

Tutorial-08

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Visual Communication

Learning Objectives

Today we will look at examples of visualisation and communication. We will practice:

- identifying key messages
- identifying the audience
- assessing if the key messages are communicated well

Preparation

Take some time to read this [article](#) by the Washington Post.

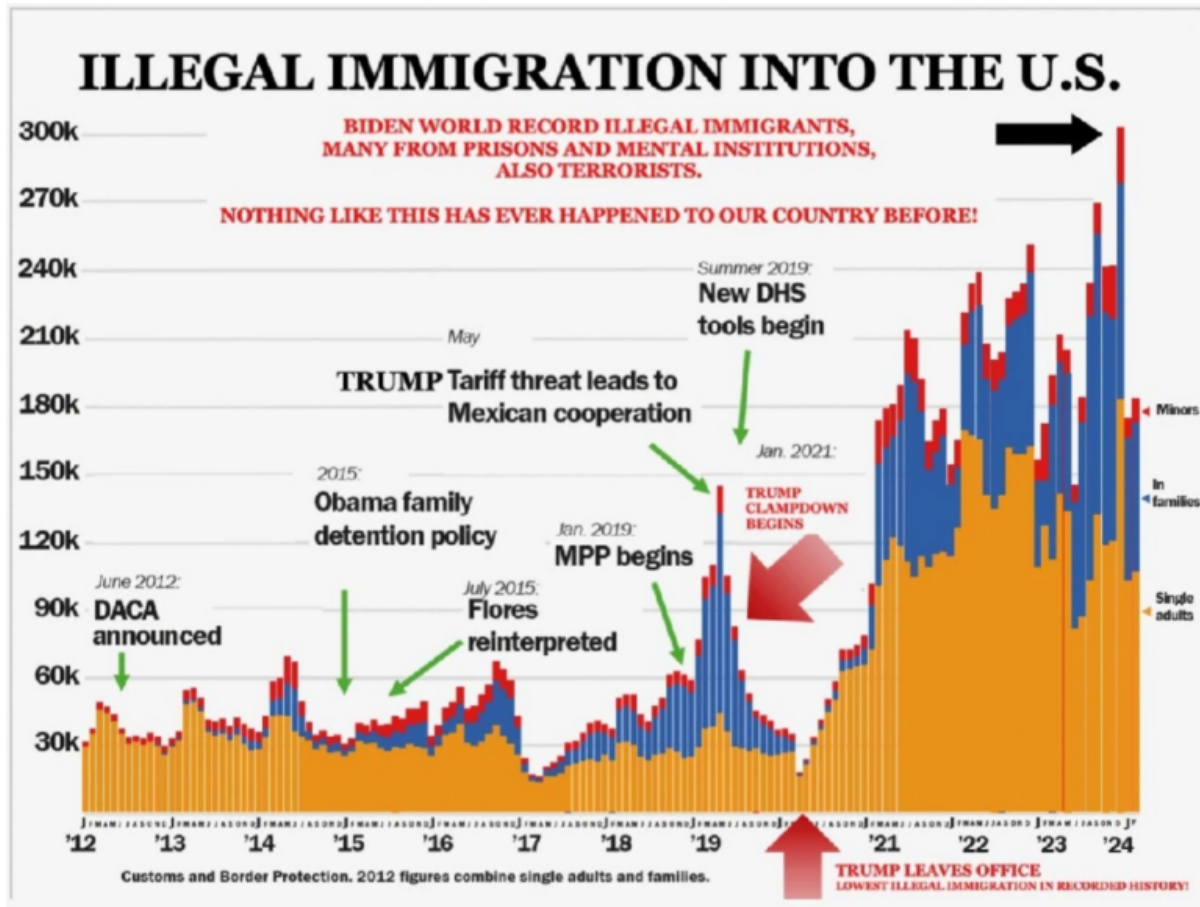
Do not pay for this article, you can not access this article for free via the [Monash library](#).

The article plots we will consider are also included directly below.

Motivation

This lecture we want to look at visual communication and discuss key messages.

Recall this plot from Lecture 1, which has been used by President Trump to show how the number of illegal immigrants over time and with different administrations.



