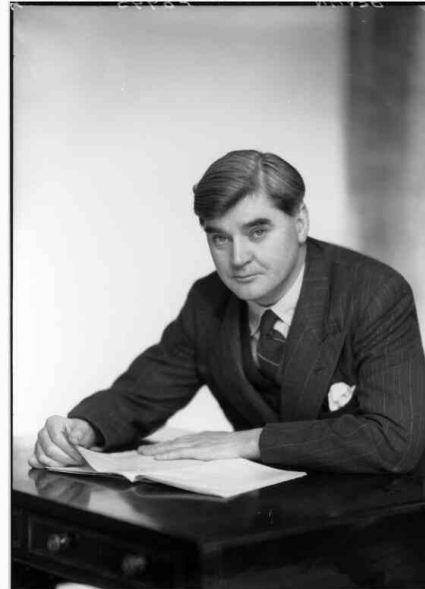


Health coverage

In the United Kingdom, the National Health Service was established in 1948 by Aneuryn Bevan under the premiership of Labour PM Clement Attlee to provide health services “from the cradle to the grave”.

The NHS has been considered to make less unfair a society notoriously divided into social classes (“the two nations”).



In the United States, employers have to offer employees a **health insurance** scheme.

Many companies providing healthcare (**providers**) or insurance thus offer employers healthcare programs or insurance schemes.

Employees are free to enroll in the scheme offered by their employer.

Access to healthcare is therefore strongly conditioned by people's professional situation.

Two major healthcare programs were established by law in 1965:

Medicare is available to people aged 65 or more and to people with disabilities or certain medical conditions.

Medicaid is available to low-income people.

Medicare Advantage was created in 1997: it allows subscribers to shift from traditional Medicare to another operator (which may be for-profit or nonprofit) which determines its own policy: eligibility, coverage...

The **Affordable Care Act**

(officially the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, colloquially Obamacare)
aimed at making health care available to Americans without health insurance
by expanding Medicaid and improving private coverage.

It was adopted in 2010 during Barack Obama's presidency and was the subject of intense political debate and opposition from the Republican Party.

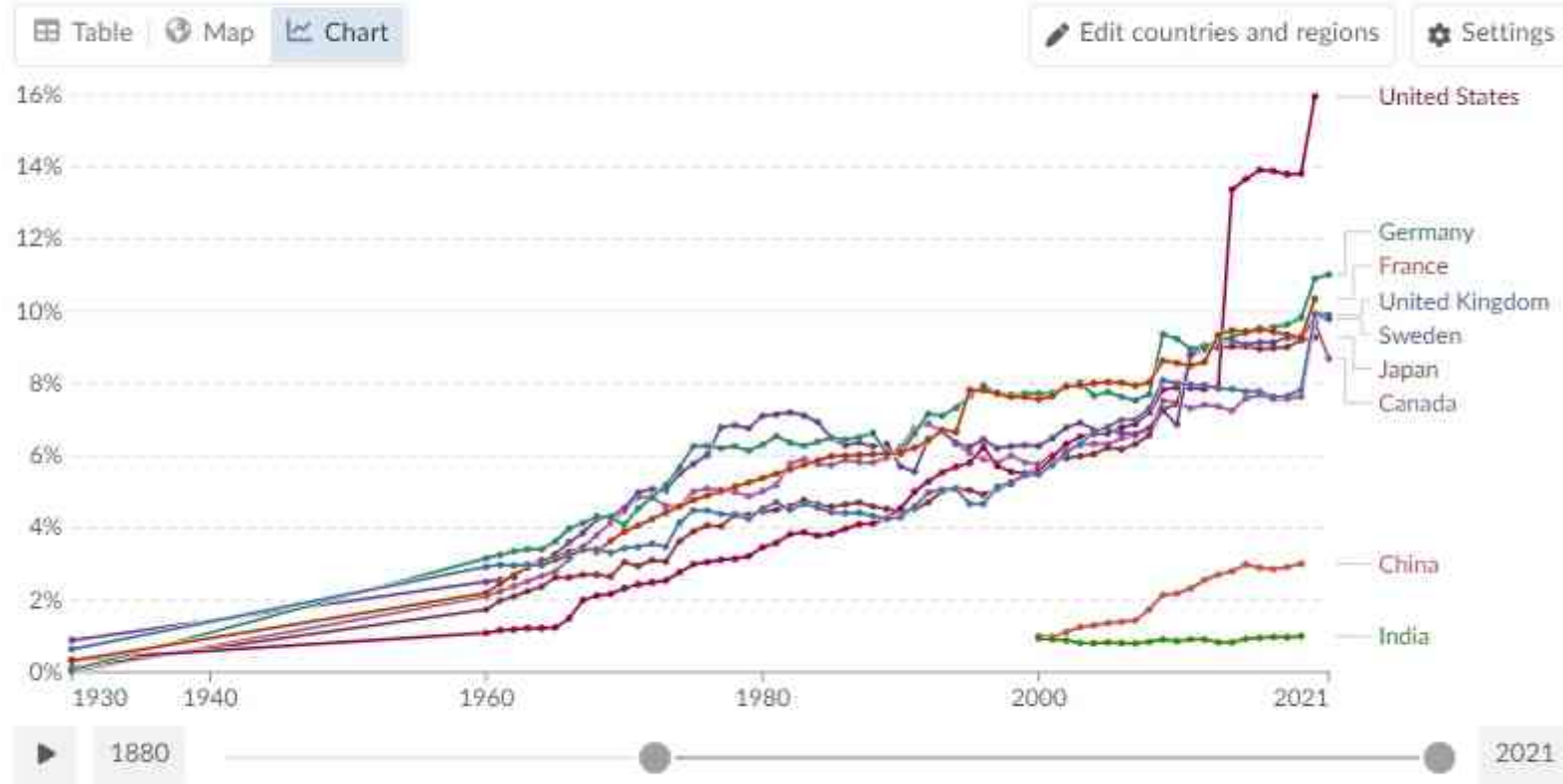
Obama (Dem.) won the presidential election in 2008.

