

WEEK 1

INTRO TO TIDYVERSE AND GGPLOT

DATA VISUALIZATION FOR SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

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ROAD MAP FOR TODAY

- Today:

- ▶ Welcome
- ▶ Mapping data to aesthetics
- ▶ Intro for tidyverse and ggplot in R

- By next week, please...

- ▶ Fork GitHub repository
- ▶ Problem set #1

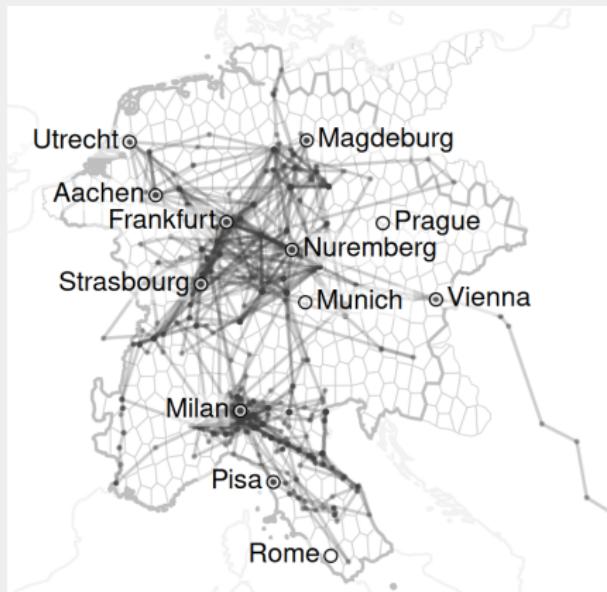
MAPPING DATA TO AESTHETICS

- Aesthetic
 - ▶ Visual property of graph
 - ▶ Position, shape, color, etc.

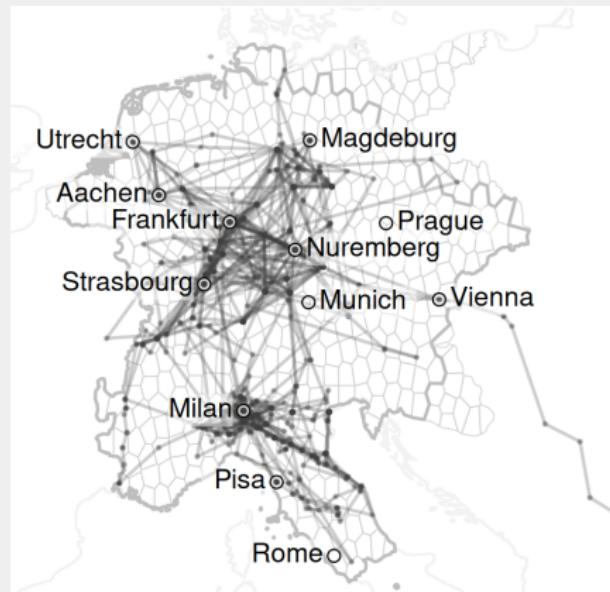
- Data
 - ▶ Column in dataset

Ex: RULERS' ITINERARIES OF ROMAN EMPIRE

Frederick I Barbarossa (1152-1190)



Louis IV (1314-1347)



Müller-Crepion, C., Neupert-Wentz, C., Kokkonen, A., & Möller, J. (2025). Rulers on the Road: Itinerant Rule in the Holy Roman Empire, AD 919–1519. American Journal of Political Science.

