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Testing out NLP on the public Danish asylum database

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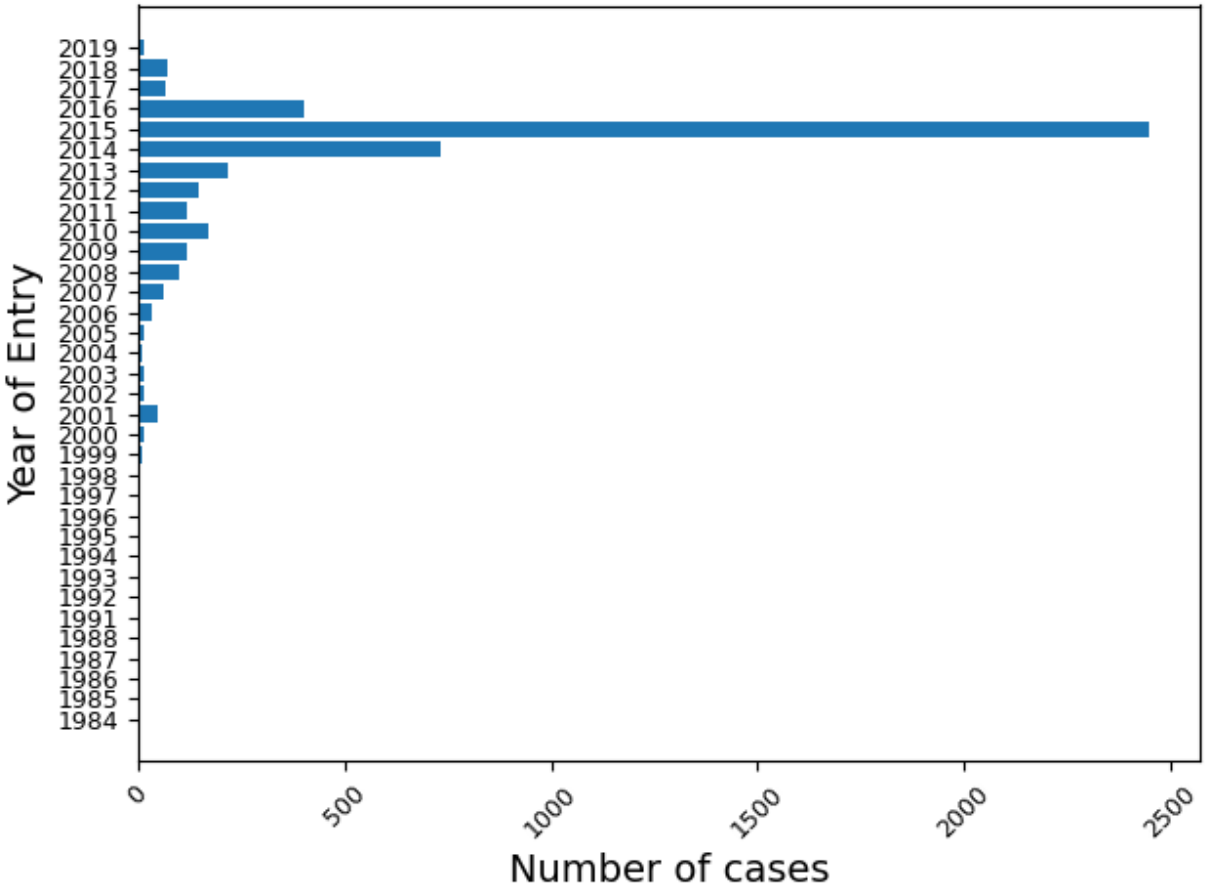
A first look into Danish asylum decisions has been possible through the publicly available decision summaries, found on the Refugee Appeals Board website: https://fln.dk/da/Praksis