The Republican Party won a majority of seats in the House of Representatives in the 2010 midterm elections.

Government health expenditure as a share of GDP, 1930 to 2021

Our World
in Data

This metric captures spending on government funded health care systems and social health insurance, as well as compulsory health insurance.



Data source: Our World in Data based on Lindert (1994), OECD (1993), OECD Stat – [Learn more about this data](#)

Note: Health spending includes final consumption of health care goods and services (i.e. current health expenditure). This excludes spending on capital investments.

OurWorldInData.org/financing-healthcare | CC BY



Vaccination

In the second half of the eighteenth century, English physician noticed that people who had been infected with cowpox did not contract smallpox.

In the following decades, several British people tried to induce immunity to smallpox through the inoculation of cowpox.

The most famous of these was Edward Jenner who experimented his method in 1796.

In 1980, the WHO declared smallpox eradicated.

From the late nineteenth century, after the discovery of bacteria, vaccines for other diseases were invented.



Jenner vaccinating James Phipps (Ernest Board, c. 1910)



The Cow-Pock — or — the Wonderful Effects of the New Inoculation! — Also, the Publications of the Anti-Vaccinia Society.

Print by James Gillray (1802)

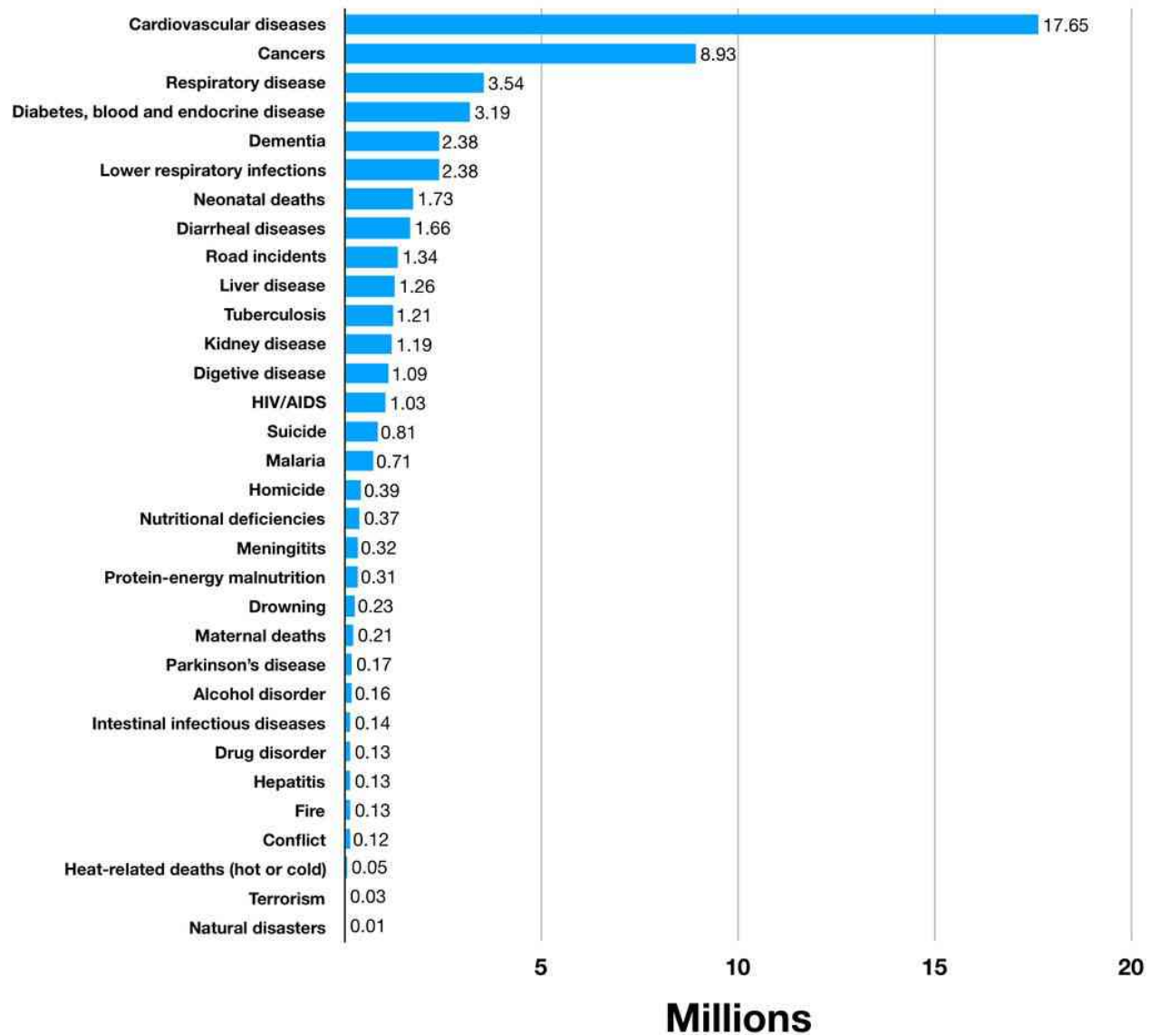
In January 2025, President Donald Trump nominated environmental lawyer Robert F. Kennedy Jr as Secretary of Health and Human Services.



Kennedy campaigning against vaccines in 2019.

Annual Number of Deaths by Cause

(World) (2016)



Share of the population infected with HIV, 2019

The share of people aged 15 to 49 years old who are infected with HIV.

