

THE ISSUE NETWORK AS A DELIBERATIVE SPACE: A CASE STUDY OF THE DANISH ASYLUM ISSUE ON THE INTERNET

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Abstract

Through an analysis of the Danish asylum issue network on the Internet, this article discusses the possibilities of the online sphere as a deliberative space, where politics is happening. By assessing the hyperlink structure of the issue network and a subsequent content analysis of the claims presented by the various actors on the issue the study finds that even though the network contains the overall structures for a functioning deliberative space, the actual deliberation occurring between the actors is very limited. The issue network approach in this case study is seen to be a good way to identify relevant political issues online, but it does not manage to bring together the various antagonistic actors in one deliberative space online. In a triangulation of the results from the two separate analyses, the study further finds evidence, which suggests that the relationship between hyperlinks and deliberative activity is not as definitive as it is often assumed in network analysis.

Keywords: issue network, online, deliberative space, hyperlink, claims,

1. Introduction¹

During the past years the debate about asylum seekers in Denmark has taken place in many different political arenas. Politicians have discussed the issue in parliament and in the media, various organizations have presented their viewpoints to the very same politicians and to the international community (e.g. through the UN's Universal Periodic Review of Denmark in the spring of 2011), and activists have gone to the streets and to asylum centers to demonstrate their presence and willpower. The debate has been quite contentious in several of these arenas (e.g. with clashes between demonstrators and the police), yet it seems like that the issue has been performed differently by the various actors political actors in different arenas (politicians in one areas and civil society somewhere else). This might not be very surprising but it is problematic in a deliberative democracy perspective, and therefore there is a need to try to locate potential spaces, where such issues are being discussed by the more established (e.g. the government) and less established (e.g. advocacy groups) actors in the political spectrum. In this paper I assess whether the online sphere could be such a deliberative space.

¹ This paper is based heavily on my unpublished Master Thesis from Political Science, Central European University. An earlier version of the paper was presented at the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) Conference in Istanbul 2011. I want to thank John Downing for his comments and my supervisor Stefania Milan for her thorough feedback and critical comments on my writing.

The online sphere has been studied quite extensively when it comes to social media sites, debate fora and other web 2.0 options, but the interaction that occurs between different websites have been analyzed to a far lesser extent. In this study I will engage with the network of these websites as a possible deliberative space where contentious politics is unfolding. A reason to study the relationship of websites is partly to find the most developed positions on the issue by the actors, and partly because prior studies in the field have found evidence that important political activity is forming around the websites of political actors through the network of hyperlinks between the websites. These "issue networks", as they have been called², offer us an opportunity to approach political deliberation from a very different perspective than the social media approach, since it looks at the deliberation across multiple websites instead of centering on one website (e.g. a debate forum)³ So far there is not a sufficient number of empirical studies to be able to evaluate the usefulness of the issue network approach.

Therefore, it is relevant to apply the theoretical framework to an appropriate case study, which in this article is the Danish Asylum Issue, to shed some light on the political deliberation on the Internet. I have chosen the Danish Asylum issue as a "most fitting"⁴ case that should be able to provide us with sufficient relevant actors and political activity online. This is meant to give the theory the best chances of finding a functional issue network, where political deliberation is happening. Accordingly, this article will discuss the question of whether the Danish asylum issue network constitutes a deliberative space. To do this I will map the network of relevant actors online and subsequently analyze the deliberation among these actors. By triangulating the results of these two methods it is also possible to briefly touch upon a more fundamental question of Internet research, namely, are hyperlink networks good indicators of deliberative activity among political actors on the Internet?

2. Operationalizing the Issue Network

Originally, the term "issue network" was described by the American political scientist, Hugh Heclo, as a network of professional actors forming around a policy issue that interacts directly with each other to debate, redefine and find new policy

2 Most notably by Richard Rogers and Noortje Marres, e.g. Richard Rogers and Noortje Marres, "Landscaping Climate Change: A Mapping Technique for Understanding Science and Technology Debates on the World Wide Web," *Public Understand. Sci.* 9(2000).

3 Richard Rogers, "Mapping Public Web Spaces with the Issuecrawler," in *Digital Cognitive Technologies: Epistemology and Knowledge Society*, ed. Claire Brossard and Bernard Reber (London: Wiley, 2010), 8.

4 Bent Flyvbjerg, "Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research," *Qualitative Inquiry* 12, no. 2 (Apr. 2006).

options.⁵ This idea of the organized network of actors that act deliberately and try to bring issues to the forefront of the political scene resonated with studies of “policy networks”⁶ as well as “advocacy networks”, which refers to networks of organizations that are “driven primarily by shared values or principled ideas”⁷. Common among these concepts is the general idea that these networks consist of more or less organized actors who in synergy try to achieve a shared political end-result.

Recently, a number of scholars, most notably Richard Rogers and Noortje Marres, have taken the concept a step further in suggesting that issue networks can be used to locate areas of contention as well as alliance-building online⁸. Following Marres, issue networks can be defined as “open-ended alliances” that are constituted by antagonistic actors who engage in the articulation and (re)formatting of controversial issues to influence the politicization of these issues in the formal political space.⁹ Actors in the network are connected through the issue – but do not necessarily agree with or know of each other in the network – and the issue itself is constituted by their expressions of opinions, claims or knowledge about the issue. In that way, issue networks are the site of politics where actors express views, ideas and knowledge about certain issues and “attempt to put these issues on the agendas of political institutions”.¹⁰ In this sense, issue networks can be seen as act of deliberation by actors in the political field.

So far issue networks have been used mostly to locate clusters of activist groups that mobilize on shared issues¹¹, but there have been attempts to locate truly

5 Hugh Heclo, "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment," in *The New American Political System*, ed. Anthony King (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1978), 103-04.

6 E.g. Michael W. Kirst, Gail Meister, and Stephen R. Rowley, "Policy Issue Networks: Their Influence on State Policymaking," *Policy Studies Journal* 13, no. 2 (Dec 1984); William T. Gormley, "Regulatory Issue Networks in a Federal System," *Polity* 18, no. 4 (Summer 1986); James E. Skok, "Policy Issue Networks and the Public Policy Cycle: A Structural-Functional Framework for Public Administration," *Public Administration Review* 55, no. 4 (Jul. 1995).

7 Kathryn Sikkink, "Human Rights, Principled Issue-Networks, and Sovereignty in Latin America," *International Organization* 3(Summer 1993): 412.