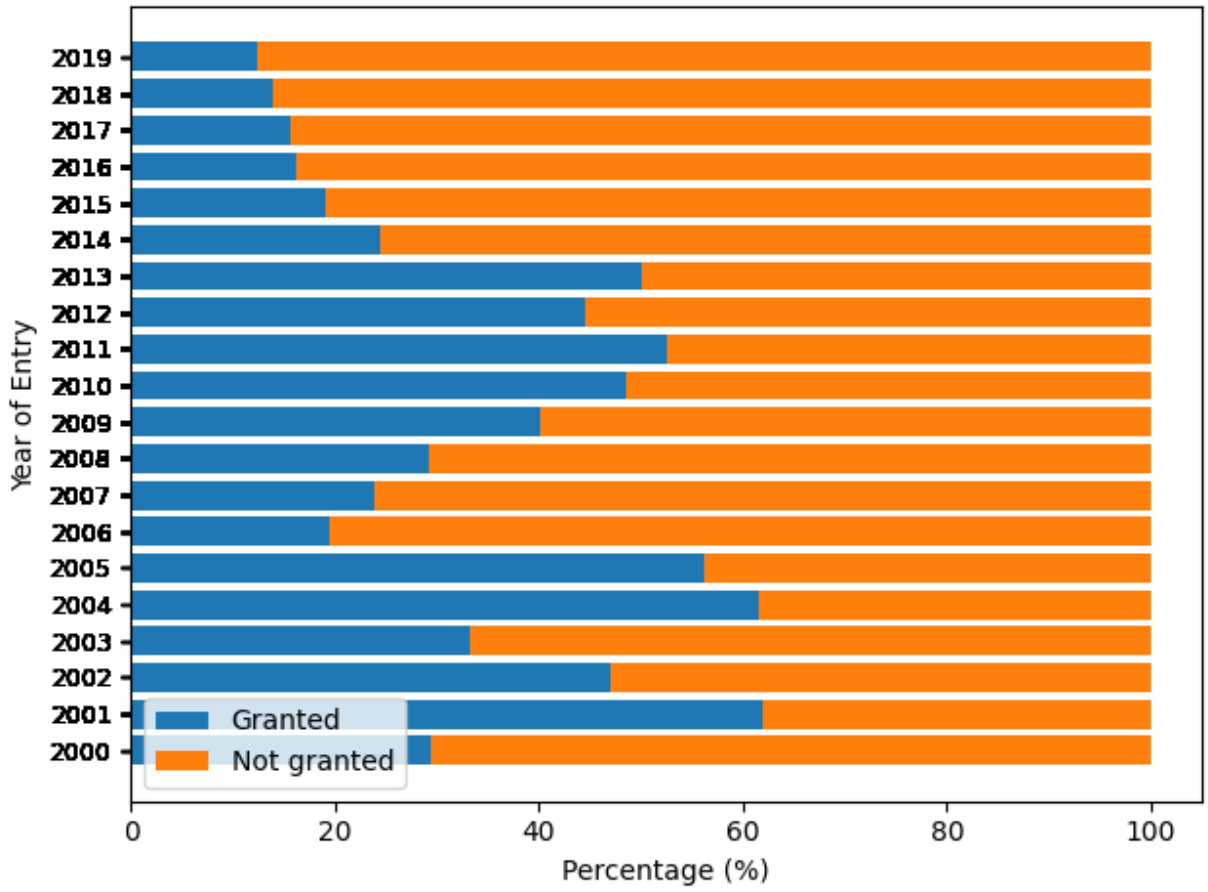
In the Danish asylum system an asylum case is first treated by the Danish Immigration Service. If the applicant is refused asylum, the case is automatically appealed to the Refugee Appeals Board, which may either uphold or overturn the initial decision.

