

Data visualization in R

Angelika Merkel (Head of Bioinformatics Unit IJC) 07/04/2025



The IJC Bioinformatics Unit



Angelika Merkel Unit Manager Bioinformatician



Emilio Lario Software Engineer



Marta Meroño Bioinformatician



Paula Vela Bioinformatician (Student)

Office: 1st floor; phone: 4300

https://ijcbit.eu

https://www.carrerasresearch.org/en/bioinformatics-unit



Data analysis

- Processing
- Analysis
- Visualization
- Report

Consulting

- Experimental design
- Statistical advice
- Recommend analysis workflow and tools

Data services

- File transfers (collaborators)
- Data upload to public repositories (GEO, SRA)
- Data download from public repositories and databases

Training

- Internships (master)
- Seminars
- Workshops

Tool development

 Custom (bio)informatic solutions



Materials

Course book:

R for Data Science, 2nd edition (Wickham, Cetinkaya-Rundel and Grolemund, 2023)

BIT course webpage:

https://ijcbit.github.io/Workshops/



Data visualization in R

packages:

- {graphics} for basic graphic
- {lattice}, for high level data visualizations for multivariate data
- {ggplot2} coherent system for data visualizations based on 'the grammar of graphics'
- {ggpubr} publication-ready pots based on ggplot2
- {ComplexHeatmap}, {pheatmap} for specialized graphic such as heatmaps
- {gviz} vizualization of genomic data



The Tidyverse

Tidy verse = collection of approx. 25 packages for manipulation, visualization, transformation of "tidy data" (incl ggplot2)

Tidy data (and data frames aka 'tibbles'):

= each value is placed in its own "cell", each variable in its own column, and each observation in its own row.





```
table1
#> # A tibble: 6 × 4
    country
                  year cases population
    <chr>
#> 1 Afghanistan 1999
                         745
                               19987071
#> 2 Afghanistan
                 2000
                               20595360
#> 3 Brazil
                 1999
                       37737 172006362
#> 4 Brazil
                       80488 174504898
#> 5 China
                 1999 212258 1272915272
#> 6 China
                 2000 213766 1280428583
```

```
table2
#> # A tibble: 12 × 4
                 year type
                                      count
                 <dbl> <chr>
                                      <dbl>
#> 1 Afghanistan 1999 cases
                                        745
#> 2 Afghanistan 1999 population 19987071
#> 3 Afghanistan 2000 cases
                                       2666
#> 4 Afghanistan 2000 population 20595360
#> 5 Brazil
                 1999 cases
                                      37737
                 1999 population 172006362
#> 6 Brazil
#> # i 6 more rows
```

tab	16	e3		
#>	#	A tibble: 6	× 3	
#>		country	year	rate
#>		<chr></chr>	<dbl></dbl>	<chr></chr>
#>	1	Afghanistan	1999	745/19987071
#>	2	Afghanistan	2000	2666/20595360
#>	3	Brazil	1999	37737/172006362
#>	4	Brazil	2000	80488/174504898
#>	5	China	1999	212258/1272915272
#>	6	China	2000	213766/1280428583



Base R and the tidyverse

BaseR

- better for software development
- better for running quick simulations
- generally faster performance
- more appealing to users with previous programming experience

Use if:

- Most of your work involves software or package development, advanced statistical procedures, or computationally expensive operations
- You're used to other languages that have more in common with Base-R
- Most of your collaborators and online network use it too

Tidyverse

- ease of use, functions have the same structure and easier names, enables reading functions as instructions
- quick and easy data manipulation
- grouping datasets with many variable for summary statistics with dplyr
- over 25 packages in the tidyverse, each requiring its own updates to stay current
 - -> adds overhead, difficult to reproduce, limits submission to code repros as R cran or bioconductor

Use if:

- Most of your work involves data cleaning, visualization, and common statistics
- You're newer to R and find it easier to read and understand than base-R
- Most of your collaborators and online network use it too



The Grammar of Graphics

- Variables are mapped to visual properties (aesthetics): aes()
- Values of the aesthetic are assigned to each unique level (or values) of the variable = "scaling"
- Data is represented as = geom_*()
- Data might be transformed (rescaled) as part of the representation



Practical session

R for Data Science, 2nd edition (Wickham)

Chapter 1

- Building up a plot: ggplot(), mappings = aes(), representations = geoms_*()
- o Visualizing distributions of variables and relationships between variable for exploratory analysis

Chapter 9

- Adding layers
- o Mapping aesthetics to groups (general vs specific)
- Aesthetics mapping vs geom_* attributes
- Grouping by facets

Chapter 11

- Labels
- Guides (legends)
- Scales
- Coordinate systems
- Themes



Further resources

Tutorials:

<u>Datanovia</u>

Inspirations with code examples:

R gallery

GGplot2 extensions:

https://exts.ggplot2.tidyverse.org/gallery/



Questions?

Thank you!