

Analysis of IR

PS 1599 | Introduction

Michaël Aklin

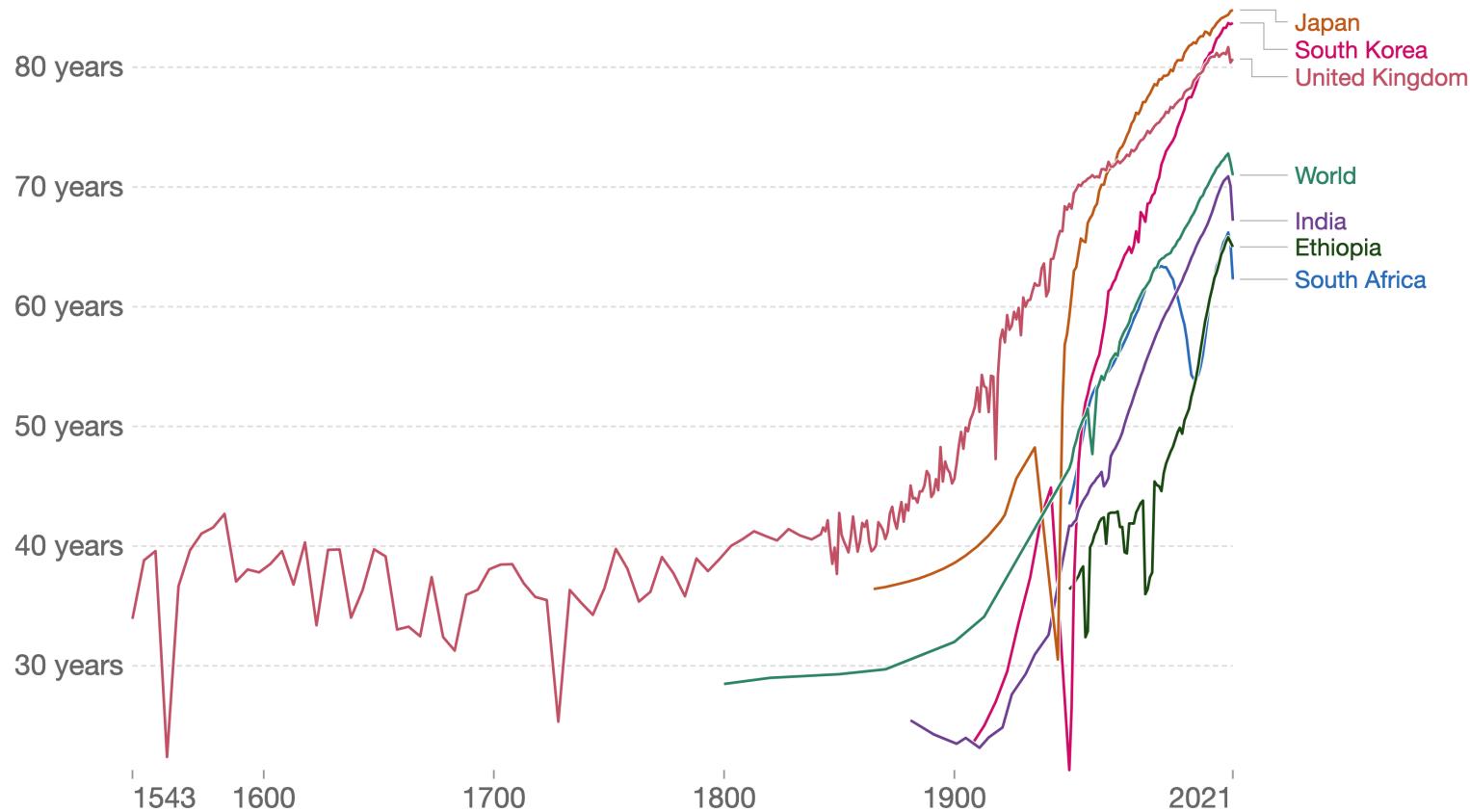
University of Pittsburgh

If you could pick **any year** to live in...
which one would it be?

