Northwestern University

Data Storytelling

Week 8

Data Storytelling

“

Don't just show the notes, play the music!

vizlogue
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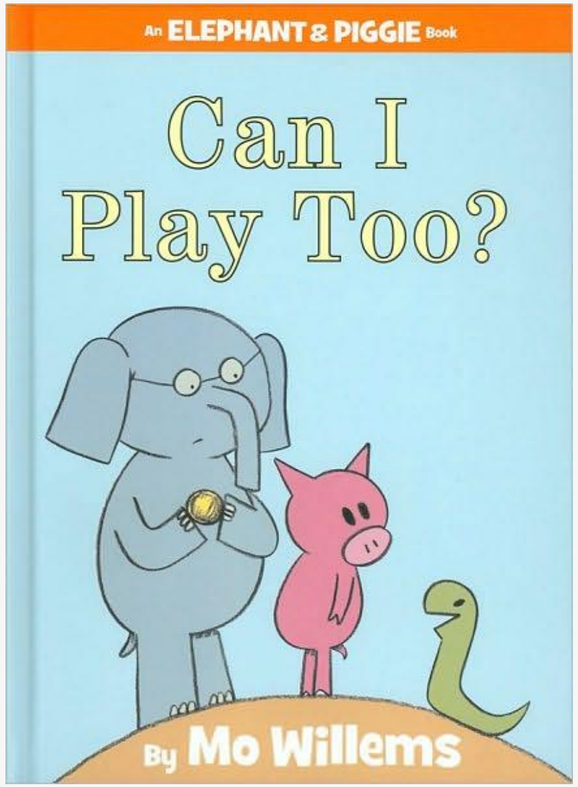
TYPICAL STORY LINE

Intro
(background & methodology)

