black for zero baseline only

COLOUR ORDER



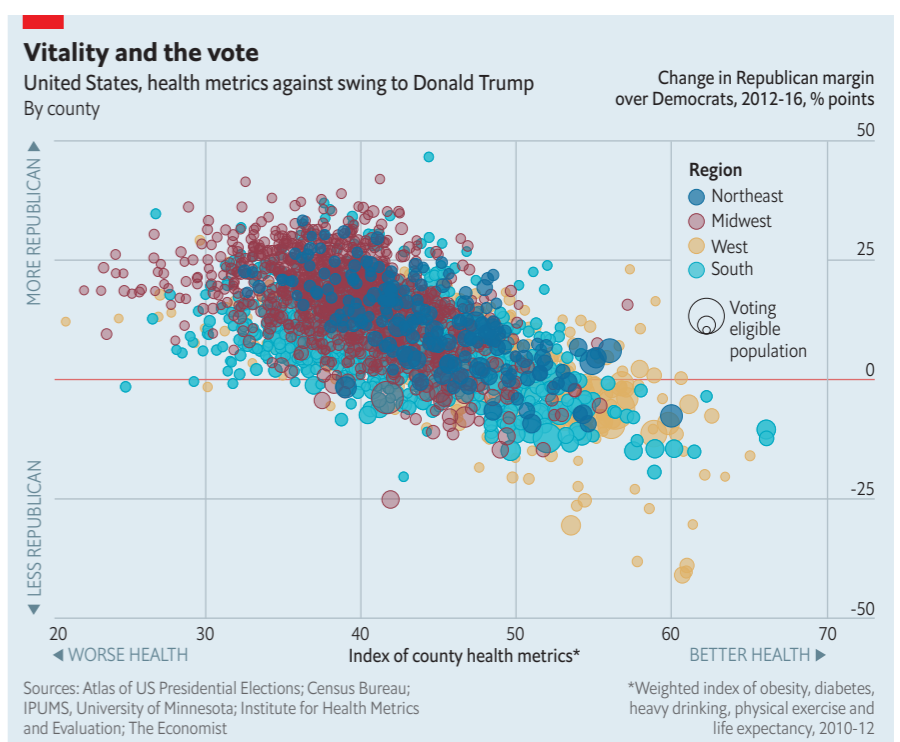
Connected scatter



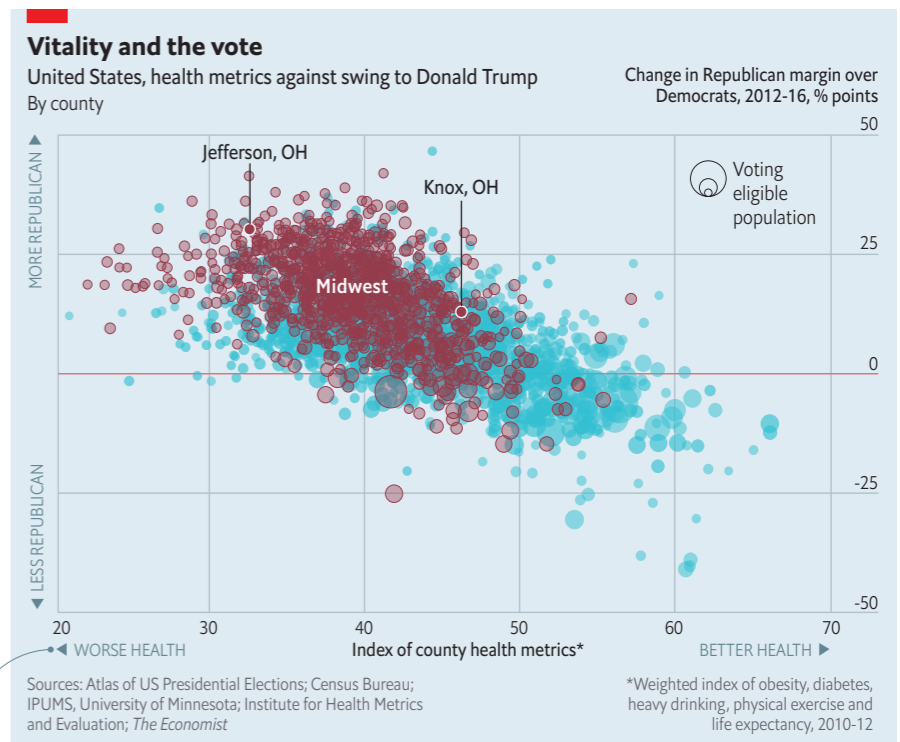
To avoid obscuring the connecting lines and labels, axis lines can be broken

