Using open data to inform public debate

Chris Knox, Data Editor, New Zealand Herald

chris.knox@nzherald.co.nz

@vizowl

March 2, 2018
What is data journalism?
A definition

Data can be the source of data journalism, or it can be the tool with which the story is told — or it can be both.

– Paul Bradshaw, Birmingham City University
At the New Zealand Herald

- Primarily interactives and visualisations that allow readers to explore data themselves
- Explainers that use interaction and animation to make complicated concepts more accessible
- Data releases to make OIA’d or leaked data available to the public
NZ Herald data journalism using open data
NZ Herald Insights

- 83 data driven articles
- 49 use open data \(^1\)
- 40 only use open data

\(^1\)Sports data was not treated as open
Where does the open data come from?

- Statistics NZ
- Police
- Treasury
- Land Information New Zealand (LINZ)
- New Zealand Transport Agency
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
• Auckland City Council
• Wellington City Council
• Electoral Commission
• Ministry for the Environment
• Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment
• State Services Commission
What do readers like most?

Always do well

- Crime data
- Property data
- Election data
- Rugby data
Can do well

- Immigration data
- Education data
- Cricket data
Burglaries example

Burglaries per mesh block
Burglaries example details

The map had over 200,000 views, but this data is no longer available.

Data sources

- New Zealand Police
- Statistics New Zealand
Labour vs National example

Economy: Unemployment rate

Under the National Government the unemployment rate...

... increased from 4.3 per cent to a maximum of 6.6 per cent in 2012, before falling to 5.2 per cent in 2017.

Unemployment rate comparison
### Labour vs National example details

#### Data sources

- Statistics NZ
- Treasury
- State Services Commission
- Immigration New Zealand
- Massey University
Retirement example

Retirement selector
Retirement example details

Data sources

- Statistics NZ
- Ministry of Health
- New Zealand Police
- Ministry for the Environment
- CoreLogic
Data journalism open data wish list
In an ideal world

• More open data!
• Easier automation of acquiring the same data again
• Always have a bulk download
• Less changes
• More integration
Get in touch

Checkout http://insights.nzherald.co.nz

Email chris.knox@nzherald.co.nz

Twitter/GitHub @vizowl