Numbers

What the Numbers Mean

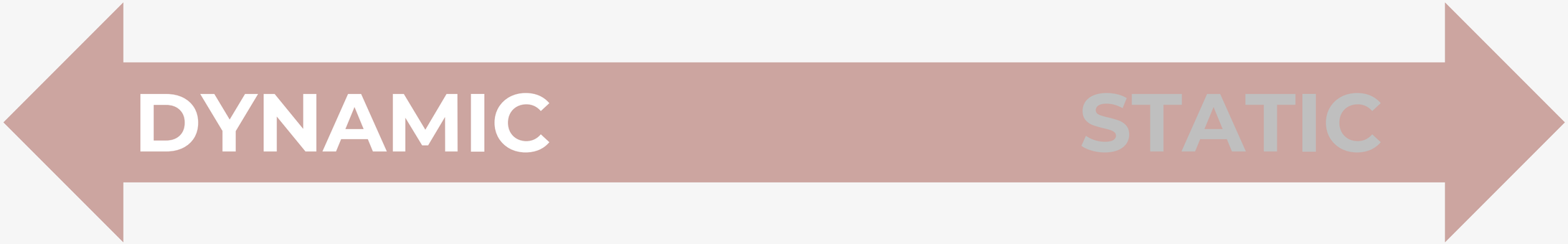
What's Next


An ELEPHANT & PIGGIE Book
Can I Play Too?
By Mo Willems

Inspiration

THE ANATOMY OF DATA STORYTELLING

Why women are paid less, explained

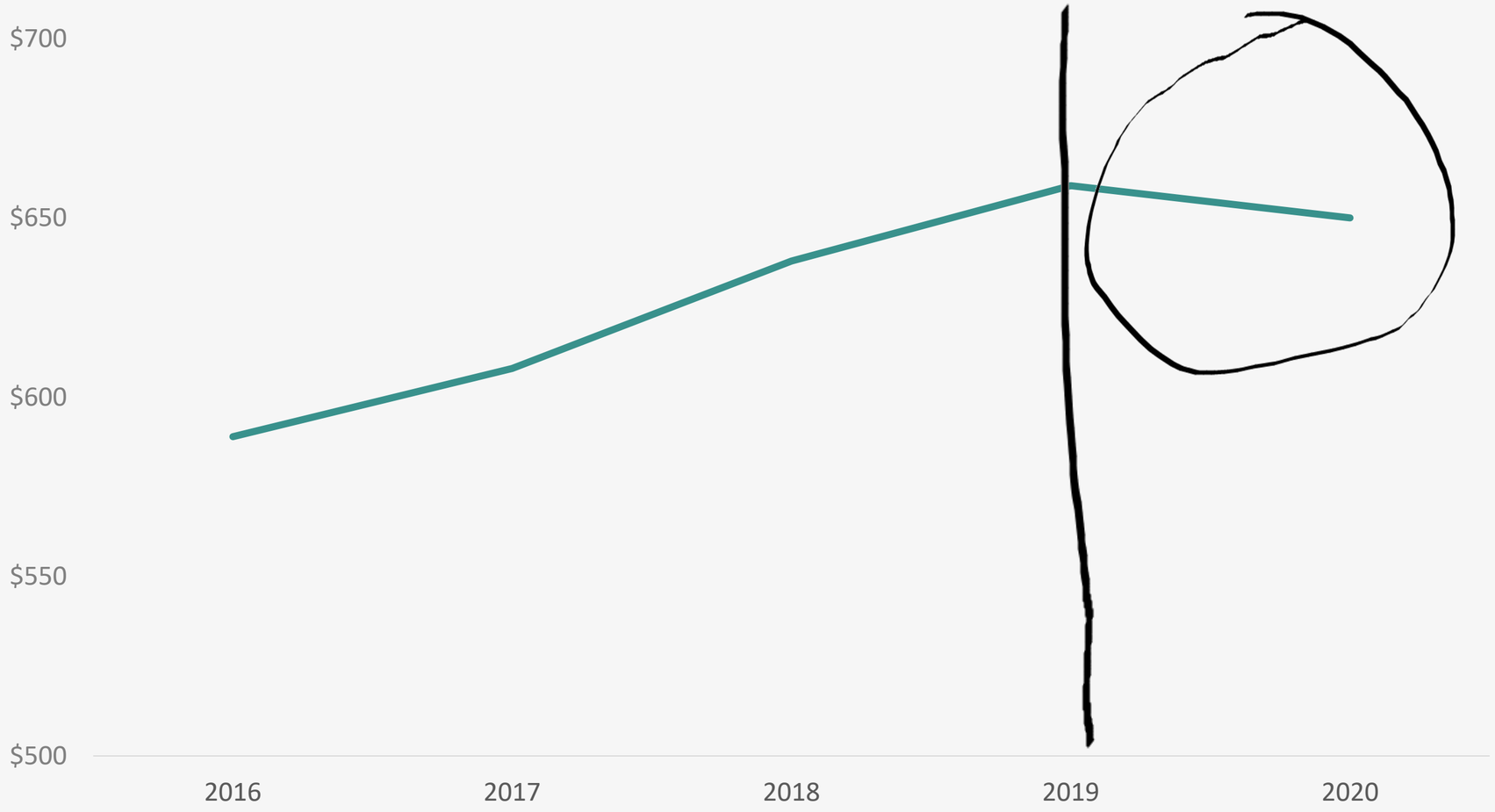

DYNAMIC
STATIC

THE ANATOMY OF DATA STORYTELLING

SYNCHRONY

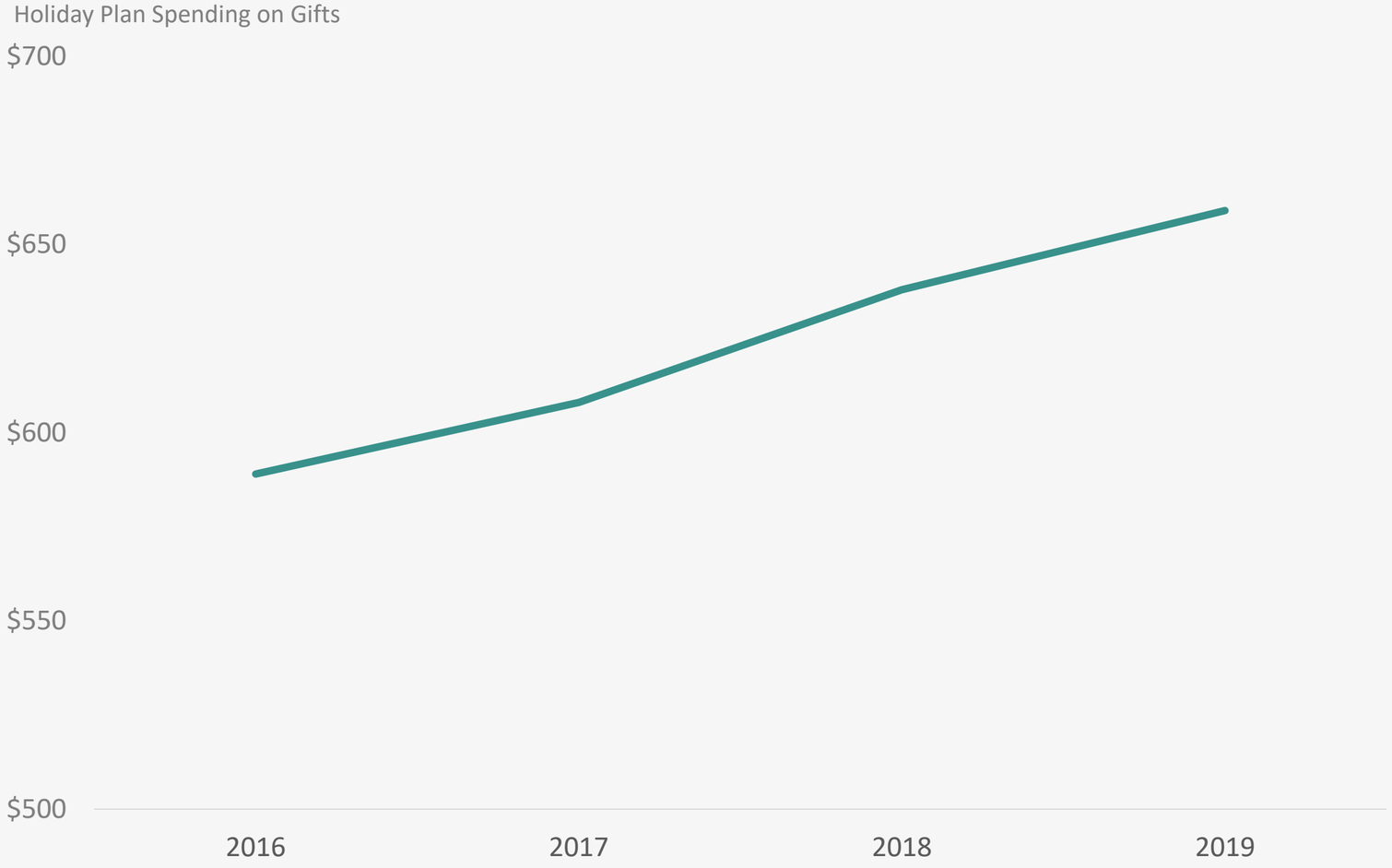
Example #1

Holiday Plan Spending on Gifts



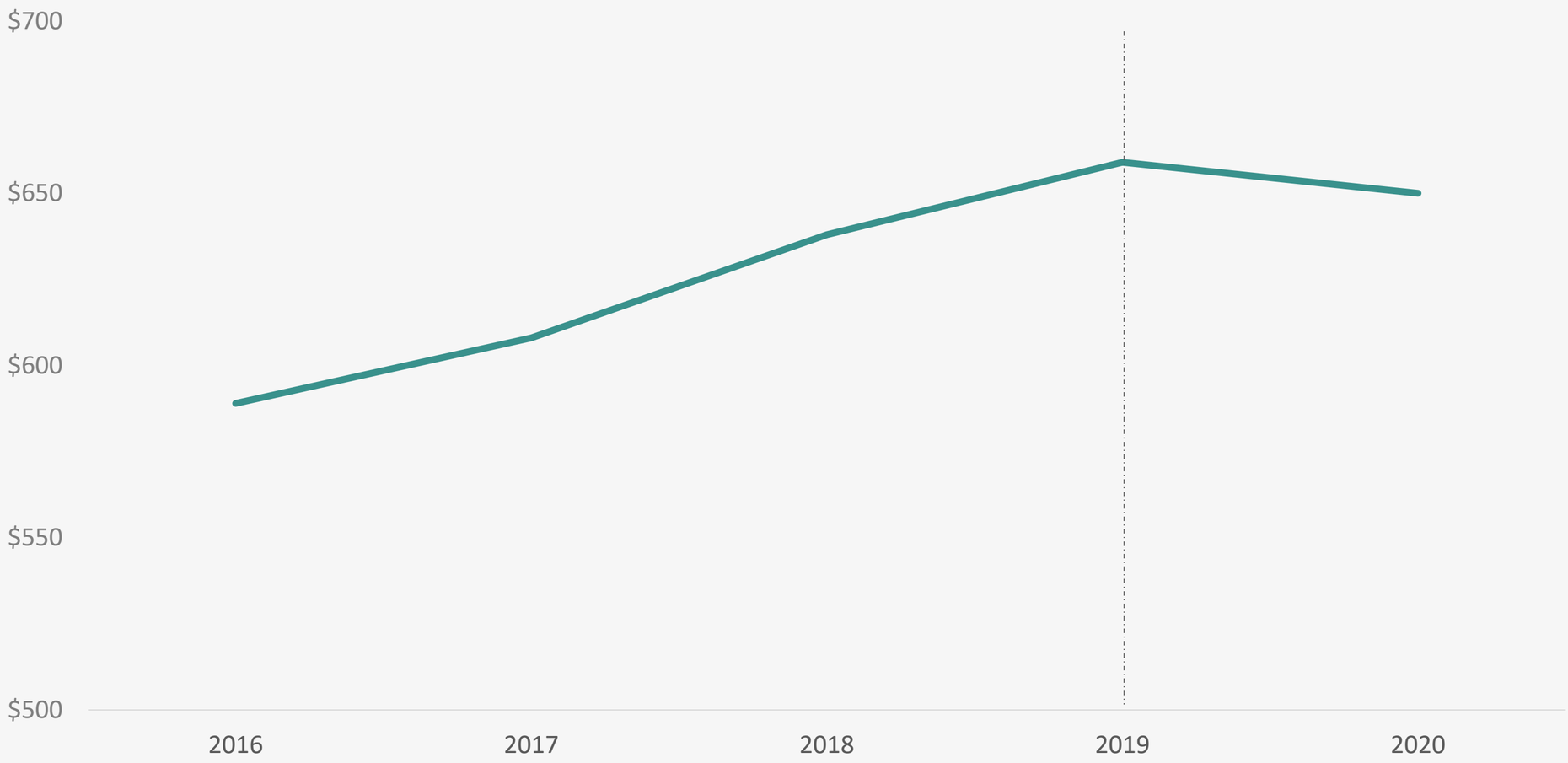
Source: NRF's Annual 2020 Holiday Survey, conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytic

Planned spend on **gifts** for the holidays was consistently up between 2016 and 2019