Bubble chart

4 categories ● ● ● ●



Where colour categories become difficult to distinguish, consider highlighting the most significant part of the story



On larger / complicated scatters, use explanatory labels to make the correlation clear

Tables

Chart elements

headline econ sans cnd medium 7.5/9
 body econ sans cnd light 7.5/9
 paragraph space 4pt
 detail text 75k



Standard table

Greatest hits

Largest Y Combinator-funded startups

Company	Value* \$bn	Date of joining
Airbnb Rents out places to stay for local hosts	\$25.5	2009
Dropbox File-sharing and storage in the cloud	\$10.0	2007
Stripe Software for selling from within apps	\$5.0	2010
Zenefits Online HR and payroll services	\$4.5	2013
Instacart Grocery collection and delivery service	\$2.0	2012
Docker Platform to manage distribution of software	\$1.1	2010

Sources: CB Insights; CrunchBase *Latest funding round

Use 75k text to differentiate explanatory text

Divided by a dozen

Policy choices in our political proximity model

Social
Which comes closest to your position on abortion?
Would you support/oppose a constitutional amendment allowing states to ban gay marriage?
Should gun-control laws be more or less strict than they are now?
Economic
Do you support/oppose raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour?
What should be done to reduce the federal budget deficit?
Do you support/oppose a single-payer health-care system?
Should our taxes provide free college tuition?
Foreign policy
Do you think the US government should be doing more or less in its fight against terrorism?
Do you support/oppose sending ground combat troops to fight IS in Iraq and Syria?
Do you favour/oppose building a wall along the border between the United States and Mexico?
Would you say NAFTA has had a positive/negative effect on the US economy?
Is the government doing enough to combat climate change?

With colour highlight

Obama's jobs bill

New stimulus measures	\$bn
Business tax cuts	70
Infrastructure spending, state and local government aid	140
Unemployment insurance and training	62
Payroll-tax cut	175
Total	447
Paid for by	
Limiting deductions for upper-income earners	405
Treating carried interest as ordinary income	18
Limiting oil and gas company tax benefits	40
Removing corporate-jet tax breaks	3
Total*	467

Source: White House *Figures may not sum due to rounding

Use colour highlight with inverted text to pull out key details

Use alternating row colours to help with reading

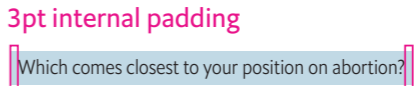


Table with integrated charts

What to expect

Asylum processes, selected countries, 2014

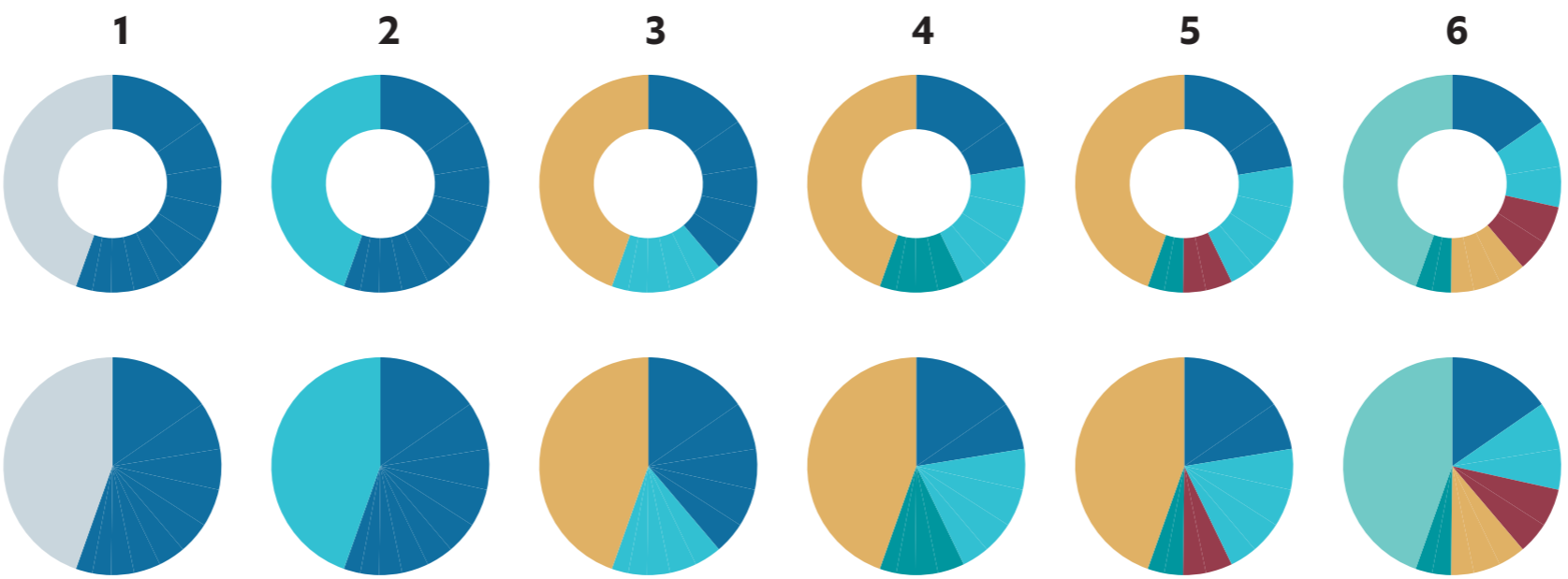
Country	Applications* Decisions made	Mainly from %	Accepted %	Minimum wait before permitted to work	State benefits per month
Germany	173,070 97,415	Syria 23 Serbia / Kosovo 14 Eritrea 8	42	3 months	€374
Sweden	75,090 40,015	Syria 40 Stateless 10 Eritrea 8	77	Immediately Without restrictions	€226
Hungary	41,370 5,445	Serbia / Kosovo 51 Afghanistan 21 Syria 16	9	9 months Working only in a reception centre	€86 Maximum
Britain	31,260 26,055	Eritrea 13 Pakistan 11 Syria 8	39	12 months Only jobs where gov't sees a shortage (medics, engineers)	€217
United States	121,160 71,765†	Mexico 12 China 11 El Salvador 8	30†	6 months In practice, 92% of applicants wait longer	Nil
Australia	8,960 13,198†	China 19‡ India 13‡ Pakistan 10‡	19†	Most applicants cannot work as they are in detention	€275