8 Rogers, "Mapping Public Web Spaces with the Issuecrawler," 10.

9 Noortje Marres, "Network Is Format Work: Issue Networks and the Sites of Civil Society Politics," in *Reformatting Politics - Information Technology and Global Civil Society*, ed. John Asherson, Jodi Dean, and Geert Lovink (London: Routledge, 2006), 5.

10 Ibid.

11 E.g. Fieke Jansen, "Digital Activism in the Middle East: Mapping Issue Networks in Egypt, Iran, Syria and Tunisia," *Knowledge Management for Development Journal* 6, no. 1 (May 2010). or Marres, "Network Is Format Work: Issue Networks and the Sites of Civil Society Politics."

contentious deliberative spaces, e.g. climate change¹² and gun control groups on the internet¹³. The analysis of the climate change network found that the issue managed to engage different actors (governments, organizations and companies) in the debate and that the hyperlinks connecting the actors could be used to assess the positions of the individual actors on the issue¹⁴. In the gun control network on the other hand there was not sufficient interaction among the actors on both sides of the issue to see it as a functional deliberative space¹⁵. These sparse results call for a need to conduct further research in the possibility of issue networks to register politics in action, and at the same time tell us more about the relationship between linking and deliberative activity on the Internet.

To perform the analysis of the Danish Asylum issue network I will define exactly how I understand the issue network as a functioning deliberative space. In this context a deliberative space should be understood as a political arena (like the halls of parliament or the newspaper articles and debate pages), where different civil society actors as well as established politicians present their viewpoints on and discuss a given issue. Whereas the deliberative space in the offline world is demarcated by among other things, physical (not everybody has access to parliament) and institutional constraints (editors select who to interview on a given issue and which opinion pieces to publish in the newspaper), the space in the online sphere will be defined by the network of hyperlinks around the actors performing the issue. As such the online deliberative space is seemingly more democratic (the more links a website receives from other actors in the issue the higher is the likelihood that the website will be included in the network).

The actors are identified through their websites and they perform the issue by presenting political claims on these sites. For the network to actually be composed around an issue - instead of just being a social, professional or information network - it has to fulfill two conditions: First, the issue has to be active among different type of political actors (e.g. activist groups, organizations and official actors) who interact with each other through hyperlinks; and second, the actors represented in the network have to actually debate the issue, e.g. by providing statements, policies or spreading information about the specific issue. If both of these criteria are not fulfilled then the network cannot be said to constitute a functioning deliberative space.

12 Rogers and Marres, "Landscaping Climate Change: A Mapping Technique for Understanding Science and Technology Debates on the World Wide Web."

13 Zachary Devereaux et al., "Using the Issue Crawler to Map Gun Control Issue-Networks," in *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association* (Toronto, ON, Canada, Sep 3-62009).

14 Rogers and Marres, "Landscaping Climate Change: A Mapping Technique for Understanding Science and Technology Debates on the World Wide Web."

15 Devereaux et al., "Using the Issue Crawler to Map Gun Control Issue-Networks."

3. Linking as Acts of Communication

The basic theory behind issue network analysis is that hyperlinks can be used to locate the relevant actors in the articulation of the issue on the Internet.¹⁶ This idea builds on the assumption from network analysis that the number of links (or edges) a given website (or node) receive can be used to assess its relative importance (or centrality) in the network.¹⁷ By looking at how people (in social network analysis), infrastructure (in information networks) or websites (in hyperlink analysis) are organized in networks it is possible to assess which actors that are most fundamental for the sustainability of the network and can exercise most power over others in the network. Whereas most network analyses operate with a large-n sample that is able to generate generalizable results and therefore suitable for advanced statistics, issue network analyses often take a smaller sample that allows for less extensive statistical analysis, yet at the same time make it possible to engage closely with the interaction between the actors in the network. Thereby, the issue network as a multi-website approach¹⁸ opens up for a network analysis on the meso-level that is situated between the classical network analysis (macro-level) and the qualitative website analysis (micro-level).

The reason hyperlinks can be said to demarcate the issue network and thereby include relevant actors and exclude irrelevant ones is because these links are seen to hold a special communicative value.¹⁹ The decision to provide links to other websites is assumed to be structured, as opposed to random, and motivated by a choice of association. At the most fundamental level, a link between websites signals recognition of existence. As Rogers puts it:

Somewhat akin to a footnote in a manuscript, a hyperlink is thought of here as an acknowledgement by one organization of another organization's relevance to the discourse, based on some appreciation for that latter organization's knowledge and reputation. A link indicates 'belonging'²⁰.

The number of links coming to a specific website can be interpreted as an indicator of the authority given to that site or to the trust or prestige granted to that site. Likewise, in networks where a few pages receive a majority of all the links these links

16 Richard Rogers, "Operating Issue Networks on the Web," *Science as Culture* 11, no. 2 (2003).

17 Han Woo Park and Mike Thelwall, "The Network Approach to Web Hyperlink Research and Its Utility for Science Communication," in *Virtual Methods - Issues in Social Research on the Internet*, ed. Christine Hine (Oxford, NY: Berg, 2005).

18 Rogers, "Mapping Public Web Spaces with the Issuecrawler," 8.

19 Rogers and Marres, "Landscaping Climate Change: A Mapping Technique for Understanding Science and Technology Debates on the World Wide Web," 144.

20 Rogers, "Operating Issue Networks on the Web," 204.

can be interpreted as a sign of popularity – “the winner takes it all”²¹. Accordingly, the decision to provide or not to provide links to another website holds communicative value exactly because it can tell us how certain websites view other websites and their importance to the deliberation. Therefore, it is important to approach the issue network as a “selective associational space”²² that is being created and maintained by the linking between the actors.

Earlier analyses of issue networks and other online networks have suggested that the constellation of the associational space follows certain trends.²³ This has been confirmed in other types of network studies. Large-scale studies of the linking patterns between websites show that there exists a high degree of homophily – that is the tendency to prefer other actors of the same type as yourself - among the different types of users, e.g. political actors linking to other political actors, organization linking to other organizations and so on²⁴ as well as a tendency to prefer other actors with the same ideological stance on politics²⁵. In the study of issue networks certain actors (e.g. respectable NGOs) often have less intention to provide links to other actors or return links to websites that link to them, either because they do not recognize the actor’s importance to the network or because they do not wish to be associated with those websites²⁶. Even though the interpretation of the linking process will always be context-dependent these trends should affect the expectations to the issue network. The distribution of hyperlinks among websites can be expected to be quite unequal among the various actors in the network, and therefore it is helpful for the subsequent analysis to formulate two hypotheses about the constellation of the issue network:

21 Han Woo Park, Mike Thelwall, and Randolph Kluver, "Political Hyperlinking in South Korea: Technical Indicators of Ideology and Content," *Sociological Research Online* 10, no. 3 (Sep 2005).. They can also be a sign of importance or usefulness of a given website for the community within a particular field (determined by a key word query) as is the basis for many search algorithms, most notably Google Sergey Brin and Larry Page, "The Anatomy of a Large Scale Hypertextual Web Search Engine," *Computer Networks and ISDN Systems* 30, no. 1-7 (Apr 1998).

