



## **Enhancing Smart Growth by Open Data and Statistics - experiences from Helsinki**

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### **Abstract**

The city of Helsinki and its surrounding metropolitan area is growing fast at the moment. The growing rate is 1,4 percent per year which means nearly 9 000 new citizens in Helsinki and 18000 citizens in metropolitan area every year. At the same time the economic circumstances are challenging. In these circumstances the city faces many changes and challenges related to housing, social welfare, economy and urban environment just to name a few. It is highly important to understand the ongoing processes, their interconnections and their outcomes in order to manage the urbanization and societal changes related to it. Statistics and expertise based on it are key elements for that. The cities of Helsinki Metropolitan area (Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa and Kauniainen) have determinedly cooperated in order to open administrative and statistical data for public use. The common open data service, The Helsinki Region Infoshare ([www.hri.fi](http://www.hri.fi)), includes nearly 1200 different open datasets at the moment. The open datasets covers variety of different topics likedata of living conditions, economy and welfare, employment, mobility and environment. The benefits of open data are considered to be at least threefold. First, it enhances decisionmaking and policy design of the cities. Secondly, it stimulates new economic activity and innovations. Thirdly, it will increase the citizens understanding of the operational environment and development of one's home town. Experiences from Helsinki shows that offering statistics and other administrative data sets for public use really activates different kinds of user groups and by that way enhances decision making and city planning based on statistical and other information

.Key Words: Open data, City Planning, Smart Growth, Helsinki Region Infoshare