At the School of OPENCOHESION

WHAT IS DATA JOURNALISM
(part one)

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1858: Florence Nightingale writes a report on the condition of English soldiers in the Crimea, analysing the leading causes of death.

DIAGRAM OF THE CAUSES OF MORTALITY IN THE ARMY IN THE EAST.

2. APRIL 1855 TO MARCH 1856.

1. APRIL 1854 TO MARCH 1855.

The Areas of the blue, red, & black wedges are each measured from the centre as the common vertex.

The blue wedges measured from the centre of the circle represent area for area the deaths from Preventible or Mitigable Zymotic diseases; the red wedges measured from the centre the deaths from wounds, & the black wedges measured from the centre the deaths from all other causes.

The black line across the red triangle in Nov.r 1854 marks the boundary of the deaths from all other causes during the month.

In October 1854, & April 1855, the black area coincides with the red; in January & February 1856, the blue coincides with the black.

The entire areas may be compared by following the blue, the red & the black lines enclosing them.

1821: the first edition of the **Guardian** publishes a table listing all schools in Manchester, with the costs and number of students.
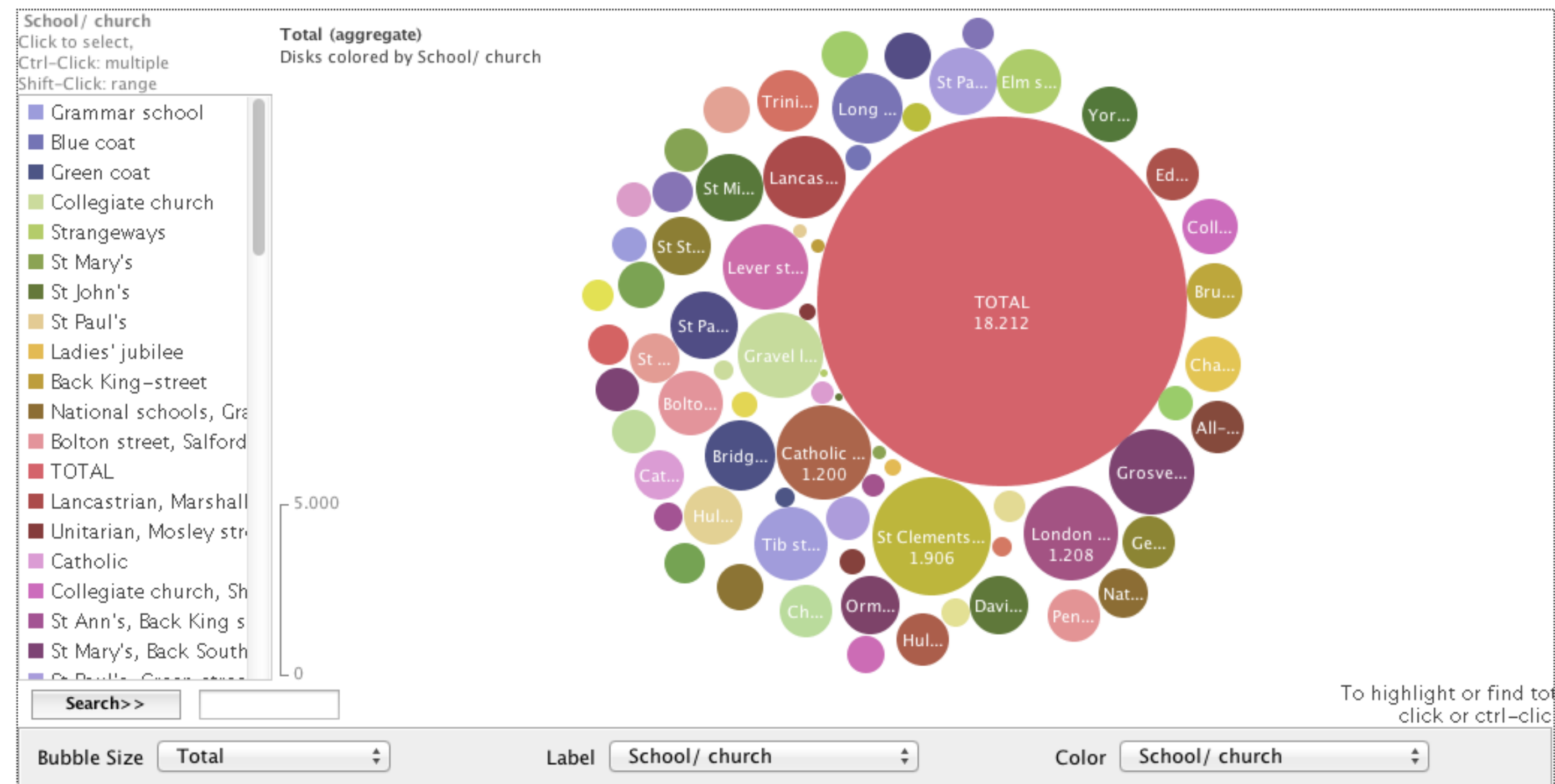
WHAT IS DATA JOURNALISM: INTRODUCTION