Ex: MAPPING DATA TO AESTHETICS

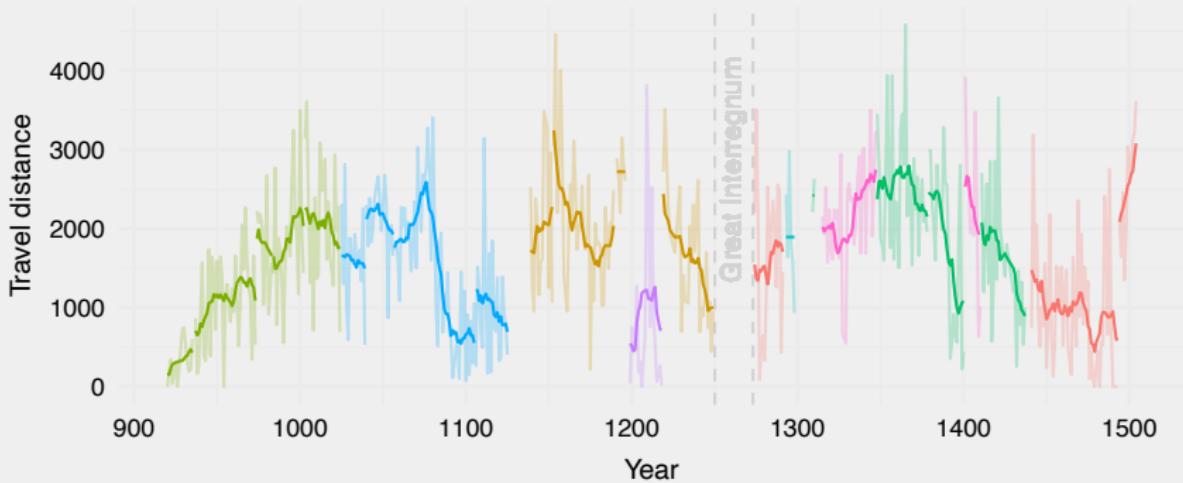
Data	Aesthetic	Graphic/Geometry
Longitude	Position (x-axis)	Grid
Latitude	Position (y-axis)	Grid
Itinerary	Color	Path
Destination	Color	Point

In ggplot...

Data	aes()	geom
Longitude	x	aes(x=)
Latitude	y	aes(y=)
Itinerary	x, y	geom_line()
Destination	x, y	geom_point()

Ex: MAPPING DATA TO AESTHETICS

Count of *Regesta Imperii* entries by ruler and year (running mean in bold)



Müller-Crepon, C., Neupert-Wentz, C., Kokkonen, A., & Møller, J. (2025). Rulers on the Road: Itinerant Rule in the Holy Roman Empire, AD 919–1519. American Journal of Political Science.

Ex: MAPPING DATA TO AESTHETICS

Data	aes()	geom
Time	x	aes(x=)
Distance	y	aes(y=)
Leader	x, y	geom_line()
Mean	x, y	geom_line()

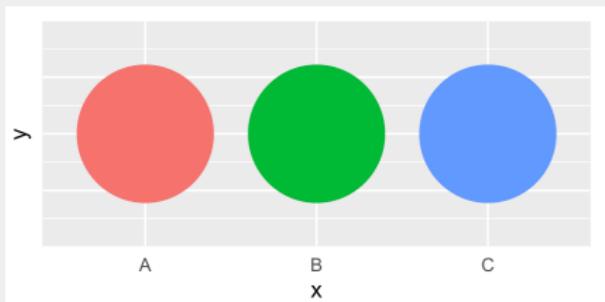
COMPONENTS AS LAYERS

- So far we've introduced data, aesthetics, and geometries
- Think of these components as "layers"
- There are many layers we can use
 - ▶ We sequentially add layers onto foundational `ggplot()` plot to create complex figures
 - ▶ Add them to initial plot in `ggplot()` with "+"

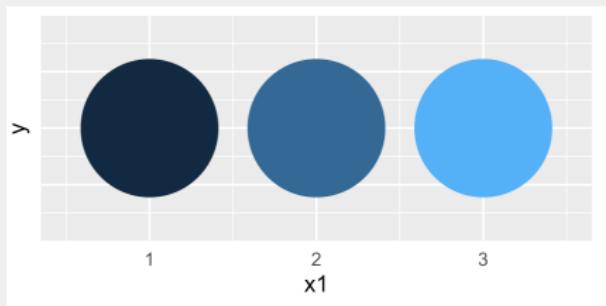
POSSIBLE AESTHETICS

Color - aes(color=)