The Washington Post used 12 plots to explore this same issue. Using these plots to provide more context to the rates of illegal immigration.

To understand these plots here is some situational context:

- Immigration was a key issue in the 2024 presidential race.
- Trump lost the 2020 presidential election to Biden in November, 2020.
- Biden took the presidential office in January 2021.

- Biden repealed Policy 42, a policy which turned back unaccompanied minors, but replaced it with a new policy on asylum eligibility.
- Trump won the 2024 presidential election in November, 2024.

Exercise 1

Discuss in your groups, the immigration plot that was used at Trump Republican rally.

- Who is the **audience** for this plot?
- What is the **key** message of this plot?
- What are the important secondary messages?
- Are the key messages clear and easy to identify?
- Think about the rhetoric situation - If this plot was shown as evidence at a democratic rally would this communication of the key messages be the received the same?

Exercise 2

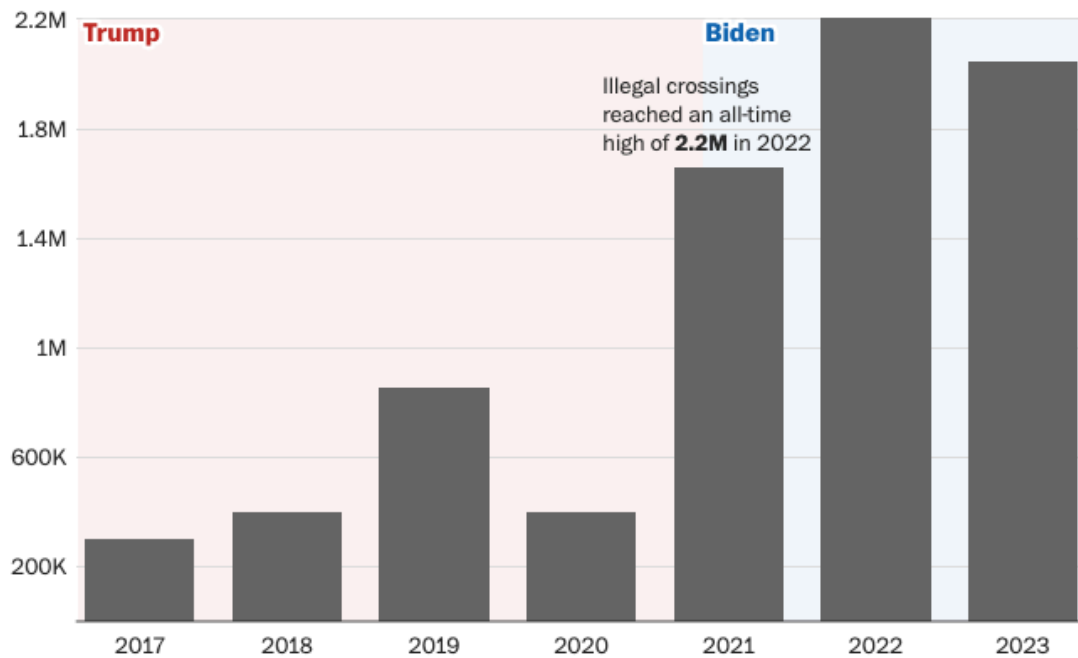
Discuss in your group's the immigration plots shown by the Washington Post.

- Who is the **audience** for these plots?
- What is the **key** message for each of the below plots?
- Does voter preference influence how the key messages are communicated and understood for these plots?

Plot 1

This plot shows the number of Illegal crossing at the US-Mexico border (2017 - 2023).