Visualizations : Schools in Manchester, 1821

Uploaded by: smfrogers
Description:

Created at: **Sep 25 2011**

2000s: Simon Rogers (Guardian Datablog) reproduces the table published in 1821 using simple Data Visualisation tools

Data Journalism is not new: you could say that it has **existed as long as data has**.

The difference is that in the past the data were published in very costly books, now computers with spreadsheets and specific tools do half the work by themselves.

Today, Data Journalism is a **form of journalism** that:

- Collects, cleans and analyses **data**

- Uses **new technologies**

- Translates data into **information, visualisations, analyses**... in a few words: **TELLING STORIES (in the most understandable way possible)**

Starting point...

Data are the raw material for a data journalist. As in traditional journalism, it's also important to start out with a good **research question**, identify the **story** that you want to tell and understand the **final objective** of the project.

Think like a journalist...

The data journalist, usually, thinks about data as a journalist would and not as an analyst.

Why are some numbers interesting? What's in there that's new? What might happen if it's crossed with other data? Answering these questions is the most important thing.

WHICH DATA?

Data useful for our research:

- Associated with **economic or social** issues

- Taken from **reliable** sources

- **Reusable** (published by sources with licences for reuse)

- **Can be aggregated**, when we can build them ourselves by putting multiple sources together

The tools you need

- Spreadsheet (Excel or Libre Office Calc) which allows you to **analyse** small or large scale tables

- Software and applications that allow you to **visualise** the data we have aggregated using maps or graphs
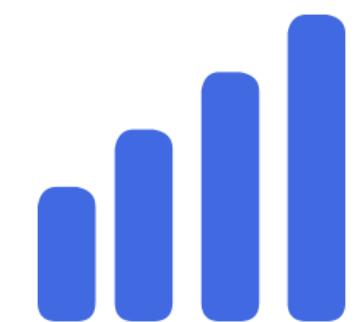
SOME EXAMPLES

Analyse a social phenomenon across territories

- The aim is to compare different geographical areas in terms of a phenomenon

- We require and need to make uniform data for all territories that we wish to compare

- They need to be compared starting from a common element (in relation to the population, for example)