22 Rogers, "Mapping Publib Web Spaces with the Issuecrawler," 117.

23 Rogers and Marres, "Landscaping Climate Change: A Mapping Technique for Understanding Science and Technology Debates on the World Wide Web."

24 Park, Thelwall, and Kluver, "Political Hyperlinking in South Korea: Technical Indicators of Ideology and Content."; Shaomei Wu et al., "Who Says What to Whom on Twitter," in *International World Wide Web Conference Committee (IW3C2)* (WWW 2011, March 28–April 1, 2011, Hyderabad, India.2011).

25 Lada Adamic and Natalie Glance, "The Political Blogosphere and the 2004 U.S. Election: Divided They Blog," in *LinkKDD '05: Proceedings of the 3rd international workshop on Link discovery* (2005).

26 Rogers and Marres, "Landscaping Climate Change: A Mapping Technique for Understanding Science and Technology Debates on the World Wide Web," 146-152.

- 1) different types of actors link more often to other actors of the same type (e.g. official websites to other official sites); and
- 2) the direction of the links go mainly from less organized actors (e.g. smaller civil society groups) to more organized actors (e.g. larger NGOs).

These general hypotheses obviously conflict with the criteria for the issue network presented above, but that only confirms the obstacles one must expect when trying to find issue networks on the Internet. Needless to say, it is possible to locate contentious issue networks even though both of the hypotheses should be confirmatory (as long as they are not absolute for all instances of interlinking between the various actors). Before I turn to the results of the analysis I will briefly discuss the methodological framework that I use to aggregate the data.

4. Mapping the Network and Analyzing the Claims

To identify the issue network I will do an analysis of the relevant webpages using a quantitative web crawling tool called the "Issue Crawler". The tool has been developed by Richard Rogers.²⁷ Issue Crawler looks through the relevant part of the web (whose boundaries are defined by the initial starting points, i.e. websites, which the user has selected) and searches for co-links between the actors. All the actors that share at least two links with other actors in the network will be included in the resulting issue network²⁸. If a webpage receives a sufficient amount of hyperlinks from other webpages that are recognized as part of the network, then this webpage will be considered as relevant to the issue. Likewise, if a webpage provides links to other webpages, the recipients will achieve a higher relevance for the network. The more hyperlinks a given webpage receives from other relevant actors, the more important it will be for the sustainability of the network. Furthermore, Issue Crawler registers the amount and direction of the links between the actors and visualizes these relationships in a graphical map. This quantitative data can be used for the analysis of the structure of the network, that is to say, which actors occupy the central positions in the network and what are the directions of the links between the different types of actors.

Whereas Issue Crawler can be used to locate the issue network it cannot tell us much about the deliberative activity in the network. The mapping of the network can identify the relevant actors and suggest their relationship with each other and the analysis of the deliberation can tell us whether this relationship in fact translates into political action. In order to assess the deliberative activity I will use the concept

27 Issue Crawler is publicly available at www.Issuecrawler.net

28 Rogers, "Mapping Publib Web Spaces with the Issuecrawler."

of “political claims”²⁹ to determine how active the political issue is among the actors in the online sphere. According to Koopmans and Statham, the political claims should be understood as utterances, actions or other statements made in public and can be defined as “the strategic demands made by collective actors within a specific contested issue field”.³⁰ This definition fits well within an issue network scope with one adjustment; instead of restricting the analysis to collective actors alone, I include every actor in the issue network as potential claims makers, whether they are government representatives, organizations, activist groups, institutions or individuals.

In the analysis I register every instance of claims-making made by the actors and code the overall theme (or sub-issue) of the claim (see Appendix A) as well as the basic framing of the claim. Framing should be understood here as the process through which meaning is assigned to the claim and it designates the attitude that the actors take on a given issue and the understanding of the issue that the claim-maker would like other actors to adopt.³¹ Hence, the claims as analytical units can be used to assess the activity of the network and the framing reveals the vibrancy of this activity. If a sufficient number of different actors present claims about the same sub-issue, then I find it justified to see the issue as active. Given the fact that the different types of actors not necessarily present different perspectives on the issue it is necessary to establish how the framing of the issue takes place. If there is a sufficient degree of framing disputes or counter-framings found in the claims about the same sub-issue, then it makes sense to see the issue network as vibrant as well. This I will show by identifying each framing process as being mainly confirmatory of the actions by the policy-makers, oppositional to these actions or taking an overtly neutral stance. When these conditions are satisfied, it makes sense to talk about the issue network as a site of politics.

Since the goal of this analysis is to establish the interaction among various political actors there is a need to construct a typology of actors. Here I will differentiate mainly between state actors representing the official (or the government) view on one side, and civil society actors representing a cacophony of views on the other

29 Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham, "Political Claims Analysis: Integrating Protest Event and Political Discourse Analysis," *Mobilization: The International Journal of Research and Theory about Social Movements, Protest and Collective Behavior* 4, no. 2 (1999).

30 Ibid., 206.

31 This conception of framing builds largely on the activist group literature on “collective action frames” David A. Snow et al., "Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation," *American Sociological Review*, 51, no. 4 (Aug. 1986). However, I focus here more on the framing processes rather than frames as analytical units in themselves (fixed entities) as have been presented by Robert D. Benford, "An Insider's Critique of the Social Movement Framing Perspective," *Sociological Inquiry* 67, no. 4 (Oct. 1997).

side. Since this latter group encompasses potentially many different advocacy groups spanning from individual activists to large-scale international organizations, I will split this category into two analytically separate sub-categories. Manuel Mejido Costoy has presented a taxonomy of civil society actors that differentiate between NGOs and activist groups, where the first is more institutionalized and formalized (e.g. with hierarchies of paid and unpaid labor) operating within the system to influence decision-makers (e.g. through lobbying), whereas the latter is less institutionalized, typically with a more loosely structured (or flatter) organization using more radical language and actions to convey their messages³². This differentiation makes it possible to distinguish between loosely organized civil society groups and the more professional NGOs and therefore I find it useful in this regard.

