

Do interactive data visualisations make sense (and when)?

Dataharvest

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About me

- Data Journalist at BR, German Public Broadcaster
 - Focus on environment and climate topics
 - Background in economics
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- BR Data // AI and Automation Lab
 - Goal: personalise and improve climate reporting

Unser Bayern 2050 – Our Bavaria 2050

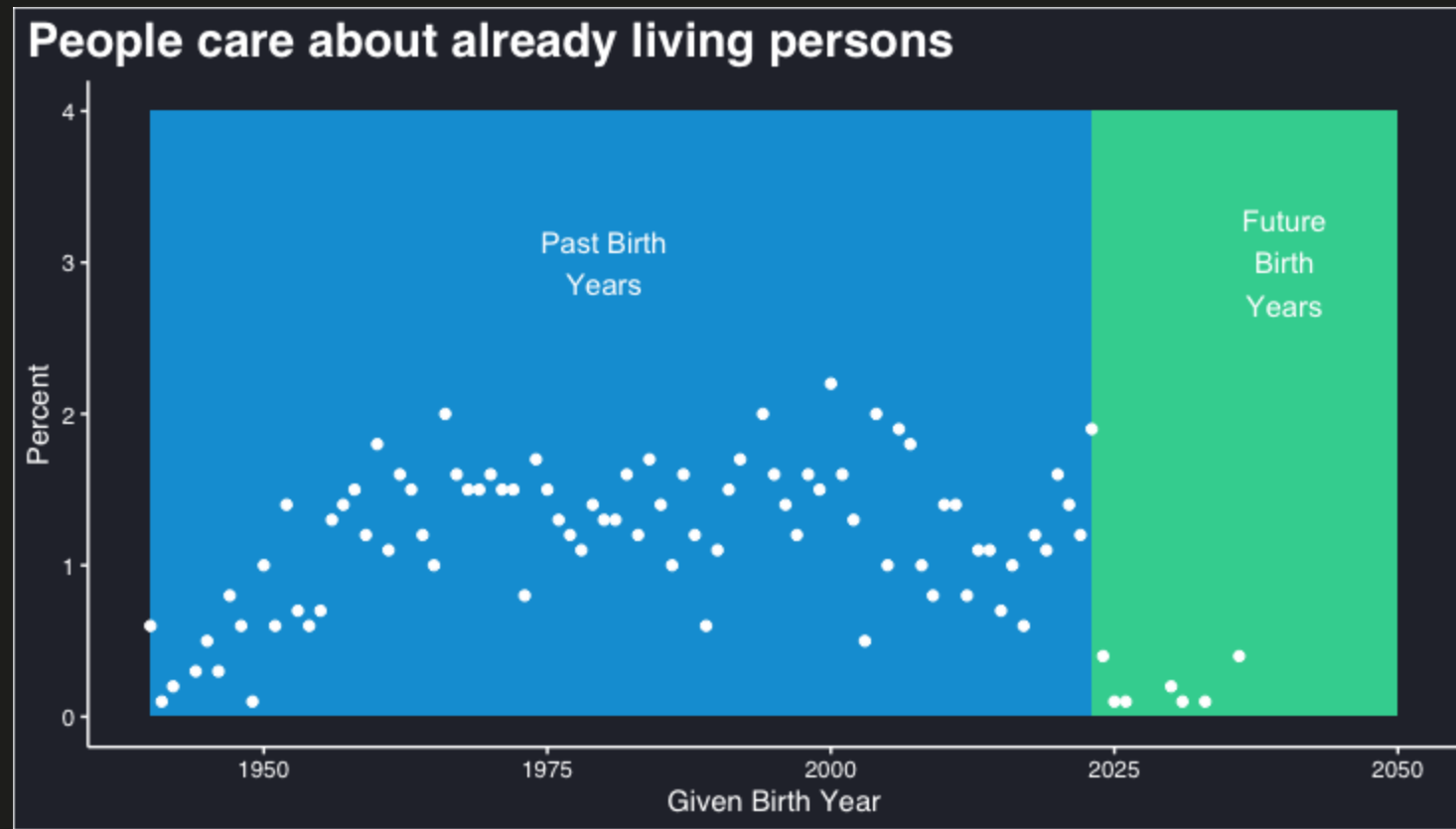


<https://interaktiv.br.de/unser-bayern-2050/>

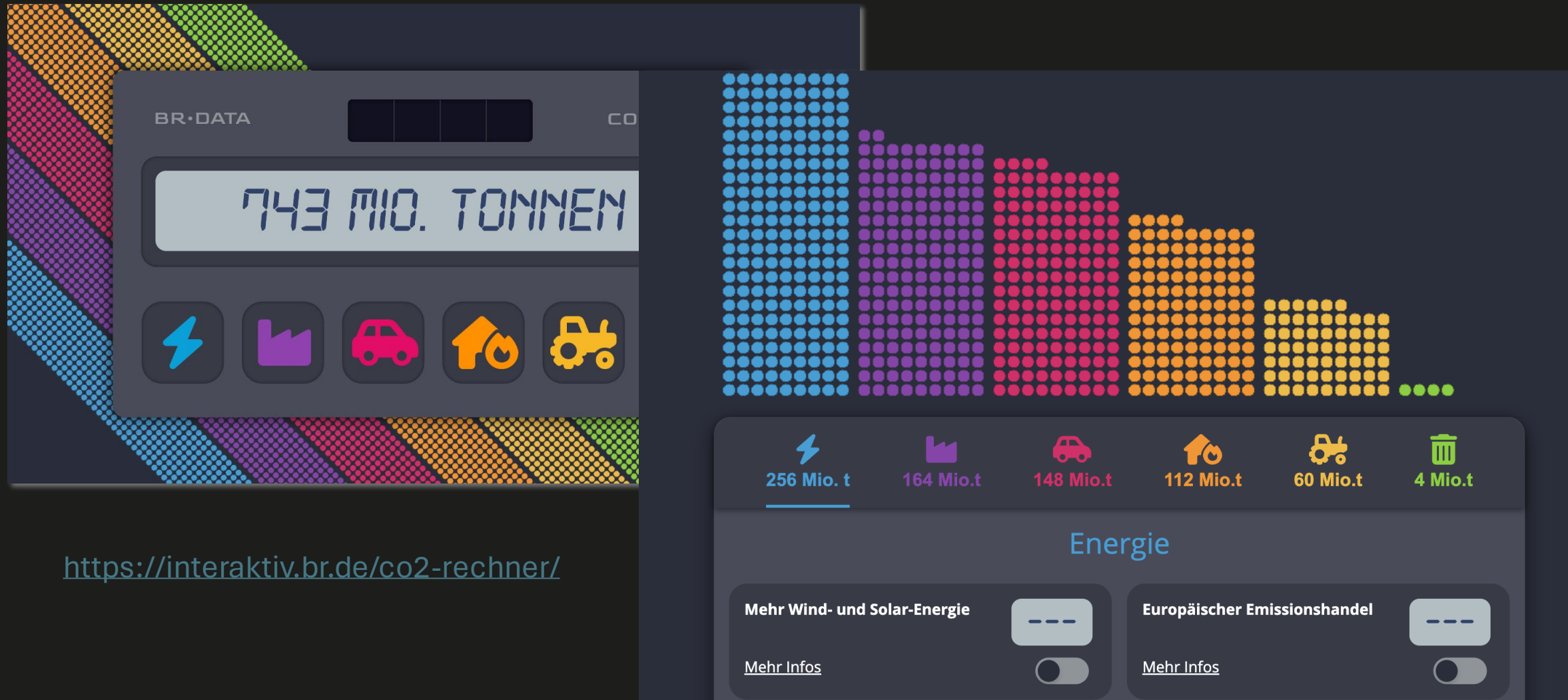
A screenshot of the interactive form on the 'Unser Bayern 2050' website. The form is titled 'Mach diese Geschichte zu deiner Geschichte ...' and includes a sub-header '... oder der deines Kindes / Enkelkindes'. It contains input fields for 'Name' (with 'Mia' entered), 'Geburtsjahr' (with '1993' selected), and 'Wohnort (Landkreis)' (with 'München' entered). There are also dropdown menus for gender ('weiblich') and a button for 'Standort nutzen'. A note at the bottom states: 'Der nachfolgende Text ist ganz an dich angepasst: Alter, Geschlecht, Wohnort und ob du auf dem Land oder in der Stadt wohnst.' The background of the form is the same stylized landscape illustration seen in the header.