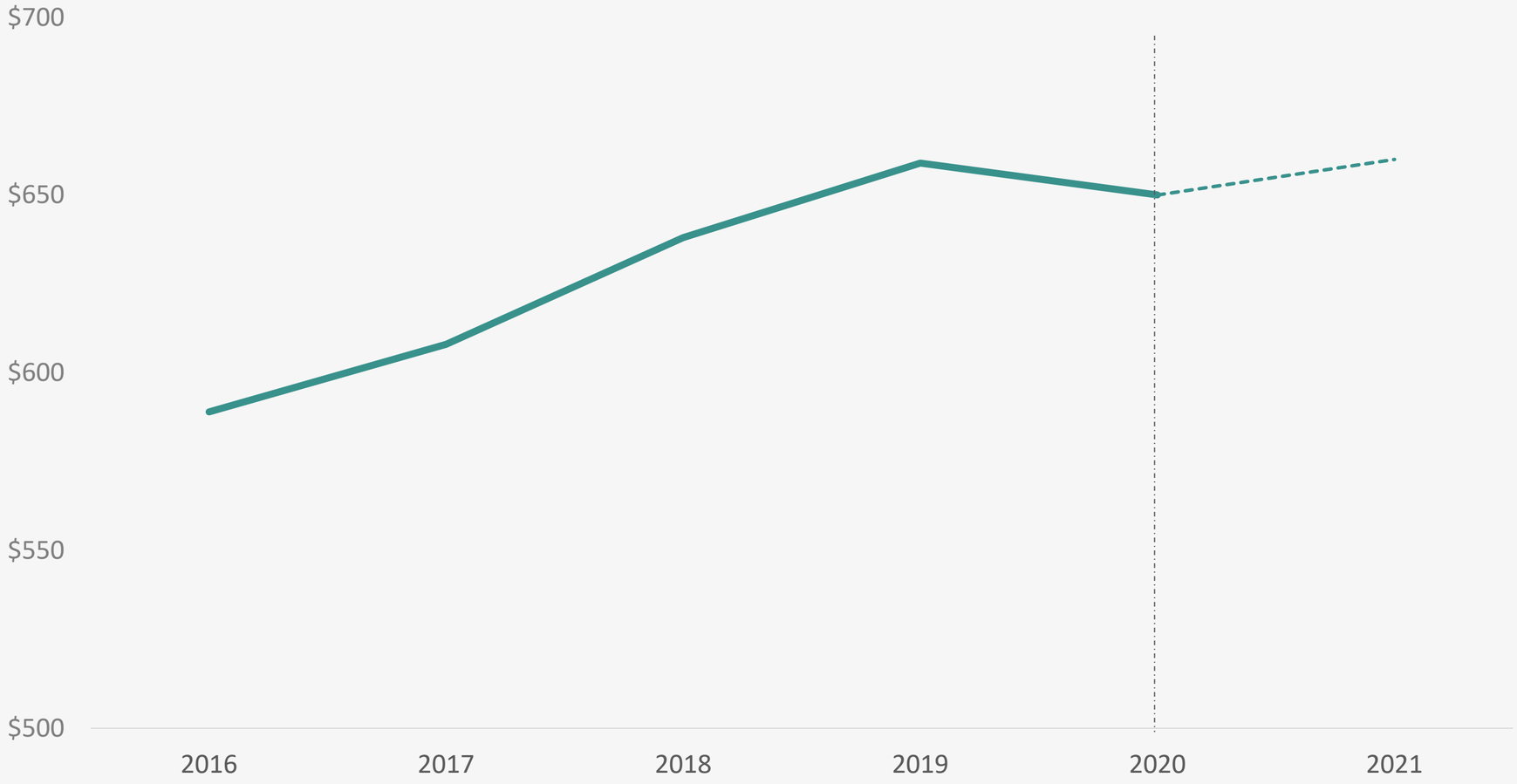
Source: NRF's Annual 2020 Holiday Survey, conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytic

2020: For the first time YoY planned spend on gifts declined



Source: NRF's Annual 2020 Holiday Survey, conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytic

What’s next? Likely, post-pandemic, people will go back to their **regular spending habits**

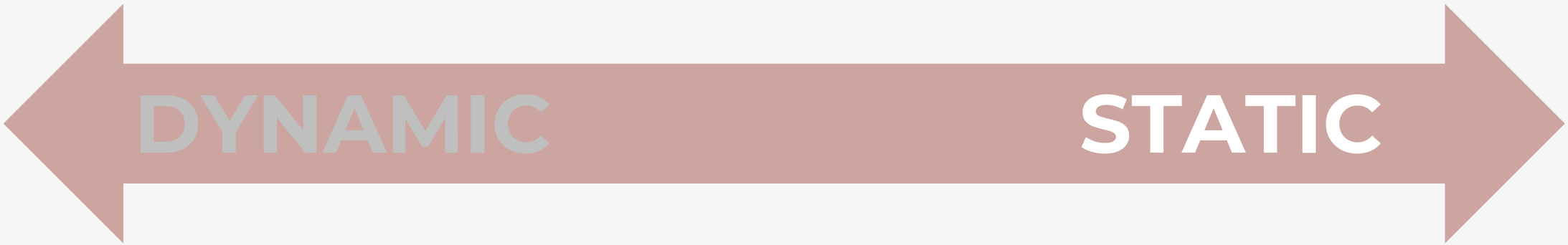


Source: NRF's Annual 2020 Holiday Survey, conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytic

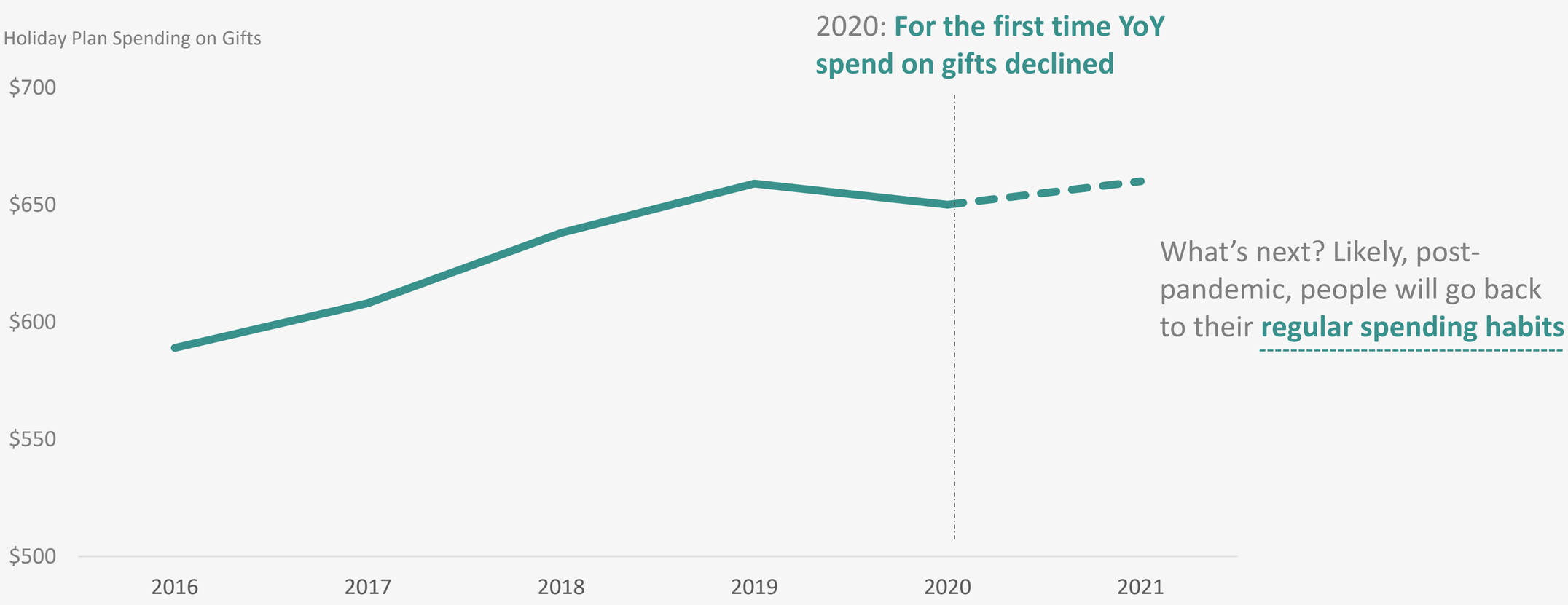
THE ANATOMY OF DATA STORYTELLING

Synchrony

ANNOTATION

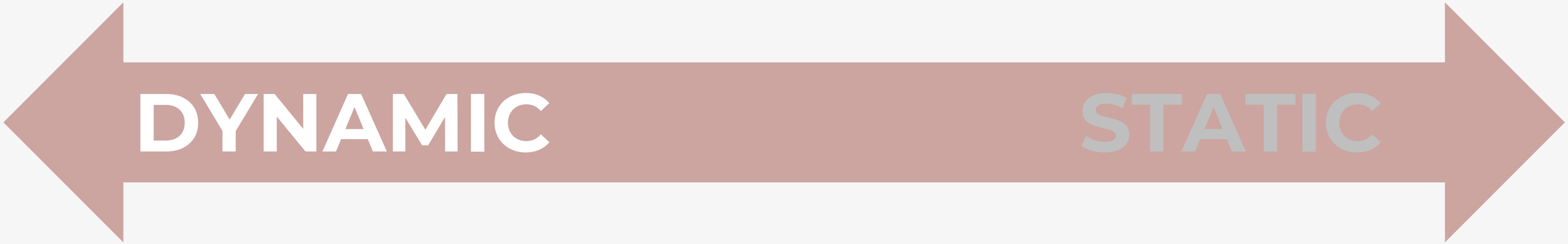

DYNAMIC
STATIC

Americans' Holiday Spending Habits Look Different This Year



Source: NRF's Annual 2020 Holiday Survey, conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytic

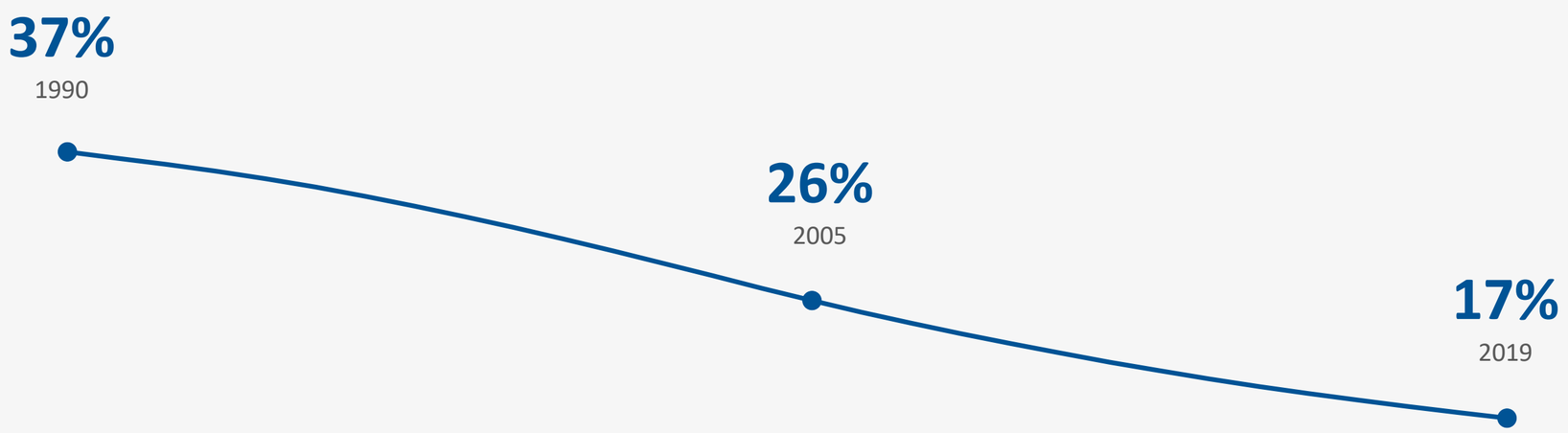
Example #2


DYNAMIC
STATIC

Step 1: Intro

Neonatal mortality rate has **fallen significantly over time**

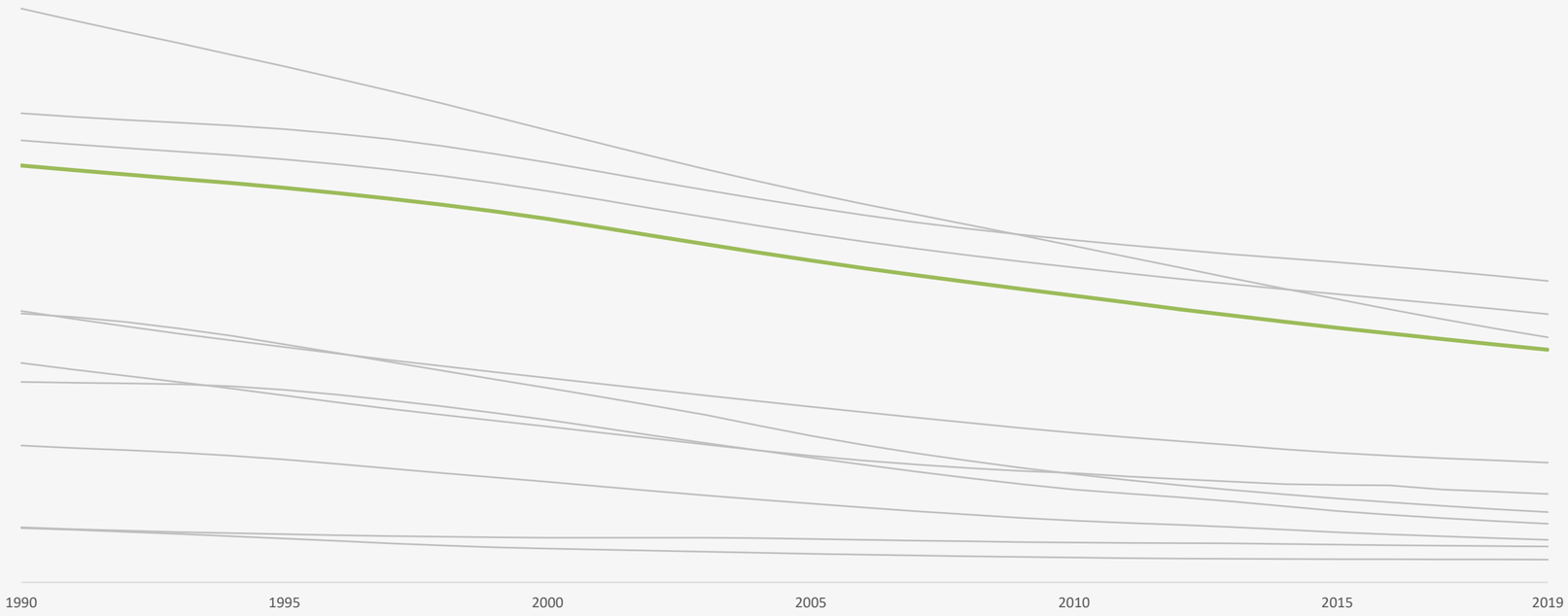
Estimates generated by the UN Inter-agency Group for Neonatal Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) in 2020



Step 2: Conflict

But not all regions are the same. Some have improved faster than others.

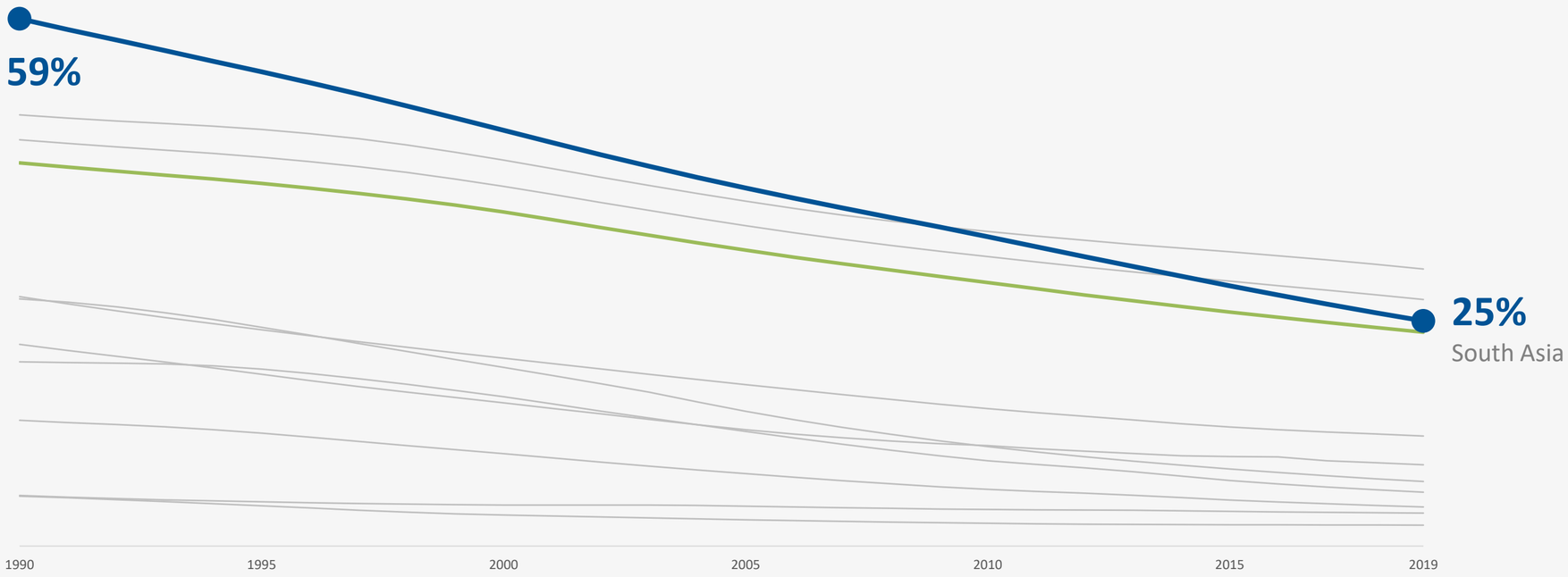
Estimates generated by the UN Inter-agency Group for Neonatal Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) in 2020