To avoid conceptual misunderstandings I will use the label "organizations" instead of NGO since I expect international organizations (such as the UN) to participate in the asylum network, who cannot be said to qualify as NGOs. Furthermore, the term "social movement" is very loaded (a whole genre of literature is dedicated to defining social movements) and therefore I will adopt the broader and more diffuse notion of "activist groups" to label this category. Accordingly, I will operate with three main categories of actors: state, organization and activist group. To make sure that I do not lose important information from actors that do not fall in these categories I introduce a fourth category, "other", to encompass the left-over websites. Obviously, this categorization cannot be exhaustive and, given the complexity of civil society actors, it is probably not redundant, either. However, for the sake of parsimony and since the most important analytical difference is between the state actors and the civil society actors it will suffice in the context of this analysis.

5. Mapping the Asylum Issue

Since Issue Crawler maps the network from a predefined set of starting points (websites) the most defining act in drawing up a useful issue network is to choose the exact starting points. There are obviously no objectively correct starting points, but there are definitely more or less adequate starting points in mapping a given network. Since the hyperlinks themselves cannot differentiate between relevant and irrelevant sites, it is solely up to the user to find the starting points that eventually will lead to the most interesting network. In that sense, Issue Crawler is like any other statistical tool: the difficult part is not to push the calculate button, but to find

32 Costoy, Manuel Mejido: "Toward a Typology of Civil Society Actors: The Case of the Movement to Change International Trade Rules and Barriers", United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, Civil Society and Activist groups Programme Paper Number 30, October 2007.

out what to calculate on. The tricky part is that the network might drift away from the issue, which basically means that even though some starting points have relevance for the issue the subsequent co-link analysis performed by issue crawler might reveal a completely different issue network or no network at all. Therefore, it is important to test different starting points. Another problem can be that even if websites are relevant for a given issue the remaining network proves to be too “generic” or broad to properly represent a given issue.³³ Furthermore, it is not necessarily the most active websites that constitute the most appropriate starting point, but rather the websites that, through links, will lead the crawler toward the most representative sites for the issue deliberation.³⁴

I tested different methods for choosing the starting points³⁵ and eventually found that a triangulation approach produced the most accurate network. In this approach, I choose two websites that had been deliberating the issue for some time, which were still active (had posted issue related material within the past 12 months) and maintained a rather long list of hyperlinks to other actors that could have relevance to the issue. These websites turned out to be two activist groups: *bedsteforaeldreforasyl.dk* and *afvisteirakere.dk*. The first group, Grandparents for Asylum, is popularly known for its creative demonstrations and work to improve the conditions for the asylum seekers³⁶, whereas the second group, Rejected Iraqis, specifically targeted the Iraqis that have been denied asylum and faced forced expulsion. Grandparents for Asylum has received extensive coverage in the

33 This is especially a liability if one tries to map issues in the blogosphere as have been showed by Bruns in Axel Bruns, "Methodologies for Mapping the Political Blogosphere: An Exploration Using the Issuecrawler Research Tool.," *First Monday* 12, no. 5 (2007).

34 Rogers, "Mapping Publib Web Spaces with the Issuecrawler."

35 First, I used a "snowball" analysis, which does not conduct the co-link analysis, but just follows the links from the starting points in a predefined number of iterations, to get a sense of the actors that are present online ("Asylum Seekers Network DK"). Thereafter, I tried to map the issue from the perspective of one activist group, one NGO and one official site as starting point ("Asylum Seekers Network DK2"), but that included too many irrelevant actors. An attempt to draw a transnational network failed ("Asylum Seekers Denmark – International"). I also tried the query-method, where the top sites on Google in a query of "asylum seekers" (in Danish) were chosen as starting points, but that map lost to many of the obvious key actors (Asylum Seekers network DK3 – query sample"). Likewise, my attempt to force oppositional actors in the network only dragged the network far away from the issue ("Asylum Seekers Network DK5 – Antagonistic"). The network that came closest in fulfilling my criteria was based on starting points chosen for their relevance ("Asylum Seeker Network DK4 – relevance"). This network shares many of the features (actors, links and centrality) with the triangulation network, which could be a sign that the varieties of the Danish asylum seeker network are fewer than what the theory would expect. This could probably be explained partly by the size of the country and the specificity of the issue itself. All the networks are publicly available online at *Issuecrawler.net* or by request from the author.

36 http://www.bedsteforaeldreforasyl.dk/?Hvem_er_vi%3F, last accessed at January 20, 2012.

mainstream media in recent years and both activist groups maintain a top ten ranking in a google.dk query of “asylum” or “asylum seeker” (in Danish). This should provide the crawler with a list of actors from two very active and highly credible actors that should have considerable relevance to the network themselves. I compared the lists of links from the two websites and choose the actors that were present in both lists as starting points for the co-link analysis³⁷. The resulting issue network included 50 webpages and contained a variety of actor types (activist groups, organizations, official sites and other related sites) with many actors receiving and sending links to the network, which could be seen as a sign of deliberation occurring. With this multiplicity of actors active in the network there is the possibility of finding an active issue network online and therefore I found this version of the map the most useful for my analysis. The graphical issue network map with inlinks (received links) and outlinks (sent links) can be found in Appendix B.

The simple descriptive statistics of the network (Table 1) show that the network contained 46 actors that could be divided into the four different types: Official actors (N=9) that includes the government sites and official institutions; Organizations (N=11) that include international organizations, international and national NGOs; Activist groups (N=19) who covers a range of different groups that make political claims and distribute information about the issue, but are not formally organized as the organizations and institutions; and lastly, the other group (N=7), which encompasses all the remaining actors, such as newspapers and blogs.³⁸

Table 1 also gives us some hints to how the network dynamics functions. It confirms the expectations that activist groups constitute the largest pool of actors (N=19) and that they provide most links to other actors in the network (7.0). These actors should be expected to be most vocal on the Internet and most focused on referring to other relevant actors, because their access to other media channels are more limited than the organizations and official actors. Likewise, it is not surprising that official actors and organizations receive more links on average from the whole of the crawled population (includes all the links that Issue Crawler has found from actors within and without the network) than the rest. However, it goes against my expectations that the organizations – and not the official actors - are the largest recipients of average references from network actors (6.0). This could be an indication that the other actors regard them as very influential for the sustainability of the network. Taking together with the fact that organizations are the least participatory actors in the network with only three average references to other actors in the network, these observations become very interesting. They signal that

37 The full list of starting points can be retrieved from www.issuecrawler.net under the issue network “Asylum seeker network DK6 – triangulation.”

