

Tips for effective data visualization

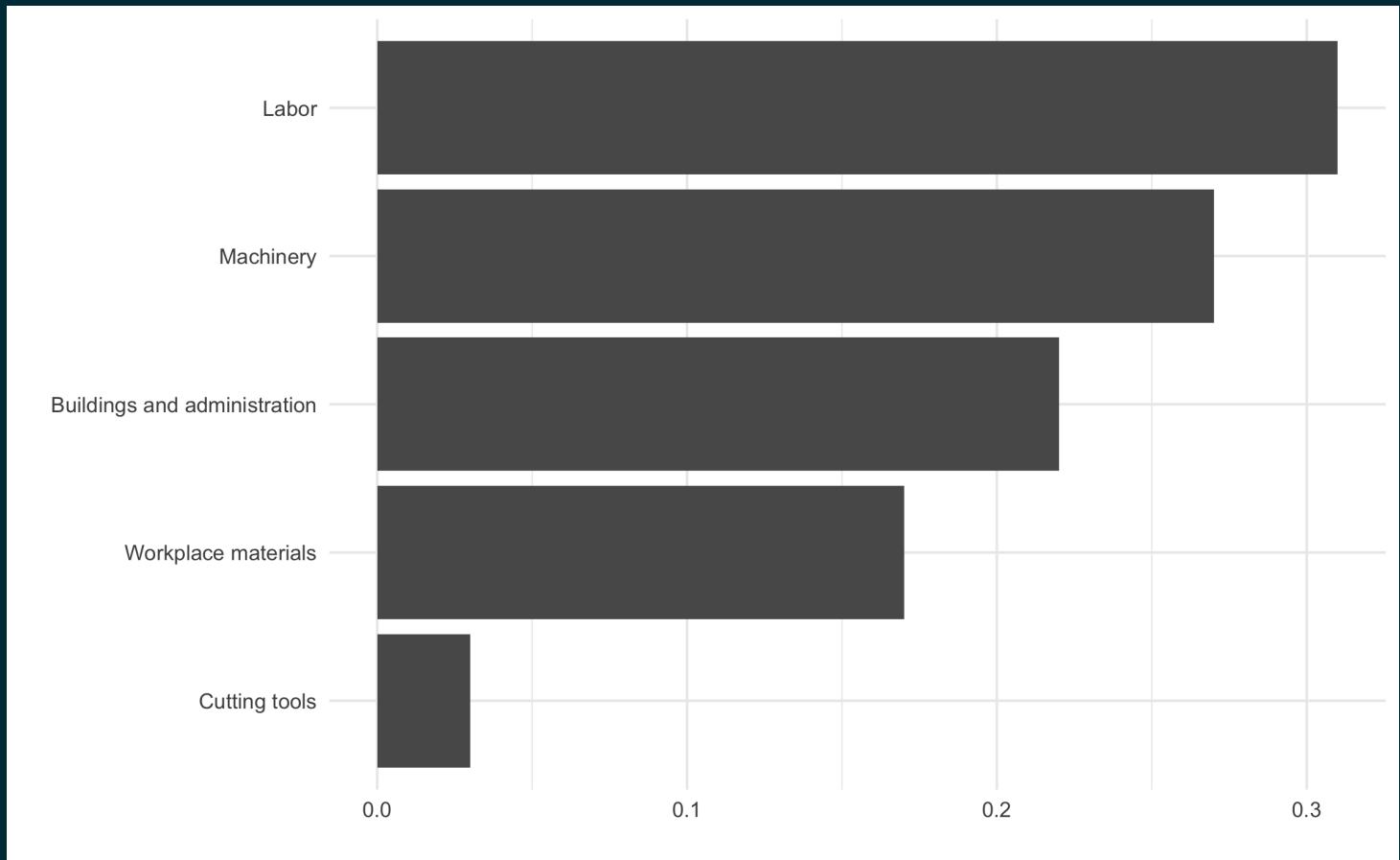
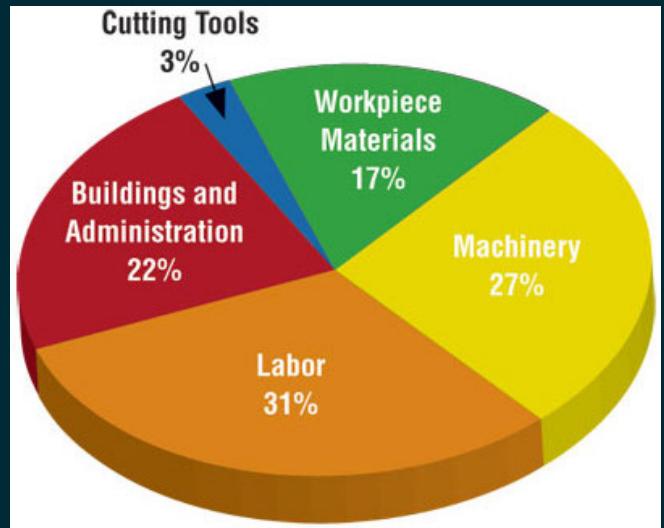
Data Science in a Box
datasciencebox.org



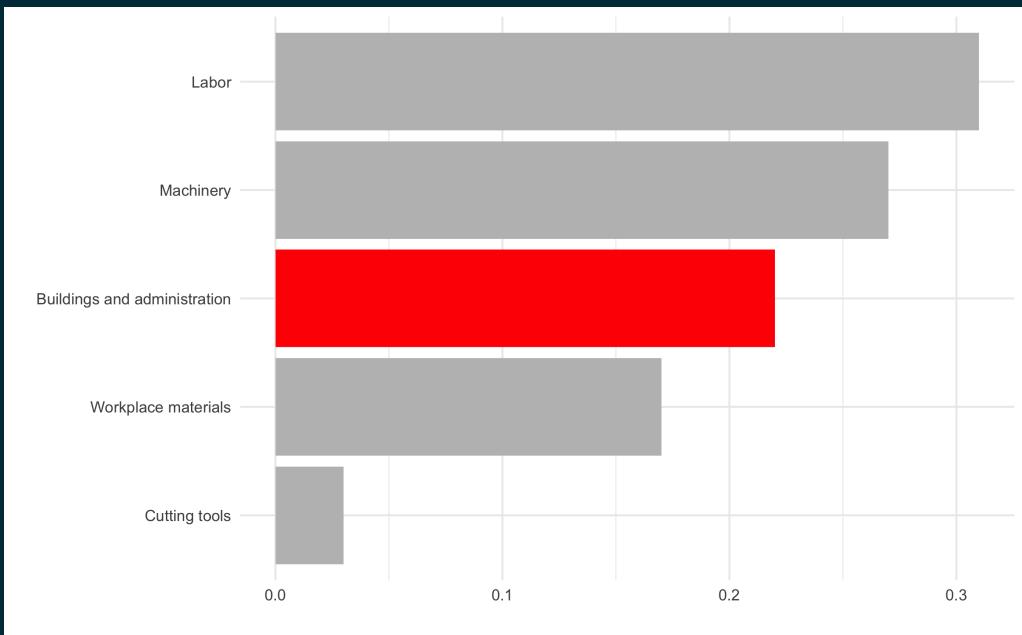
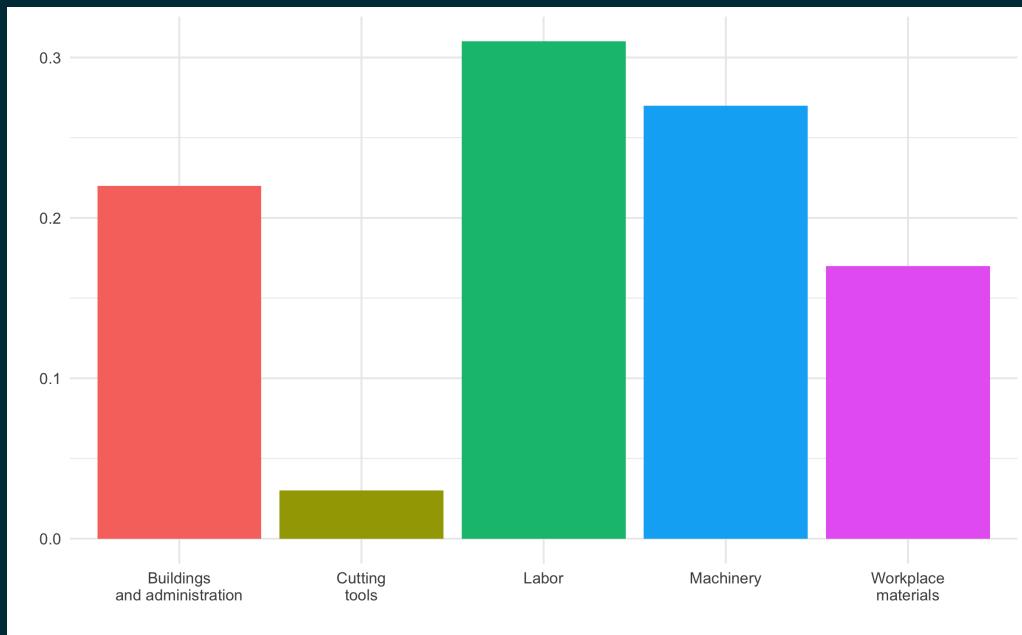
Designing effective visualizations



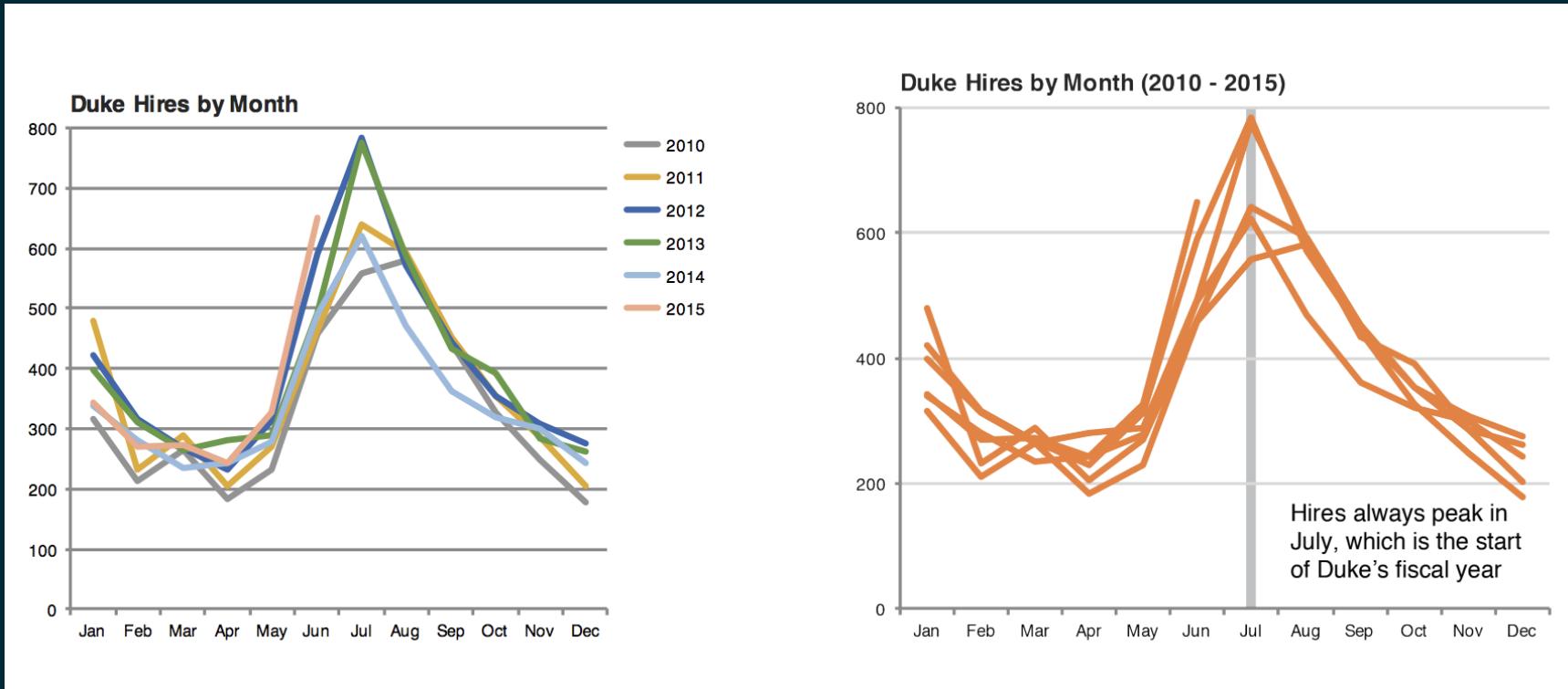
Keep it simple



Use color to draw attention



Tell a story



Credit: Angela Zoss and Eric Monson, Duke DVS

Principles for effective visualizations



Principles for effective visualizations

- Order matters
- Put long categories on the y-axis
- Keep scales consistent
- Select meaningful colors
- Use meaningful and nonredundant labels