Sources: UNHCR; government statistics; The Economist *From UNHCR 2014 report †From UNHCR Statistical Database ‡2012-13 figures

Where table data will benefit from visualising, use small labelled bar charts etc.

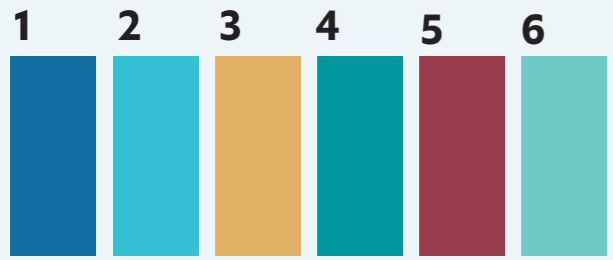
Pie / doughnut

Standard colour order

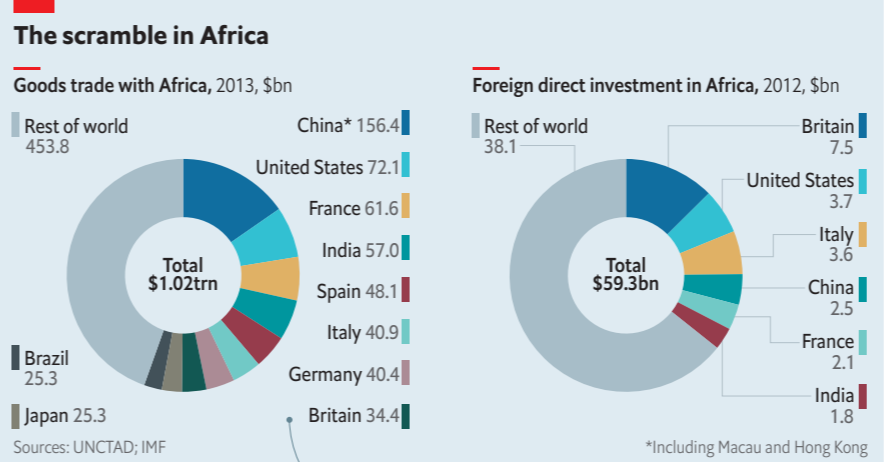
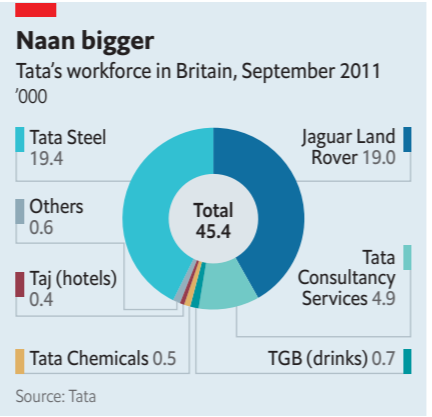
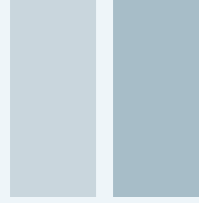