We never had it better...

Life expectancy, 1543 to 2021

Our World
in Data



Source: UN WPP (2022); Zijdeman et al. (2015); Riley (2005)

Note: Shown is the 'period life expectancy'. This is the average number of years a newborn would live if age-specific mortality rates in the current year were to stay the same throughout its life.

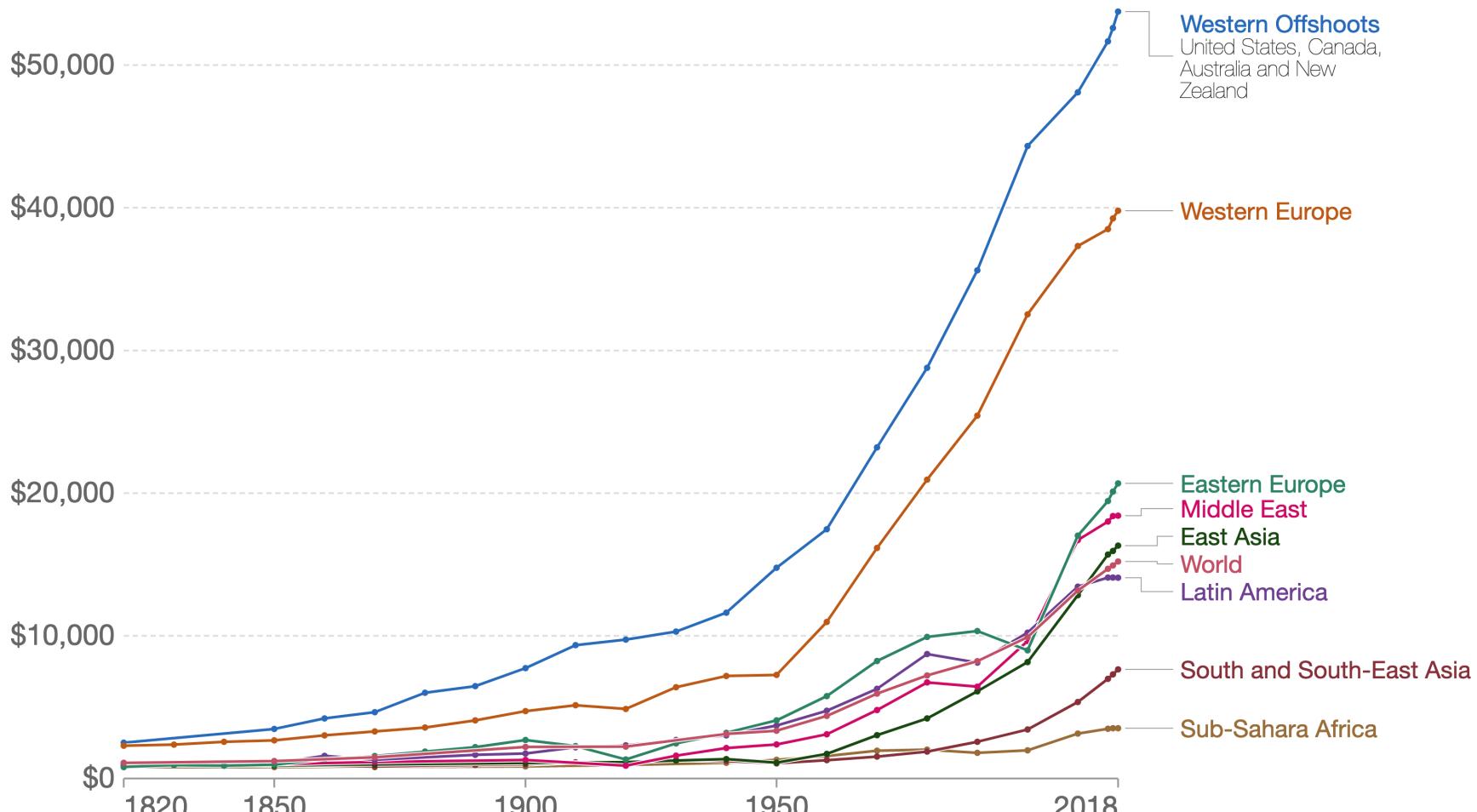
OurWorldInData.org/life-expectancy • CC BY

Life expectancy

GDP per capita, 1820 to 2018

Our World
in Data

This data is adjusted for differences in the cost of living between countries, and for inflation. It is measured in constant 2011 international-\$.