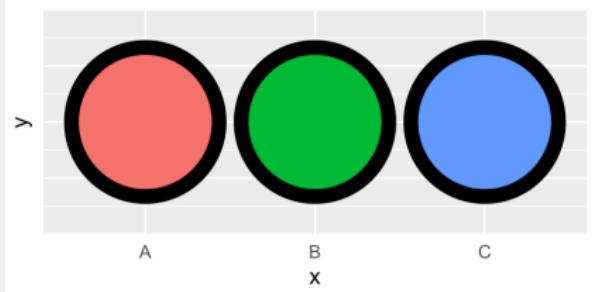
Continuous



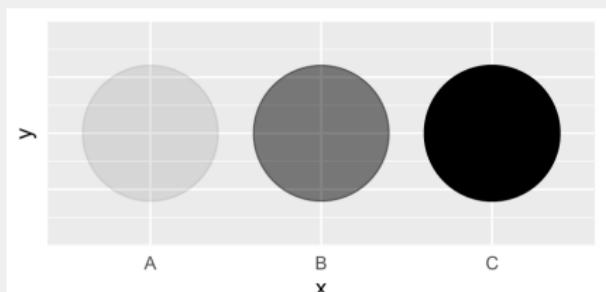
Discrete



Fill - aes(fill=)

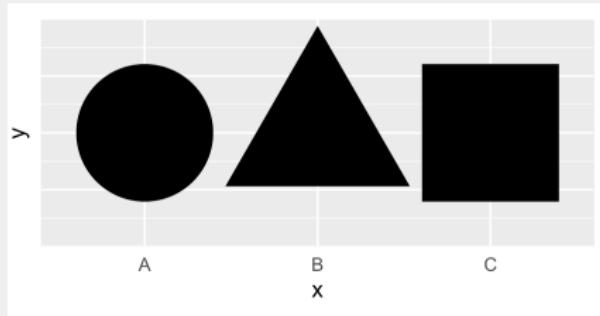


Alpha - aes(alpha=)

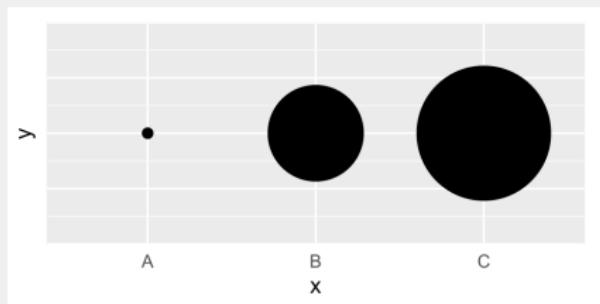


POSSIBLE AESTHETICS

Shape - geom_point()



Size - geom_point(size=)



