



Confronting Asylum Decision-making through Prototyping Sensemaking of Data and Participation

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The research outlined in this paper is focusing on understanding asylum decision-making and outcome variations across the Nordic countries. As a preliminary study, we extract data from an open dataset of decision summaries from the Danish Refugee Appeals Board. The approach we propose, offers points for discussion of how prototyping context and participation can help raise questions about such data and engage stakeholders. Combining the application of Machine Learning (ML) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) with participatory methods (e.g. critically designed artefacts) enable us to 1) move beyond "obvious" ML-application areas, 2) through sensemaking of data with stakeholders, and 3) co-develop approaches to data science from a CSCW-perspective.

Figure: The Ecosystem of Data in Danish Asylum Decision-making

1. The Danish Police

When a person applies for asylum in Denmark, the first authority the applicant comes into contact with is the Danish police.

Data entry: Name, date of birth, country of origin, entry date, biometrics, breeder documentations.

Fingerprints are electronically transmitted and checked in the EU fingerprint database (Eurodac). The applicant is invited to fill out an asylum application form.

2. The Immigration Service (1st instance)

1st interview: The purpose is to determine identity, itinerary to Denmark and reasons why the applicant is applying for asylum. The Immigration Service asks questions concerning identity, nationality, itinerary to Denmark, family, and the applicant is asked to elaborate on the asylum motivation.

The Immigration Service decides where the case shall be processed according to the Dublin Regulation (another country might be responsible for processing the case, "1st asylum country"). If the applicant only applied for asylum in Denmark, the application will be examined in Denmark as either 1) Manifestly unfounded (if the Immigration Service finds that the applicant has no valid grounds for seeking asylum - e.g. if the applicant seeks asylum on the basis economic reasons. Danish Refugee Council can veto, if so: Normal procedure), 2) Expedited version of manifestly unfounded (i.e. the applicant comes from a number of certain countries that are considered safe. Danish Refugee Council can veto, if so: Normal procedure) or 3) Normal procedure.

2nd interview / Normal procedure: During the second interview, the applicant is asked to elaborate on the asylum motivation as well as on statements made during the 1st interview. Focus on consistency and plausibility.