Step 2: Conflict

South Asia registered the most remarkable improvement among all regions (34 p.p.)

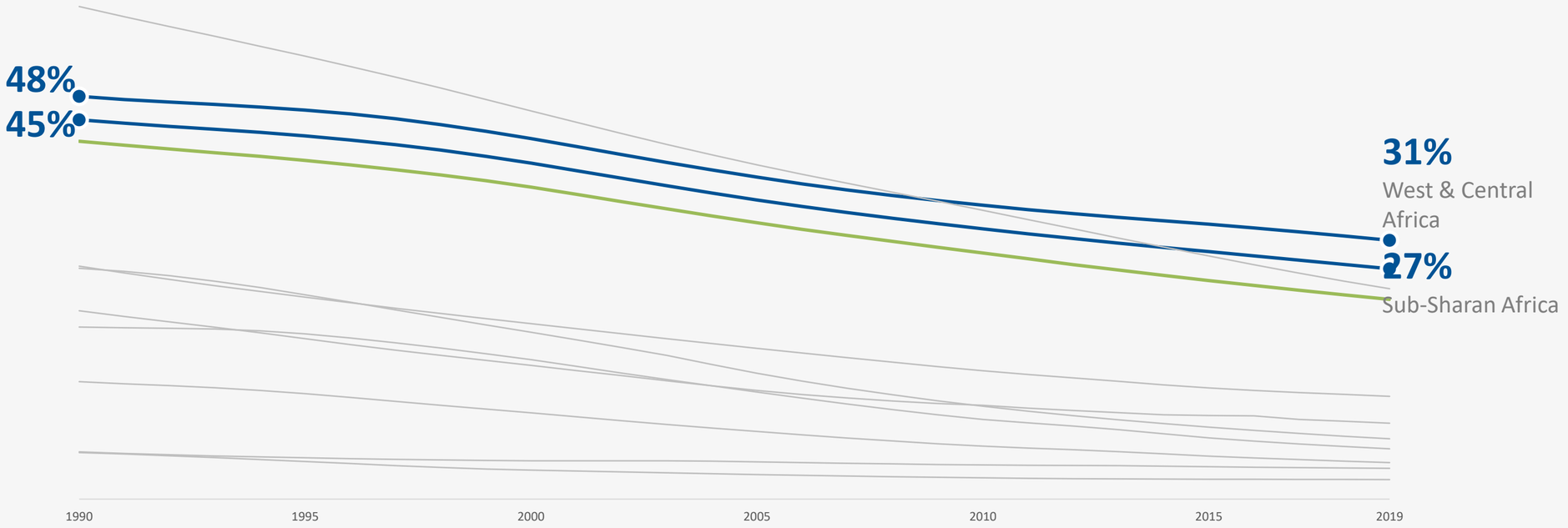
Estimates generated by the UN Inter-agency Group for Neonatal Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) in 2020



Step 2: Conflict

Among countries that had above 40% child mortality rate in 1990, **West & Central Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa showed the least improvement**

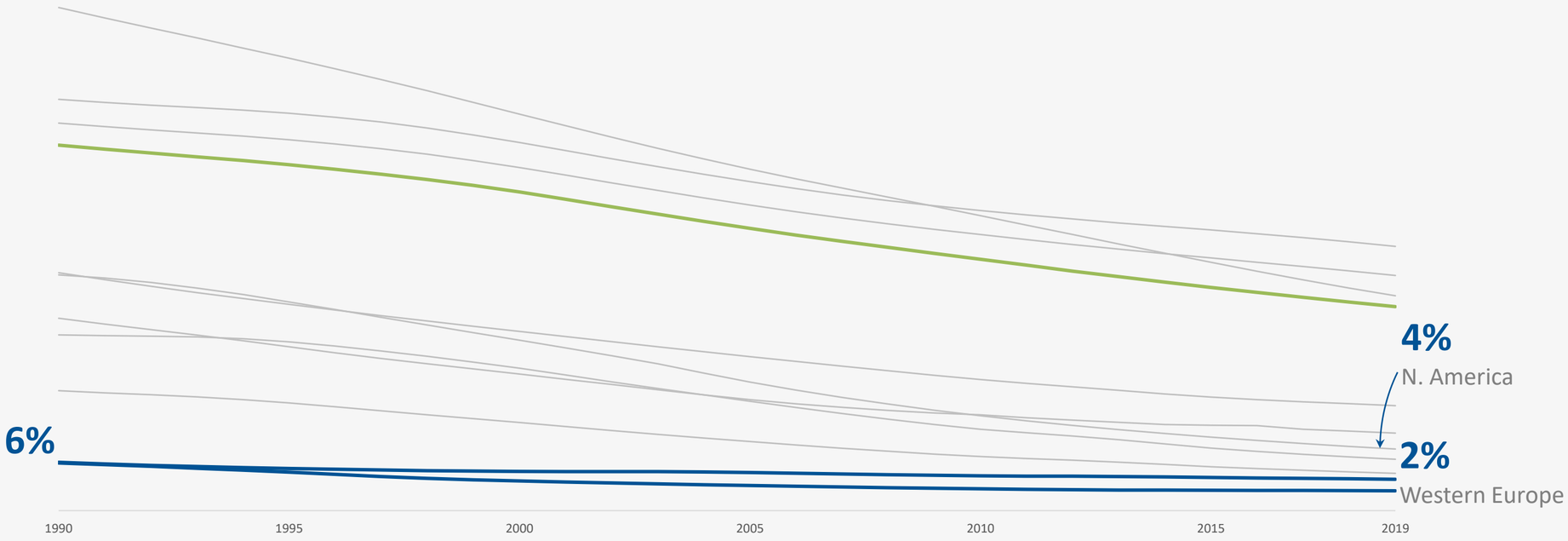
Estimates generated by the UN Inter-agency Group for Neonatal Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) in 2020



Step 2: Conflict

Although **Western Europe and N. America** were already ahead in 1990, they continued to show improvement