NOTE: Use with caution.
Should probably be abandoned in favour of stacked bar if over 4 categories

COLOUR ORDER



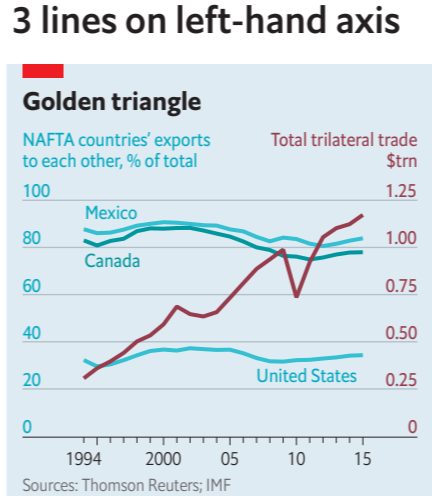
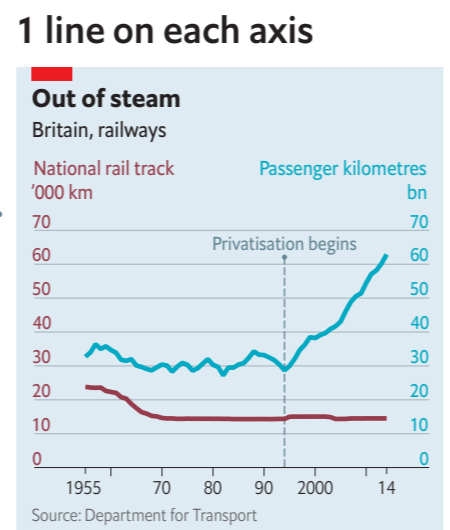
Other



Where linking lines get too crowded, key the labels with small colour block

Double-scale charts

Use Econ Sans Cnd Regular, instead of light, for coloured y-axis labels



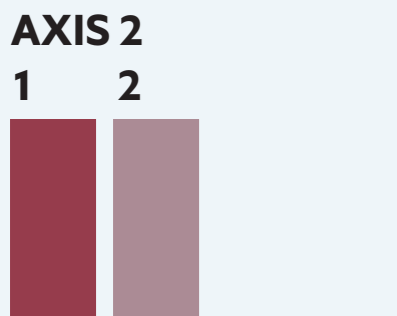
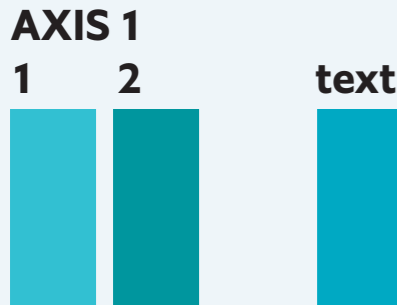
Always choose the axis colour order that will visually associate the labels best with the corresponding line

Double scales can be good at showing correlations and are economical with space.

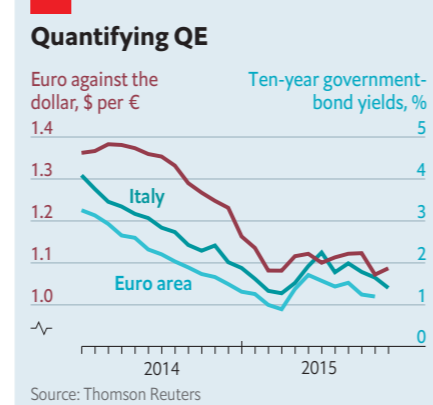
But they can also be confusing/misleading.

