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Exploring the Potential of Government 2.0 in Dublin City Cycling

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Citizen-government engagement and collaboration using social Information Systems is a relatively new concept, but whose potential several authors have previously explored. The Irish Government has set an ambitious target for cycling modal share by 2020, with Dublin city being a key contributor to this. It has also presented a vision for e-government, with new and emerging technologies and media central to that vision. Urban cyclists represent a passionate community but face challenges in the areas of safety, security, and ride quality. There is potential for cycling citizens and government to share data to address these challenges. However, collection and sharing of cycling data has, to date, been limited and low-tech. This study explores the key aspects of Government 2.0 as well as previous uses of Information Systems in urban cycling. Direct engagement with key stakeholders is undertaken, via an electronic survey offered to cyclists, and face-to-face interviews with cycling advocates and state authorities. Based on the findings from these engagements, this Dissertation concludes that social media is unsuitable for cycling discussions between government and citizen. The government side feels that traditional, face-to-face, or physical interactions are more effective than online engagement. Social media does have other niche uses, mainly in the area of promotion. The smartphone is adjudged to be the platform of choice for hard data collection and sharing. The Irish Government has made some creditable forays into open government, but more data of relevance to cycling should be made available by default. Better organisation of this data, and integration of existing and desired Government services into a smartphone App, is recommended. Cyclists showed most desire for an App to geolocate and report issues with the cycling infrastructure to the authorities. Resource shortages in Government are currently the key obstacle to wider realisation of the potential of Government 2.0.