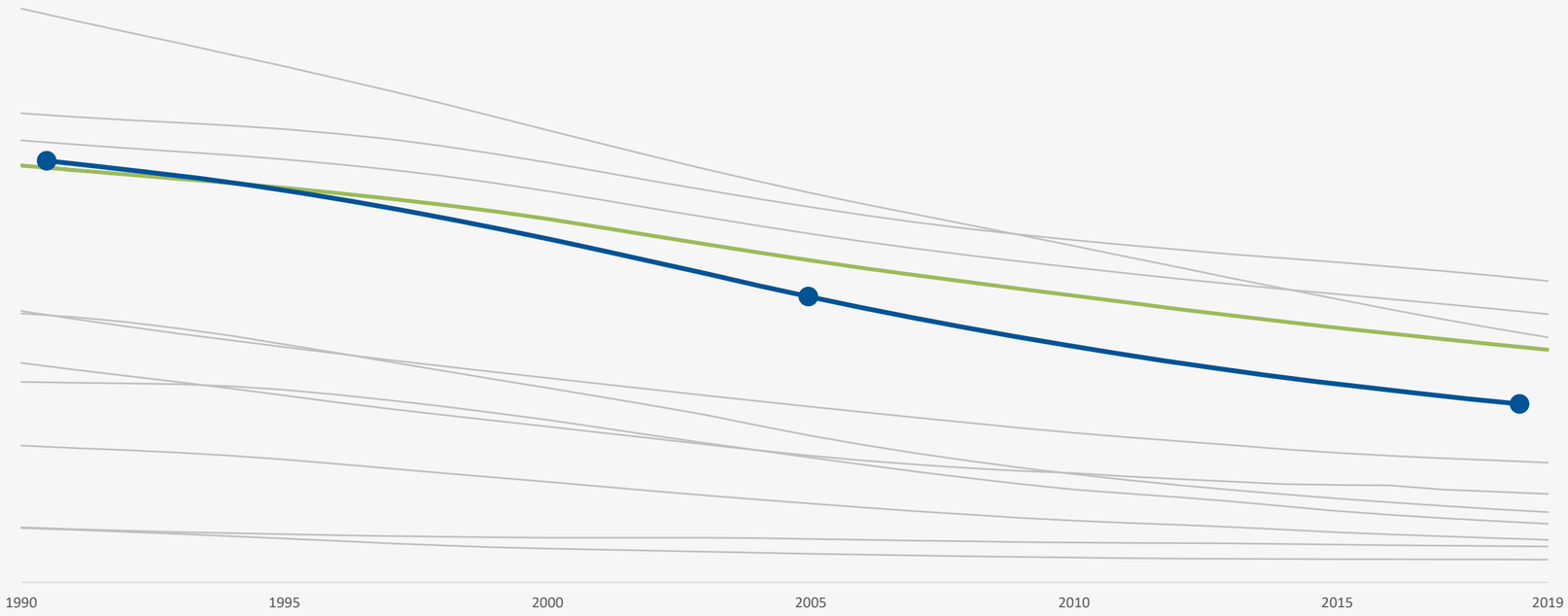
Estimates generated by the UN Inter-agency Group for Neonatal Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) in 2020

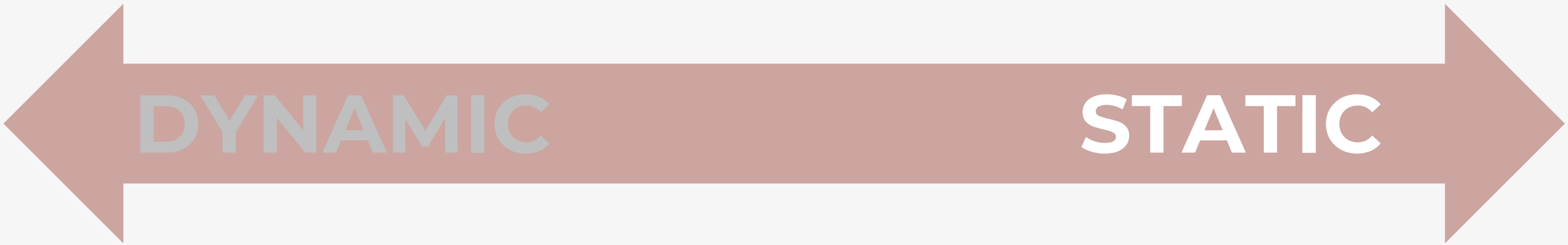


Step 3: Resolution

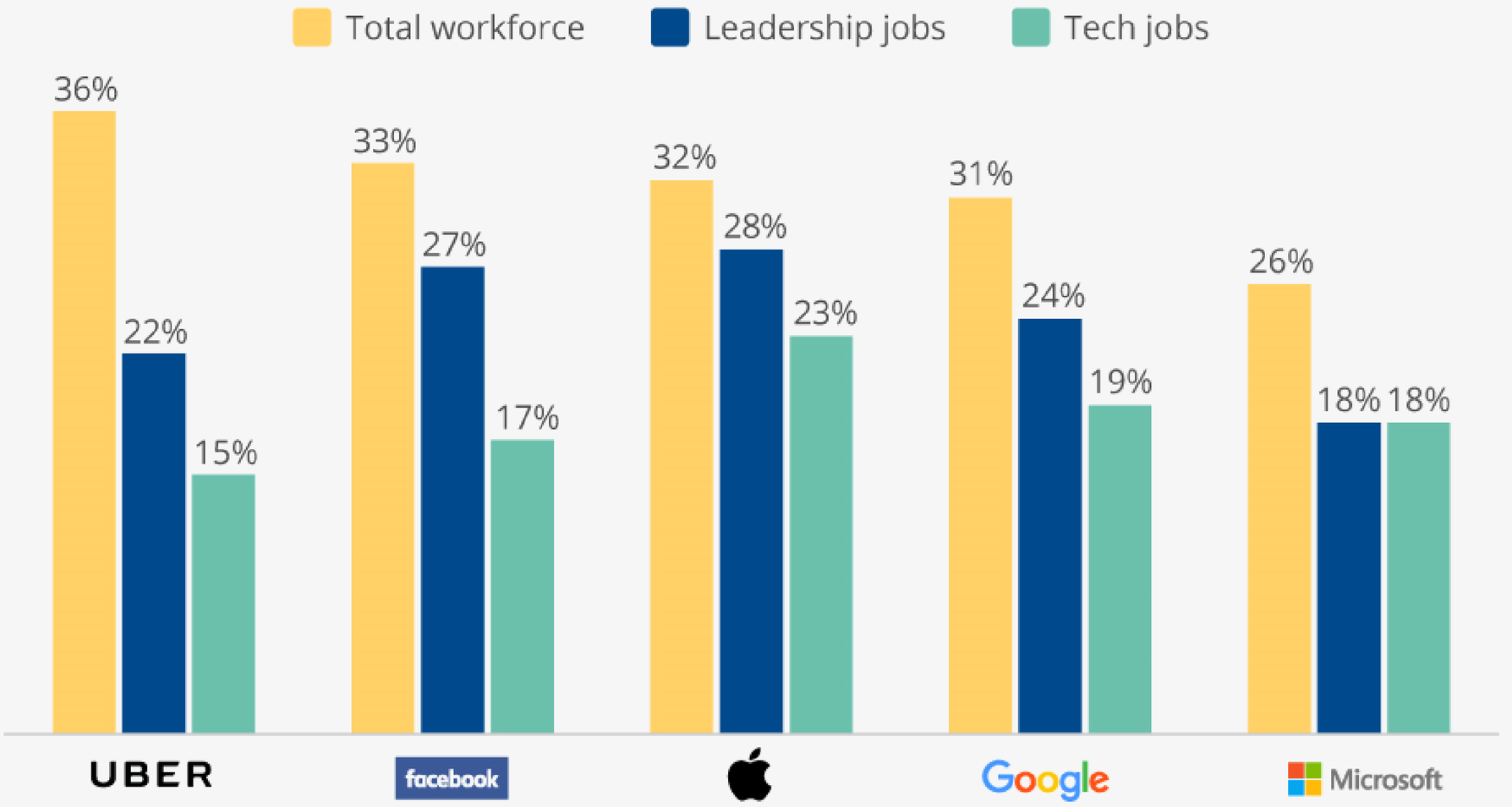
Remember: The global trend doesn’t tell the whole story.

