Smart Cities: Privacy, Transparency, and Community

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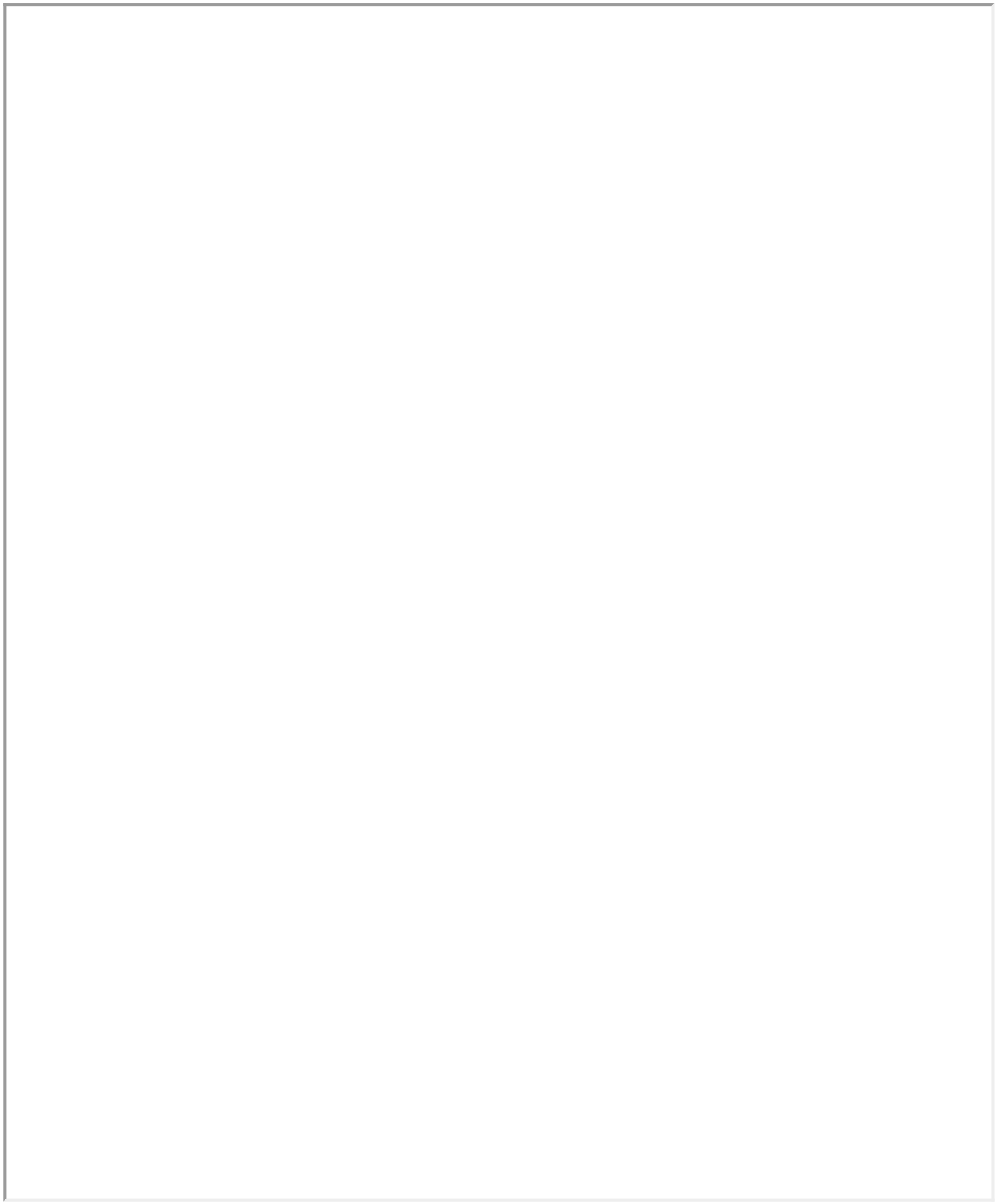
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Why did we conduct this research?

Cities nowadays are increasingly dominated by technology, be it network sensors that allow us to know the amount of traffic in the area we work or live, or the levels of pollution on the hill we normally go for a job every evening. A great deal of the data collected at smart cities are focused on non-human factors (pollution levels, electrical outages, etc), it is increasingly agreed amongst the literature that data will tend to be also focused on the daily activities of citizens (home energy usage, commuting time and patterns, etc). Consequently, together with the increase of connectedness within a city, an increase of collected data by the city governments would follow as well. This paper deals with how communities can take at their advantage the benefits of a data-rich society while lessening the threats to individuals' privacy and their civil liberties.

Key findings:

- Given that citizens have a higher control of their own data for their own purposes, a culture of data-driven decision-making, civic participation, and empowerment takes place.
- In the contrary scenario, where citizens do not trust in that their data will be protected, a fear towards smart cities would grow and a collective feeling of surveillance would arise.
- City officials as responsible to properly deal with citizen's data, protect it and be the ones in charge of setting security and privacy standards.
- Need for city officials, technology providers, and other stakeholders to work with community organizations (as to ensure civil liberties).



Reference:

Tene, O., & Finch, K. (2018). Smart Cities: Privacy, Transparency, and Community.