visualization in Excel

Is it possible to make it look nice?

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Excel is a well-known spreadsheet software and a solid choice for calculating, cleaning, preparing, and formatting data. Excel graphs have a tarnished reputation – maybe undeserved? This poster will highlight some of the advantages of visualizing in Excel and show that it is possible to do decent visualization.

Pros

- Everybody knows Excel
- Terminology and structure is well known
- Great tool to learn the craft of visualizing and understand the structure of a visualization
- One stop shop - you clean, you prepare and you visualize in the same system

Cons

- Excel is not a specialized visualization tool and only has limited graph options
- It takes time to master all the great formatting options
- Default Excel isn’t pretty
- Closed source

Data used for the visualizations are openly available data from the Danish National Open Access Indicator. Downloaded from http://oaindikator.dk

Visualization in Excel is more than graphs:

Waffle chart by formatting

Heatmap with conditional formatting

Data bars conditional formatting

Remember:
- Keep it simple
- Use colours strategically
- The key is in formatting