Estimates generated by the UN Inter-agency Group for Neonatal Child Mortality Estimation (UN IGME) in 2020



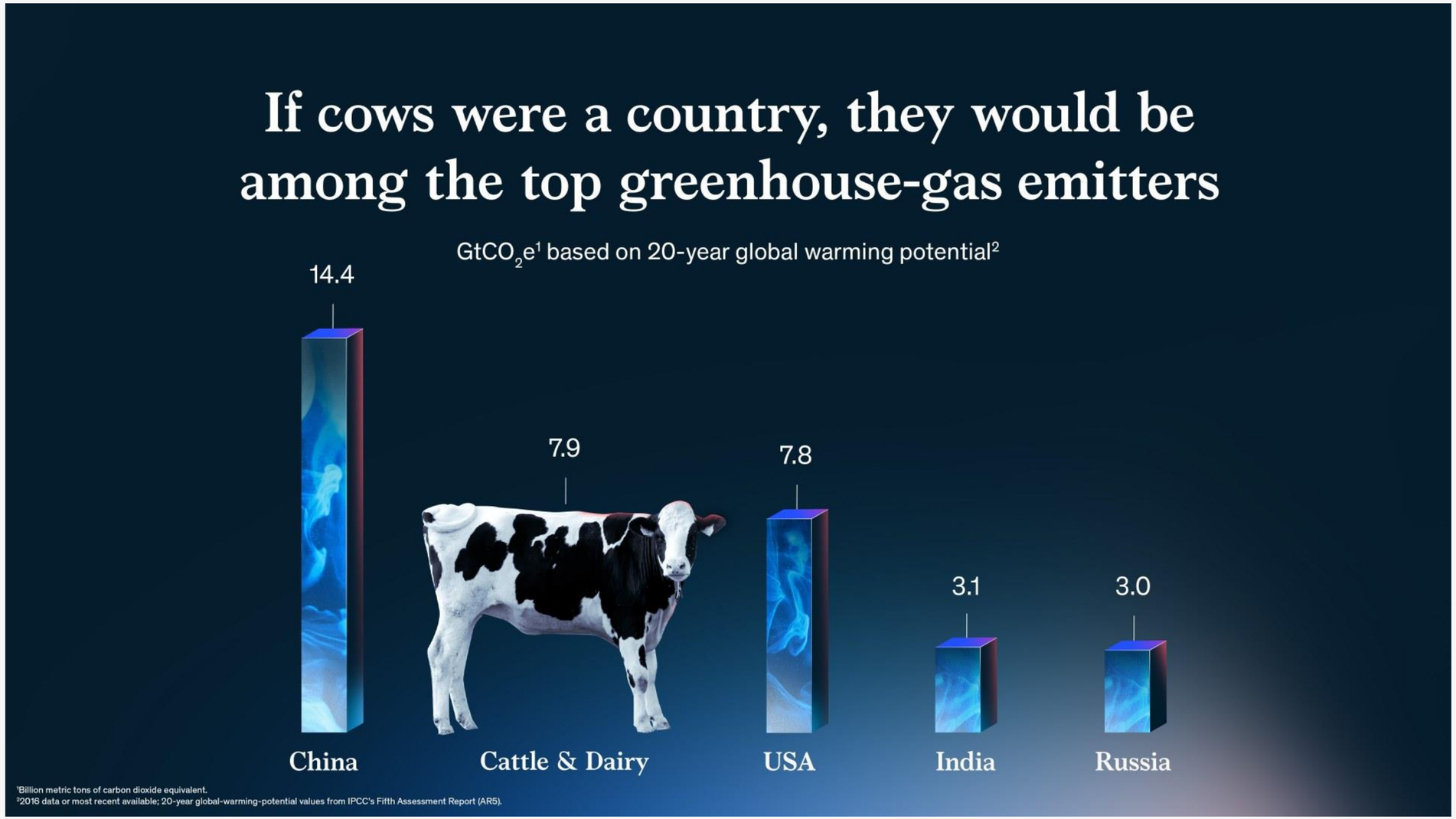

DYNAMIC
STATIC

Percentage of female employees in the global workforce of major tech companies



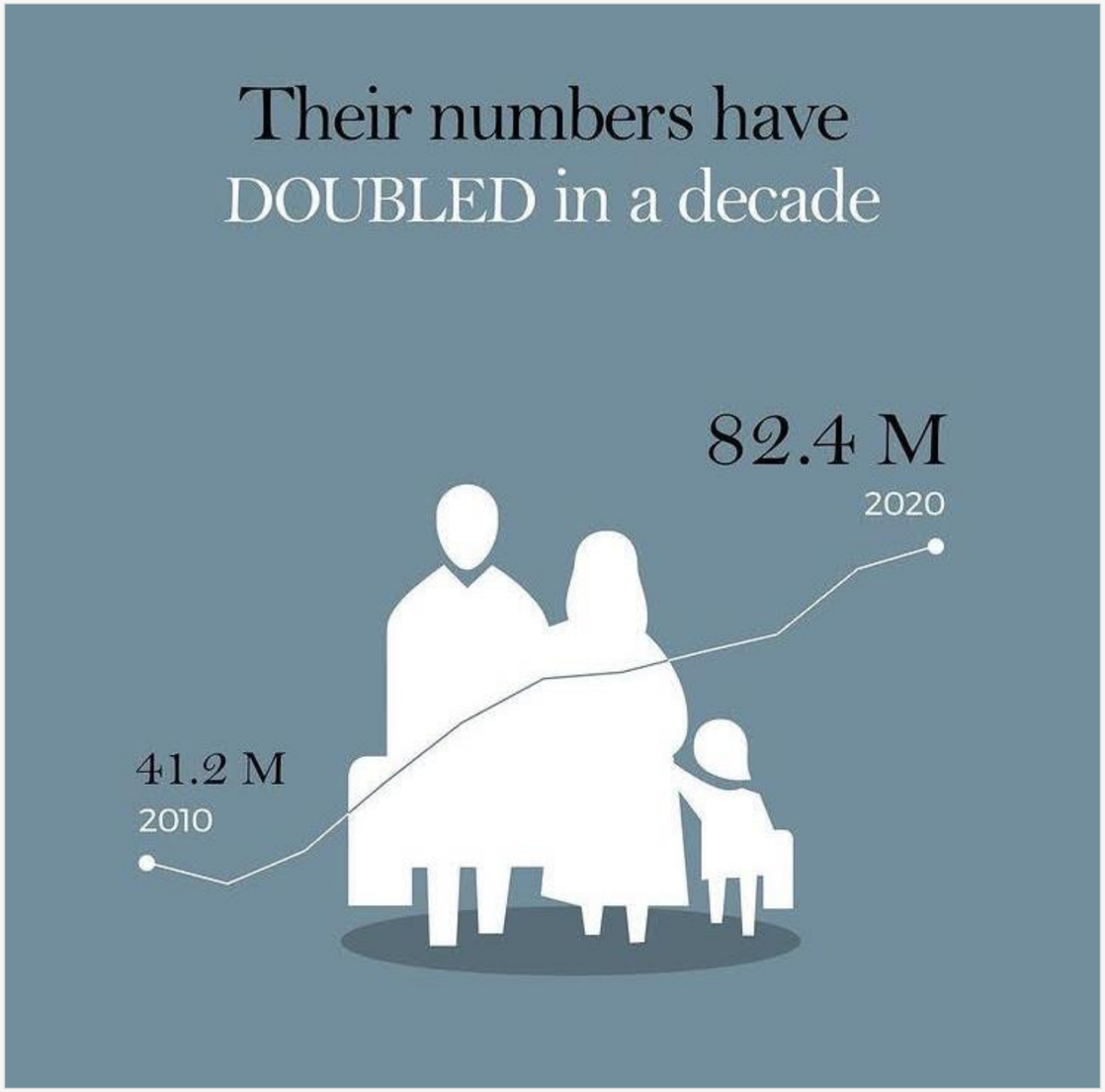
@StatistaCharts Source: Company diversity reports