Here are some things to avoid when considering a double scale

COLOUR ORDER

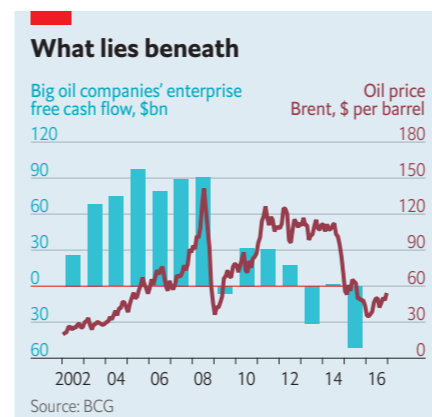


✗ Avoid breaking the scales without good reason



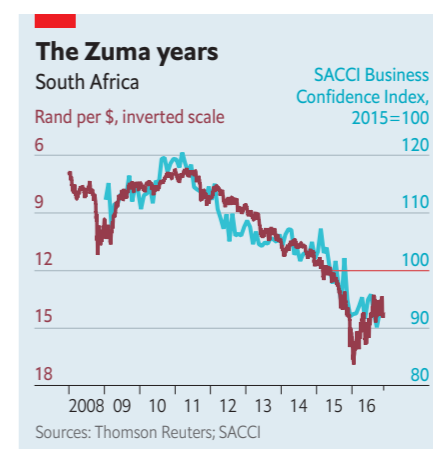
Broken scale distorts data

✗ If you are plotting above and below a zero line make the zero lines align



misaligned baselines

✗ Avoid mixing disparate measures to force visual correlation



Index value + inverted scale

If you cannot conform to the above rules try splitting the chart into panels or indexing the variables

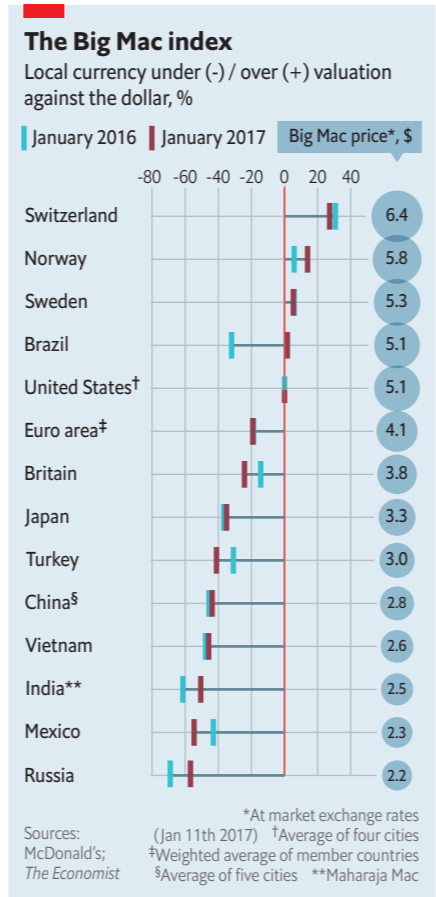
Blob heads

A secondary data variable added as area-sized bubbles or number boxes

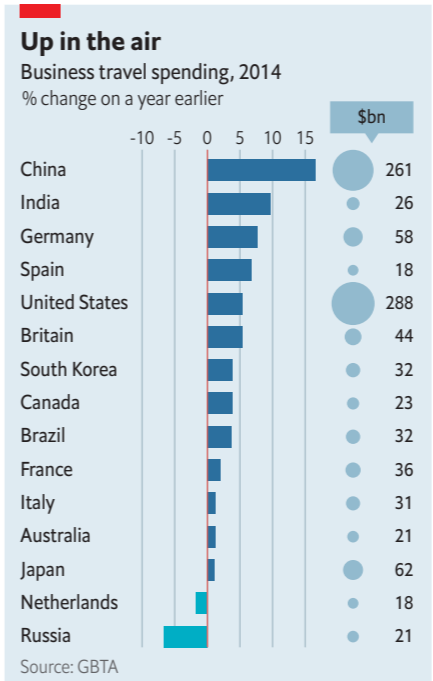
Can be used with column or thermometer charts

Bubble

Where bubbles are large enough fit numbers inside

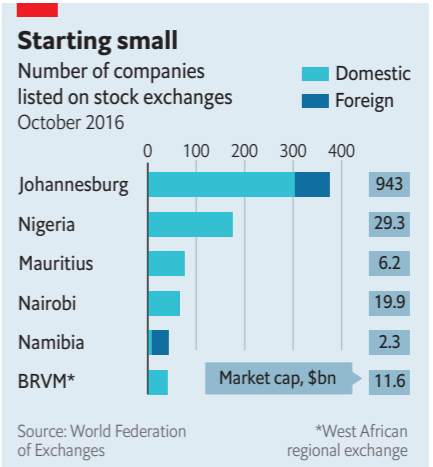


To avoid awkward alignment, if most numbers won't fit, put them outside bubble and align text right



Number block

If number range or positive / negative values rule out bubbles, revert to equal-sized number blocks