Illegal crossings at the U.S.-Mexico border



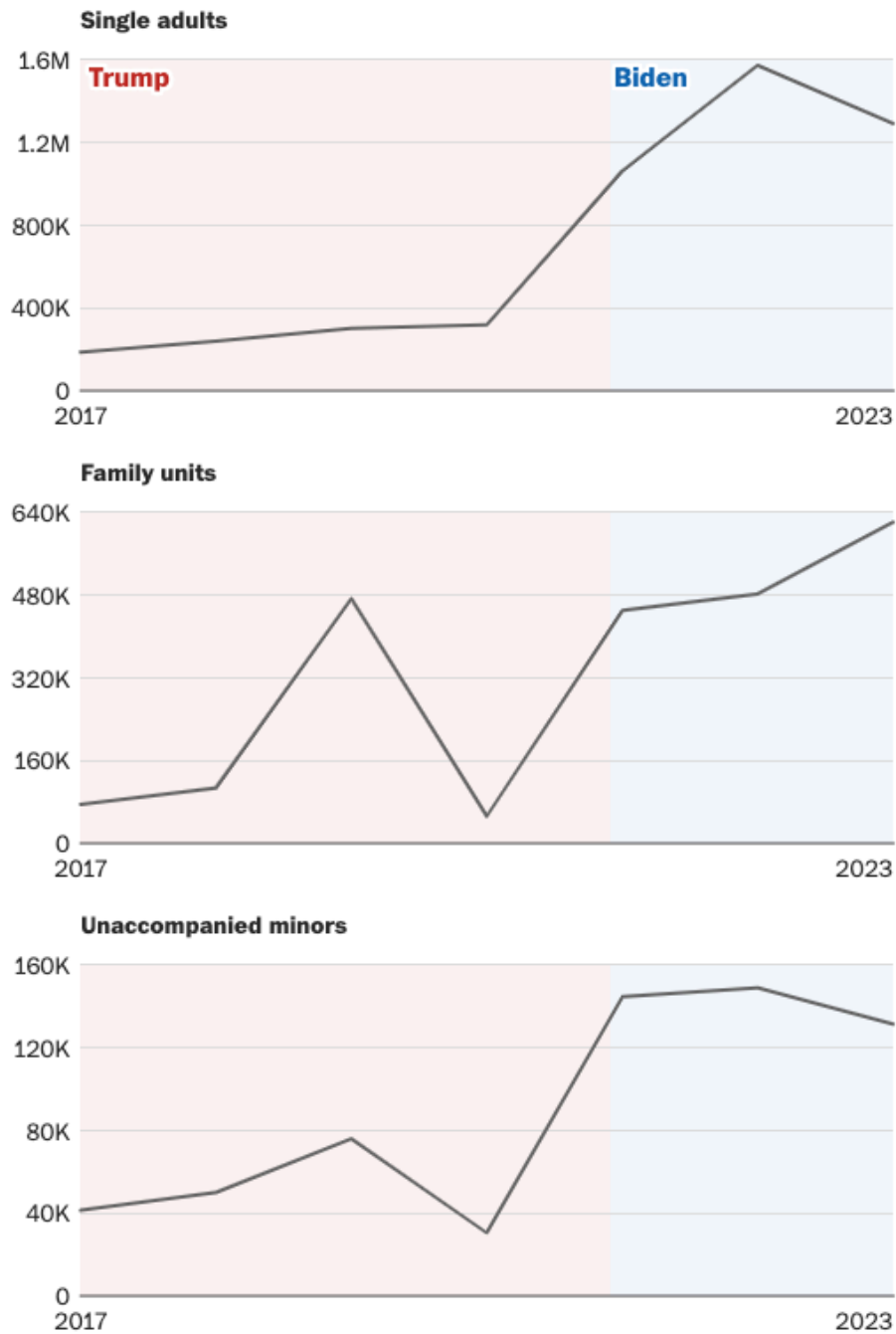
Years shown by fiscal calendar starting on Oct. 1

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics

Plot 2

This plot shows the number of single adults, families and unaccompanied minors.