38 An overview off all the actors divided into the different types as well as explanations for the hosts of the Danish websites can be found in the appendix C.

even though their activity seems important for the network, these actors might perform their activities related to the issue in other deliberative spaces (e.g. in the offline media or through lobbying in parliament). The “other” group of actors receives by far the fewest links from the network, which is unsurprising since these actors are supposed to be irrelevant to the issue deliberation.

To estimate the more precise relationship between the actors, we need to break down the links, so we can differentiate between links that are provided and received among the same type of actors and links that connect the different actor types. The result of this breakdown is presented in Table 2. Since the average amount of linking activity by the different types of actors varies substantially, see Table 1, I find it more fruitful to present linking as the percentage of the total links provided and received within the group. In general, there is a strong homophilic tendency among all the different types, apart from “Other”, which does not constitute a coherent group and therefore cannot be expected to exhibit homophily. In the group of official actors 48 percent of the links are coming from other official actors and likewise, 65 percent of the links these actors provide are directed toward official actors as well. The corresponding numbers for organizations are 34 percent for links received from and 64 percent directed to other organizations. Compared with the low average amount of links organizations provide to the network in general, this high number of links to other organizations again suggests that they have less interest in deliberation the issue online. Among the activist groups the homophily is also quite strong. 75 percent of links comes from other activist groups and 62 percent of the outlinks stay within that group. These observations are clearly in line with our expectations of a high degree of homophily among the actors (the first hypothesis).

Table 1: Average Activity of the Various Types of Actors in the Network

Type of actor	Amount (N)	Average unique links to network actors*	Average unique links from network actors*
Official	9	4.4	5.1
Organization	11	3.0	6.0
Advocacy	19	7.0	5.6
Other	7	3.4	2.4
Total	46**	5.0	5.1

Notes: The table shows the average amount of links that the types of actors provide to and receive from the other actors in the network.

* Unique link means that the links from or to a given actor is only counted once regardless of how many links there might exist between the actors (min. one link).

** The valid amount of actors (N) differs from the Issue Crawler data, because I decided to remove two broken pages, facebook.com and addthis.com, from the network and exclude the website, hrw.org, since it didn't contain links to or from the network. Furthermore, I recorded two instances of identical websites that occurred twice, sosmodracisme.dk and anstaendig.dk. I have collapsed these sites into two separate actors in the network. A full list of actors can be found in the Appendix C.

Table 2 also reveals other aspects of the interaction. On average, 28 percent of the links to the official actors comes from the activist groups, whereas only four percent of the links to the activist groups come from the official websites. Likewise, 45 percent of the links to organizations come from activist groups with a mere eight percent of links to the activist type being sent from organizations. This follows our expectation that activist groups would be active in linking to the more institutionalized official actors and organizations without a high degree of reciprocal links. Interestingly, the percentage of links from the official sites that are targeted at organizations (21 percent) is higher than the share of links that the organizations sent to the official actors receive (15 percent). This again highlights the fact that the organizations are seen as important actors and that both activist groups and official sites sustain the organizations central position in the network. In fact the low linking interaction between the official group and the activist groups show that it is the organizations that hold the issue network together by the mere recognition they receive from all the actors. It was expected that the interaction between the most established (official actors) and the least established (activist groups) would be rather low (in accordance with the second hypothesis), but this analysis shows that it is the organizations that is attributed the most importance and at the same time interacts the least through linking with the rest of the actors in the network.

One possible explanation for this phenomenon is that the organization group includes domestic NGOs that work closely with the government (e.g. the Danish Red Cross) as well as highly esteemed international organizations (such as the UN Refugee Agency) that are traditionally recognized by parties on both side of the political spectrum. But that does not explain why these organizations do not reciprocate links to the other actors in the asylum issue. Another explanation here would be that the organizations avoid taking an absolute position on the issue and try to maintain a balanced approach. In this sense, it would make sense if these organizations would refrain from acknowledging the activist groups due to the political sensitive aspect of being affiliated with overtly antagonistic (to the dominant policies) actors on the political scene, and at the same time be cautious in being too closely affiliated with the official institutions. However, at the moment these results are too speculative before the claims and the framing of the deliberation have been analyzed.

Table 2: Inlinks and Outlinks between Different Types of actors (percentage of total*)

Actor Type	Official		Organization		Activist group		Other		Total*	
	Inlink	Outlink	Inlink	Outlink	Inlink	Outlink	Inlink	Outlink	Inlink	Outlink
Official	48%	65%	13%	21%	28%	11%	11%	3%	100%	100%
Organization	17%	15%	34%	64%	45%	20%	4%	2%	99%	101%
Activist group	4%	15%	8%	16%	75%	62%	13%	7%	100%	100%
Other	12%	19%	2%	16%	76%	45%	10%	20%	100%	100%

Notes: The table shows the average proportion of links that the different types of actors receives (inlinks) and provide (outlinks) to other actors in the network, shown in percentages of total amount of links. Note: links here are measured as unique references, which mean that if any given actor provides more than one hyperlink to another actor this only count as one link. It is only the connection between the actors that are of importance here, not the frequency of these connections.

* The total does not add up to a hundred perfectly, because the percentages are shown without decimals.

6. Deliberating the Asylum Issue

To be able to collect all the different claims on the sites I have looked through the various press statements, news, reports and other documents published online between May 2010 and May 2011, as well as the general statements of purpose of the actors. Instead of operating with a fixed set of pre-determined categories, I have let the statements and their context determine the nature of the political claim by using an open-ended coding strategy³⁹. This has been to ensure that my rigid categories do not constrain the material too much, although some simplification of the complexity is obviously unavoidable. Since my goal is to map the different types of political claims that the actors make, I am not interested in the frequency each actor poses the same claims. Therefore, this differs from a more traditional content analysis in that I only code every unique claim made by the actor, which is sufficient for the comparative study of the variety of claims and the framing of the claims made by the actors. Furthermore, relevancy to the issue network is here is solely defined as, whether an actor presents claims or not. It is not self-evident that only active claims-makers are relevant to the issue, since the mere distribution of content in some situations can be very relevant for the politicization of an issue. However, given that my focus is on the issue network as a deliberative space I find it justified to restrict this analysis to active claims-makers. I have registered and coded every unique claim made by the actors⁴⁰ and compiled the information in the matrix below (Table 3).