- A lot of people didn't use the interactive parts at all.
 - So the story should stand and work without doing anything.
 - Think of a good default. Choosing Munich as a default, some people will perceive it as "yet another story of urban journalists telling us in the countryside how things are working".
 - to indicate very clearly about what they gain from it. this goes for the advertising (what can they do), for visual clues as a reward when you actually do anything and maybe have a pointer or one example open, when first coming across the interactive.

Unser Bayern 2050 – Our Bavaria 2050

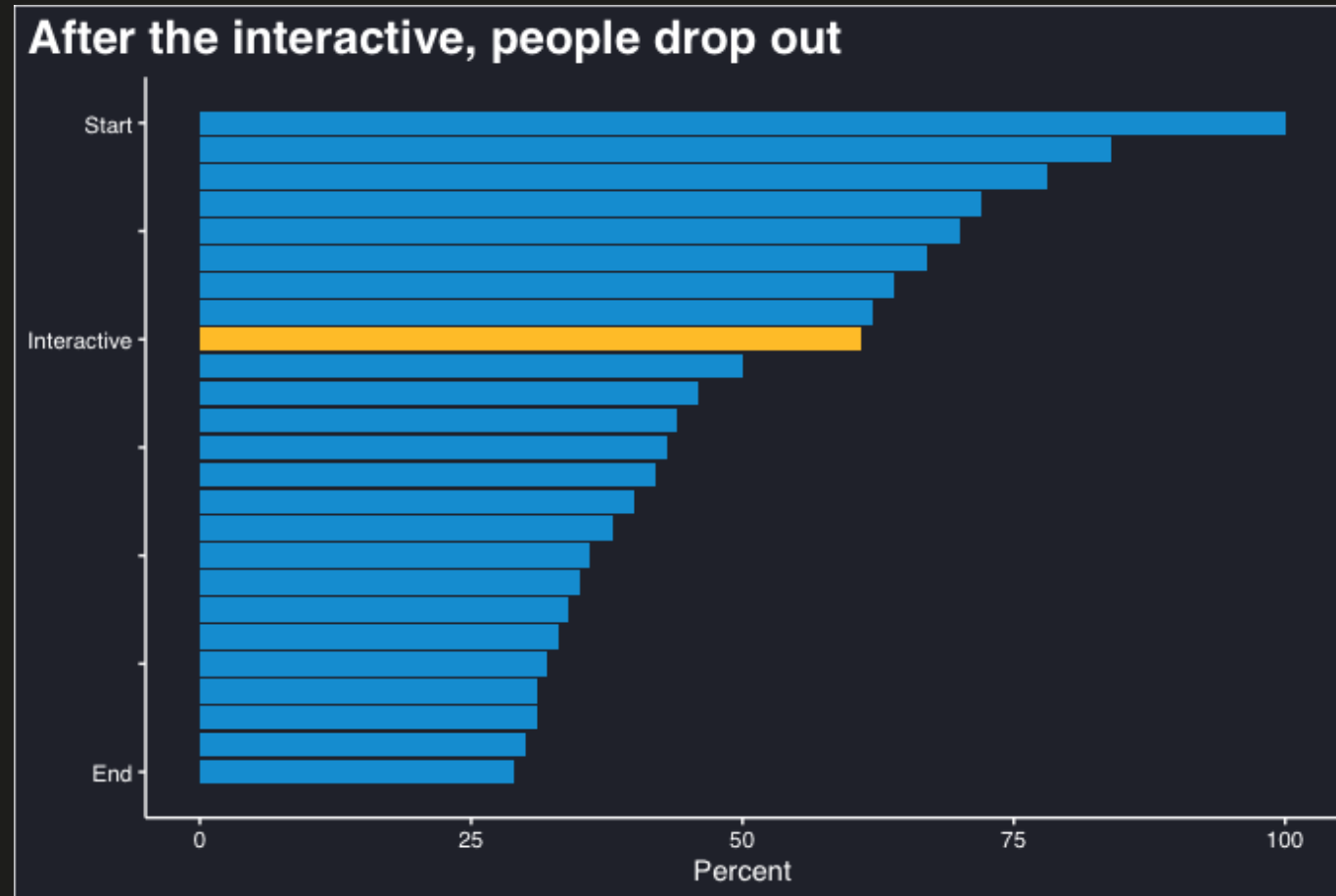


The CO2 Calculator

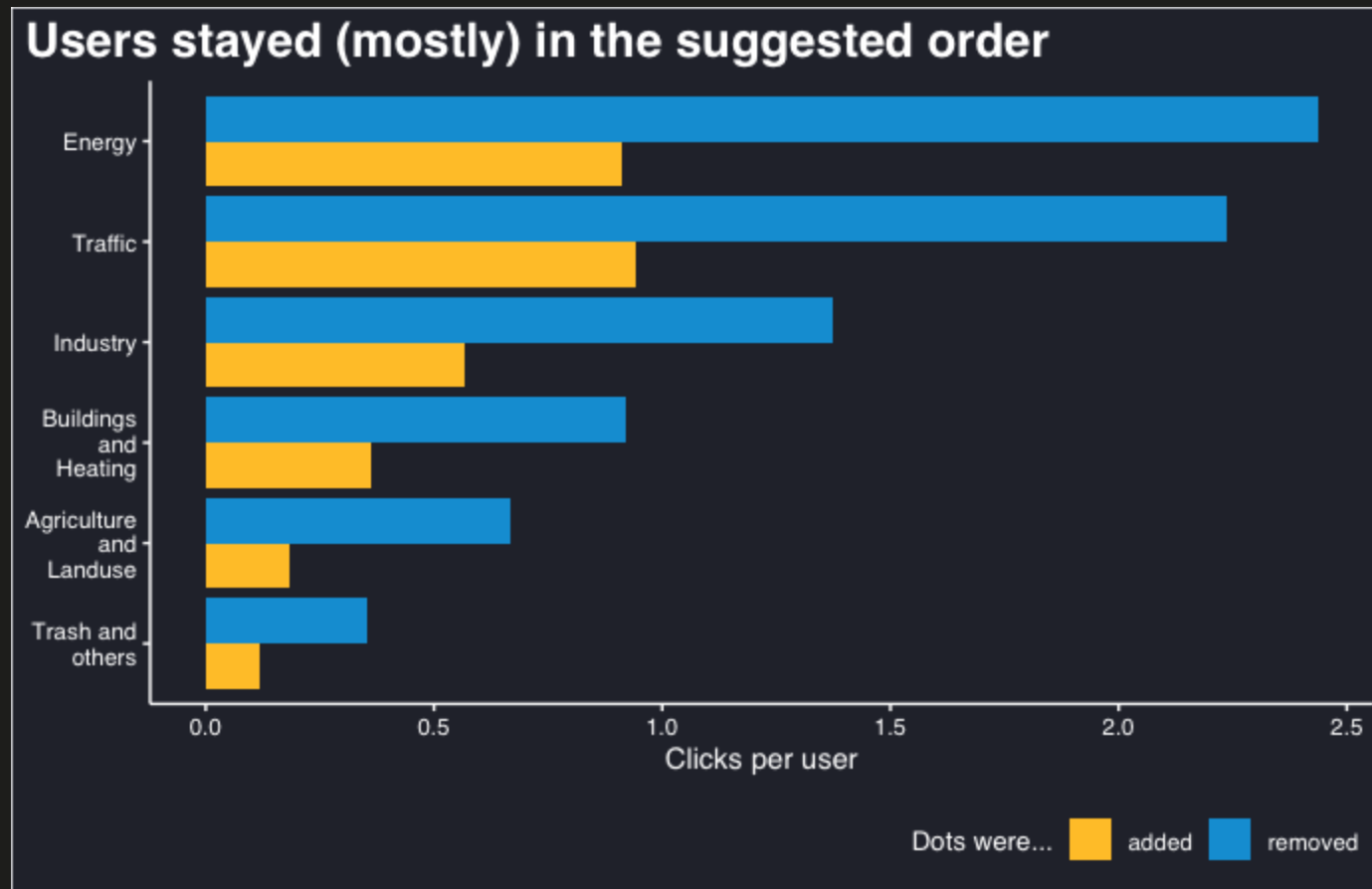


- In a scrollytelling, text and interactives have to be interlinked to tell the story.
- Having the interactive in the middle, might not be the best choice: Either