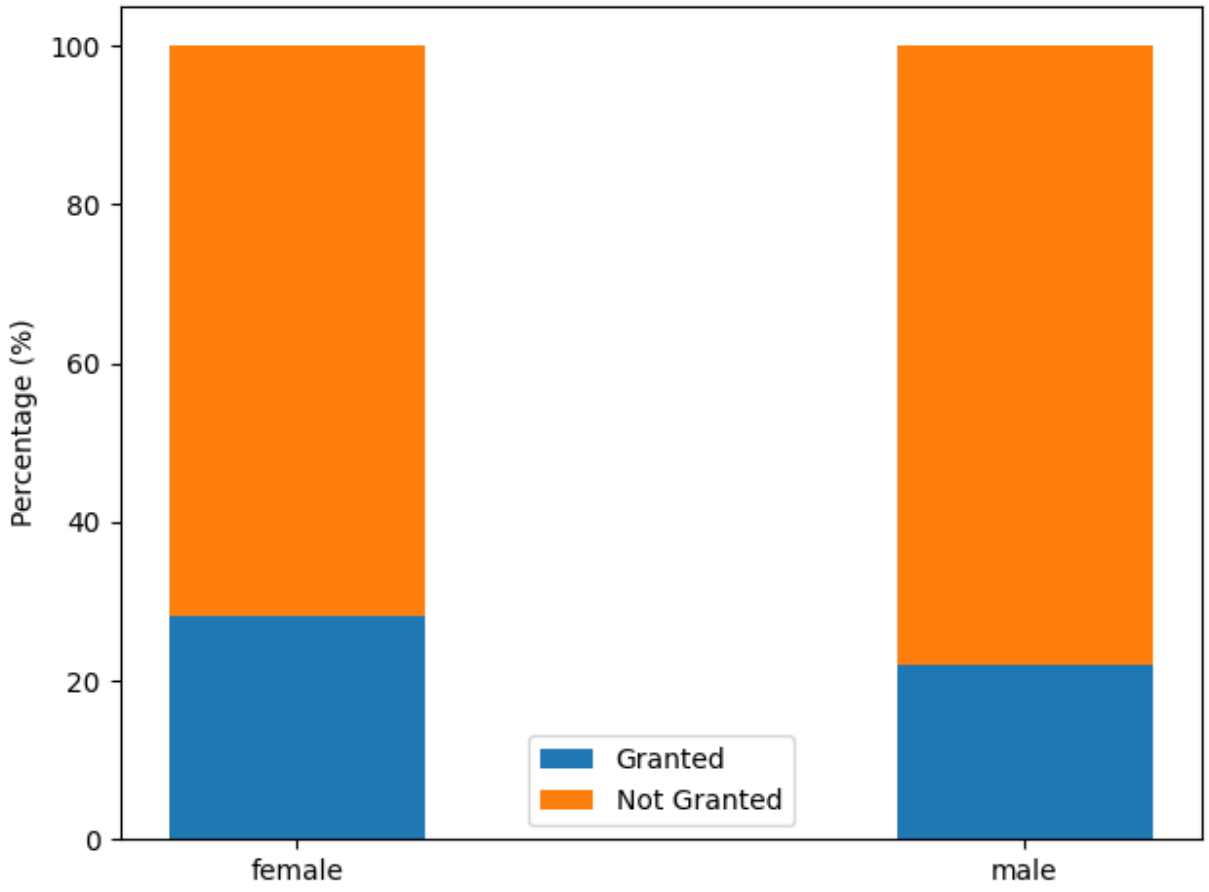
We scraped over 8000 decision summaries, containing a short description of each applicant's particular situation and a brief explanation on why the Refugee Appeals Board upheld or overturned the Immigration Service decision. Decisions on the website are categorised along three dimensions: the nationality of the applicant, the application type and the year of decision.

