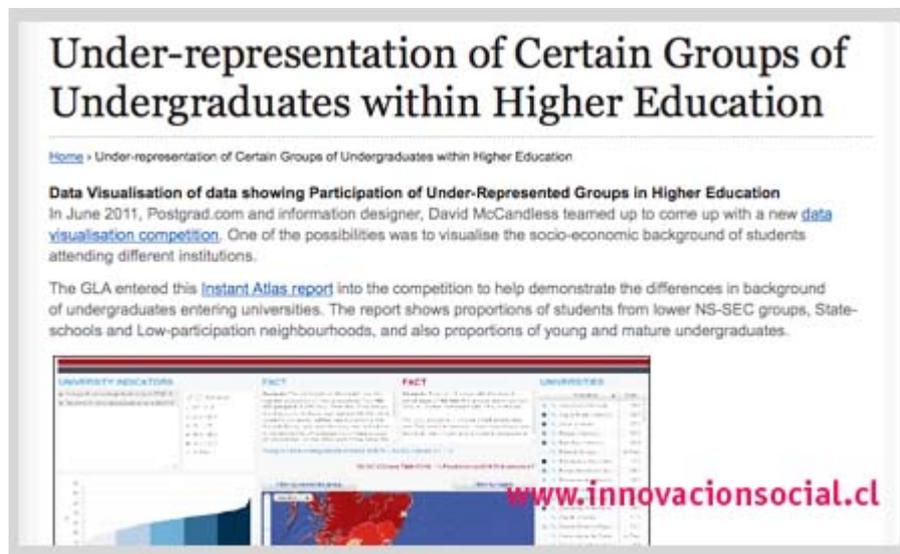# Data to people: London data store, freeing data for social purposes like education

Sociología, 24/06/2011

As mentioned in previous posts like the one on "opening raw data", concept that was put forward by Tim Berners Lee in his Ted Talk: "The Year the Data went Worldwide"[2010] and made real by institutions like Google with their Google Public Data Explorer ; there are public institutions like the **Greater London Authority** [GLA] that have started the quest of freeing their data to democratize the utilization of it. They indicate that their intention is not only to make data accessible to the public sector but to common citizens, or "**netizens**" [Hauben, "Netizens: on the history and impact of Usenet and the Internet" 1997], which entail those networked online citizens that are avid to make changes on their communities over the web. This is a frequent concept in magazines like "The Economist", when they refer to the empowerment of oppressed communities through the social networking. Nonetheless, empowerment comes to anyone when looking to freeing data to the people.

The **London Data Store** is an interesting platform that combines the benefits of crowdsourcing or grouping social intelligence to understand huge social problems, with a friendly visual interface that allows the users to understand and negotiate thesis that can raise from diverse data connection. It also provides the grounding to **"make questions to the data"** in different ways, and to put it forward to resolve social issues. One example of this is the mapping of the "under representation of certain groups in higher education", which combines statistical data with geographical mapping coming from a GIS platform.

If we do it, we want others to do it too, says the GLA: "GLA is committed to influencing and cajoling other public sector organisations into releasing their data here too". **This is a first step to a greater democratization of social innovation.**