people might skip the interactive for reading (unlikely) or skip the text for the interactive.

The CO2 Calculator




The CO2 Calculator



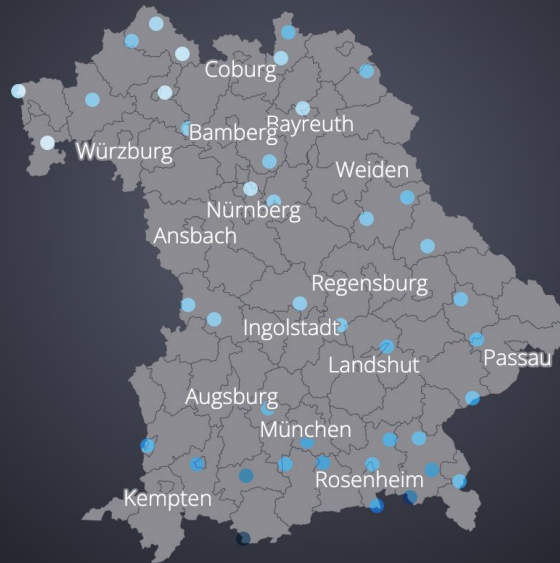
Climate Data Widget

Schneehöhen ▾ in Bayern

Höhe der Schneedecke an einem durchschnittlichen Wintertag 23/24.

0cm  50cm

Wetterstation suchen 



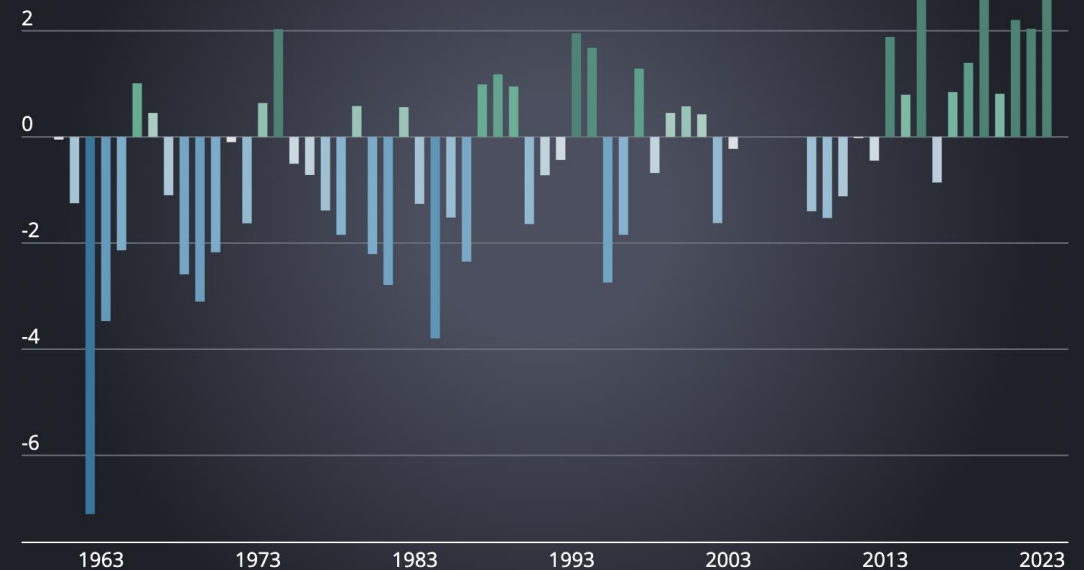
Quelle: Deutscher Wetterdienst, BR Data (Stand: 28.5.2024)