Example: investigation into confiscated Mafia assets

https://www.confiscatibene.it
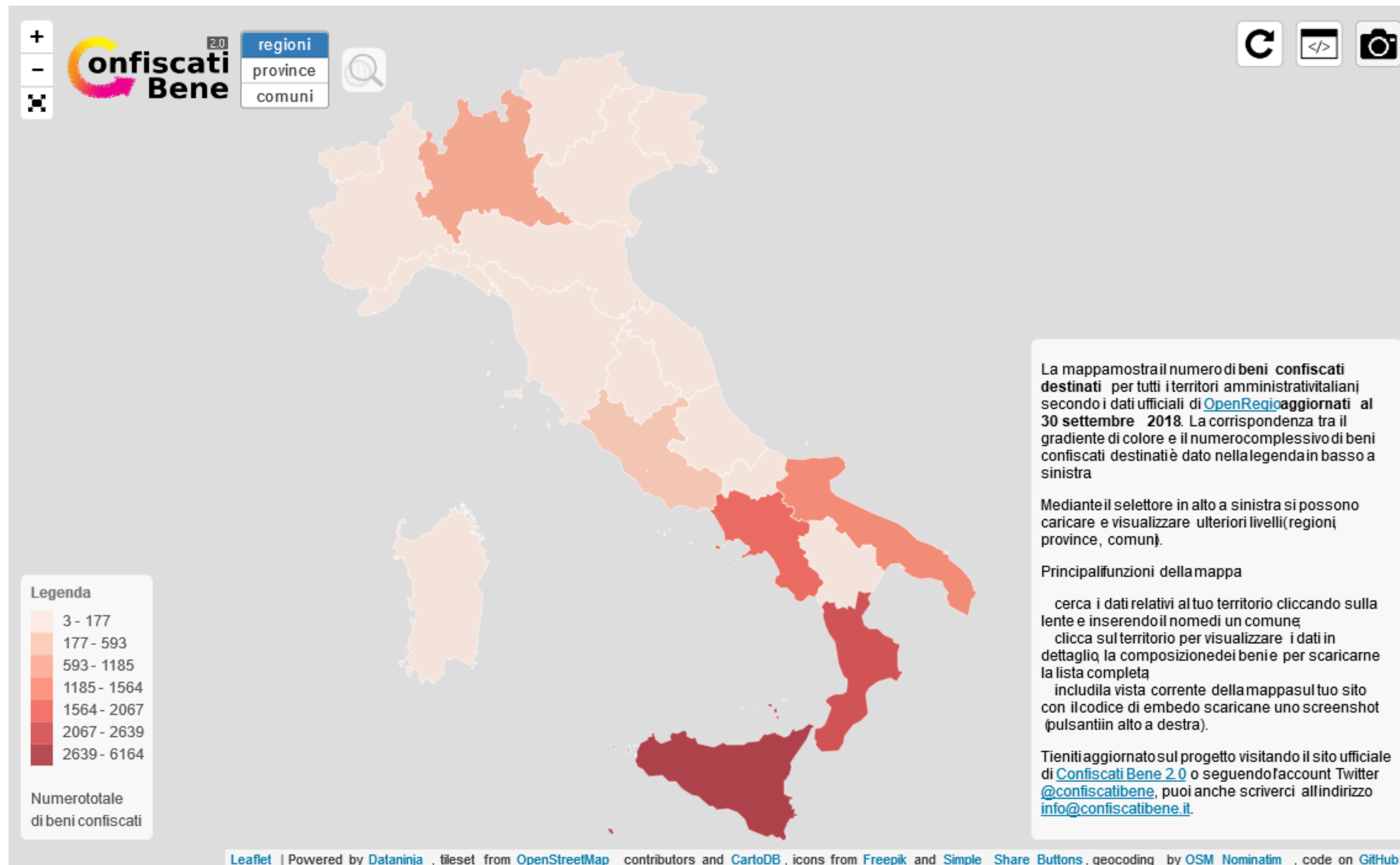
The results of the analysis allow you to:

- Understand whether a phenomenon has a **greater incidence** in one territory rather than another

- Evaluate – given these differences – whether it is necessary to look for and analyse **new data** to understand whether there is correlation with other phenomena.