Source: Maddison Project Database 2020 (Bolt and van Zanden, 2020)

OurWorldInData.org/economic-growth • CC BY

Income

- Made possible thanks to **technological innovation**
- From 1st to 4th Industrial Revolutions (~1760-today)
- More energy devote to more goods and services than ever
- And yet...

A time of “polycrises”

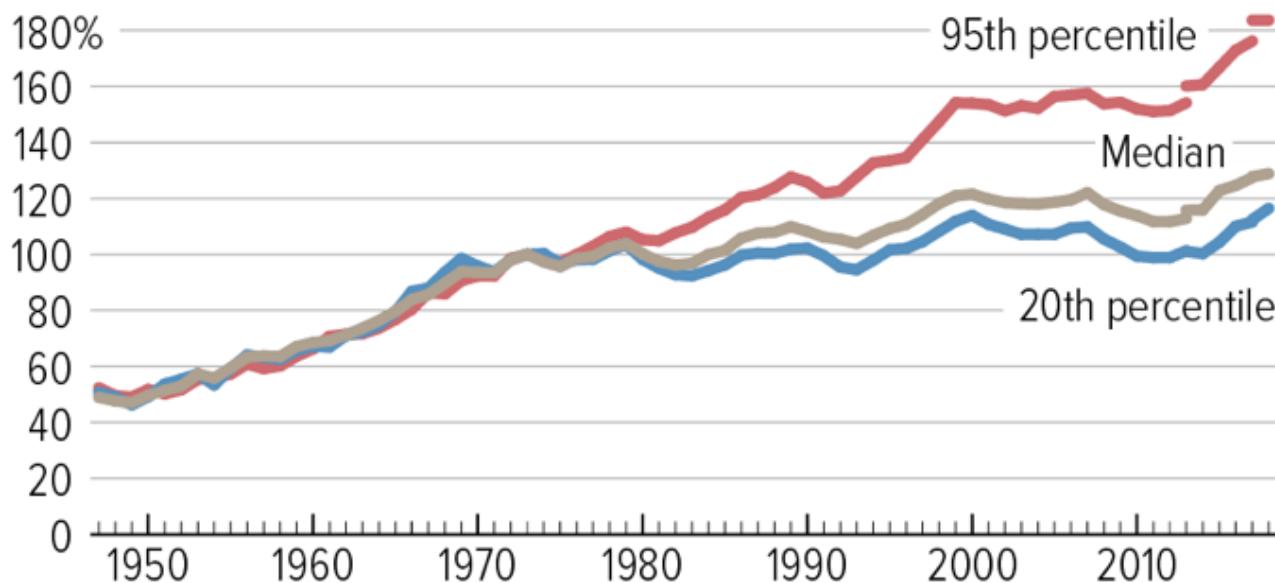
- Economy
- Health
- Environment
- Society and politics