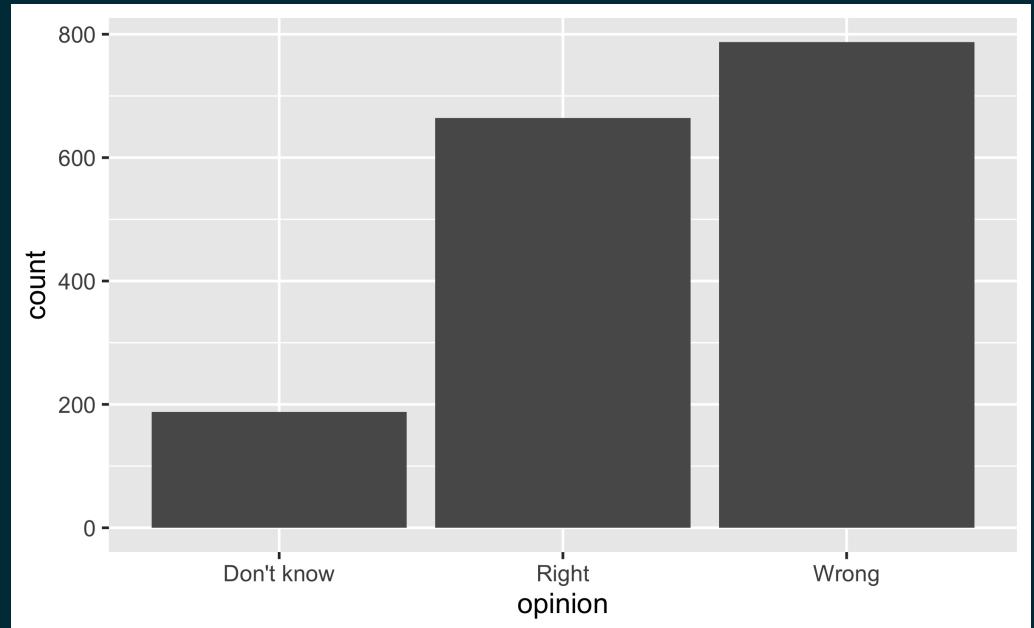


Data

In September 2019, YouGov survey asked 1,639 GB adults the following question:

In hindsight, do you think Britain was right/wrong to vote to leave EU?

- Right to leave
- Wrong to leave
- Don't know



Source: YouGov Survey Results, retrieved Oct 7, 2019

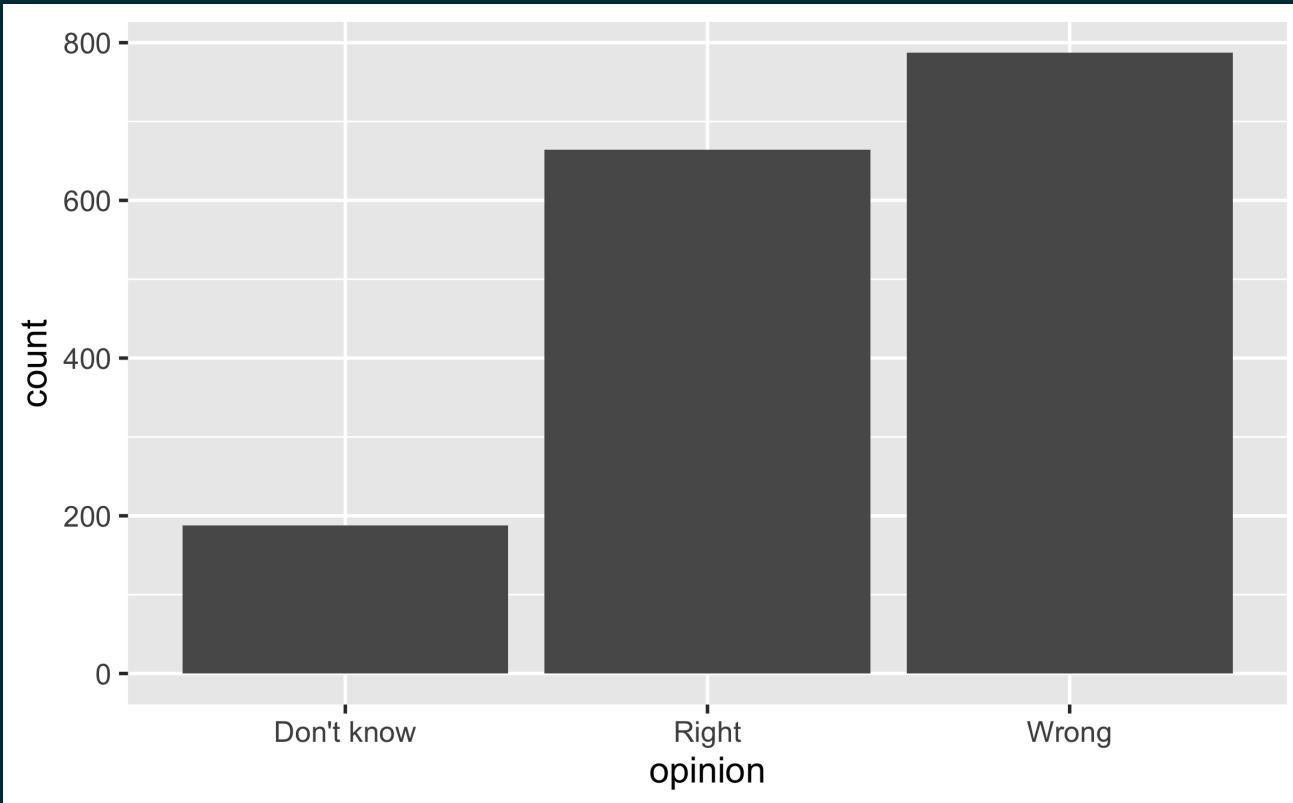
Order matters



datasciencebox.org

Alphabetical order is rarely ideal

Plot Code



Alphabetical order is rarely ideal

Plot

Code

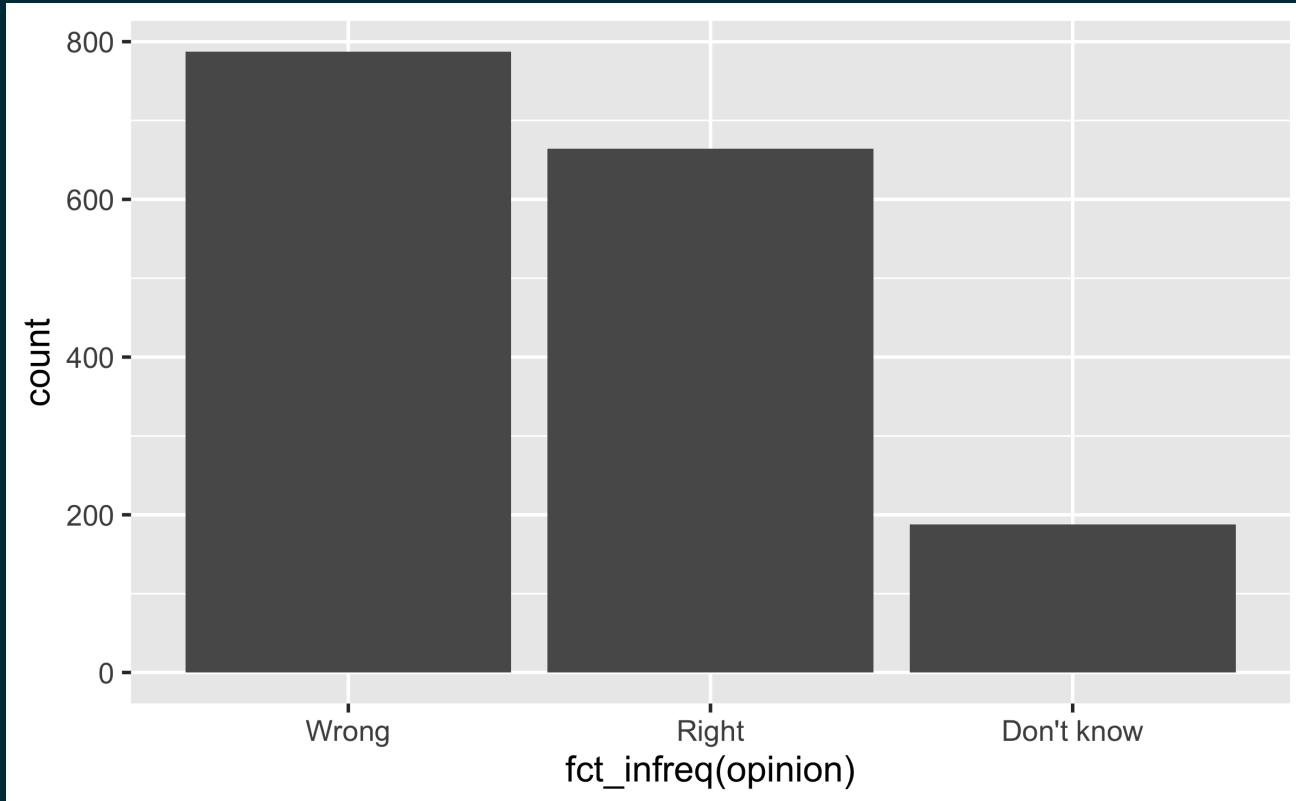
```
ggplot(brexit, aes(x = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar()
```



Order by frequency

Plot

Code



Order by frequency

Plot

Code

fct_infreq: Reorder factors' levels by frequency

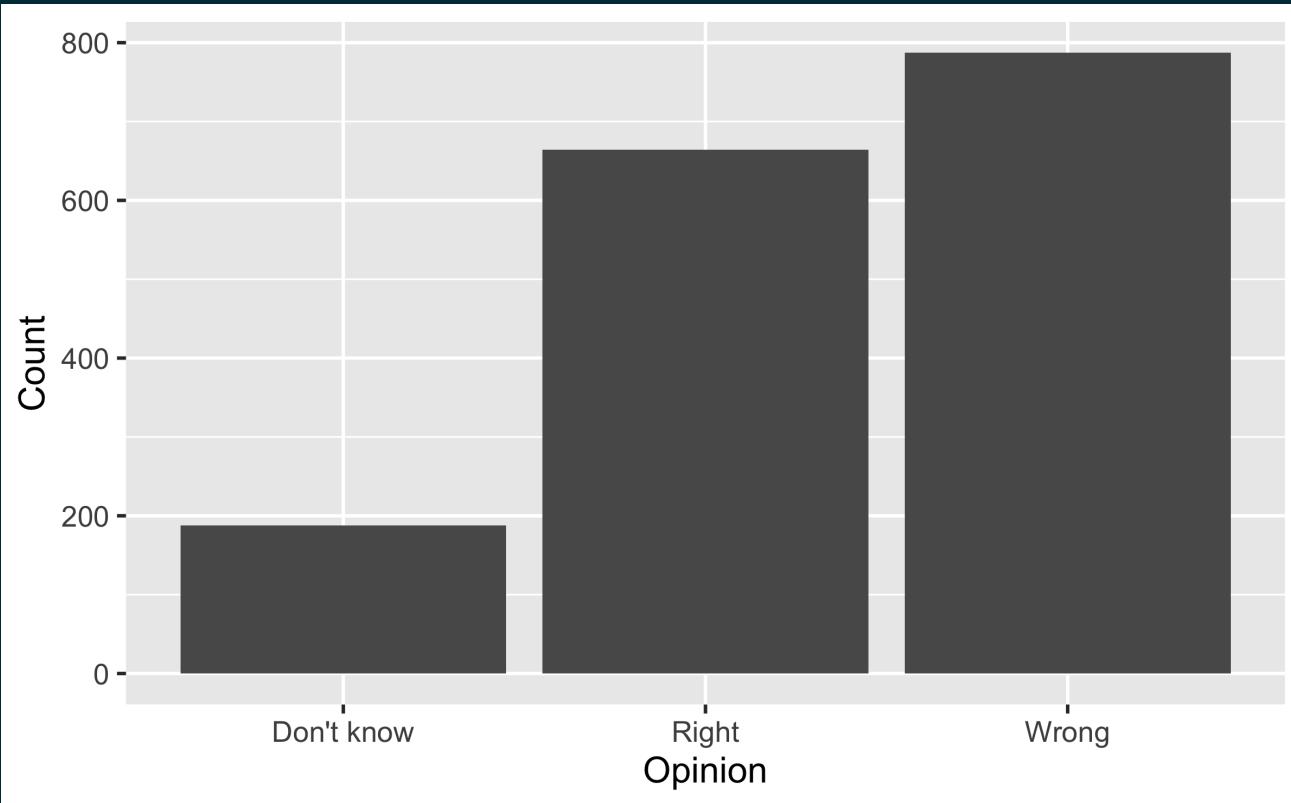
```
ggplot(brexit, aes(x = fct_infreq(opinion))) +  
  geom_bar()
```