Weihenstephan-Dürnast

Durchschnittliche Temperatur im Winter an der Messstelle.

■ Temperatur

Zurück



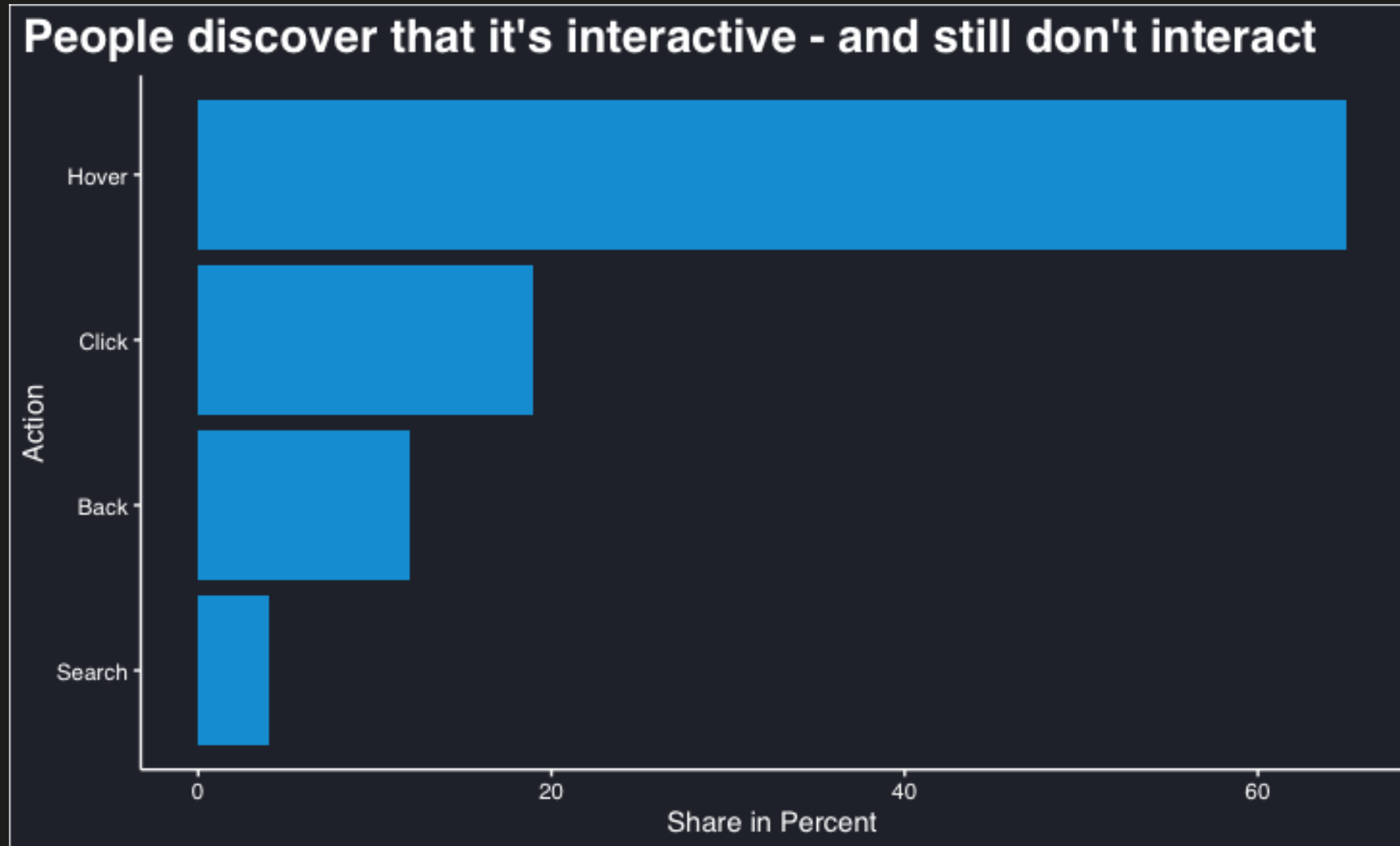
Quelle: Deutscher Wetterdienst, BR Data (Stand: 30.5.2024)