→ time of global crises of all sorts

Economy

Income Gains Widely Shared in Early Postwar Decades — But Not Since Then

Real family income between 1947 and 2018, as a percentage of 1973 level



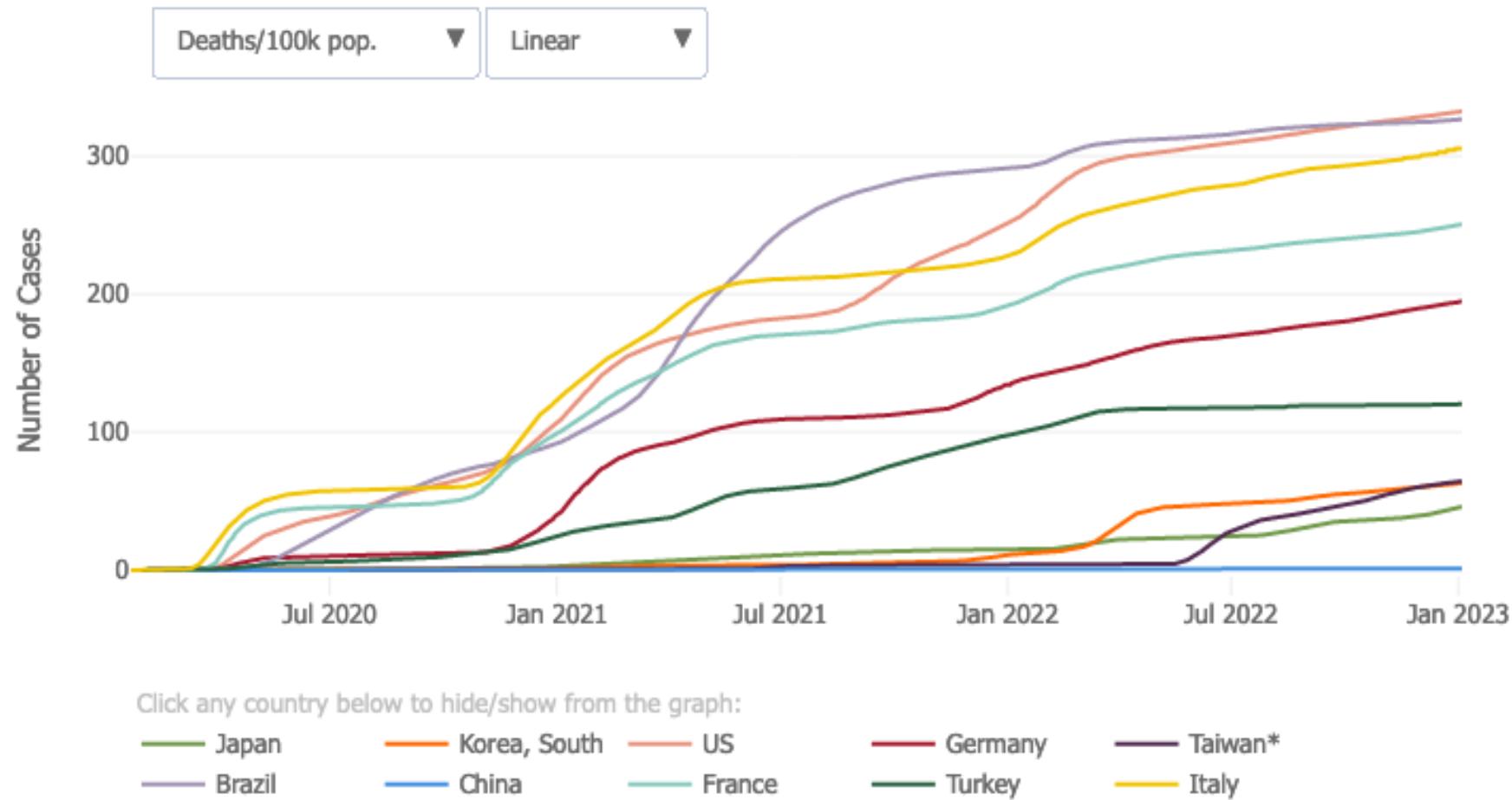
Note: Breaks indicate implementation of a redesigned questionnaire (2013) and an updated data processing system (2017).