Text blocks

Econ Sans Cnd reg 7.5/9.5pt
Box: c22.5 k15 100% multiply

- 1 line 12pt height / 6pt horizontal padding
- 2 line 23pt height / 6pt horizontal padding

numbers

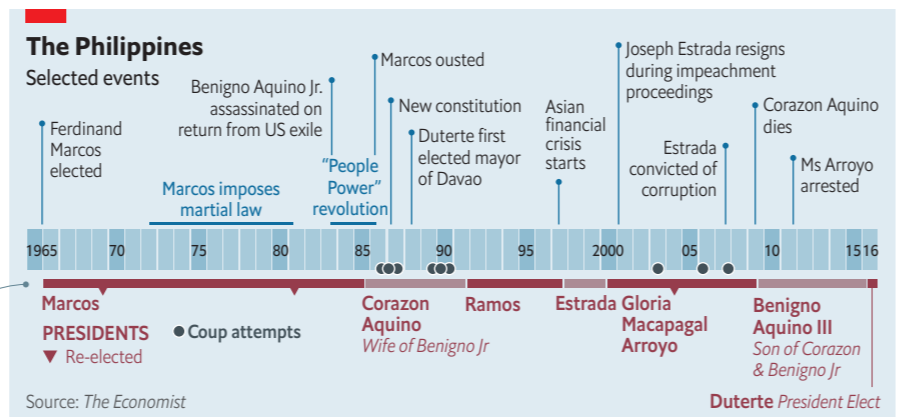
Econ Sans Cnd reg 7pt

Arrow placement

- ECB announces QE
 - ECB announces QE
 - ECB announces QE
- Horizontally or vertically centred
- Minimum 6pt in from box edge if necessary

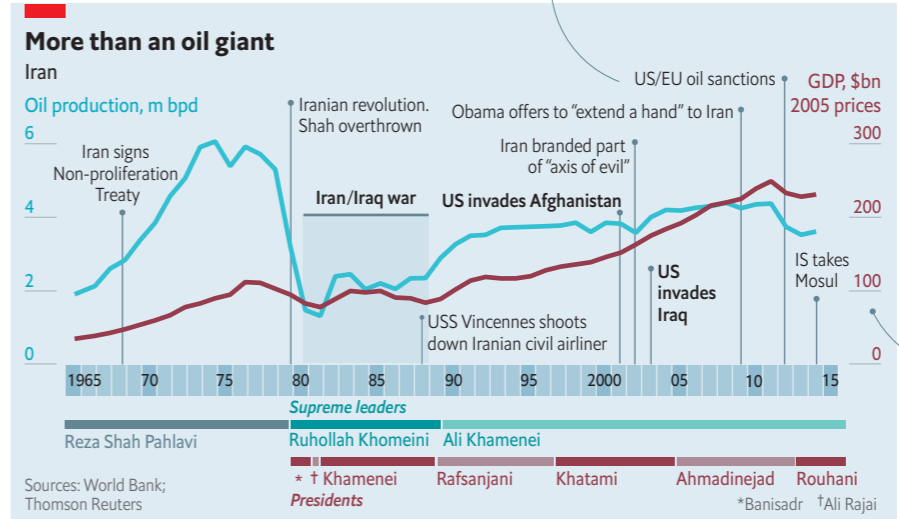
Timelines

Non-data timelines



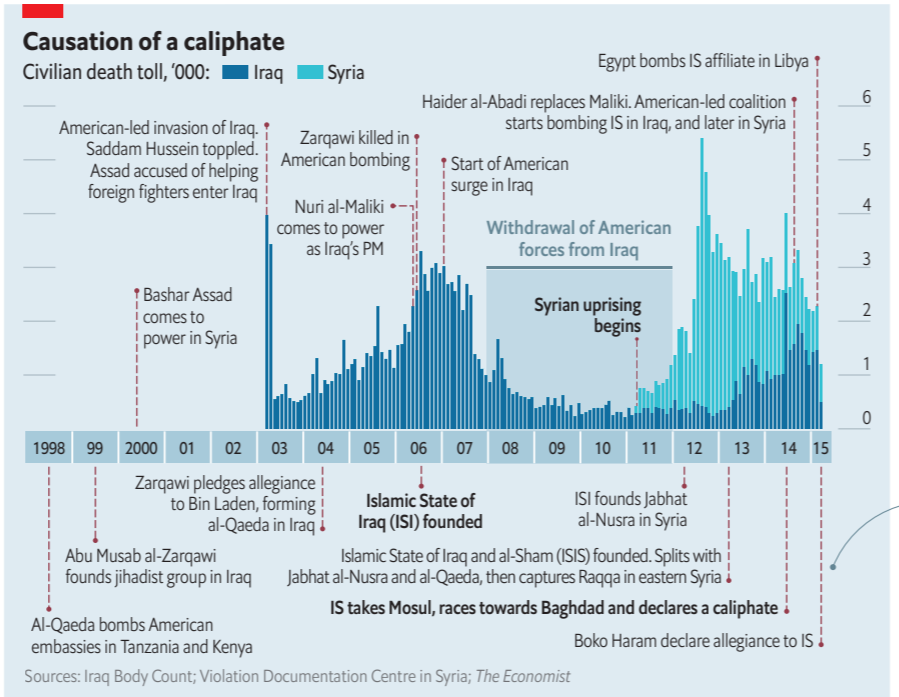
Use thin alternating-colour bars to mark out time periods. Key repeated events, like coup attempts, to avoid duplicating text labels