The development of a phenomenon over time

- Given a certain phenomenon, the aim is to understand how it recurs over time
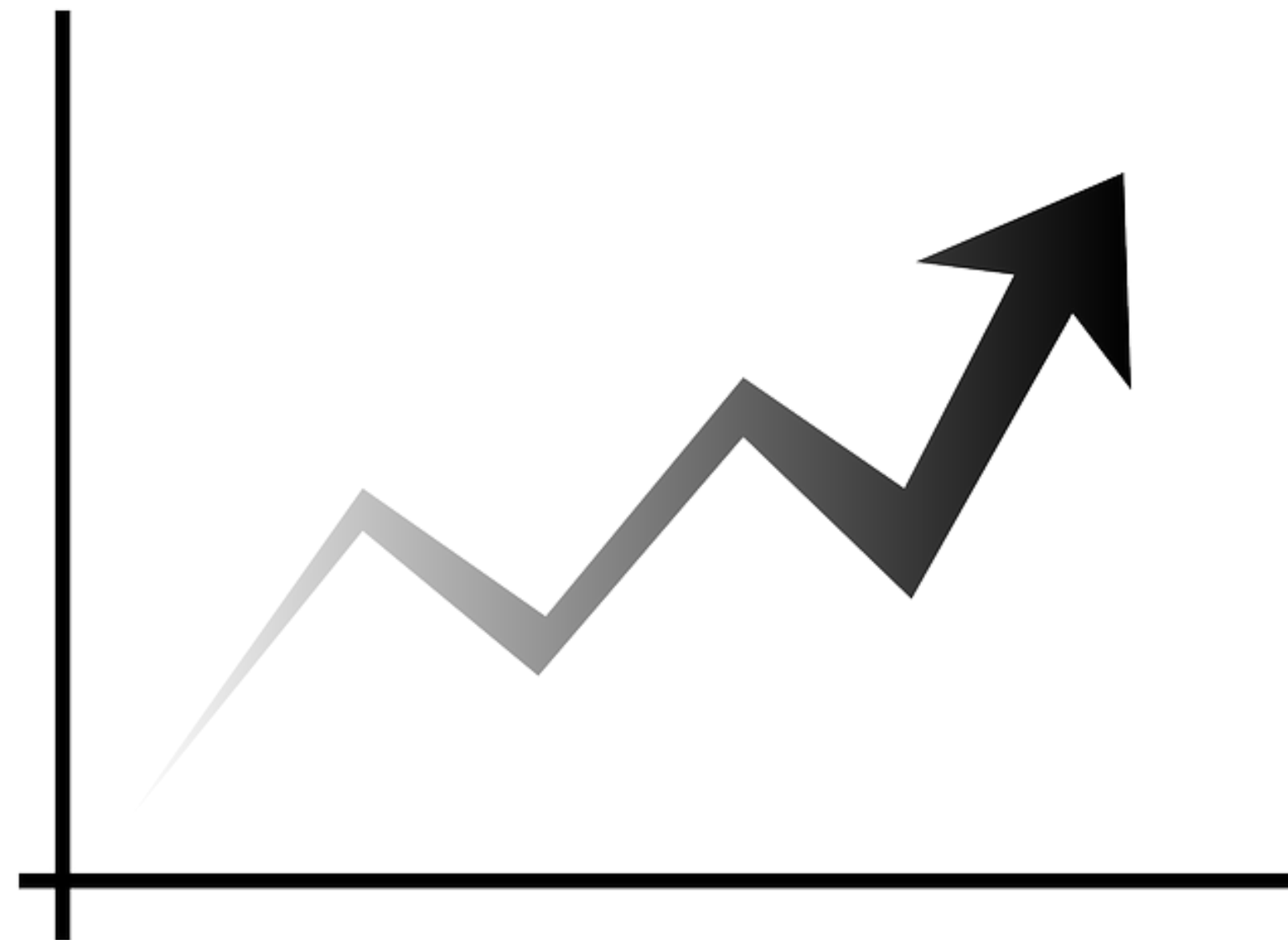
Some examples

- An accident occurs on a section of road: is it the first time this happened or is that section often affected by similar events?

- A flood causes damage: was it more intense than similar episodes or is it a territorial/town-planning problem?

The example: the impact of vaccines in the 20th century

- What was the trend of infectious diseases in the United States?

- What impact have vaccines had on individual diseases?

- Are there other significant territorial differences in proportion to the number of infected people?

- Are there some interesting outliers?

SOME EXAMPLES: DATA JOURNALISM INVESTIGATIONS

Battling Infectious Diseases in the 20th Century: The Impact of Vaccines

By Tynan DeBold and Dov Friedman
Published Feb. 11, 2015 at 3:45 p.m. ET

The number of infected people, measured over 70-some years and across all 50 states and the District of Columbia, generally declined after vaccines were introduced.

The heat maps below show number of cases per 100,000 people.