Source: CBPP calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau Data

CENTER ON BUDGET AND POLICY PRIORITIES | CBPP.ORG

Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

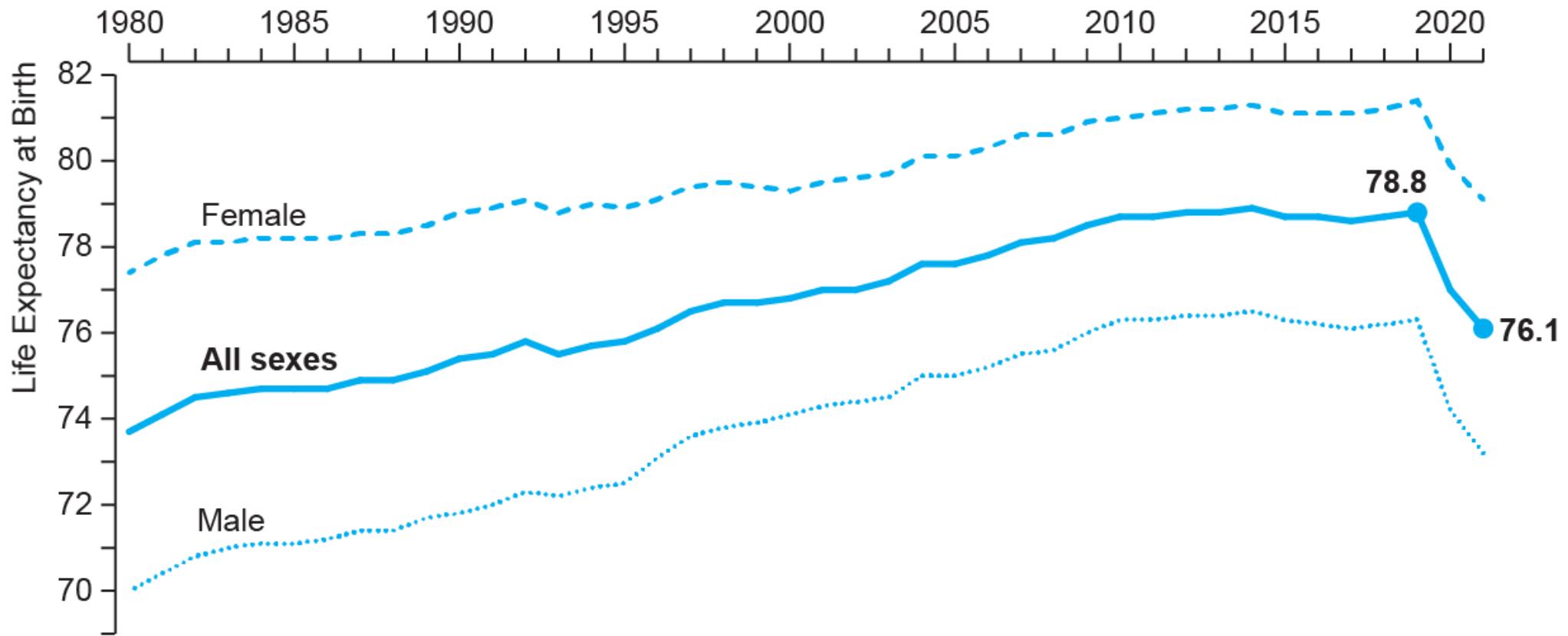
Health



Source: Johns Hopkins University.

