Who Are The Civic Hackers?

Submitted on 17 Oct 2011 by David Osimo

In the context of a study into collaborative e-government services we did a survey to find out who the developers are that create these services. Collaborative e-government services are largely services built by citizens or organisations using government data that target topics and themes within the public task.

While the survey is still open to your participation, here are some early results.

In the context of the study, which we will present at an upcoming ePractice workshop (Brussels October 27th), we did a survey of developers.

This survey received so far few answers (only 17) and is still open, but the early results are insightful.

82% of civic hackers do it **voluntarily**, without financial rewards or funding. Only one receives government funding. However this is possible because their costs are in 80% of the cases below 1000 Euros per year.

In terms of **drivers**, 90% are motivated by identifying a need not yet covered, and 80% by the desire to make a difference, and 40% for visibility. Money plays a minor role.

60% say that the main **obstacle** is non-availability of public data. Costs and business models instead are mentioned by a minority (18% and 29%). About one-third mentions lack of interest by the public as a problem.

Government attitude has generally been indifferent (50%). Only 18% defines it as supportive. None however defines it "hostile".

Finally, the **profile**. 85% men; 94% with university degree (29% with Phd); 87% between 25-44 years old; half employed and half self-employed.

I found these results very insightful. They are available as open data.

If you are a developer, please fill out the survey so that we can have a more accurate picture. You have time until the end of October.

(cross posted from David Osimo's blog Benchmarking e-Government in Web2.0)