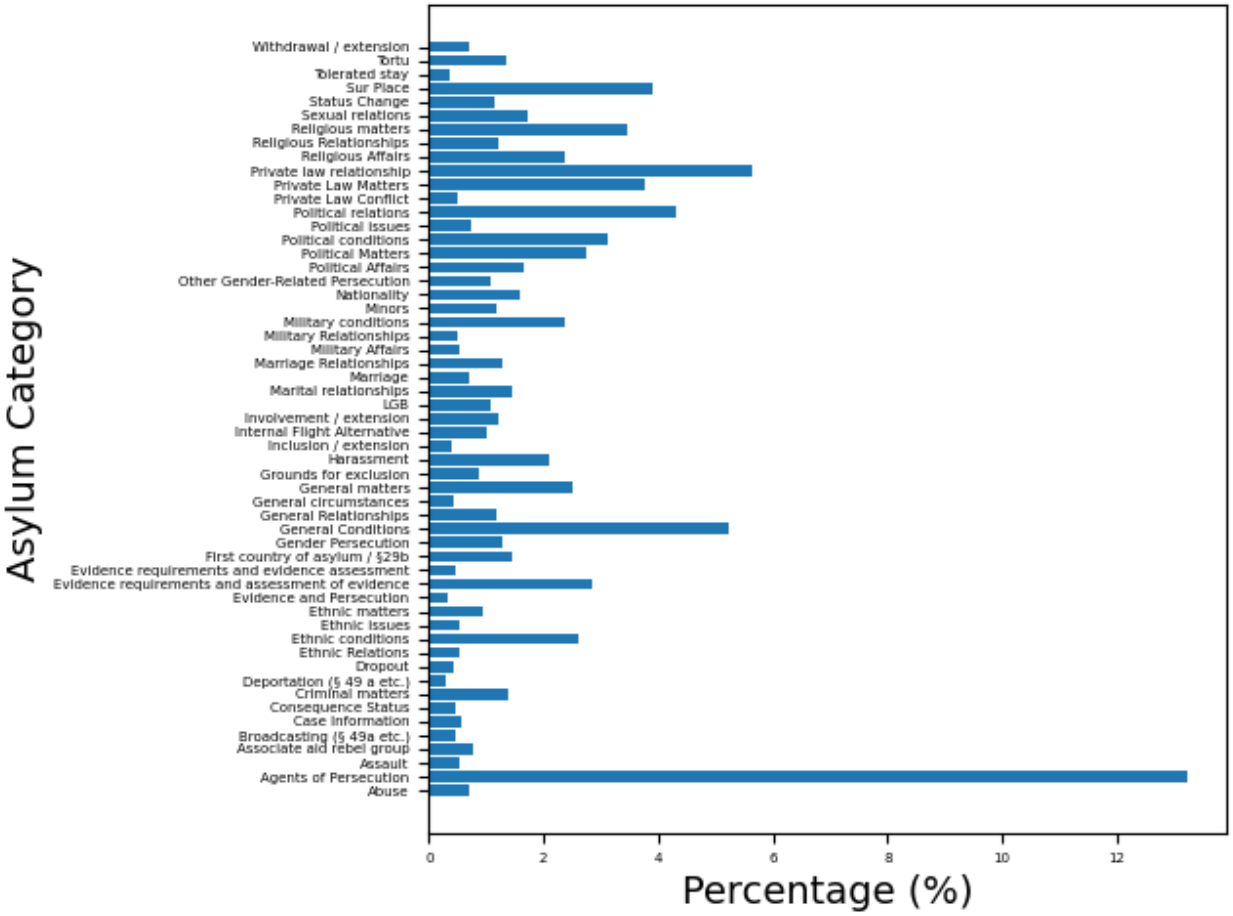
Using natural language processing techniques and regular expressions, we further extracted the gender, year of entry in denmark, religion, ethnicity, marital status and the board's decision for each applicant. The distribution of applications, as well as the recognition rates, are shown in the following figures.