Health

Life Expectancy by Sex, 1980–2021*

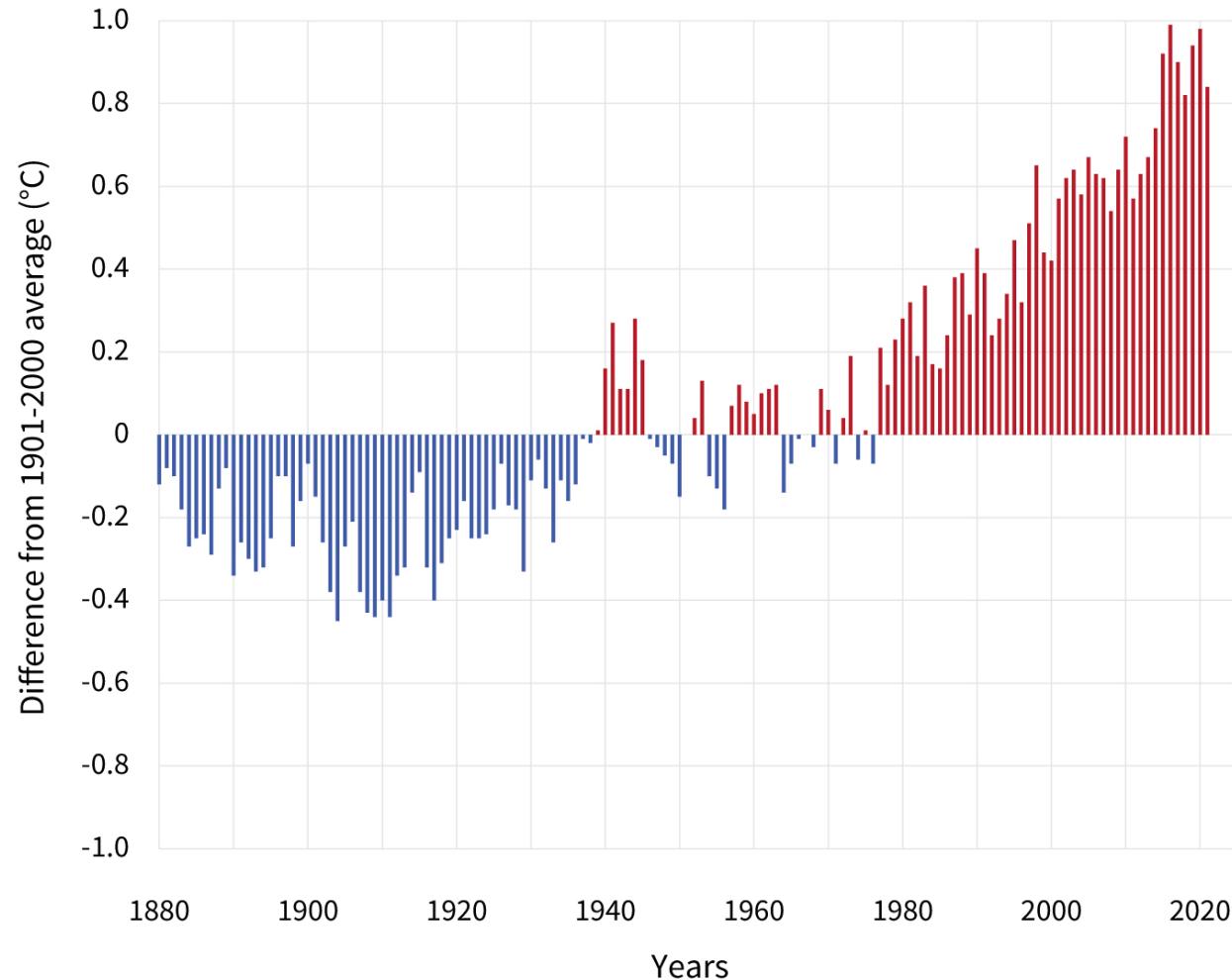


*2021 estimates are based on provisional data.

Source: CDC via Scientific American.