Table 3 shows the distribution of claims across actor types and the general framing variations of these claims. The table reveals a number of interesting findings that need further discussion. The coding process revealed that 20 out of the 46 actors identified in the issue network posed clearly identified political claims about asylum seekers⁴¹. This distribution of claims-making actors across the types was such that there are three official, seven organization, ten activist and zero actors from the "other" group. This makes the official actors underrepresented, the organizations overrepresented and the activist actors proportionally the same compared to the full population in the issue network.⁴² If we see the amount of inlinks as a sign of

39 Koopmans and Statham, "Political Claims Analysis: Integrating Protest Event and Political Discourse Analysis."

40 The full coding can be retrieved by the author or found in my MA Thesis: "The issue network as a site of politics: Deliberating the Danish Asylum Issue on the Internet", http://www.etd.ceu.hu/2011/oermen_jacob.pdf.

41 Originally 22 actors presented relevant claims, but since both the Danish Refugee Council and the Danish Institute for Human Rights, had the same material on their Danish (flygtning.dk and menneskeret.dk) and English (drc.dk and humanrights.dk) websites I have collapsed these sites into drc.dk and humanrights.dk.

42 This is merely a simple observation from the small sample and not an expression of statistical significance.

importance to the issue, this observation follows our expectation since organizations were on average the largest recipients of links from the network, followed by activist groups and with official actors coming in last. Since none of the actors of the “other” type presented any claims on the asylum issue within they hold no relevance for the remainder of the framing analysis.

When we look at the overview data in Table 3 we get roughly the same picture. On average, the official actors present 3.25 different claims each, the organizations, 5.6 claims and the activist groups, 5.2 claims. This is interesting since on one hand it confirms our expectation that the actors with most links to the network – the activist groups - also presents most claims in total (52) and thereby contribute most to the deliberation. However, on the other hand, the organizations that provided the least number of links to the network on average (3.0) present most claims to the network on average (5.6). This suggests that the relationship between links and deliberation is more complex than at first sight, which I will discuss further. The framing confirms the expectations in general; the activist groups take an overtly critical stance on the official policies, the official actors remain neutral or defend the policies, and the organizations place themselves somewhere in between (without directly approving of the government policies). In the framing of the claims there is only one really surprising observation: the official actor, the Danish Institute for Human Rights, adopts a critical stance towards the government on several sub-issues. A closer scrutiny of the human rights institution reveals that its mandate in Danish politics is to be a sort of “critical watchdog” on behalf of human rights in Danish society⁴³. Therefore, they act more in line with the independent organizations even though they are a part of the official political establishment and receive their funding directly from the state budget.

When looking at the claims-making across the various categories we find little evidence of a functional deliberative space. The only areas where the interaction transcends the various actor types and positions on the asylum issue is within “International Treaties”, “Children’s Rights”, “Forced Returns (Greece)” and to a certain extent “Support Home”. The first two areas are key areas of the issue that have received substantial attention from the domestic and international community in recent years (most recently in the UN’s Universal Periodic Review of Denmark in the spring of 2011⁴⁴) and both rank as some of the most discussed areas of the asylum issue (13 and 15 claims-makers respectively).




43 See e.g. <http://www.humanrights.dk/who+we+are>, accessed on January 9 2011).

44 See e.g. the UN Compilation of documents from the UPR <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/HRC/WG.6/11/DNK/2&Lang=E>, accessed on: January 9, 2011.

Table 3: Overview of Political Claims Divided into Actor Types and Claim Categories

Claims	Conditions in Centers				Asylum Seeker Process			Rejection of Seekers			Total
	Inter. treaty	Health Probl.	Human Rights	Detention	Legal Prot.	Discriminate	Child. Rights	Forced return Gre.	Oth.	Supp. Home	
Official (N=3)	3	1	1	1	0	1	2	1	2	1	13
Ministry for Integ.	X						X	X		X	4
Dan. Inst. Human	X	X	X	X		X	X		X		7
Refu. Appeal Boa.	X								X		2
Organization (N=7)	5	4	2	4	2	2	6	4	6	4	39
Amnesty Internat.	X	X		X			X		X		5
UN Refugee Agen.				X	X				X	X	4
Dan. Refu. Counc.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	10
Amnesty DK	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		8
UN Human Rights	X	X					X		X	X	5
Danish Red Cross							X	X		X	3
Danish UN Assoc.	X						X	X	X		4
Activist (N=10)	5	7	5	5	6	5	7	4	6	2	52
SOS against Raci.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		8
Cross-cult. Cent.										X	1
Arne Hansen	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		9

Comitt. Und. Ref.	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X		8
Support Asyl. Ref.	X		X		X			X	X	X		6
Grand. for Asylum	X		X	X	X	X	X	X			X	8
Ass. Rejec. Iraqis								X		X		2
Visavis		X				X						2
Citiz. decent Den.	X	X	X		X	X	X					6
Amnesty Now				X						X		2
Total (N=20)	13	12	8	10	8	8	15	9	14	7	104	

The table shows the amount of claims that the actors present within the different claim categories. The colors attached to the claims represent the framing of the claims:  = claims are framed against the prevailing policies and identifies solutions that are better alternatives;  = claims are not framed against any specific responsible actor or they are framed more as policy suggestions than demands; and  = the claims that are framed in support of the current policies and justify actions taken to enforce these policies.

The data used in this table is taken from a content analysis in my MA Thesis, access: http://www.etd.ceu.hu/2011/oermen_jacob.pdf

The coding scheme and actor overview can be found in the appendices (A and C).

The discussion of international treaties centers on the hierarchy of domestic vs. international law and how much the government is expected to implement international treaties (e.g. UN and ECHR) and is as such a part of the greater debate about state sovereignty that is carried out frequently in the press and elsewhere. "Children's Rights" is a more case-specific issue that deals with the treatment of minors in asylum centers and in the juridical process and is an issue that manages to mobilize many critical voices because of its contentious nature. The discussion about forced returns to Greece is different, since it deals with a time-specific event, namely the gradual breakdown of the Greek social and justice system during the financial crisis, which was covered widely in the Danish press during the time of study. The government could not avoid the topic, probably because of its news value and the civil society actors could use the momentum to mobilize on the issue.