Clean up labels

Plot

Code



Clean up labels

Plot Code

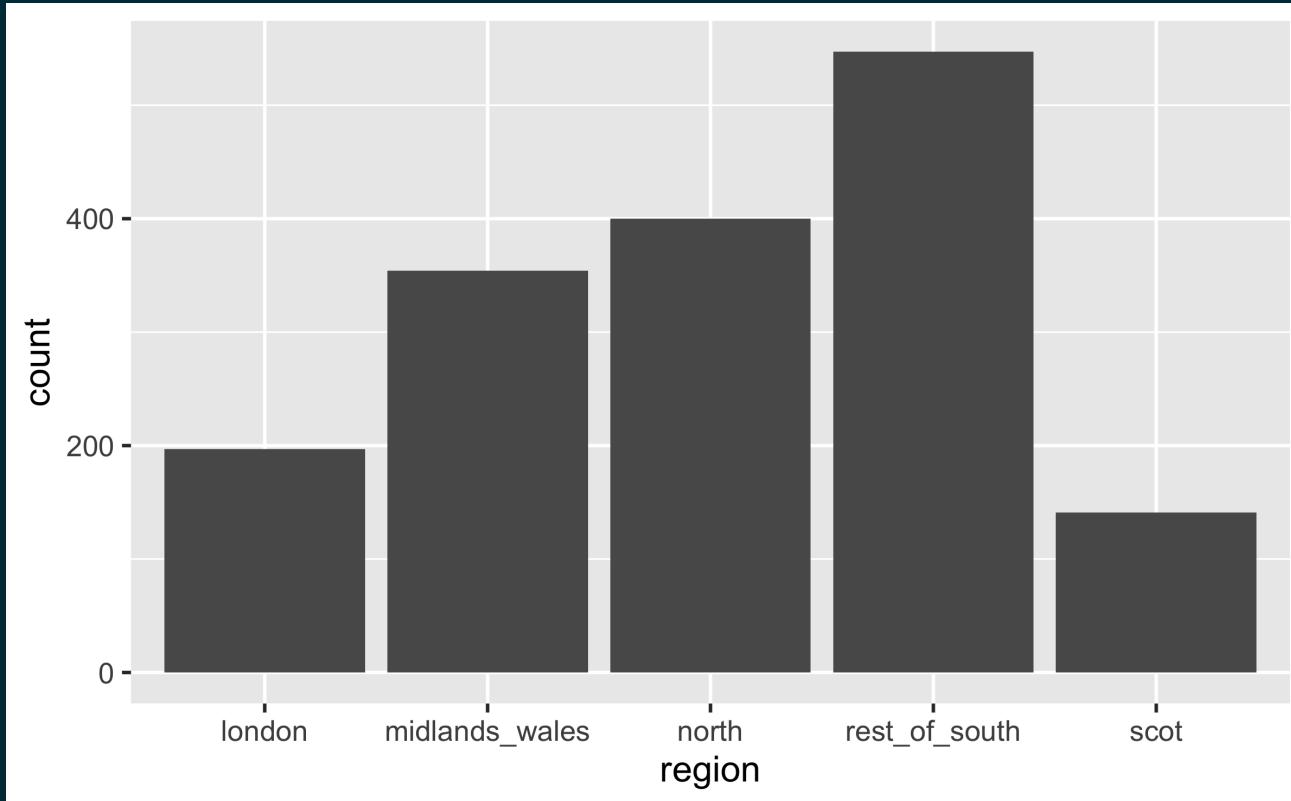
```
ggplot(brexit, aes(x = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  labs(  
    x = "Opinion",  
    y = "Count"  
)
```