Measles
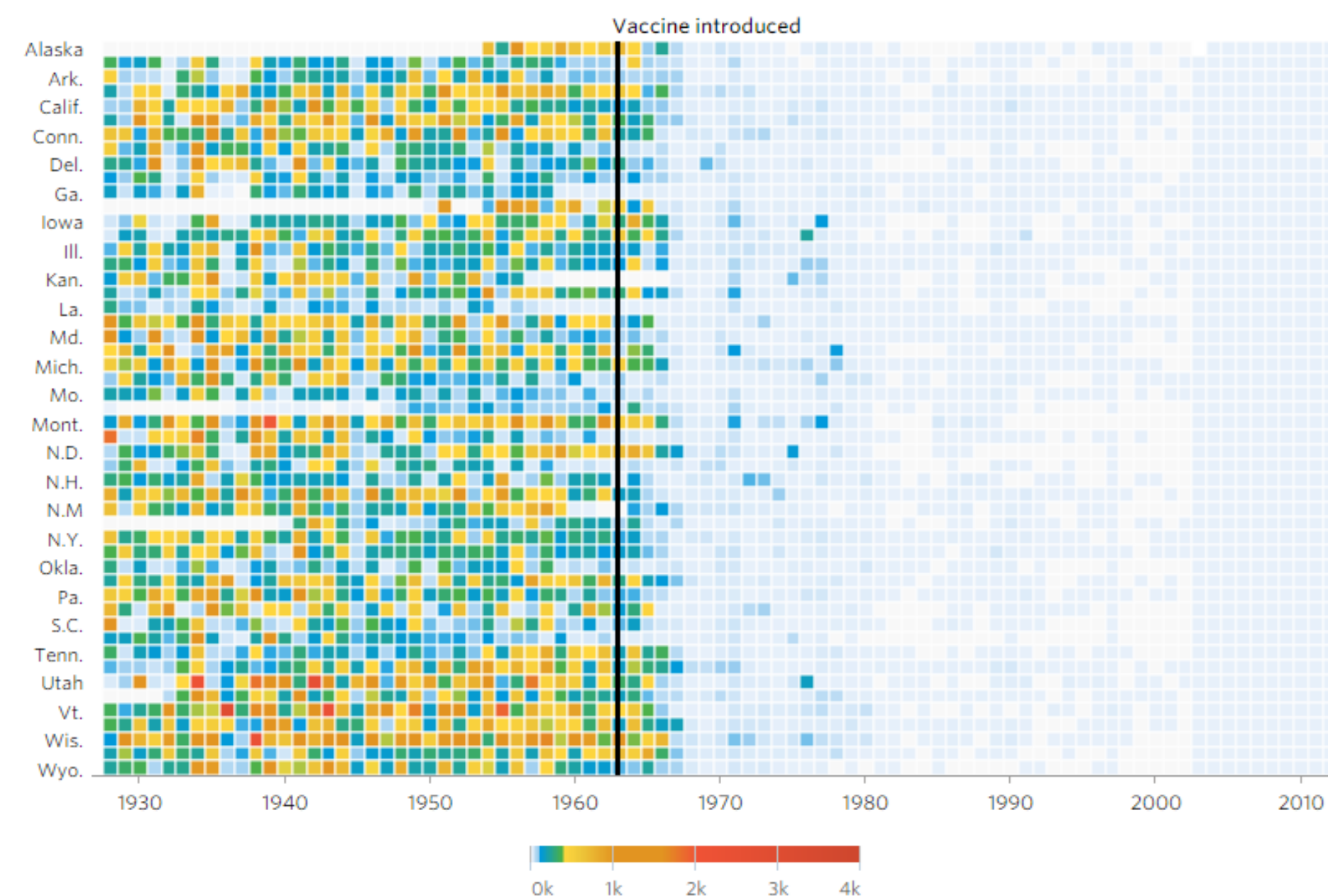
Interactive heat maps showing the number of infected people, measured over a period of 80 years (from 1930 to 2010) in 50 American states.
How have infections diminished following the introduction of vaccines?

WALL STREET JOURNAL
(Data Journalism Award 2015,
Best Data Visualization)
http://graphics.wsj.com/infectious-diseases-and-vaccines/

Civic and participatory journalism

Many Data Journalism investigations, especially those related to government transparency, spring from an organised system of **information exchange**, where researchers, sociologists, experts or lay citizens who are passionate or interested about the topic, work alongside journalists.

SOME EXAMPLES: DATA JOURNALISM INVESTIGATIONS

The **VozData** initiative in Argentina, a platform that combines participation in civic monitoring with data journalism investigations.

LA NACION
http://blogs.lanacion.com.ar/projects/data/vozdata-ii-civic-participation-for-investigative-reporting-and-educational-platform/

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Project funded with
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