The last area that merits a few comments is the issue of whether to support asylum seekers close to their homes in order to avoid crowds of refugees arriving in Denmark. The category only engages a few oppositional actors (Danish Red Cross and the Grandparents for Asylum), who argue against the establishment of centers close to the homelands due to the risk of persecution locally and they are as such not against the proposal of increasing the support locally.⁴⁵ In the remaining issue categories there are no deliberation occurring across the spectrum and I will therefore not go deeper into the discussion of these areas of the issue deliberation here⁴⁶. Consequently, apart from the few categories discussed above the issue was neither active (no claims made) nor vibrant (contentious framing) in the online sphere. In this sense, the issue network could not qualify as a functioning deliberative space.

Before I turn to the concluding remarks, I wish to touch upon the relationship between the results from the two different analyses. To test the relationship between the centrality in the network - measured by inlinks - and the relevance to the network - measured by the number of different claims - I conducted a simple correlation analysis of the amount of inlinks received and the number of claims presented (see Appendix C). The correlating results are significant ($P < 0.05$, $n=46$), but rather small (0.30), which means that there is a tendency for actors that receive more links to also contribute more to the deliberation than others⁴⁷. This observation confirms that hyperlinks can play an important role in identifying the

45 See http://www.rodekors.dk/files/DRK_2011/Detgoervi/Danmark/Asyl/Rapporter%20og%20hoerings svar/Aarsberetning_2010.pdf and http://www.bedsteforaeldreforasyl.dk/?Breve_og_avisartikler, accessed on: January 9, 2011.

46 A thorough discussion of the qualitative differences in the framing among the actors can be found in my Master thesis, which is publicly available here: http://www.etd.ceu.hu/2011/oermen_jacob.pdf.

47 Full list of data of the network as well as calculations can be retrieved from the author upon request.

actors that prove to be the most vocal in the deliberation online, but the relatively humble correlation result suggests at the same time that hyperlinks cannot be sufficient indicators of this deliberative activity. One ironic fact, is that the most central actor in the network (measured by inlinks), The Danish Immigrant Counseling, do not present a single claim and therefore do not contribute to the deliberation at all (see Appendix C). Nonetheless, there is in fact a significant correlation between centrality in the network and relevance to the deliberation, which could be interesting to explore in further studies of other issue networks online, for example, to establish the causal relationship. An analysis of the amount of hits and visits these websites receive could provide an interesting perspective on whether the central websites in the network also maintain a high visibility and thereby importance on the wider web. This could also be used to assess how accessible the different claims and framings are online, for example, in the number of Google searches on different relevant keywords.

7. Conclusions

Through a mapping of the hyperlink network forming around relevant websites on the Danish asylum issue and a subsequent analysis of the claims-making by the actors on these websites this article has discussed the possibilities of seeing the online sphere as a deliberative space, where politics can happen. All in all, the analysis showed a network that, even though the network contained the overall structures for a functioning deliberative space (a hyperlink network that encompass a variety of political actors across the political spectrum), demonstrated very sparse deliberation across the political spectrum. The infrastructure was there, although centralized around organizations, yet the channels of communication were not used substantially. In a few categories there proved to be some deliberation occurring between the more established official actors and the less established organizations as well as the activist groups not commonly part of the political debates in the political arenas, which of course is a sign that the Internet has potential in forming a deliberative space for alternative politics to happen (outside of the parliamentary debates and the restricted space in the mainstream media). However, the picture still remained bleak for most parts of the issue network, which could at best be characterized by a form of coalition-network (especially among the activist groups, but also among the organizations to a certain extent).

In the network in general the organizations proved to be the most central actors (according to the interlinking between the different actor types), who were recognized as important by both sides of the spectrum. At the same time, the organizations did not reciprocate many links to these groups and could as such be interpreted as performing the issue in separate arenas (e.g. through lobbying or in the media). However, in the claims-making analysis the organizations proved to be the most active (on average), which might tell us more about the flaws of hyperlinks

in identifying the most active deliberators in the issue network than about the linking preferences of the organizations. A correlation analysis of the links received and claims made suggested a positive significant relationship, but with a very moderate correlation coefficient (0.30), which confirms the findings in the separate analyses that the linking patterns are helpful, yet inadequate, in identifying deliberation on the Internet. The relationship between links and deliberation online is an area that merits further research.

Research design like this has significant merit and of course some limitations. First of all, this study has disregarded the role of social media sites such as web fora, blogs, Facebook, Twitter and Google+ in the formation of the deliberative space. Many political actors across the spectrum obviously use these services to present their viewpoints and as such they have great potential and relevance. There are a couple of reasons, why these sites have been left out. First of all, they have a number of limitations (restricted access and format constraints such as word limits) that does not correspond with my attempt to locate the most fully developed claims of the actors, but more importantly, Issue Crawler is not capable of capturing the "deep pages" on the social media sites, which makes it impossible to analyze the activity on e.g. an actor's Facebook page.

A related limitation is that the actors not necessarily use the online sphere as their primary arena for deliberation. Especially the official actors and most likely the organizations as well use other media platforms (e.g. the mainstream media) as their primary space for political interaction. This whole offline world of media platforms and other opportunities – as well as the online possibilities of social media and web fora – is not accounted for here, which is a common shortcoming of analyses of political participation online. In general there is a need to conduct more comparative studies of political deliberation in offline and online media. One recent study by Koopmans and Zimmermann on the political communication among different types of actors online touched upon this question. They concluded that, even though less powerful actors (e.g. civil society groups) did achieve slightly higher visibility in the online sphere compared with the offline media, it was still the official political (state and party) actors that dominated the deliberation in both spheres⁴⁸. The question that still remains to be addressed in the future is, whether the hyperlink networks could as equally important as the offline interaction, or whether the online still remains an underused and underdeveloped deliberative space. My conclusions here have been rather tentative, and rightly so, because there is still a lot of research to be done before we can get a fuller picture, of whether the Internet indeed is a site of political action.