Alphabetical order is rarely ideal

Plot

Code



Alphabetical order is rarely ideal

Plot

Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(x = region)) +  
  geom_bar()
```



Use inherent level order

Relevel Plot

fct_relevel: Reorder factor levels using a custom order

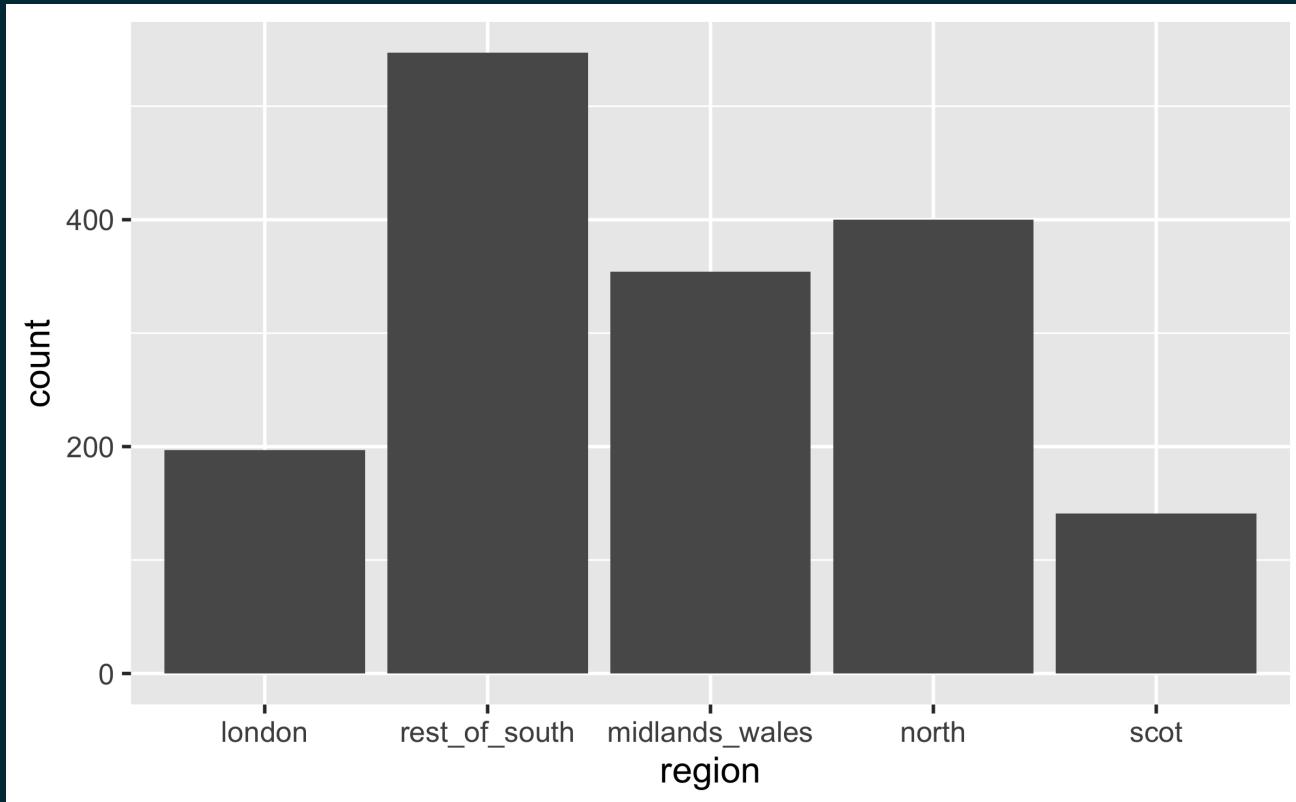
```
brexit <- brexit %>%
  mutate(
    region = fct_relevel(
      region,
      "london", "rest_of_south", "midlands_wales", "north", "scot"
    )
  )
```



Use inherent level order

Relevel

Plot



Clean up labels

Recode Plot

fct_recode: Change factor levels by hand

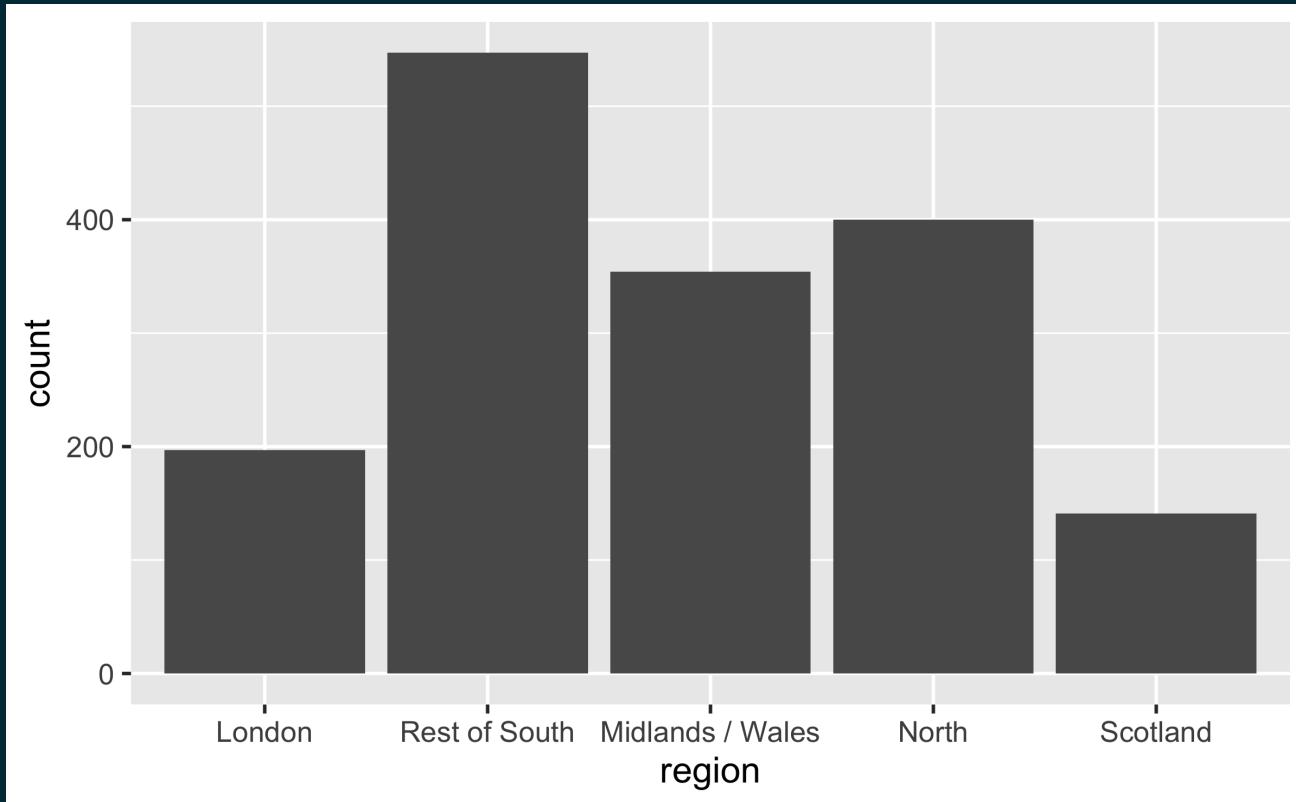
```
brexit <- brexit %>%
  mutate(
    region = fct_recode(
      region,
      London = "london",
      `Rest of South` = "rest_of_south",
      `Midlands / Wales` = "midlands_wales",
      North = "north",
      Scotland = "scot"
    )
  )
```



Clean up labels

Recode

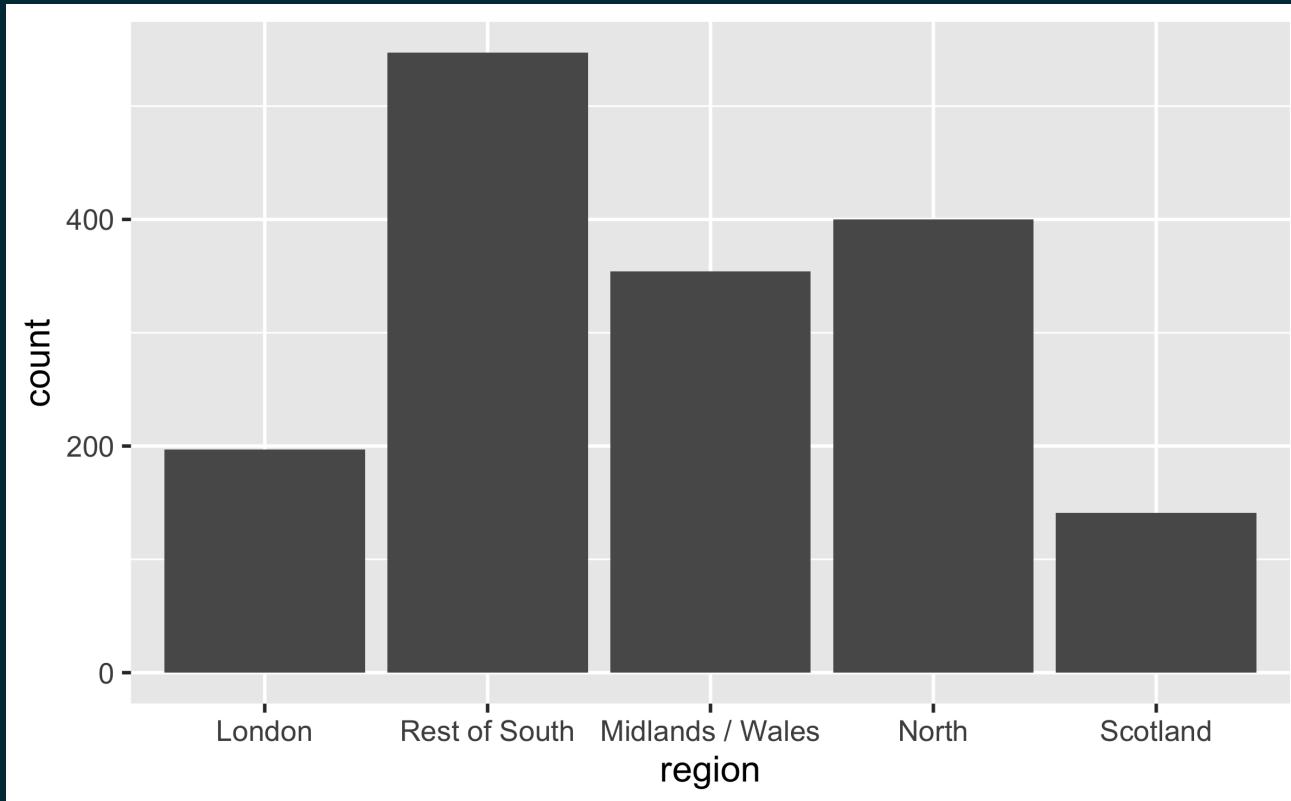
Plot



Put long categories on the y-axis



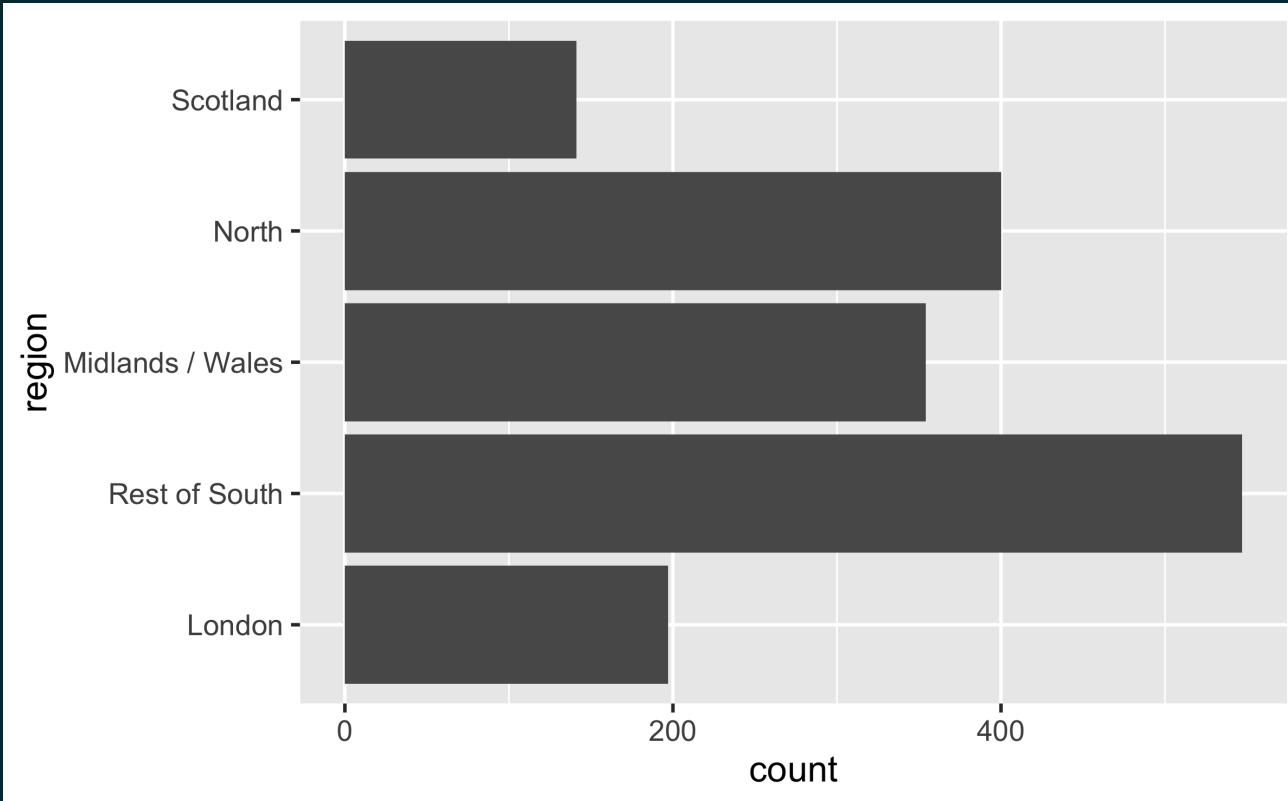
Long categories can be hard to read



Move them to the y-axis

Plot

Code



Move them to the y-axis

Plot

Code

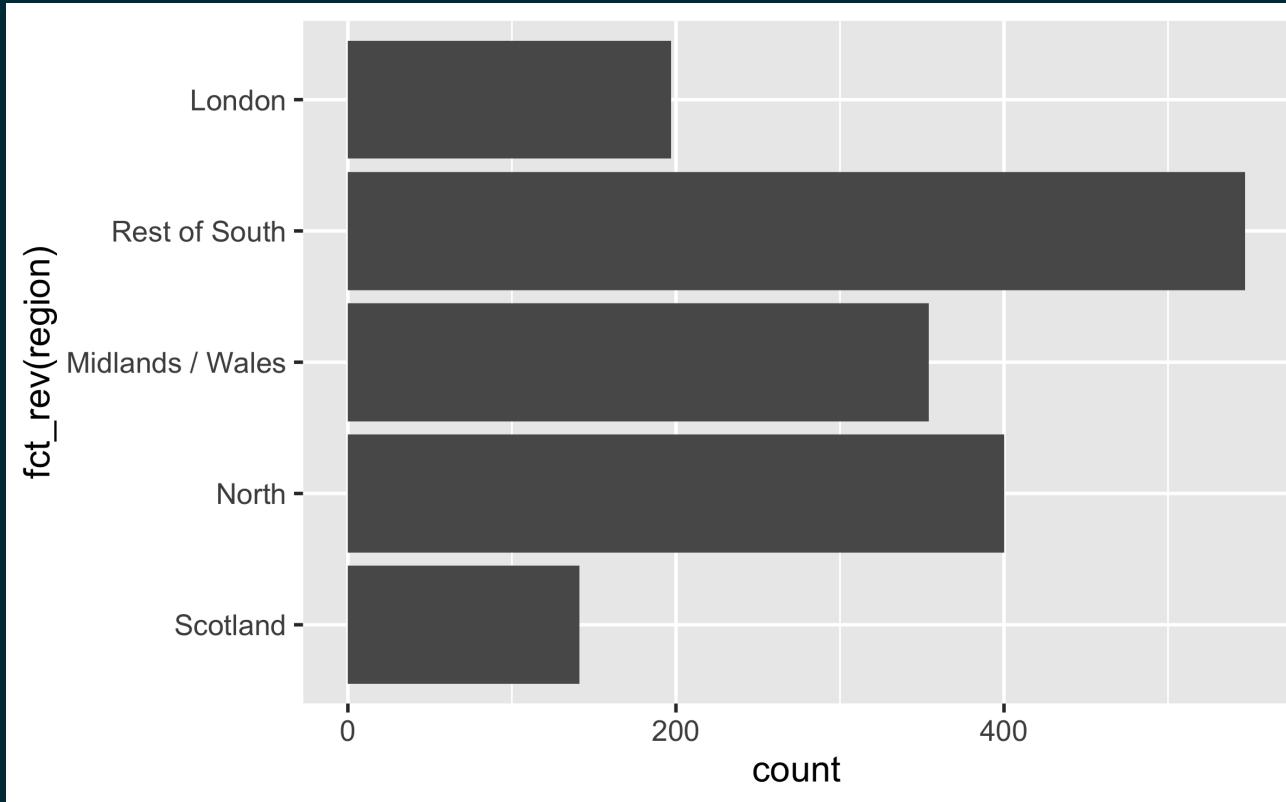
```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = region)) +  
  geom_bar()
```



And reverse the order of levels

Plot

Code



And reverse the order of levels

Plot

Code

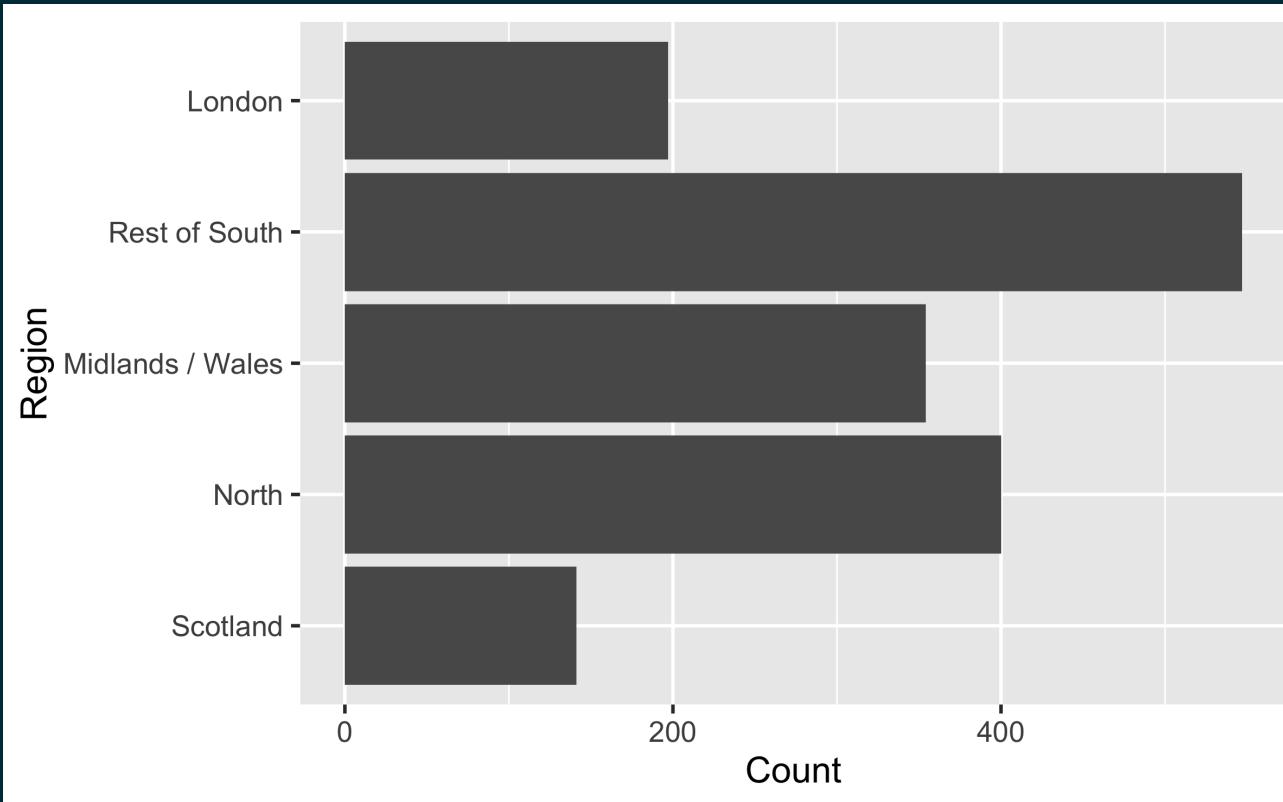
fct_rev: Reverse order of factor levels

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = fct_rev(region))) +  
  geom_bar()
```