<https://www.br.de/nachrichten/bayern/interaktiv-schneemengen-entwicklung-in-bayern,U25VgR8>

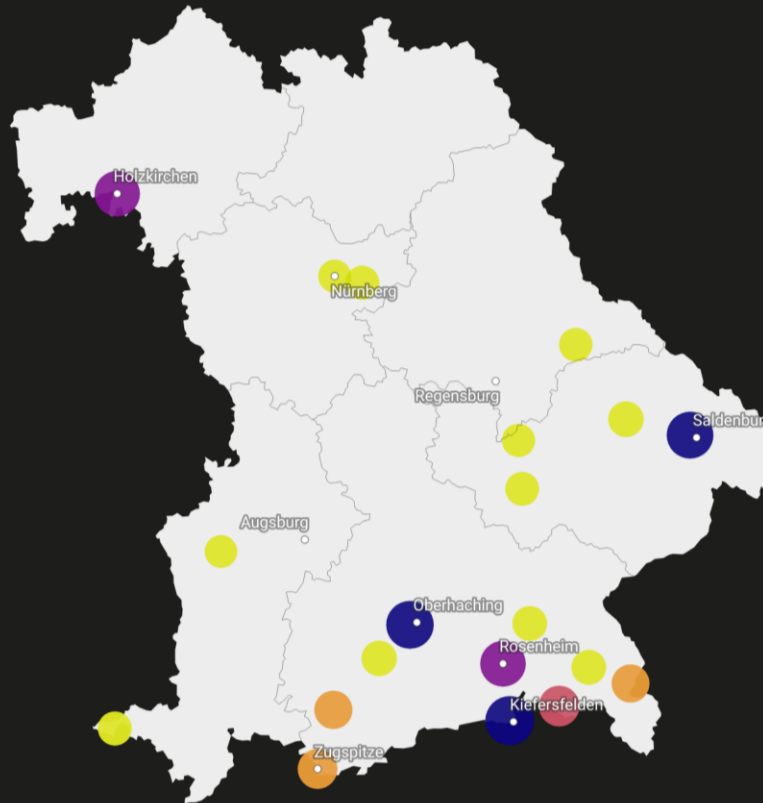
- Very often, interactives are more effort than static graphs.
- It is worth the effort f.e. when people can compare themselves to others or their region, if they can find themselves in the data, so to say. Here, people looked for skiing places they knew and to some extent to other places, most likely those where they came from. What they didn't use so much, was the "back" function to come back from the bar charts to the map - design will be improved in the next iteration.

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Climate Data Widget



Climate Data Widget



Key Takeaways

- Motivate the interaction!
- Be careful what you advertise – people will do what you tell them (if at all)
- Good defaults tell the story without interaction
- Kill your darlings!
- In Scrollytelling:
 - Location location location!
 - Interlink text and interactive

Thanks

- Constanze Bayer
- constanze.bayer@br.de
- <https://www.br.de/extra/br-data/index.html>
- On Bluesky [@looreen.bsky.social](https://bsky.social/@looreen) (and Mastodon)