statista



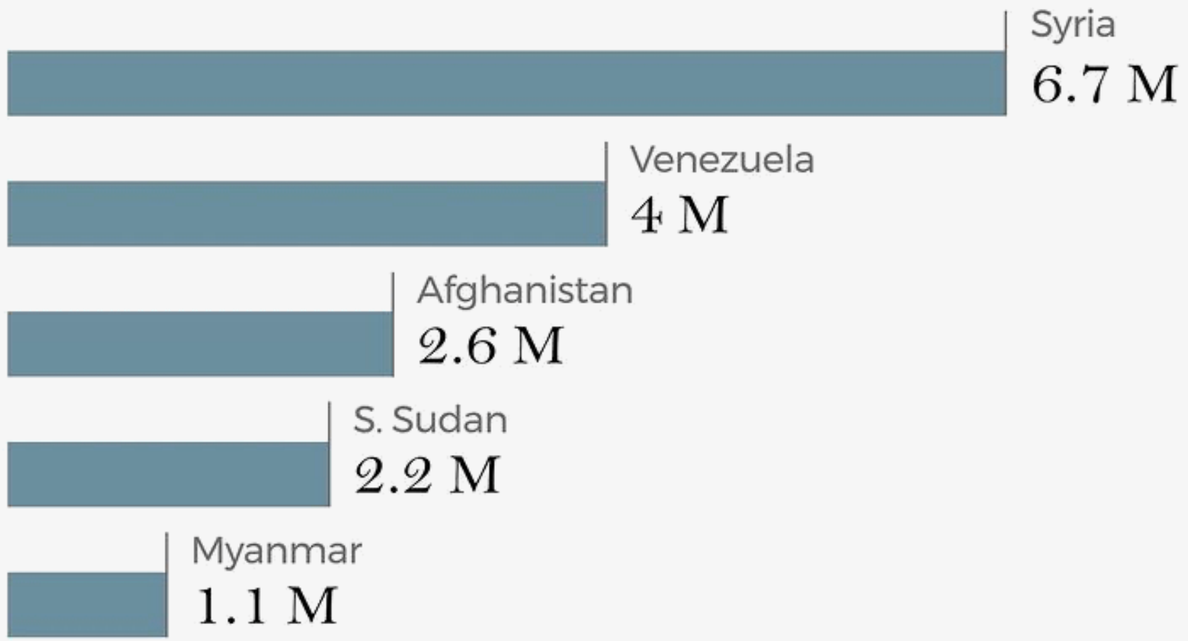
Source: McKinsey & Company

Focus & be creative

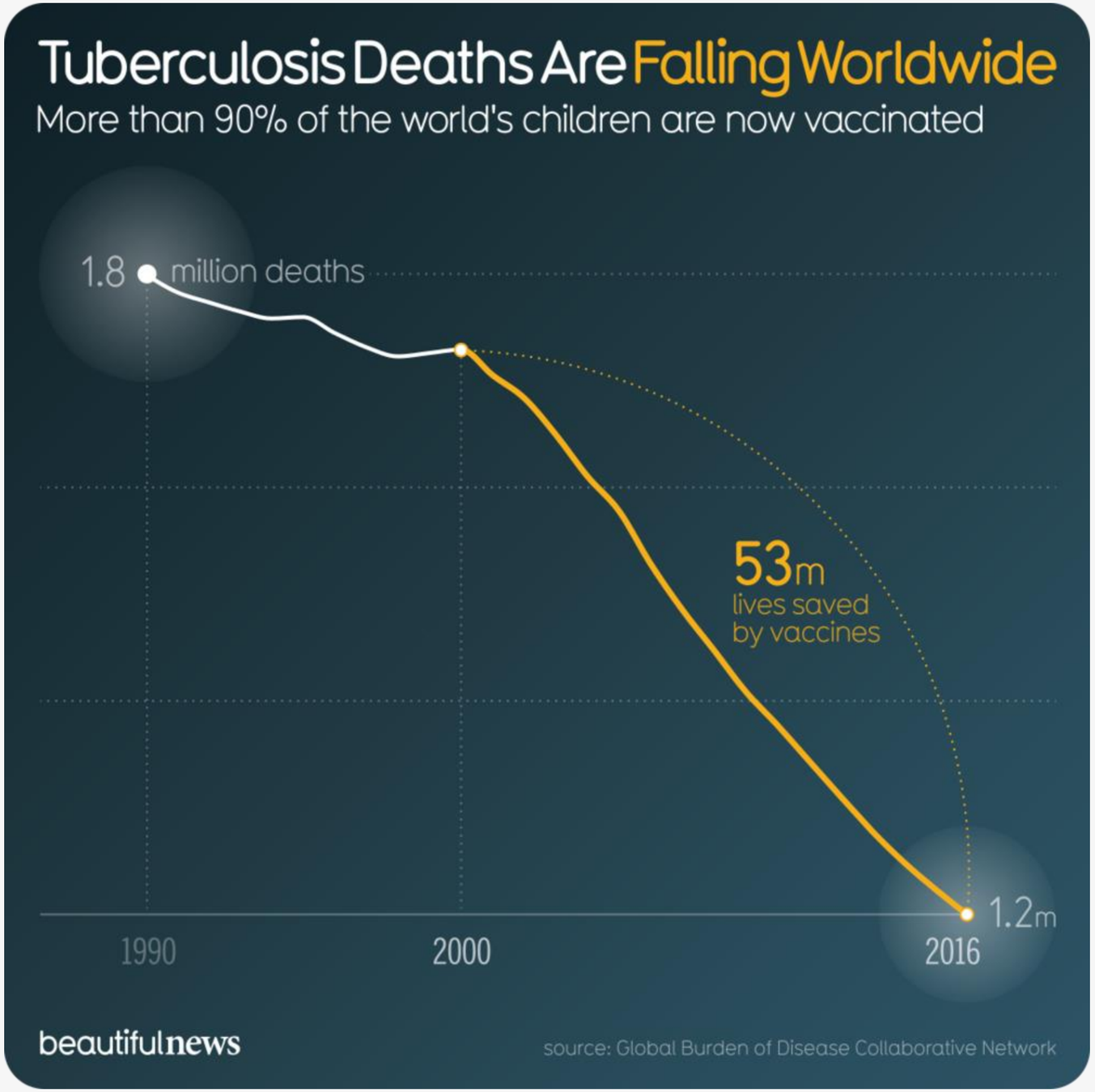


Source: https://www.instagram.com/p/CS185Yjrldh

Most refugees come from just FIVE countries



Author: Angelina Jolie (Instagram account)



Source: Beautiful News

1

PLAY THE MUSIC!

DON'T BE LIKE JIM!

2

Also consider...

75% of all presentations do not convince the audience

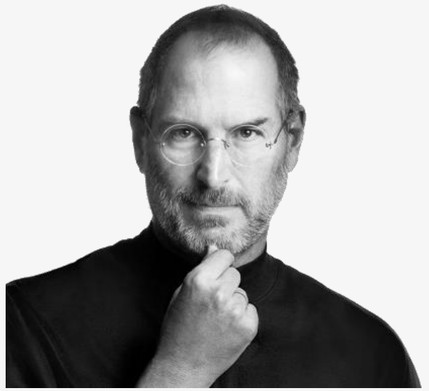
Source: Presentations impact the bottom line (2014), survey n=273 evaluating 780 presentations, The Lolly Group

Audience

- Size
- Data literacy
- Knowledge on the topic
- Level of seniority
- Specific needs/Objective
- Time available

Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple

Steve Jobs, Co-Founder, Apple



Title

- ❑ Make only **one statement / message** per action title
- ❑ Every action title must contain a **call to action or an insight**
- ❑ Be **concise and on point**
- ❑ Use **active voice** (“We must act” instead of “Action must be taken”)
- ❑ **Avoid nominal constructions** (“the demarcation of responsibility for the settlement of the realization”)
- ❑ **Avoid gerunds** (“We have to reach the target group” instead of “Reaching the target group”)
- ❑ **Do not overcomplicate things**, use easy language and syntax (don’t sound smart, be effective)
- ❑ **Avoid abbreviations**, use the full word (“Call to action” instead of “CTA”)
- ❑ **Write units out** (“2 million dollars” instead of “$2m”)

EXERCISE

Use the data set “What's the point of Valentine's Day” to sketch two graphs, one for each audience:

- **Audience 1: your classmate, who is trying to figure out what to plan for Valentine’s Day**

- **Audience 2: a news website that’s working on an article on the topic of “What's the point of Valentine's Day?” and focusing on differences by gender**

For each graph, write a short explanation on how you incorporated the following: creativity, focusing attention, simplicity, effective headline, and each audience’s needs.

Publish your two graphs and your written responses in Canvas.