Clean up labels

Plot Code



Clean up labels

Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = fct_rev(region))) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  labs(  
    x = "Count",  
    y = "Region"  
)
```



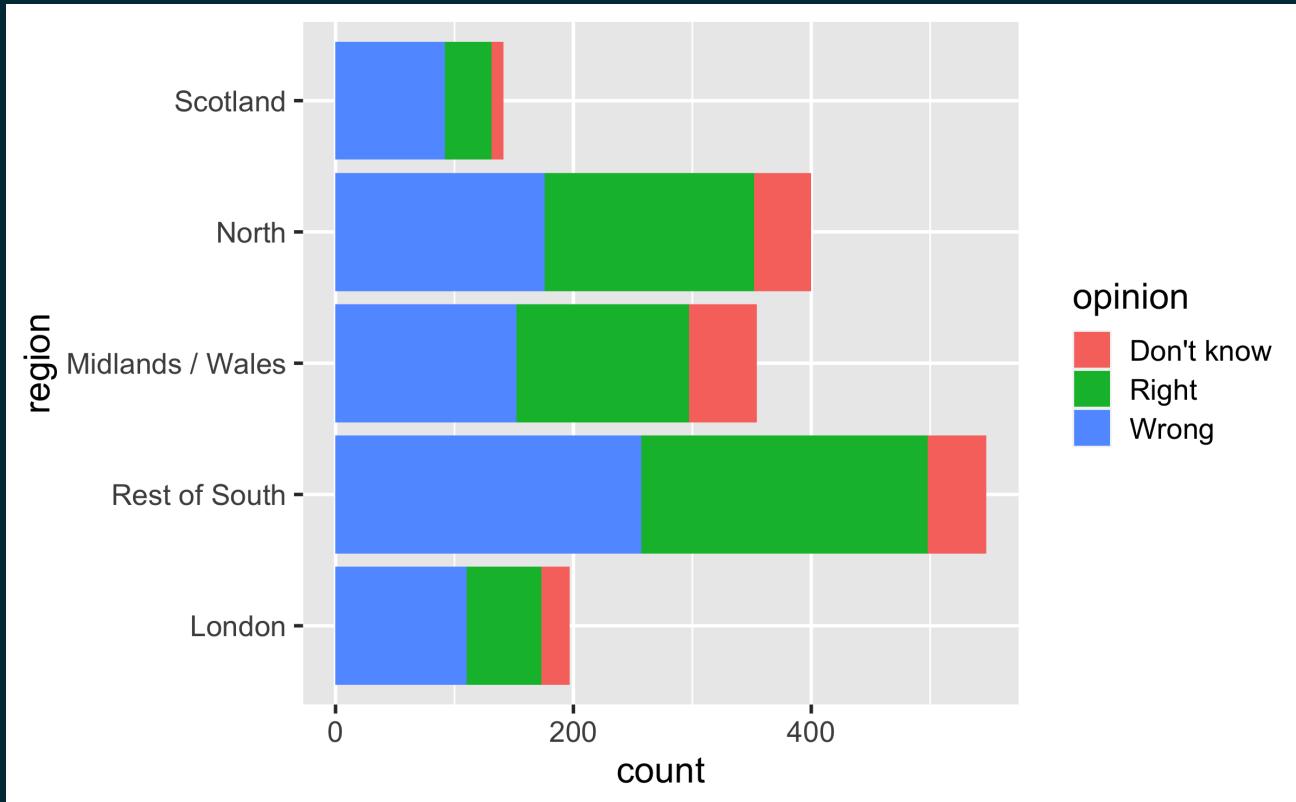
Pick a purpose



Segmented bar plots can be hard to read

Plot

Code



Segmented bar plots can be hard to read

Plot

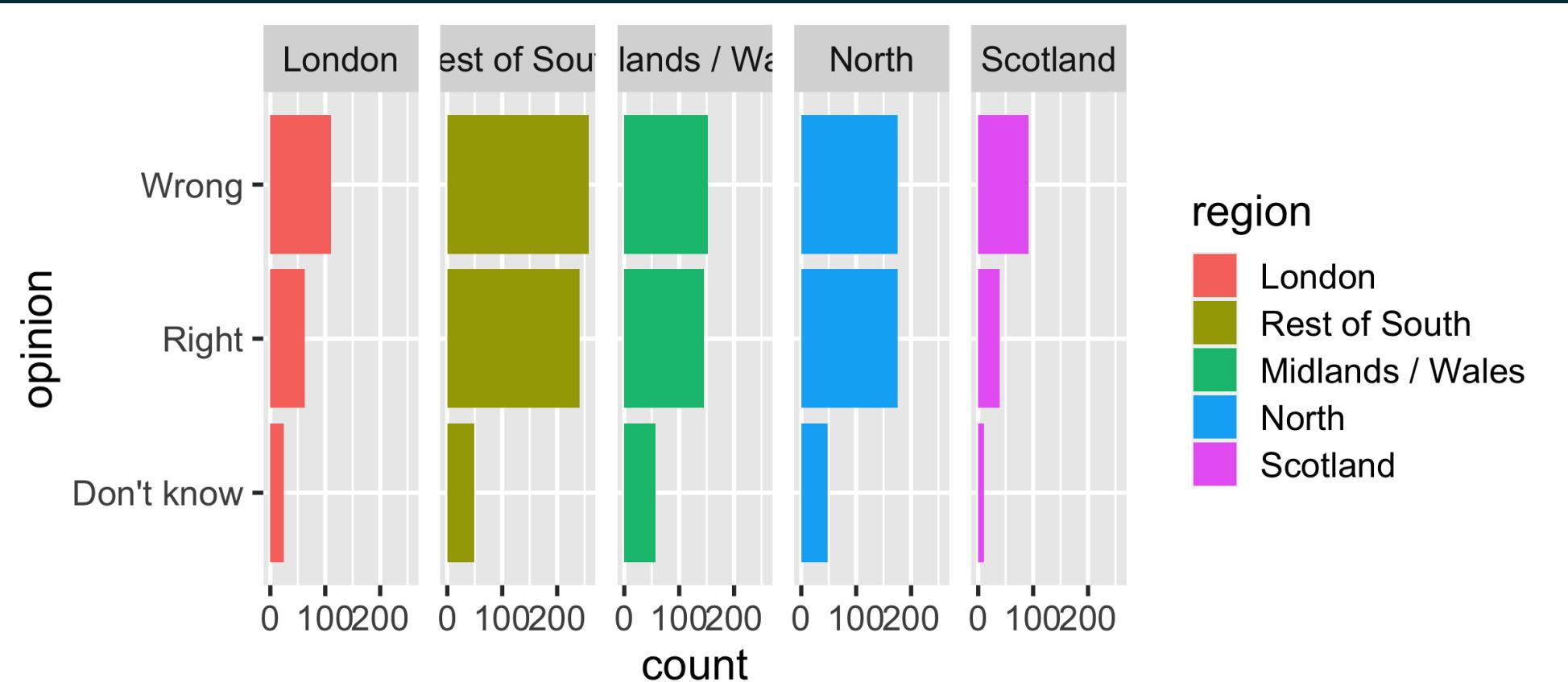
Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = region, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar()
```



