How to study lobbying with crowdsourced OpenData?

Benjamin Ooghe-Tabanou – Open Knowledge Conference Berlin – July 1st 2011
Working together with TI France

- Regards Citoyens: MPs monitoring & OpenData

- TI France: Corruption & Lobbying

→ Study lobbying transparency within the French Parliament
What data and how to exploit it

MPs reports may have list of hearings:

1) Find the lists within 1174 reports → Only 38% have such lists...

2) Identify and collect lines by names
Generating data: crowdsourcing

- 15000 audition lines
- We need information such as:
  - Sex
  - Full name
  - Function
  - Organisation

Too much work for our organisations

→ Crowdsourcing

http://regardscitoyens.org/lobbyistes/
Great participation

Each line treated at least by 3 different people → 45000 actions

3214 people in only 10 days when expecting 2 months
Resulting data consolidation

The work was not over, need to:

- **Assemble common auditions** and regroup
- **Group same organisations** with different names
- **Categorise organisations** along new typology inspired by EU's Parliament lobbyists registry:
  - Public sector
  - Unions
  - Private companies
  - Civil Society
  - Individuals
  - Lobbyists & councils
  - Think-tanks
  - Religious organisations

→ **Freebase Gridworks + homemade app used**
First results: lack in transparency

- Official Parliament's register: only 124 organisations
- Our study:
  - 15451 people heared
  - 9304 grouped hearings
  - 4635 heared organisations
- Only 24% women
Browsing the results by themes

- **Globally:**
  1) Public sector: 48%
  2) Unions: 21%
  3) Private sector: 16%
  4) Civil society: 7%

- **Thematic specificities:**
  - economy, energy, culture, internet, …
  - women, society, development help, …

http://regardscitoyens.org/etude-lobbying/
Conclusions

● Serious lack in transparency
  ● Missing list in reports (62% don't list the hearings)
  ● Misrepresentation of the official registry
    4635 organisations found vs. 120 officially published

● The emerged part of the iceberg
  Hearing is one of the 5 tools used by lobbyists

● Need for better registry and rules
  → Alter-EU.org initiative