Data timeline



Where colour is being used to categorise data, use grey for timeline labels

For timelines tied to a dataset, break the y-axis lines to avoid chart area becoming too crowded



To distinguish from plotted data, use dotted lines for labels on bar charts



Label styles

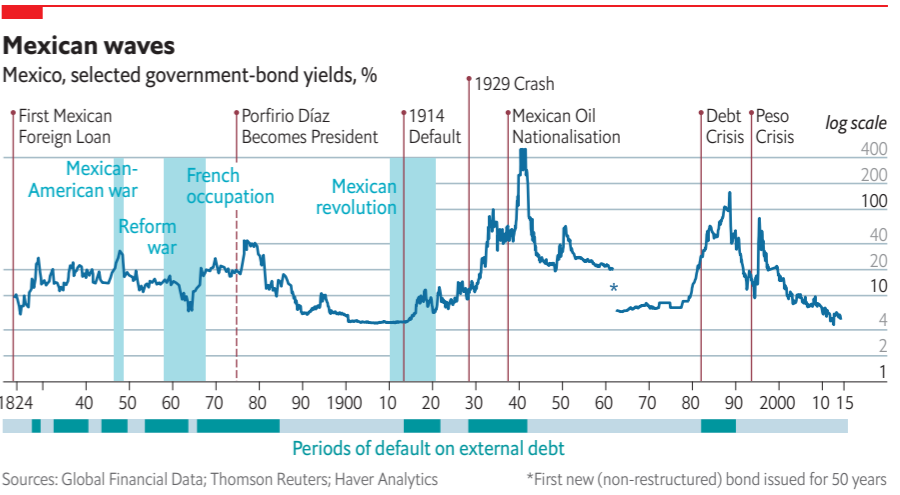
- Specific date events: 0.5px stroke, arrowhead 21, 50%
- Time periods

Timelines mobile versions

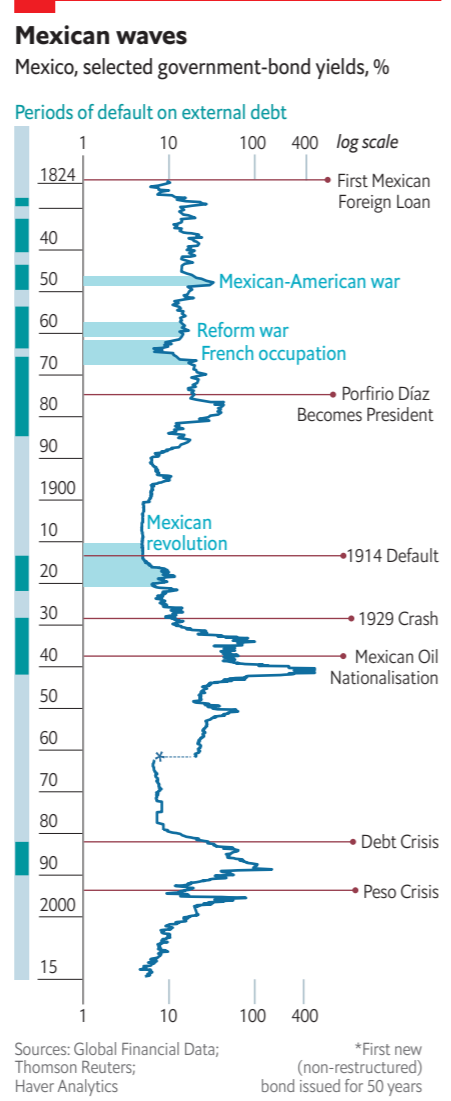
3-column print timeline



web desktop version at 332pt



Mobile option 1



Rotate timeline and run vertically on mobile.

Works well where labels are relatively evenly spaced and where the data relates to specific labels, i.e. oil nationalisation in this example

Mobile option 2



Compress horizontally, number labels on chart and list below.

With often-lengthly text labels in fixed positions on the chart, timelines present a unique challenge for condensing to mobile.

