

# How to study lobbying with crowdsourced OpenData ?

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## 1 Content

Lobbying is a very controversial subject in France: largely discussed, but not well known. So for about a year, Regards Citoyens and the French section of Transparency International worked together in order to bring more transparency in the processes of influence and lobbying within the French parliament, by bringing out some new data to the public debate. Indeed the Parliament has, like the European one, a register of lobbyists, but it turns out this register does not contain more than a hundred names, a figure far from the reality as we discovered.

So we extracted from all parliamentary reports the lists of the people who were auditioned by MP's, bringing out 15.000 names. This already revealed a first lack in transparency since only 38% of the reports have such a list. To qualify and validate this data, we used some crowdsourcing power, by making an easy-to-use web-application to let people process what couldn't be done automatically. In only 10 days, more than 3.000 people participated and successfully helped us transform this into real data.

It finally took us some time to requalify the data, especially to categorize the 9.000 different organisations revealed by the mashup. Public sector, private companies, unions, civil society, think-tanks... Which ones are the most listened to during this visible part of the iceberg that is lobbying? Is this done in a plural and equal way? These are the questions we tried to answer within the study which was published last March, revealing interesting figures like the major representation of the public sector with 48% of the auditions. To complete the study we finally developed an interactive web visualisation in order to allow anyone to browse, access and download the data that was finally published under the ODbL, an open data license.

## 2 About the Author

Regards Citoyens is a citizen organization created in 2009 which promotes public open data in France. In addition to try to popularize Open Data principles in France, the members of this association create web projects using Open Data

with Free and Open Source Software in order to provide tools for a better dialogue between citizens and representatives and a better understanding of the french democratic institutions. Their most known initiative is a parliamentary monitoring website : [NosDeputes.fr](http://NosDeputes.fr).