Use facets

Plot Code



Use facets

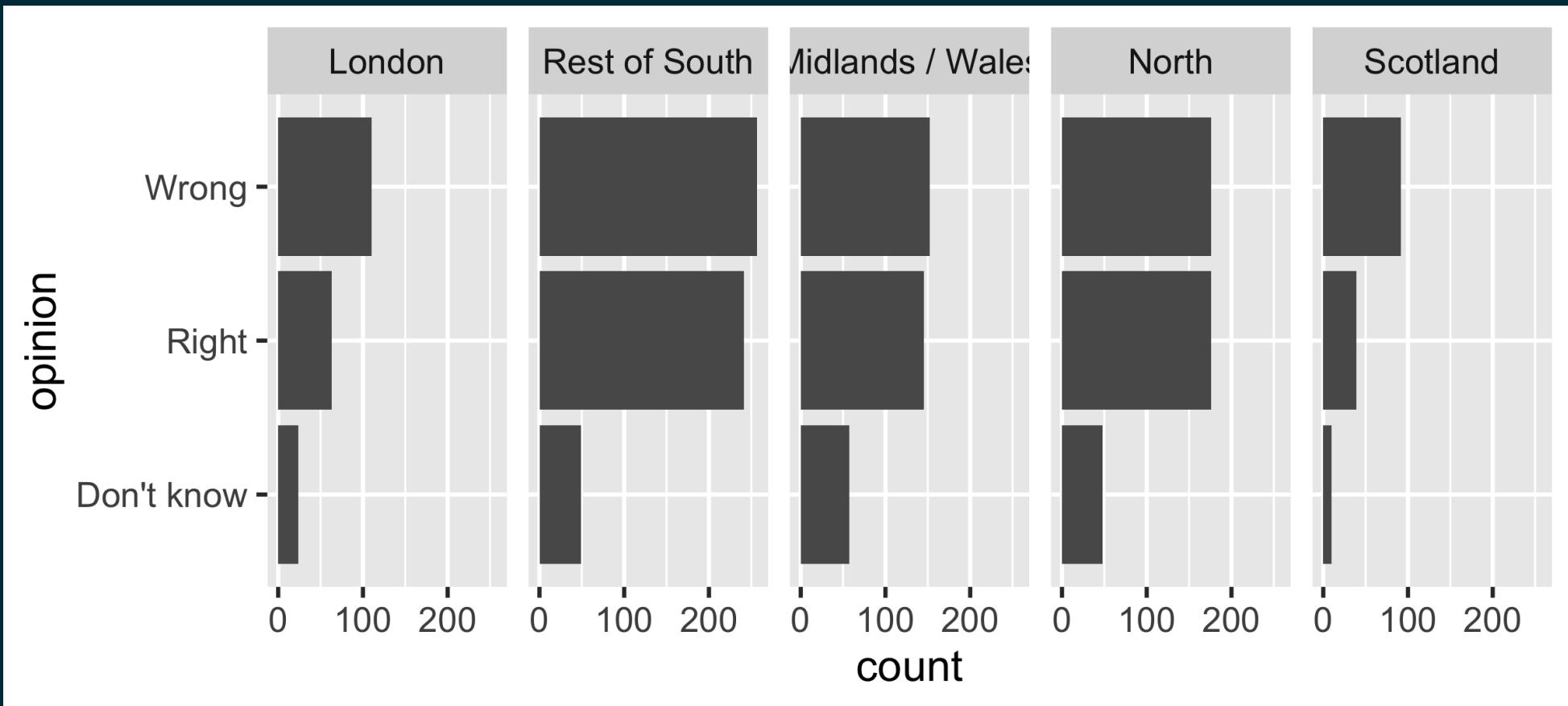
Plot

Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = region)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1)
```

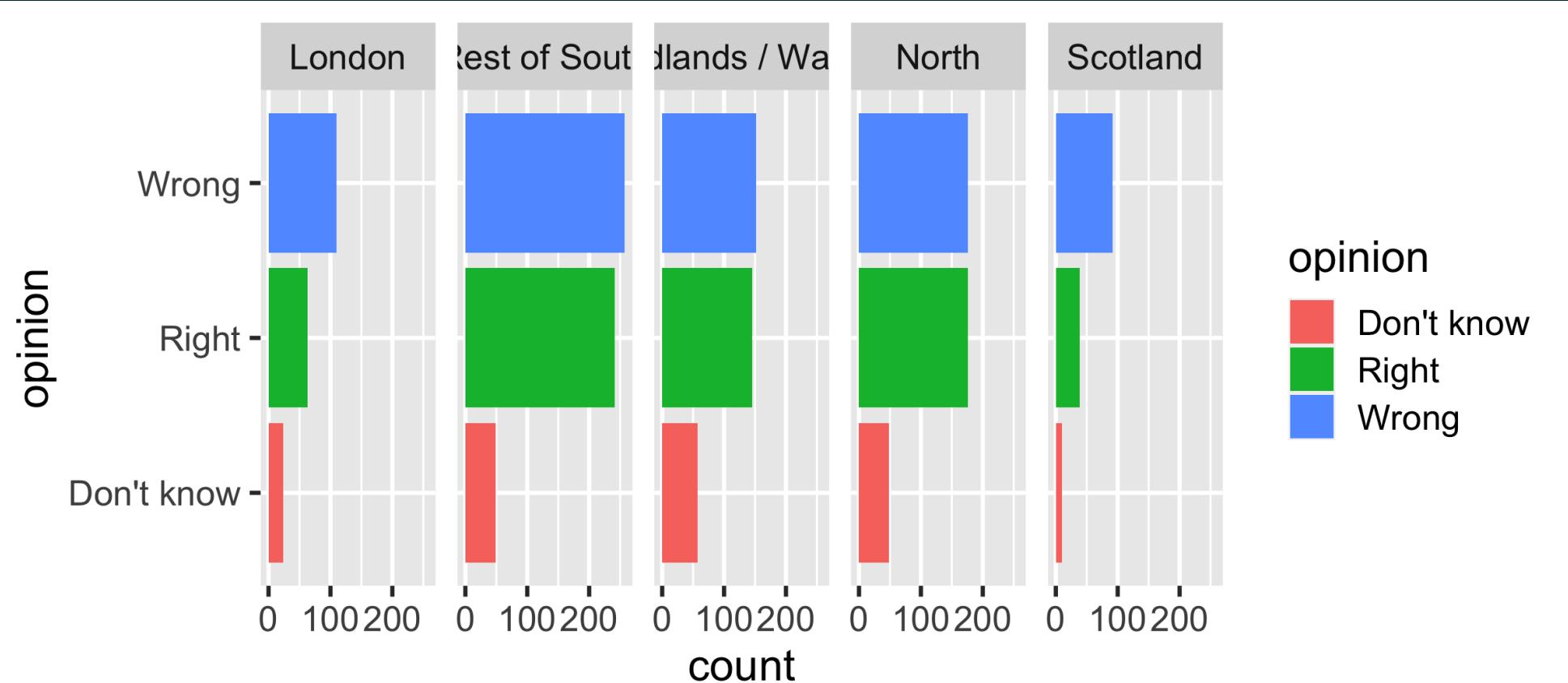


Avoid redundancy?



Redundancy can help tell a story

Plot Code



Redundancy can help tell a story

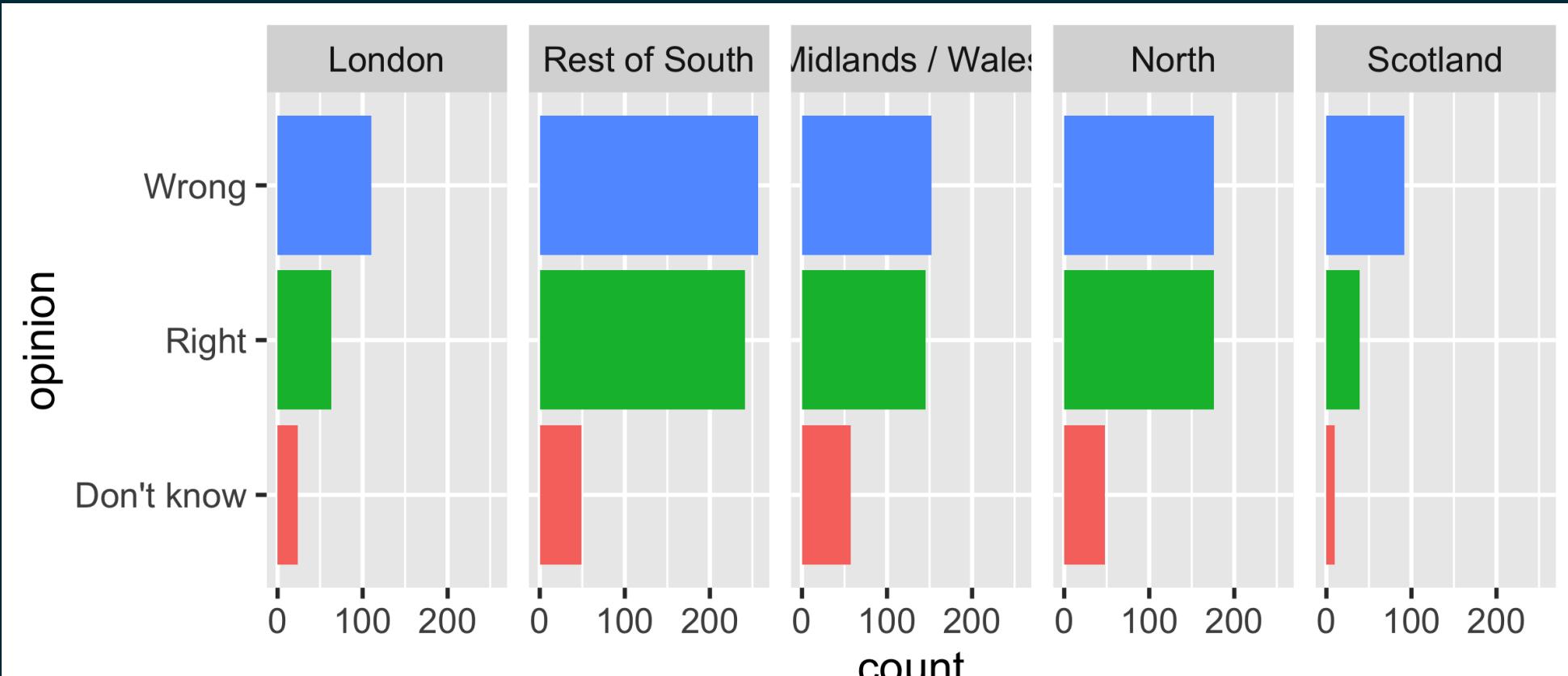
Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1)
```



Be selective with redundancy

Plot Code



Be selective with redundancy

Plot Code

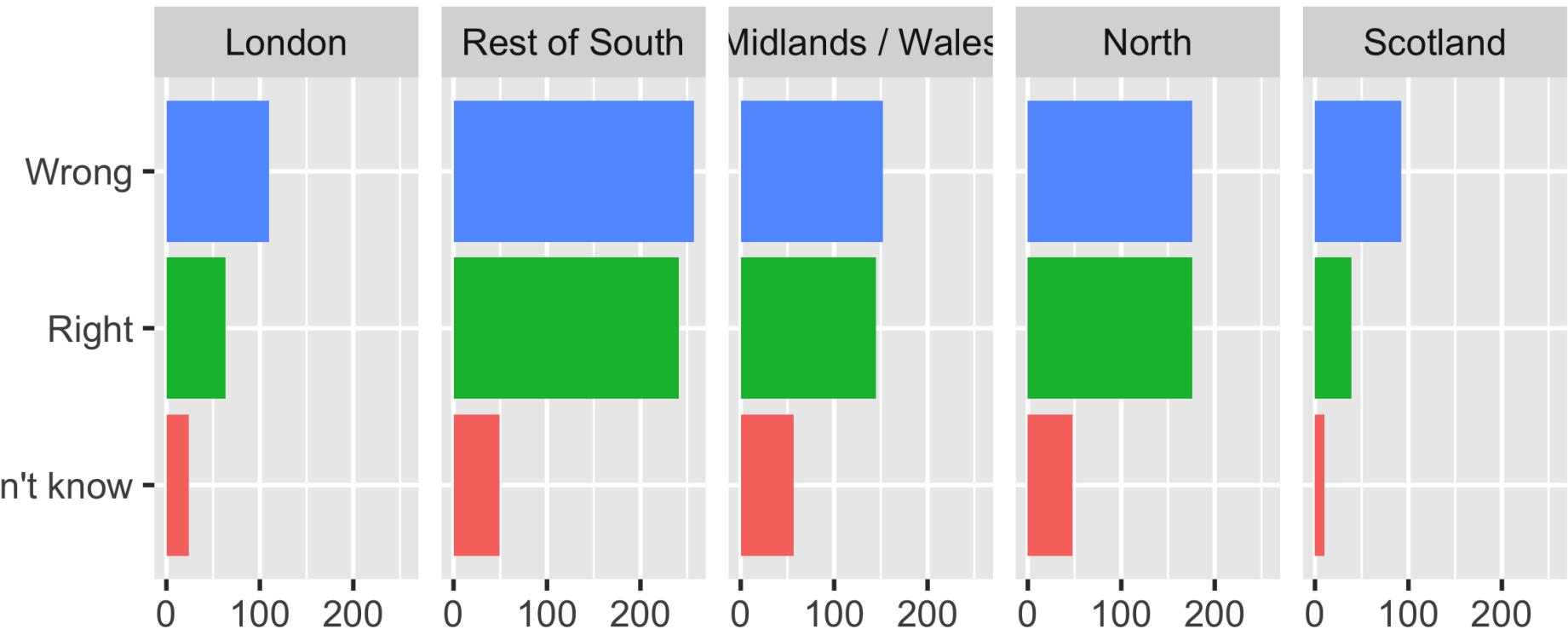
```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1) +  
  guides(fill = "none")
```



Use informative labels

Plot Code

Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?