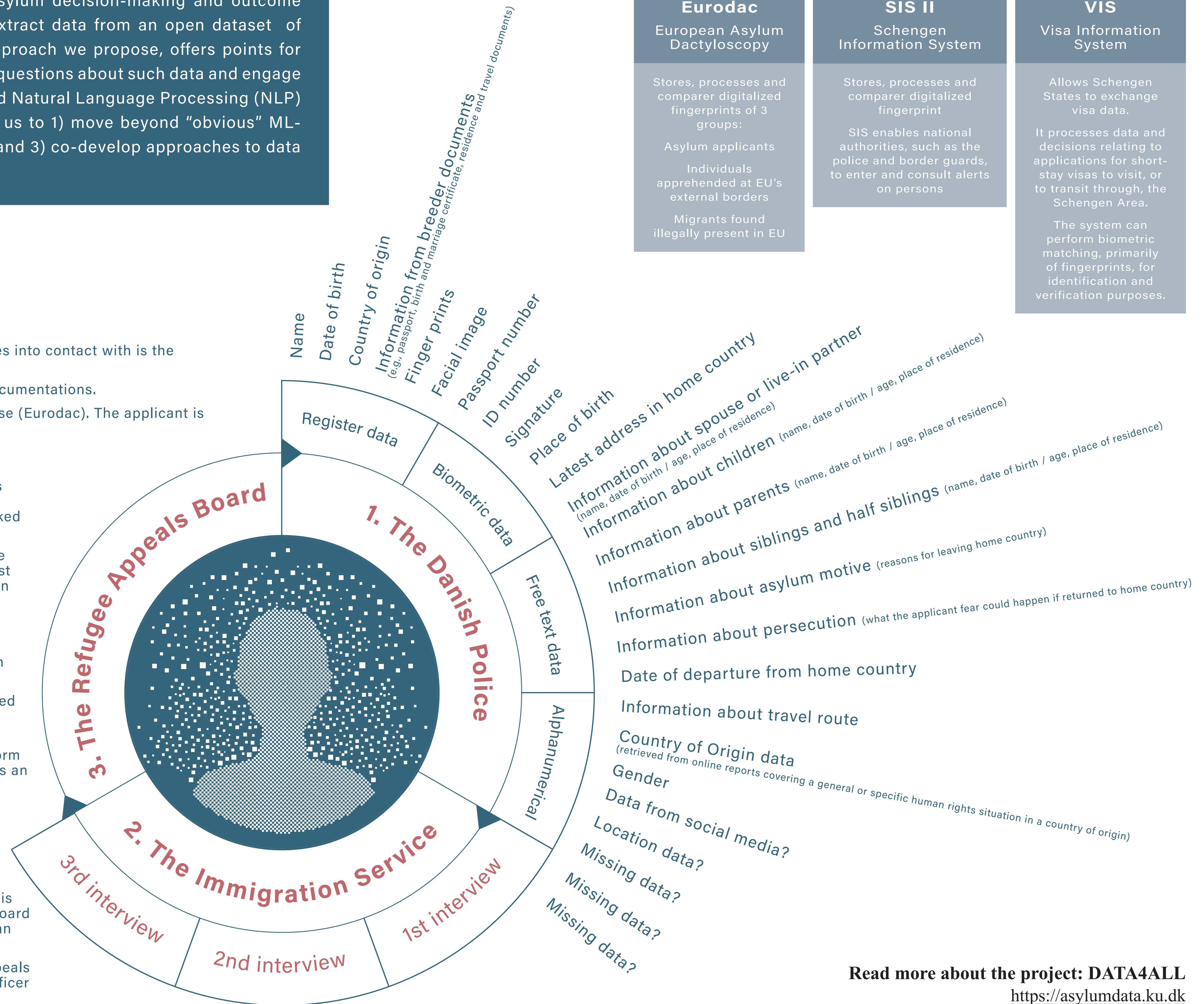
3rd interview: If necessary, a third interview will be conducted that typically takes form as the second interview. A third interview will always be conducted if the applicant is an unaccompanied minor.

Participants at the interviews: Representative from the Immigration Service, an interpreter, and the applicant(s) (and a personal representative from the Danish Red Cross if the applicant is an unaccompanied minor).

3. The Refugee Appeals Board (2nd instance)

If the applicant receives a rejection (a written decision) from first instance, the case is automatically appealed to the Refugee Appeals Board. When the Refugee Appeals Board is to make its decision, an oral decision meeting will take place. The applicant gets an attorney appointed by the state.

Participants at the meeting: The applicant(s), the 3 members of the the Refugee Appeals Board, 1 interpreter, 1 attorney, 1 representative of the Immigration Service, 1 legal officer from the Refugee Appeals Board.



References:
 Baumer 2017 & 2018; Menendez-Blanco et al. 2017, Bødker 1998; Danholt 2005; DiSalvo 2011; Seidelin et al. 2020; Møller et al. 2011 & 2020; Talhouk et al. 2016 & 2019; Almohamed et al. 2020; Tachtler et al. 2021; Cakici et al. 2020; www.nyidanmark.dk

Exchange of data between national authorities in the European Union is facilitated by three main databases

Eurodac	SIS II	VIS
European Asylum Dactyloscopy	Schengen Information System	Visa Information System
Stores, processes and comparer digitalized fingerprints of 3 groups: Asylum applicants Individuals apprehended at EU's external borders Migrants found illegally present in EU	Stores, processes and comparer digitalized fingerprint SIS enables national authorities, such as the police and border guards, to enter and consult alerts on persons	Allows Schengen States to exchange visa data. It processes data and decisions relating to applications for short-stay visas to visit, or to transit through, the Schengen Area. The system can perform biometric matching, primarily of fingerprints, for identification and verification purposes.