Who is crossing the U.S.-Mexico border



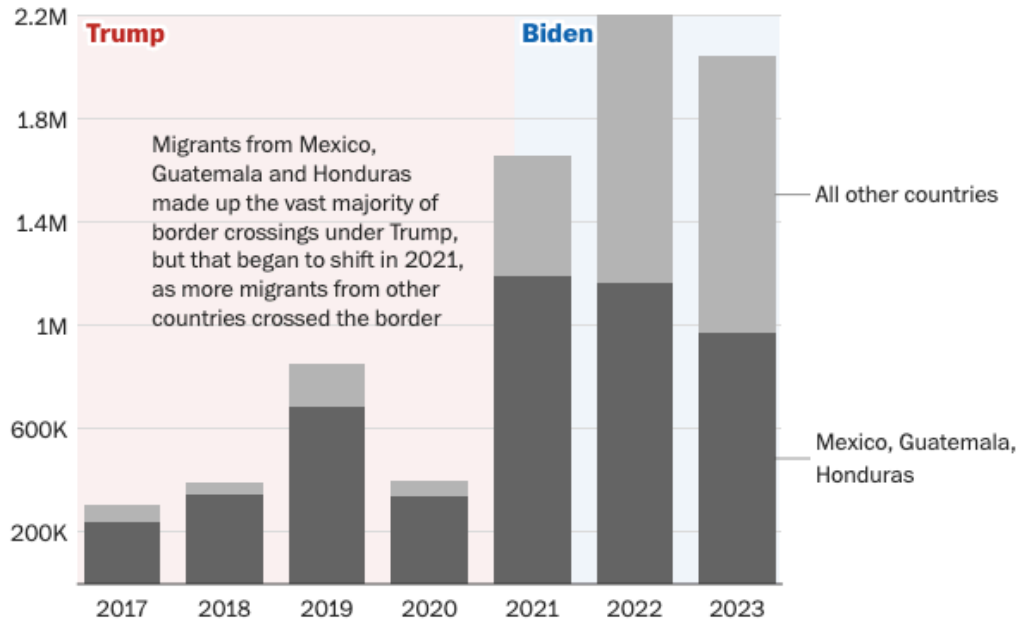
Years shown by fiscal calendar starting on Oct. 1

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics

Plot 3

This plot shows the main countries of origin for illegal immigrants.

Where people crossing the U.S-Mexico border are coming from



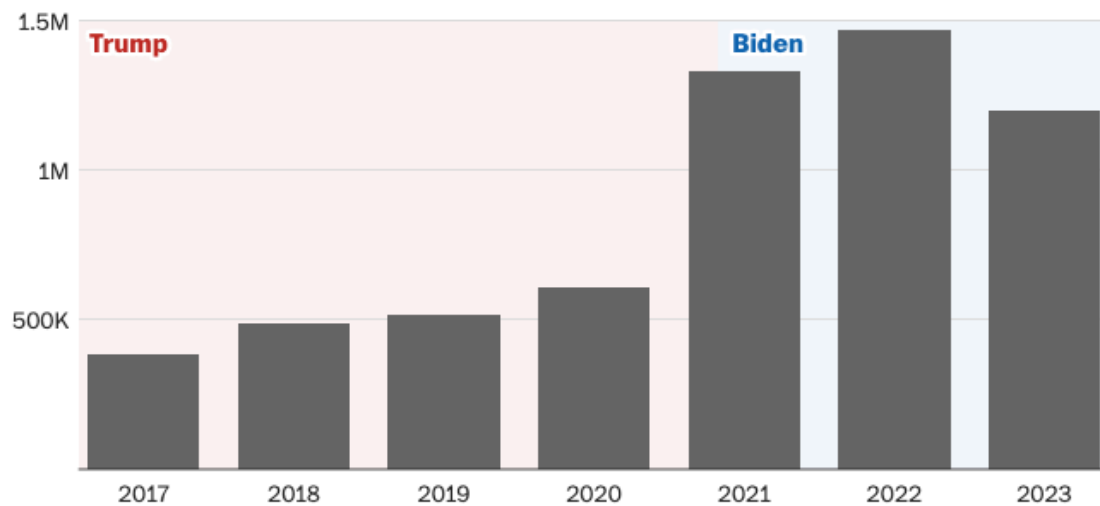
Years shown by fiscal calendar starting on Oct. 1

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics

Plot 4

This plot shows the number of people deported, returned or expelled each year.

Number of people illegally entering the United States who are deported, returned or expelled by year



Years shown by fiscal calendar starting on Oct. 1

Source: Office of Homeland Security Statistics

Note

In Assignment 2, you will combine your own set of plots to tell a data story and share key messages.