⁴⁸ Ruud Koopmans and Ann Zimmermann, "Transnational Political Communication on the Internet," in *The Making of a European Public Sphere*, ed. Ruud Koopmans and Paul Statham (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

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Appendices
Appendix A: Coding Guidelines for the Claims-Making

Claims	Key phrases
<i>International Treaties</i>	The Danish asylum policies are in compliance / violation with the multitude of relevant international treaties, such as the UN treaties (e.g. the UN Convention against Torture) on as well as the European Convention on Human Rights (EHRC); these international treaties are flawed and in need of revision to provide a sufficient backdrop for Danish asylum policies; Denmark has signed but not implemented treaties;
<i>Conditions in Centers</i>	
- Health problems	inhuman conditions in centers; care for torture victims and people suffering from psychological problems (PTSD), suicide attempts in centers; medical treatment of seekers;
- Detention	no end date for processing; detention without trial (Detention Center Ellebaek); asylum should be granted to seekers staying for longer periods in centers; detention justified; legal right to detention;
- Human Rights	Deprivation of rights to work, study and live: accommodation outside of centers, language training and basic schooling for children, further training for adults,
<i>Asylum Seeker Process</i>	
- Legal protection	proper counseling, legal representation, provision of interpreters; Refugee Appeals Board not a proper institution; opportunity to appeal;
- Discrimination	rating system makes it difficult to obtain citizenship; family reunification harder for asylum seekers; lack of positive discrimination in granting humanitarian residence permits to weak asylum seekers; sick / elderly / torture victims harder to get residence permit
- Children's rights	the need to treat children as separate case; keep unity of family; better care for unaccompanied minors; Residence permit for minors staying the majority of their life in DK; children right to health care

Rejection of Seekers

- Forced Return: Greece Lack of proper safety and protection of human rights in Greece; Dublin Convention; ECHR statement to stop returning seekers to Greece;

 - Forced Return: Other Expulsion of asylum seekers to areas, where their lives might be in danger (e.g. due to perpetual war conditions, fear of persecution and torture). Limited time frame between the decisions to expulse an asylum seeker and the act of expulsion; moral duty to; expulsion of torture victims and ill persons; refoulement: Iraq, Syria, Libya, Nigeria, Iran

 - Support Home Country Provide assistance in rebuilding home countries; survey the situation of repatriated asylum seekers; rebuilding in home countries; support of asylum seekers near home country; establishment of refugee camps in home country;
-

Appendix C: List of Actors in the Network

Rank*	Inlink	URL	Owner	Type	Base	Claims
1	24	invandreraadgivingen.dk	The Danish Immigrant Counseling	Activist	DK	0
2	17	Amnesty.dk	Amnesty Inter. Denmark	Organization	DK	8
3	16	flygtning.dk	Danish Refugee Council	Organization	DK	10
4	15	nyidanmark.dk	Danish Ministry for Refugees, Immigration and Integration	Official	DK	4
5	12	rct.dk	Research- and Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victims	Organization	DK	0
6	13	menneskeret.dk	Danish Institute for Human Rights	Official	DK	7
7	11	unhcr.org	The UN Refugee Agency	Organization	Int	4
8	10	Aegteskabuden graenser.dk	The Association for Marriage without Borders	Activist	DK	0
9	10	Vold-mod-udenlandskekvinder.dk	The Danish Immigrant Counseling	Activist	DK	0
10	9	drc.dk	Danish Refugee Council – English version	Organization	DK	-**
11	9	Tvaerkulturelt-center.dk	The Cross-cultural Center	Activist	DK	1
12	9	Visum-invitation.dk	The Danish Immigrant Counseling	Activist	DK	0
13	9	antiracisme.dk	The Danish Immigrant Counseling	Activist	DK	0
24	9	fln.dk	The Refugee Appeals Board	Official	DK	2
25	9	Bedsteforaeldre	Grandparents	Activist	DK	8

26	8	forasyl.dk Amnesty.org	for asylum Amnesty International	Organi zation	Int	5
27	8	den-svenske- model.dk	The Danish Immigrant Counseling	Activist	DK	0
28	8	Flygtningeunde rjorden.dk	The Committee for Underground Refugees	Activist	DK	8
29	8	Stoettekredsen. dk	Support Asylum to Refugees and Expulsed Persons	Activist	DK	6
30	8	Afvisteirakere.d k	The association for the support to rejected Iraqi Asylum seekers	Activist	DK	2
31	8	Amnesty-nu.dk	Amnesty Now	Activist	DK	2
32	7	Una.dk	Danish United Nation Association	Organi zation	DK	4
33	7	Um.dk	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Official	DK	0
34	7	Finfo.dk	Library service on integration	Other	DK	0
35	7	Foreningen- nydansker.dk	The Association for the Integration of Immigrants in the labor market	Activist	DK	No
36	7	anstaendigt.dk	Citizens for a decent Denmark	Activist	DK	6
37	7	drk.dk	The Danish Red Cross	NGO	DK	3
38	6	Drcenter.dk	Documentation and Advisory Center for Race- discrimination	Organi zation	DK	0

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39	6	visavis.dk	Unknown	Activist	DK	2
40	6	sosmodracisme.dk	Sos against Racism	Activist	DK	8
41	5	Kvinderisort.dk	Women in Black	Activist	DK	0
42	5	arnehansen.net	Arne Hansen – private person	Activist	DK	9
41	5	folketinget.dk	The Danish Parliament	Official	DK	0
42	4	foreignersindenmark.dk	Unknown	Other	DK	0
43	3	Joomla.org	Joomla	Other	Int	0
44	3	Ohchr.org	UN Human Rights- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights	Organization	Int	5
45	3	Internal-displacement.org	Internal Displacement Monitoring Center / Norwegian Refugee Council	Organization	Int	0
46	3	ug.dk	Ministry of education	Official	DK	0
47	3	km.dk	The Danish Ministry for Church Affairs	Official	DK	0
48	3	traume.dk	Various organizations (incl. the Danish Refugee Council)	Activist	DK	0
49	3	Krak.dk	Unknown	Other	DK	0
50	2	humanrights.dk	Danish Institute for Human Rights – English version	Official	DK	-**
51	2	Information.dk	Information –	Other	DK	0

			Danish Newspaper			
52	2	retsinformation. dk	The Civil Affairs Agency	Official	DK	0
53	2	Jp.dk	Jyllands-Posten (newspaper)	Other	DK	0
54	2	Humanisme.dk	Rune Engelbrecht (private person)	Other	DK	0

The list only includes sites that are represented in the issue network. The rank and inlink score is based on the Issue Crawler Data from the network "Asylum Seeker Network DK6 – triangulation", which is publicly available on www.issuecrawler.net
 * The rank score is determined by the number of links a given site received from the crawled population.

** A few actors have both an English and Danish website. These have been collapsed into one claims-maker.