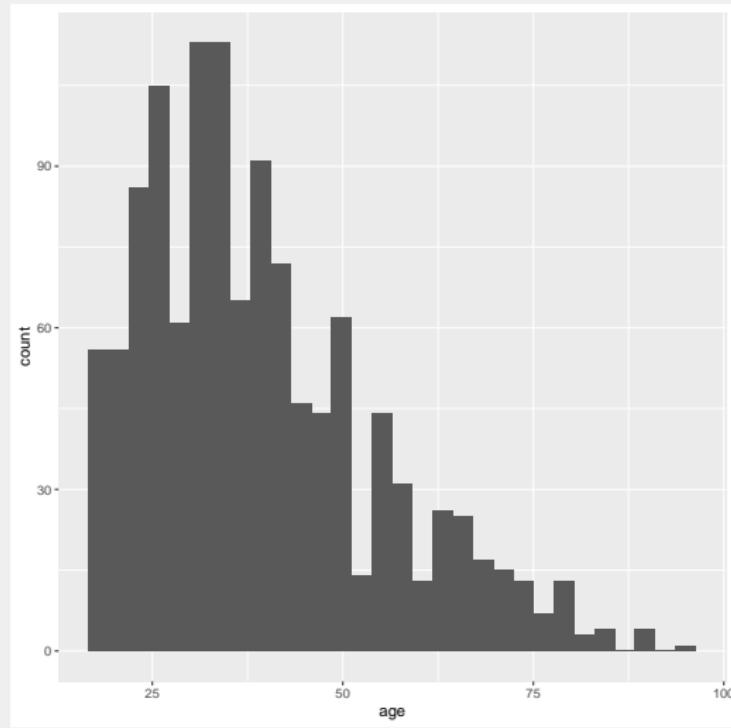
POSSIBLE GEOMS

Example geom	What it makes
	<code>geom_col()</code> Bar charts
	<code>geom_text()</code> Text
	<code>geom_point()</code> Points
	<code>geom_boxplot()</code> Boxplots
	<code>geom_sf()</code> Maps

- Dozens of possible geoms, each class session will cover different ones)
- See [ggplot2 documentation](#) for complete examples of all geom layers

Ex: AFROBAROMETER - ZIMBABWE (R10, 2024)

Distribution of respondents by age



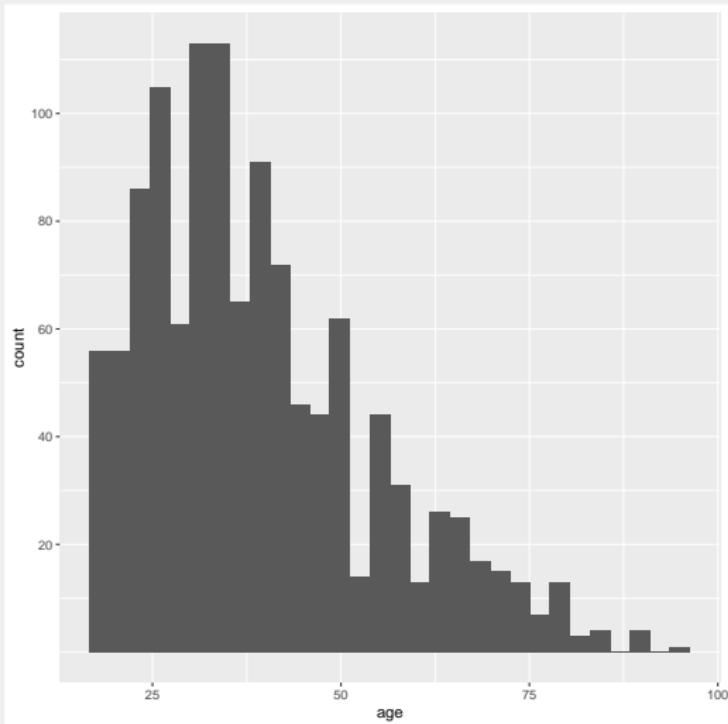
```
1 ggplot(data  
= AB_ZIM,  
mapping = aes(x=  
age)) +  
2   geom_  
histogram()
```

SCALES

Scales change properties of variable mapping

Example layer	What it does
<code>scale_x_continuous()</code>	Make the x-axis continuous
<code>scale_x_continuous(breaks = 1:5)</code>	Manually specify axis ticks
<code>scale_x_log10()</code>	Log x-axis
<code>scale_color_gradient()</code>	Use gradient
<code>scale_fill_viridis_d()</code>	Fill with discrete viridis colors