Environment

GLOBAL AVERAGE SURFACE TEMPERATURE



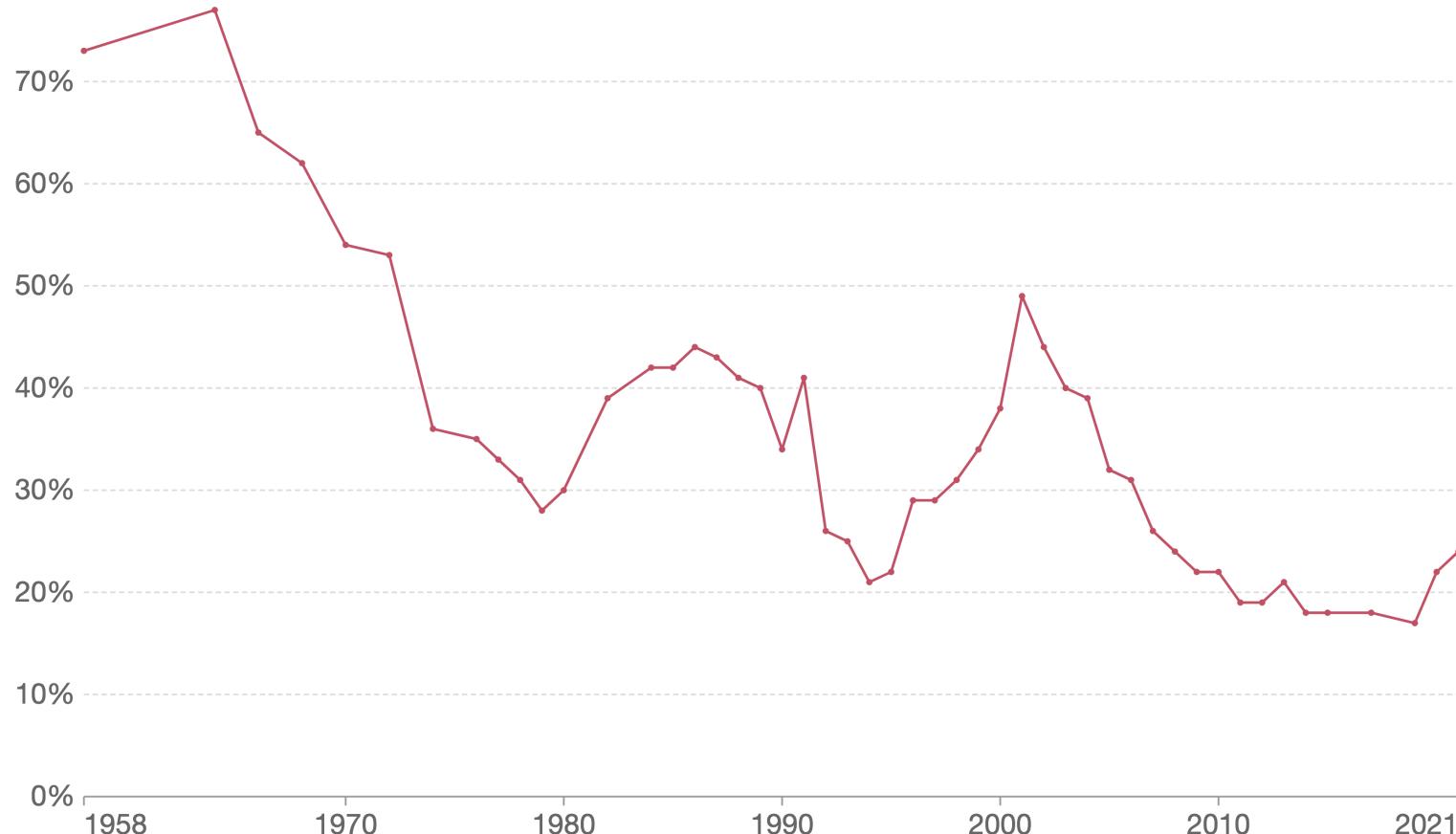
Source: climate.gov.

Society...

Public trust in government in the United States

Share who trust the United States government always or most of the time.