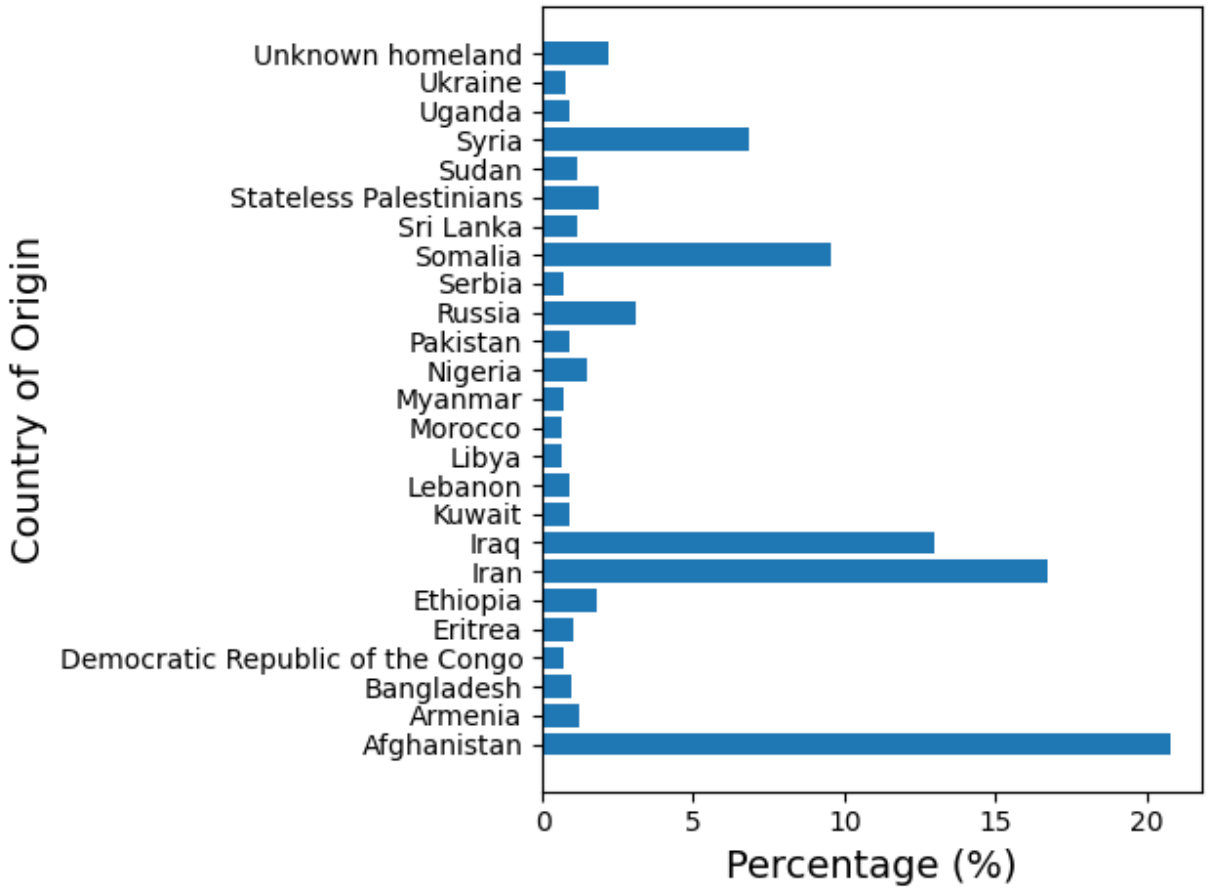
Importantly, far from all cases from the Refugee Appeals Board are made available online and the percentage and types of cases vary from year to year. Hence, one should be careful to make strong inferences based on the below, since the data set is not representative of the overall caseload. But the data set has been useful in terms of training our capacity in terms of automatically extracting relevant information from the case files. You can see a few examples below:

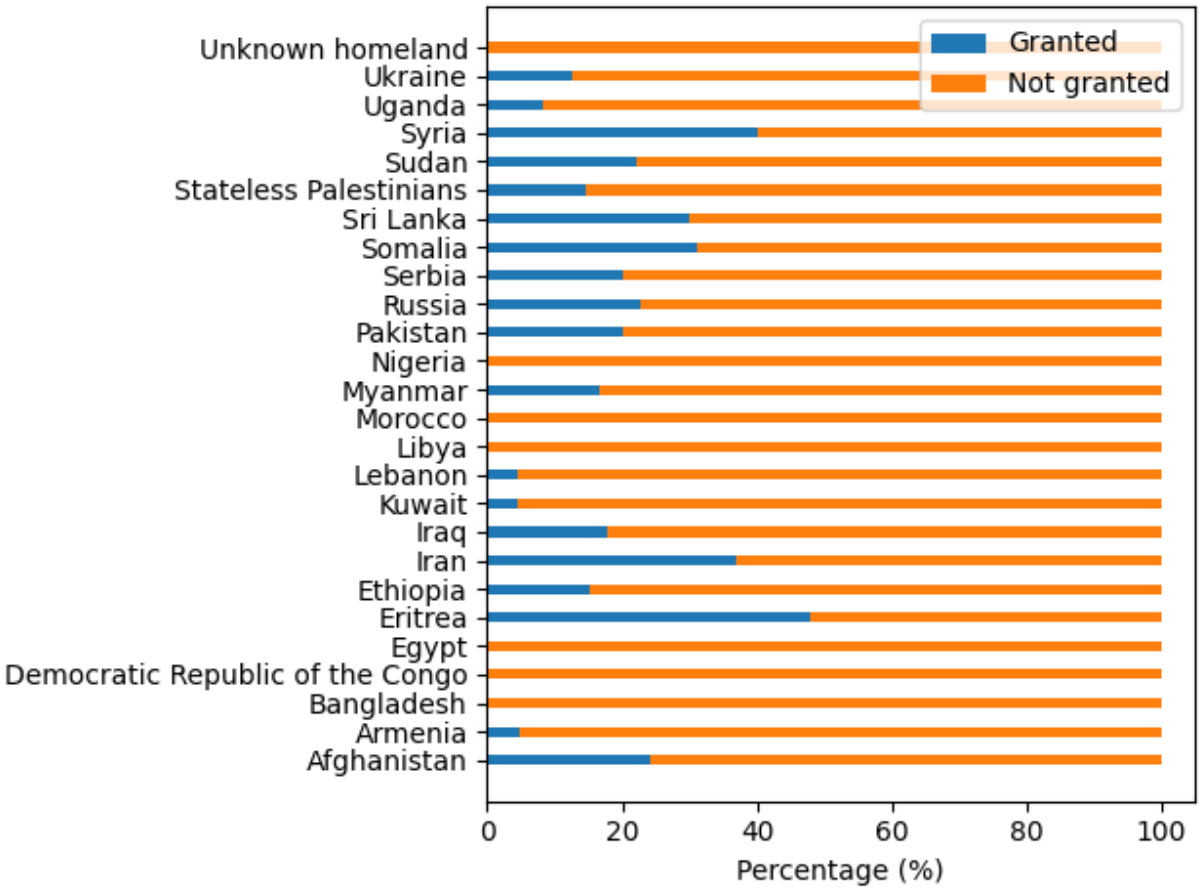

Year of Entry
2019
2018
2017
2016
2015
2014
2013
2012
2011
2010
2009
2008
2007
2006
2005
2004
2003
2002
2001
2000
1999
1998
1997
1996
1995
1994
1993
1992
1991
1988
1987
1986
1985
1984
0
500
1000
1500
2000
2500
Number of cases


Year of Entry
2019
2018
2017
2016
2015
2014
2013
2012
2011
2010
2009
2008
2007
2006
2005
2004
2003
2002
2001
2000
Granted
Not granted
0
20
40
60
80
100
Percentage (%)


100
80
60
40
20
0
Percentage (%)
Granted
Not Granted
female
male


Asylum Category
Withdrawal / extension
Tortu
Tolerated stay
Sur Place
Status Change
Sexual relations
Religious matters
Religious Relationships
Religious Affairs
Private law relationship
Private Law Matters
Private Law Conflict
Political relations
Political issues
Political conditions
Political Matters
Political Affairs
Other Gender-Related Persecution
Nationality
Minors
Military conditions
Military Relationships
Military Affairs
Marriage Relationships
Marriage
Marital relationships
LGB
Involvement / extension
Internal Flight Alternative
Inclusion / extension
Harassment
Grounds for exclusion
General matters
General circumstances
General Relationships
General Conditions
Gender Persecution
First country of asylum / §29b
Evidence requirements and evidence assessment
Evidence requirements and assessment of evidence
Evidence and Persecution
Ethnic matters
Ethnic issues
Ethnic conditions
Ethnic Relations
Dropout
Deportation (§ 49 a etc.)
Criminal matters
Consequence Status
Case information
Broadcasting (§ 49a etc.)
Associate aid rebel group
Assault
Agents of Persecution
Abuse
0
2
4
6
8
10
12
Percentage (%)


Country of Origin
Unknown homeland
Ukraine
Uganda
Syria
Sudan
Stateless Palestinians
Sri Lanka
Somalia
Serbia
Russia
Pakistan
Nigeria
Myanmar
Morocco
Libya
Lebanon
Kuwait
Iraq
Iran
Ethiopia
Eritrea
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Bangladesh
Armenia
Afghanistan
0
5
10
15
20
Percentage (%)


Granted
Not granted
Unknown homeland
Ukraine
Uganda
Syria
Sudan
Stateless Palestinians
Sri Lanka
Somalia
Serbia
Russia
Pakistan
Nigeria
Myanmar
Morocco
Libya
Lebanon
Kuwait
Iraq
Iran
Ethiopia
Eritrea
Egypt
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Bangladesh
Armenia
Afghanistan
0
20
40
60
80
100
Percentage (%)