EX: ADJUST Y-AXIS SCALE



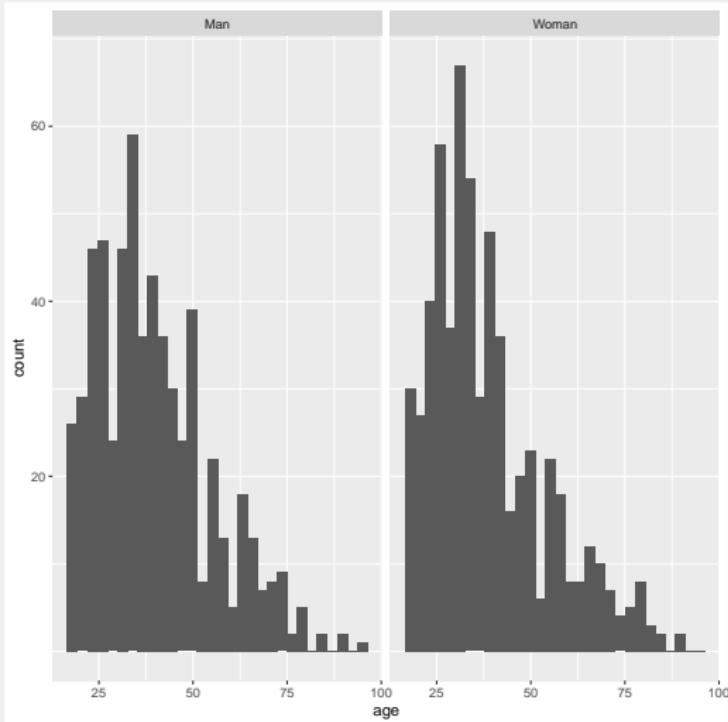
```
1 ggplot(data  
= AB_ZIM,  
mapping = aes(x=  
age)) +  
2   geom_  
histogram() +  
3   scale_y_  
continuous(breaks  
= c(20, 40, 60,  
80, 100))
```

FACETS

Facets show subplots for different subsets of data

Example layer	What it does
<code>facet_wrap(vars(continent))</code>	Plot for each continent
<code>facet_wrap(vars(continent, year))</code>	iPlot for each continent/year
<code>acet_wrap(..., ncol = 1)</code>	Put all facets in one column
<code>facet_wrap(..., nrow = 1)</code>	Put all facets in one row

EX: ADD FACETS FOR GENDER



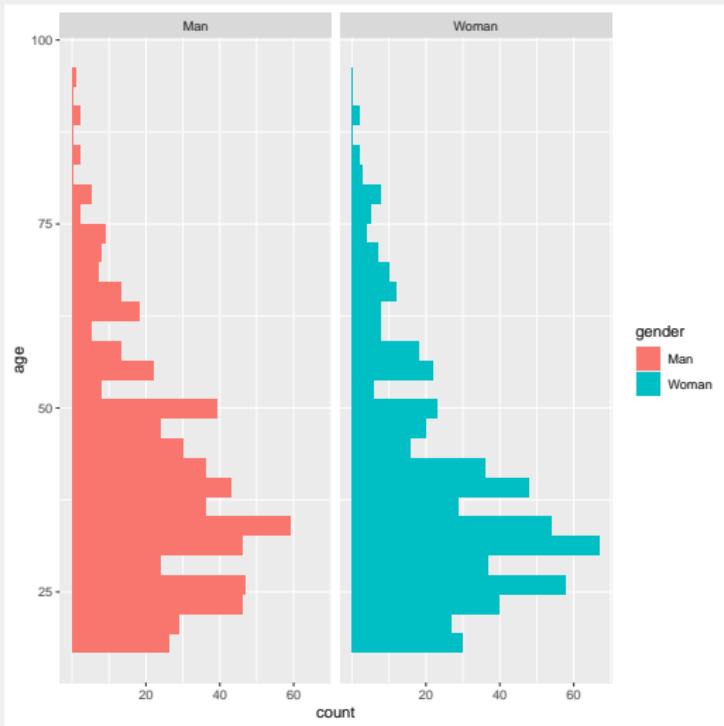
```
1 ggplot(data  
= AB_ZIM,  
mapping = aes(x=  
age)) +  
  geom_  
histogram() +  
  scale_y_  
continuous(breaks  
= c(20, 40, 60,  
80, 100)) +  
  facet_wrap(  
vars(gender))
```

COORDINATES

Change coordinate system

Example layer	What it does
<code>coord_cartesian()</code>	Plot for each continent
<code>coord_cartesian(ylim = c(1, 10))</code>	Zoom in where y is 1–10
<code>coord_flip()</code>	Switch x and y
<code>coord_polar()</code>	Use circular polar system