Our World
in Data



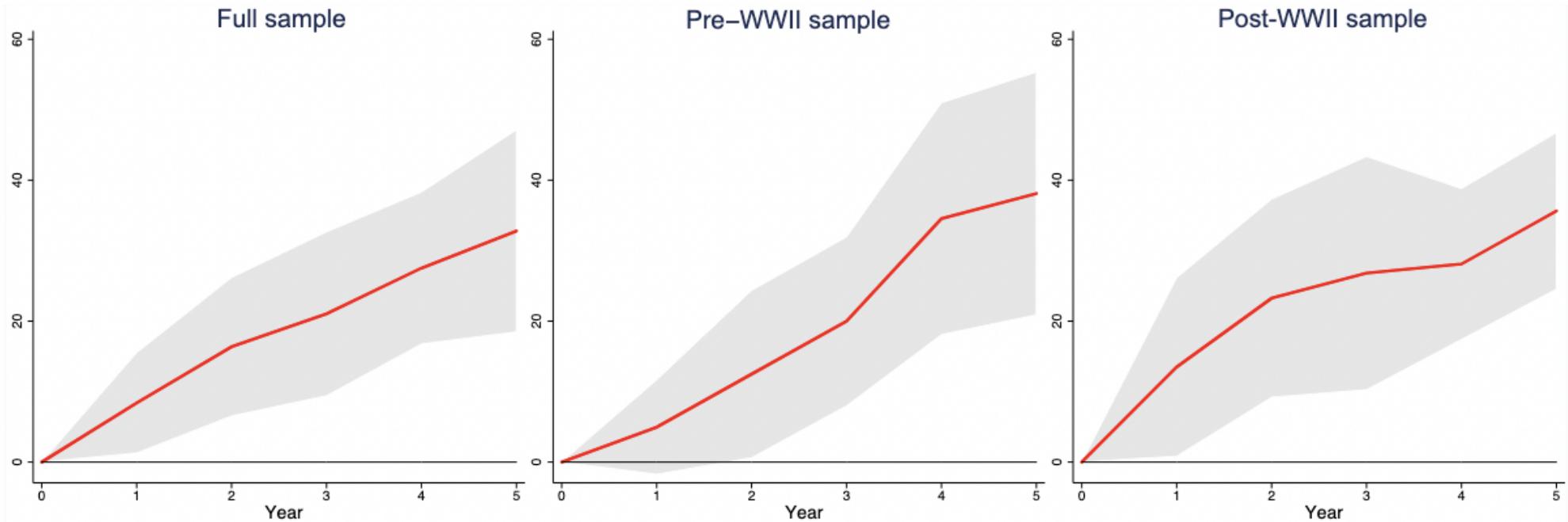
Source: Pew Research Center (2022)

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Plummeting trust

and politics

Figure 3: Far-right vote shares (local projections): financial crisis recessions



Far-right vote goes up 30% after a financial crisis. Source: Funke et al 2016.

AI



Rob Morris
@RobertRMorris

We provided mental health support to about 4,000 people — using GPT-3. Here's what happened 

2:50 PM · Jan 6, 2023

Source: twitter.com

- Key: both *+ and -* are caused by technology
- Innovations have **helped** so much...
- But: from climate change to social media, they are also a source of malaise
- Questions:
 - Why is **bad technology** succeeding?
 - Why is **good technology** too often struggling?
 - Can we make our societies more **sustainable**?
 - What kind of **policies** are needed?

Welcome!

The (international) politics of technology and sustainability

- Substance during regular classes
 - learn about the role of technology in our societies
 - develop a sophisticated understanding of sustainability
 - politics behind this + how to design public policies
- Skills during workshops
 - analyze and report real data for policymaking
 - develop your problem-solving skills

Concretely

Semester divided in 3 parts

1. Welfare, technology, and sustainable development
2. Politics of sustainable technology
3. Big picture: challenges ahead

Lectures

- Theory
- Case studies
- Policy solutions

Requirements

- Midterm: 30%. In class.
- Research report:
 - Analyze real US survey data to find out who is willing to adopt clean technology.
 - 40%. Due on 4/21.
- Policy report:
 - Scientific literature review + policy recommendations on a problem connected to technology adoption.
 - 30%. Due on 4/21.

Rules

- (Respectful) engagement - lots of opportunities!
- Readings: multi-disciplinary, technical, online
- Attendance is mandatory but not checked
- COVID policy
- Canvas/webpage: syllabus, slides, assignments
- Office hours
- **Communication** is key (grades, etc.)



Webpage for the course

Questions?

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Source for title page painting: Raymond Simboli, *Allegheny-Ludlum Steel Mill, Pittsburgh*