Use informative labels

Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1) +  
  guides(fill = "none") +  
  labs(  
    title = "Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?",  
    x = NULL, y = NULL  
)
```

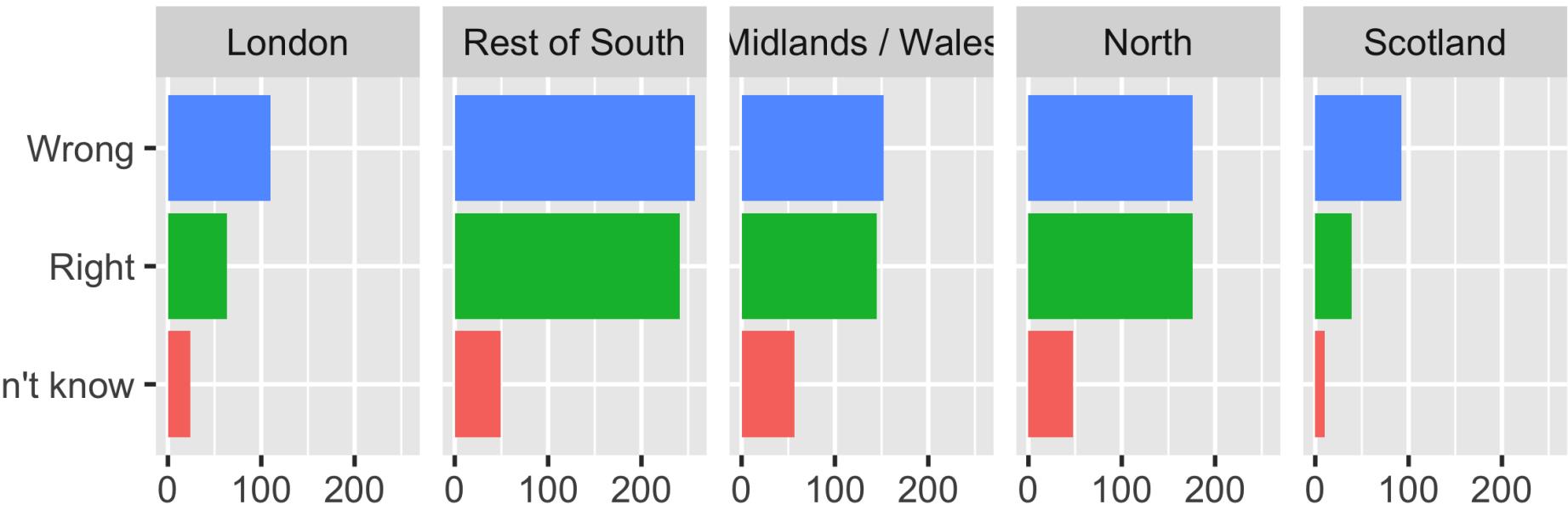


A bit more info

Plot

Code

Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU? YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019



cumulus_uploads/document/x0msmjax08/YouGov%20-%20Brexit%20and%202019%20election.pdf

A bit more info

Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1) +  
  guides(fill = "none") +  
  labs(  
    title = "Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?",  
    subtitle = "YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019",  
    caption = "Source: https://d25d2506sf94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus\_uploads/document/x0m",  
    x = NULL, y = NULL  
)
```

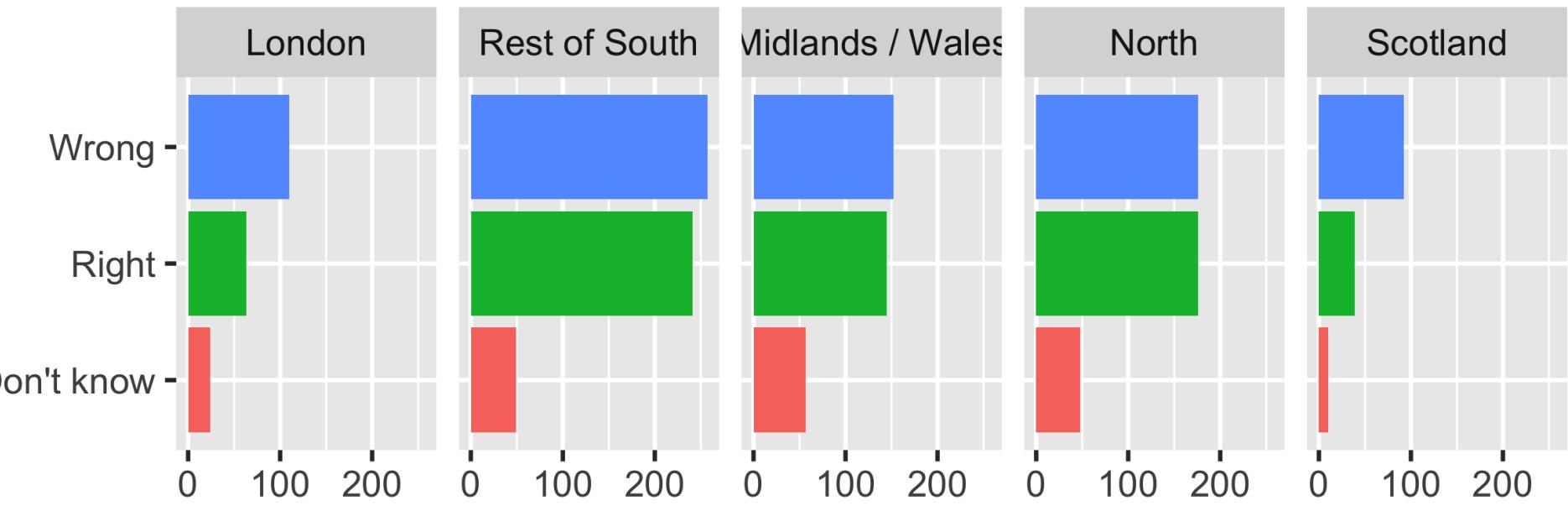


Let's do better

Plot

Code

Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU? YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019



Source: bit.ly/2ICJZVg



datasciencebox.org

Let's do better

Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1) +  
  guides(fill = "none") +  
  labs(  
    title = "Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?",  
    subtitle = "YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019",  
    caption = "Source: bit.ly/2lCJZVg",  
    x = NULL, y = NULL  
)
```

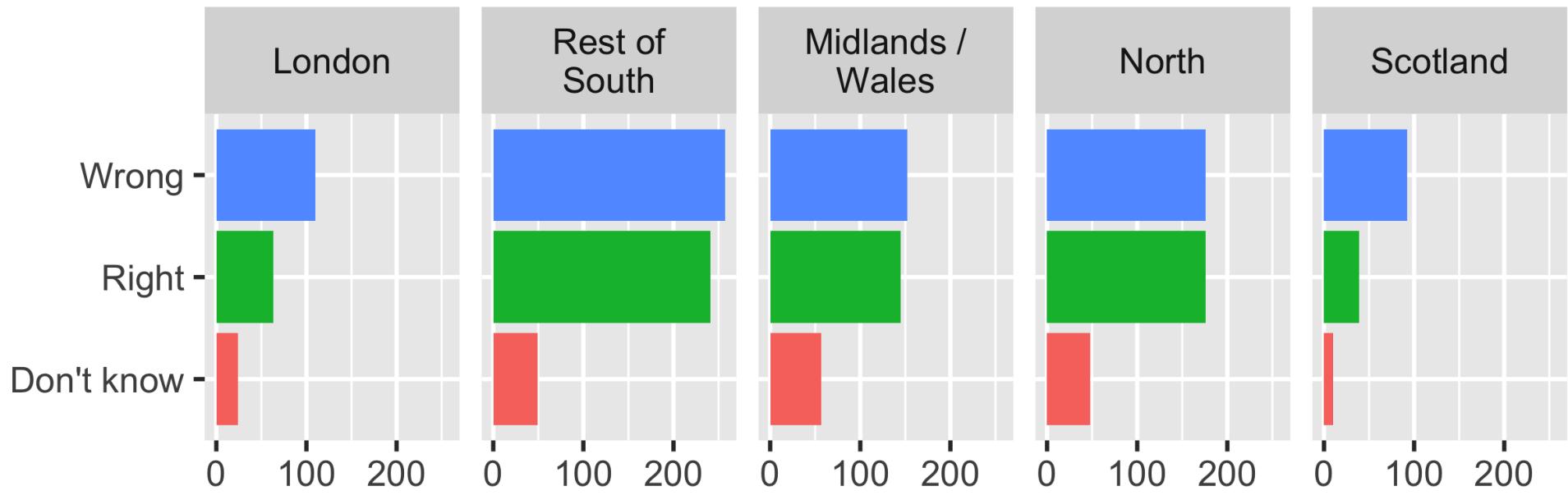


Fix up facet labels

Plot

Code

Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU? YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019



Source: bit.ly/2ICJZVg

Fix up facet labels

Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region,  
             nrow = 1,  
             labeller = label_wrap_gen(width = 12)  
  ) +  
  guides(fill = "none") +  
  labs(  
    title = "Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?",  
    subtitle = "YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019",  
    caption = "Source: bit.ly/2lCJZVg",  
    x = NULL, y = NULL  
  )
```



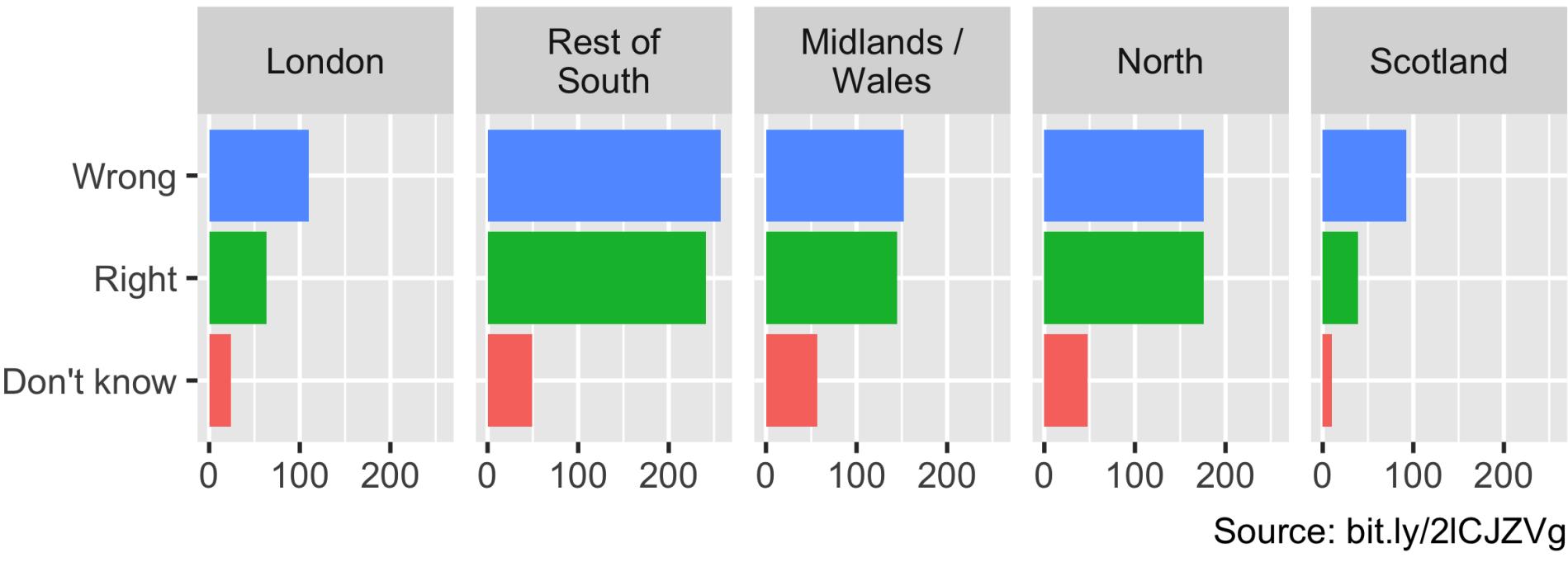
Select meaningful colors



Rainbow colors not always the right choice

Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?

YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019

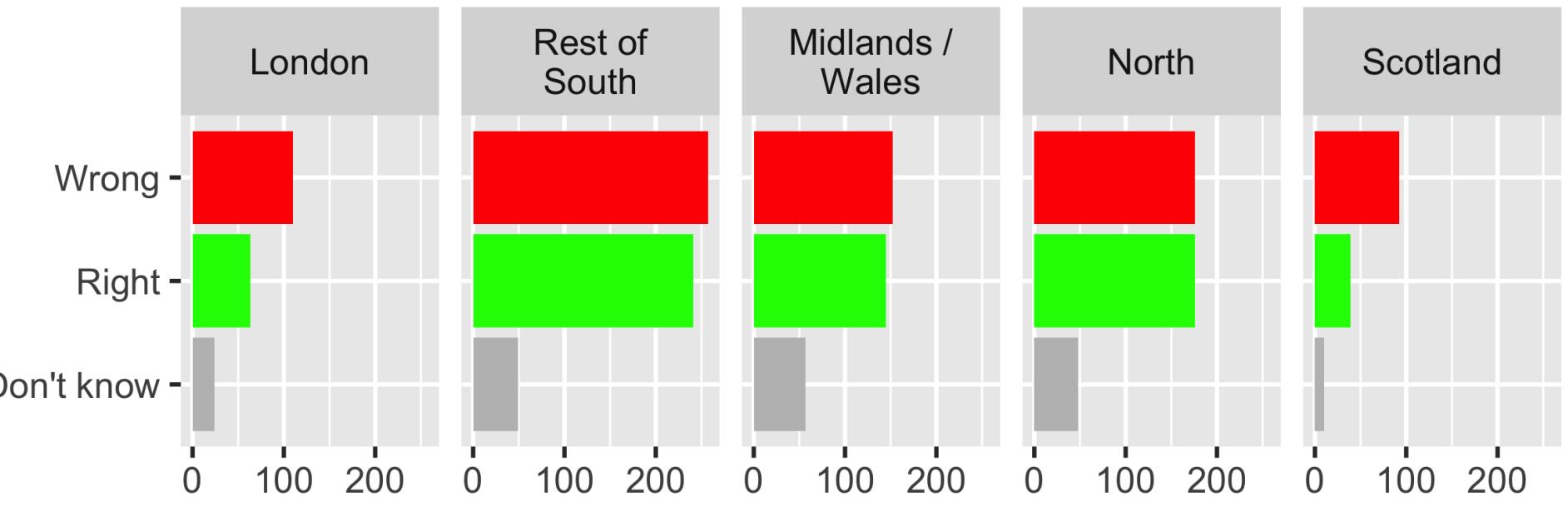


Manually choose colors when needed

Plot

Code

Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU? YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019



Source: bit.ly/2ICJZVg

Manually choose colors when needed

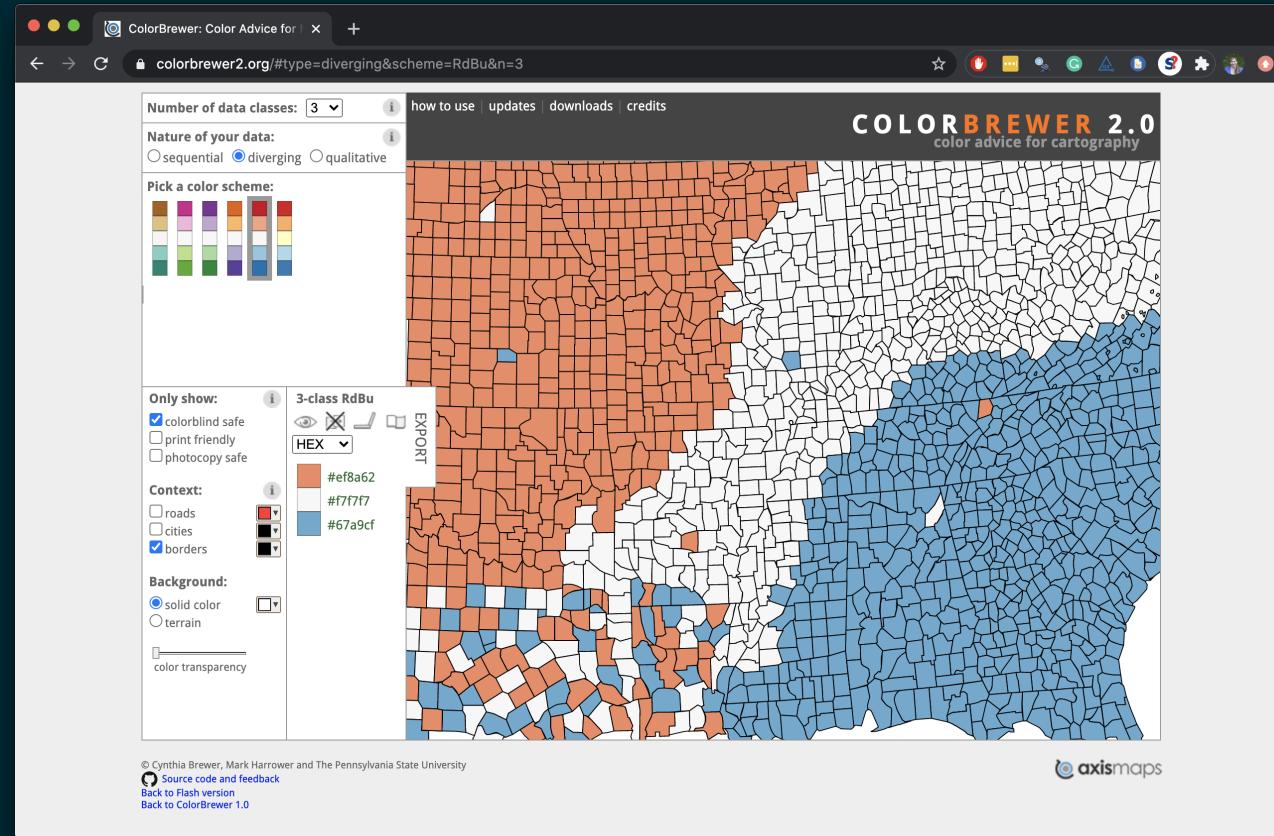
Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1, labeller = label_wrap_gen(width = 12)) +  
  guides(fill = "none") +  
  labs(title = "Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?",  
       subtitle = "YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019",  
       caption = "Source: bit.ly/2lCJZVg",  
       x = NULL, y = NULL) +  
  scale_fill_manual(values = c(  
    "Wrong" = "red",  
    "Right" = "green",  
    "Don't know" = "gray"  
  ))
```



Choosing better colors

colorbrewer2.org

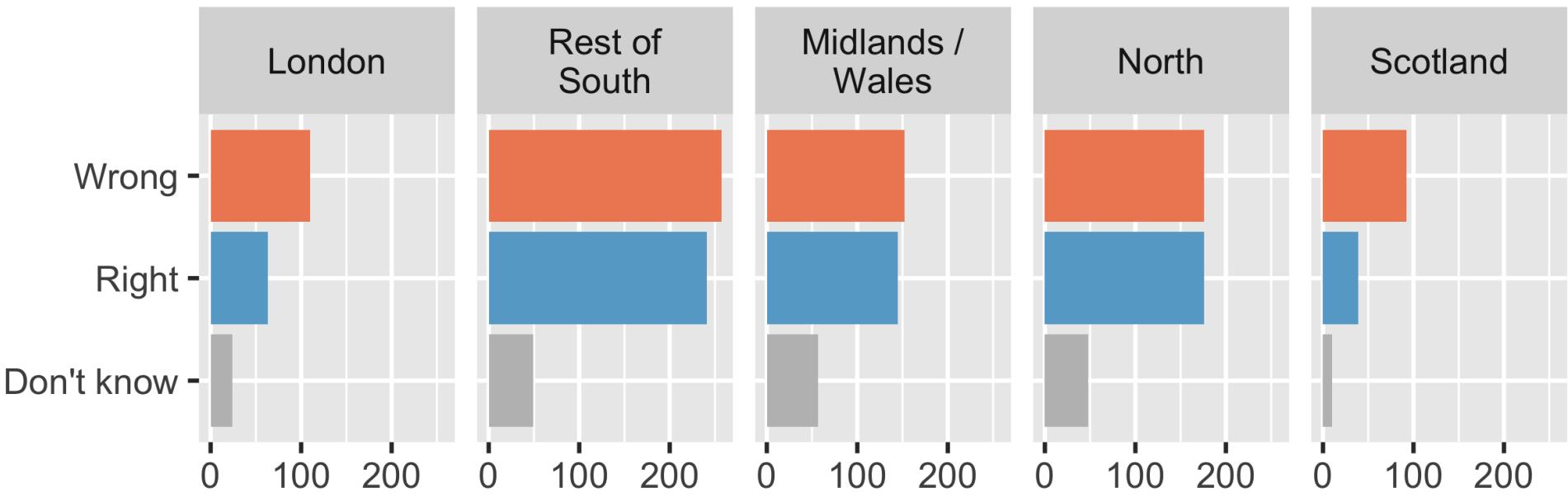


Use better colors

Plot

Code

Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU? YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019



Source: bit.ly/2ICJZVg

Use better colors

Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1, labeller = label_wrap_gen(width = 12)) +  
  guides(fill = "none") +  
  labs(title = "Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?",  
       subtitle = "YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019",  
       caption = "Source: bit.ly/2lCJZVg",  
       x = NULL, y = NULL) +  
  scale_fill_manual(values = c(  
    "Wrong" = "#ef8a62",  
    "Right" = "#67a9cf",  
    "Don't know" = "gray"  
  ))
```



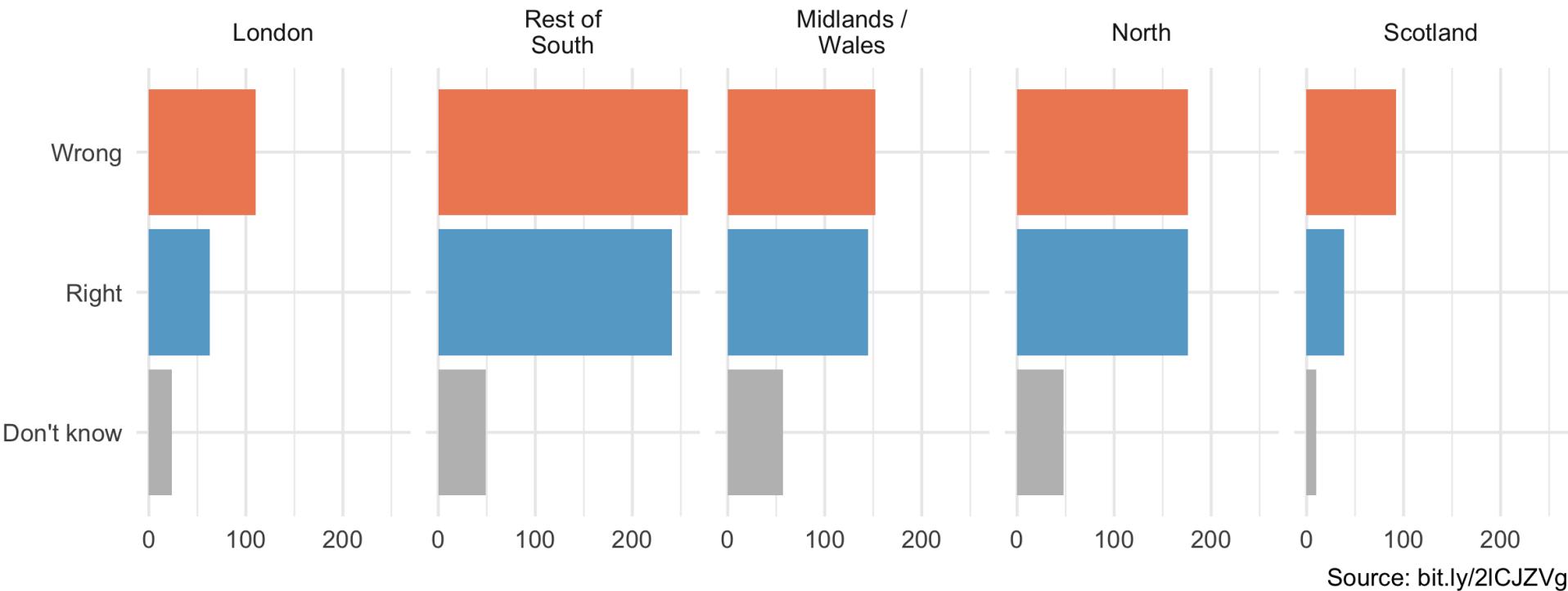
Select theme

Plot

Code

Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?

YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019



Source: bit.ly/2ICJZVg

Select theme

Plot Code

```
ggplot(brexit, aes(y = opinion, fill = opinion)) +  
  geom_bar() +  
  facet_wrap(~region, nrow = 1, labeller = label_wrap_gen(width = 12)) +  
  guides(fill = "none") +  
  labs(title = "Was Britain right/wrong to vote to leave EU?",  
       subtitle = "YouGov Survey Results, 2-3 September 2019",  
       caption = "Source: bit.ly/2lCJZVg",  
       x = NULL, y = NULL) +  
  scale_fill_manual(values = c("Wrong" = "#ef8a62",  
                             "Right" = "#67a9cf",  
                             "Don't know" = "gray")) +  
  theme_minimal()
```



Your turn!

- RStudio Cloud > AE 07 – Brexit + Telling stories with dataviz > brexit.Rmd.
- Change the visualisation in three different ways to tell slightly different stories with it each time.