Miscellaneous styles

Number boxes

Use where multiple charts are referenced in text



Econ sans bold 7.5pt
c22.5 / k15

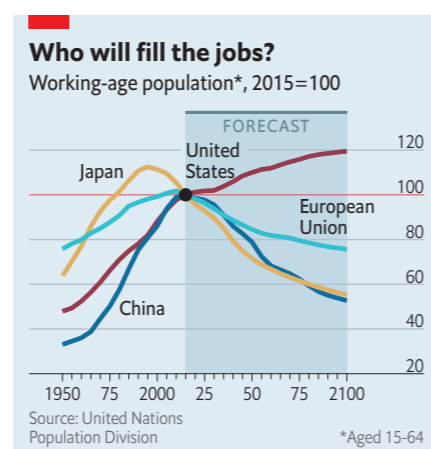
10pt

6pt

1

10pt

Highlight panels



For secondary information, like forecast or estimate, use neutral style

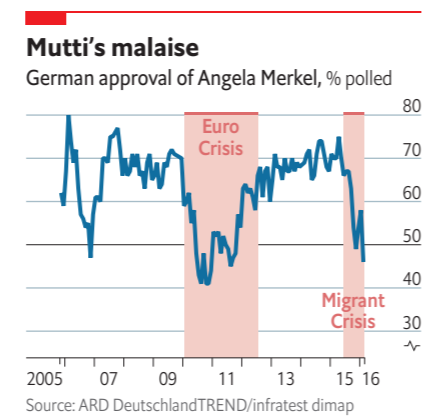
LIGHT 6.5PT UPPERCASE —1pt

GREY c15, k10



For highlights that are central to the message of the chart, use colour

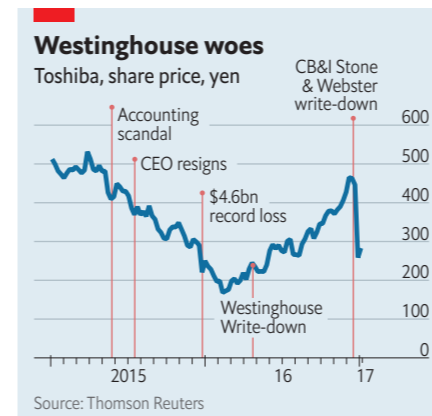
c10, m70, y50
30% tint



For web-only charts, use print bkgd colour for highlights

Highlight labels

Use to mark specific dates and points on axis

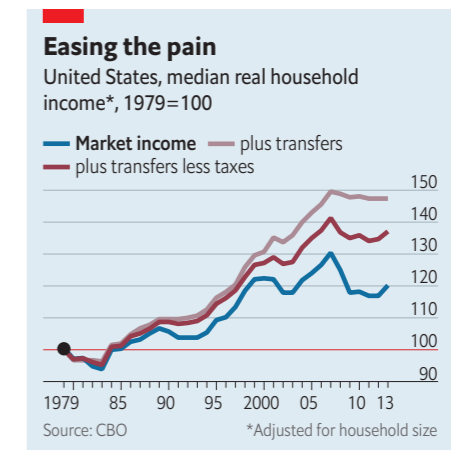


label text econ sans cnd light 7/7pt
0.5pt stroke arrow 21

If there are only 1 or 2 points, and they are key to the chart meaning, use colour/medium font

World war II starts
World war II ends

Index charts

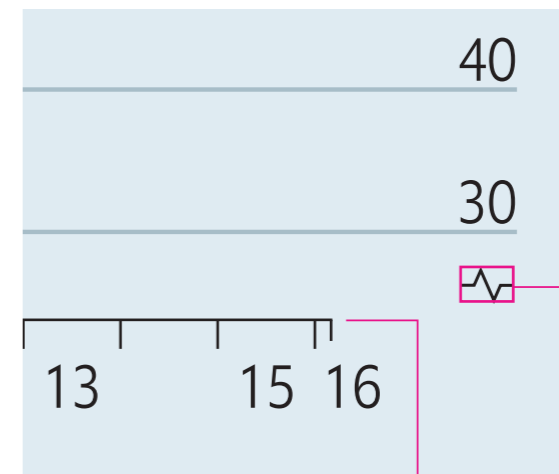


5pt diameter black circle on index point
0.5pt red line on index line
c12, m80, y60, k0

Broken scales

Use when breaking y-axis on line, thermometer and scatter charts not needed on indexed, negative scale or inverted scales

DON'T BREAK SCALE ON BAR/COLUMN CHARTS - USE THERMOMETER INSTEAD



broken scale symbol black 0.4 stroke 6pt width centred between baseline and first y-axis tick

x axis baseline ends at last tick mark