Ex: FLIP COORDINATES



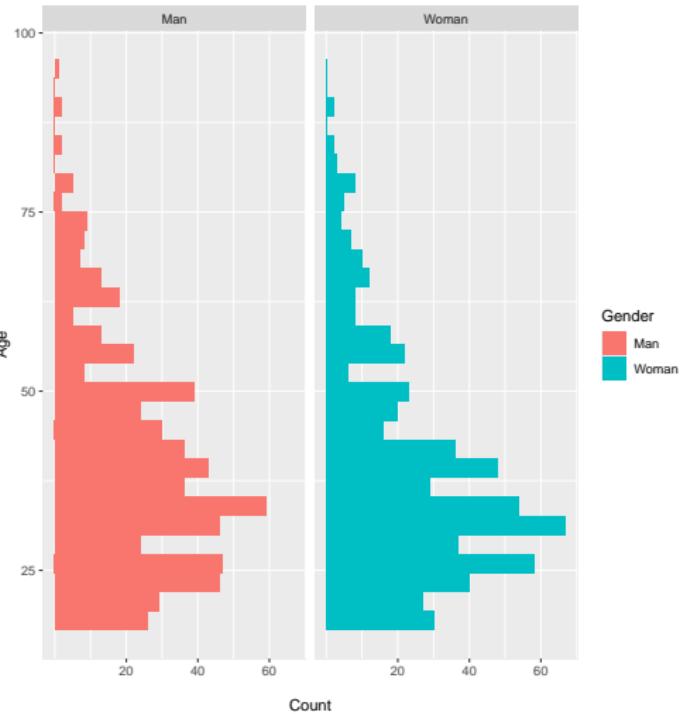
```
1 ggplot(data  
2   = AB_ZIM,  
3   mapping = aes(x=  
4   age, fill=gender)  
5   ) +  
6   geom_  
7   histogram() +  
8   scale_y_  
9   continuous(breaks  
10  = c(20, 40, 60,  
11  80, 100)) +  
12  facet_wrap(  
13  vars(gender)) +  
14  coord_flip()  
15 )
```

LABELS

Add labels to plot with a single `labs()` layer

Example layer	What it does
<code>labs(title = "Neat title")</code>	Title
<code>labs(caption = "Something")</code>	Caption
<code>labs(y = "Something")</code>	y-axis
<code>labs(size = "Population")</code>	Title of size legend

Ex: ADD LABELS



```
1 ggplot(data  
= AB_ZIM,  
mapping = aes(x=  
age, fill=gender)  
) +  
  geom_  
histogram() +  
  scale_y_  
continuous(breaks  
= c(20, 40, 60,  
80, 100)) +  
  facet_wrap(  
vars(gender)) +  
  coord_flip()  
() +  
  labs(x="\nAge", y="\nCount  
", fill="Gender")
```

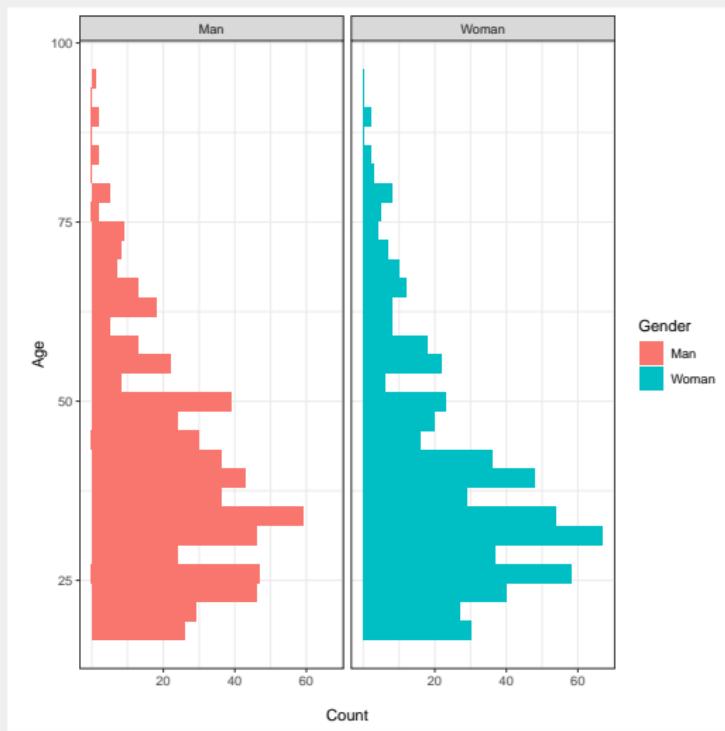
THEME

Change appearance of anything in plot

- Many built-in themes
- Pre-built themes online, like `ggthemes` package
- Make theme adjustments with `theme()`
- So many options, we have a whole class session dedicated to this

Example layer	What it does
<code>theme_grey()</code>	Default grey background
<code>ltheme_bw()</code>	Black and white
<code>theme_dark()</code>	Dark
<code>theme_minimal()</code>	Minimal

Ex: APPLY theme_bw



```
1 ggplot(data
2   = AB_ZIM,
3   mapping = aes(x=
4     age, fill=gender)
5   ) +
6   geom_
7   histogram() +
8   scale_y_
9   continuous(breaks
10    = c(20, 40, 60,
11      80, 100)) +
12   facet_wrap(
13     vars(gender)) +
14   coord_flip()
15   () +
16   labs(x="\nAge", y="\nCount"
17     , fill="Gender")
18   +
19   theme_bw()
```

CLEANING DATA FOR PLOTTING - TIDYVERSE

- For `ggplot()` to work, your data needs to be in a tidy format
- This doesn't mean that it's "clean", refers to structure of data
- All the packages in the **tidyverse** work best to tidy data

VISUALIZING TIDY DATA

country	year	cases	population
Afghanistan	1980	345	1607071
Afghanistan	2000	2666	2095360
Brazil	1989	31737	17206362
Brazil	2000	80488	17404898
China	1989	21258	127215272
China	2000	27666	12803583



variables

country	year	cases	population
Afghanistan	1980	345	1607071
Afghanistan	2000	2666	2095360
Brazil	1989	31737	17206362
Brazil	2000	80488	17404898
China	1989	21258	127215272
China	2000	27666	12803583



observations

country	year	cases	population
Afghanistan	1980	345	1607071
Afghanistan	2000	2666	2095360
Brazil	1989	31737	17206362
Brazil	2000	80488	17404898
China	1989	21258	127215272
China	2000	27666	12803583



values

- Each variable has its own column
- Each observation has its own row
- Each value has its own cell

WIDE VS. LONG DATA

Ex: Employment rate by country

Wide

Country	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Belgium	69,8	71	71,8	71,5	71,9
Bulgaria	71,4	72,4	75	73,4	73,2
Czechia	78,4	79,8	80,2	79,6	79,8
Denmark	77,8	78,7	79,4	78,8	79,8

Long

Country	Year	Value
Belgium	2017	69,8
Belgium	2018	71
Belgium	2019	71,8
Belgium	2020	71,5
Belgium	2021	71,9
Bulgaria	2017	71,4
Bulgaria	2018	72,4
Bulgaria	2019	75
Bulgaria	2020	73,4
Bulgaria	2021	73,2
Czechia	2017	78,4
Czechia	2018	79,8
Czechia	2019	80,2
Czechia	2020	79,6
Czechia	2021	79,8

REVIEW

- Mapping data to aesthetics
- ggplot
 - ▶ aes()
 - ▶ geom
 - ▶ Layers
 - ▶ Scales
 - ▶ Facets
 - ▶ Coordinates
 - ▶ Labels
 - ▶ Themes

CLASS BUSINESS

- Read required (and suggested) online materials
- Fork GitHub repository
- Problem set # 1 is up on GitHub