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what lawyers need to know about

Legal Industry Demand Trends

Based on stack exchange datasets

LegaMart is an online platform that aims to help connect **small business owners, freelancers, startups, individuals, and legal professionals** all across the globe, providing quality international legal services in a way that is **accessible** to people and businesses from all nations and backgrounds.

The LegaMart **platform** pairs specific legal solutions to specific legal problems through the usage of algorithms and carefully designed user-experiences. As an innovative business, we truly make it easier for applicants to access affordable, quality legal services in any foreign jurisdiction, and for legal service providers to boost their careers and expand and scale their practices globally.

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Introduction

Introduction

The StackExchange platform has proved itself as a vibrant and active community of experts in various fields who are eager to provide expert opinions, help, and guidance to any member who asks for it. Law Stack Exchange, the law related sub-forum of the community platform, which hosts legal experts of many different backgrounds, is no exception to this trend either.

With about 32,000 active users, Law Stack Exchange can be an invaluable asset in market and marketing research based on data analysis, and can provide insight into the trends and prominent issues in the field of law.

The knowledge-sharing platform works by utilizing text-based Questions (also known as posts) and answers. Users in need of guidance can post questions on the forum to be analyzed and answered by experts in the field. Respondents are ranked based on their 'reputation'; a measure of how many helpful answers they have provided. This metric is decided on by the community through a system of voting. Both posts and answers can be edited, responded to, and as such, discussed by many experts, which makes the answers a highly collaborative effort based on goodwill and civil discourse.

Our report is designed to identify trends and provide new insights into the most prevalent issues in the field of law. In order to achieve this, we conducted a mixed-method meta-analysis of data obtained from the Law Stack Exchange platform's more than 18,000 questions, and 380,000 answers, using datasets from the Stack Exchange data dump, accessible at archive.org, licensed under creative commons. This study covers six years of data, from 2015 to March 2020.
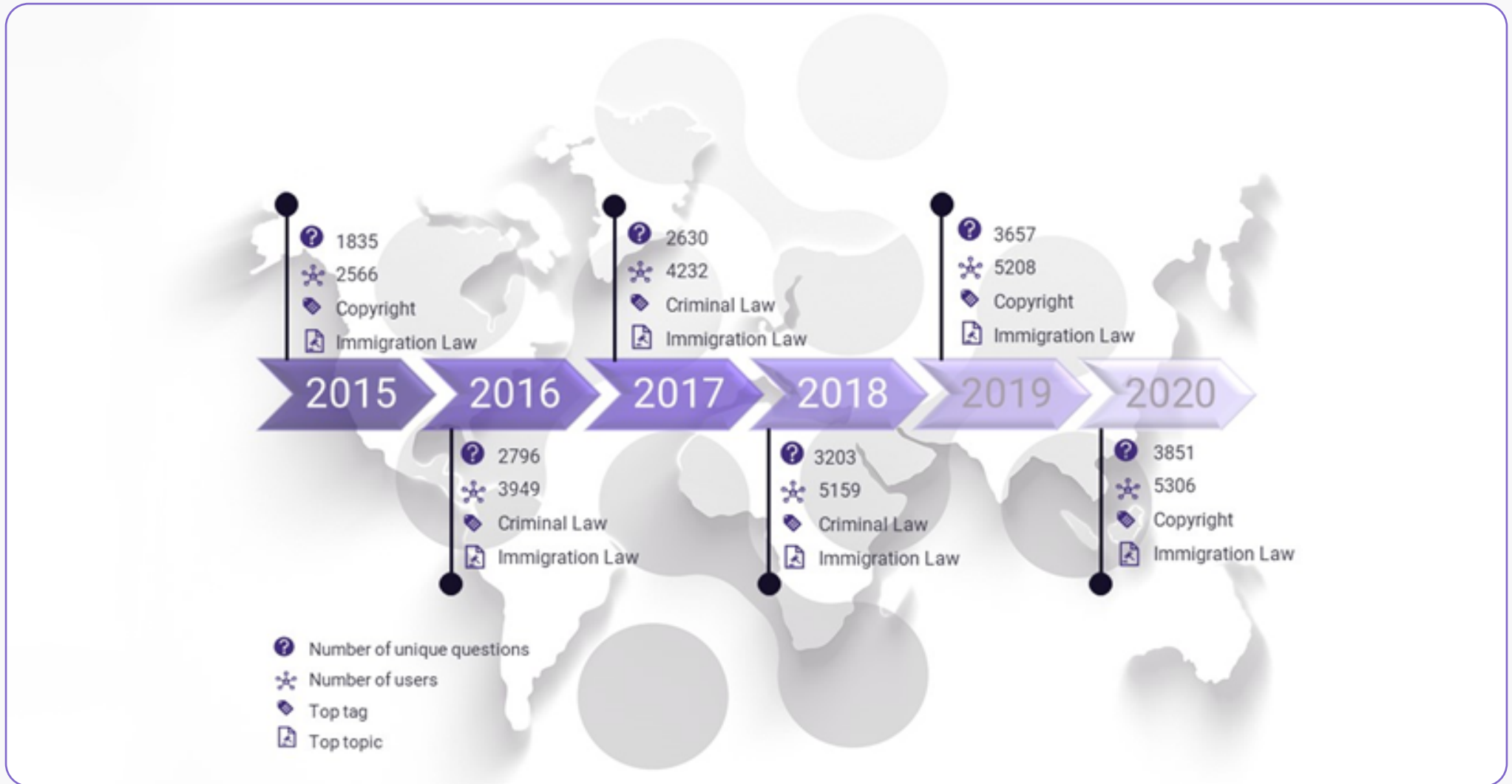
Data Overview

Data Overview

Over the past six years, 17972 unique questions have been asked. Since 2015 to March 2020, 26420 unique users have joined the law space, representing a growth rate of 106%. Among these questions, "Copyright", "Criminal Law", and "Immigration Law", have been the most popular tags used to sort questions posed in the community.

2015
- 1835 — Number of unique questions
- 2566 — Number of users
- Copyright
- Immigration Law

2016
- 2796
- 3949
- Criminal Law
- Immigration Law

2017
- 2630
- 4232
- Criminal Law
- Immigration Law

2018
- 3203
- 5159
- Criminal Law
- Immigration Law

2019
- 3657
- 5208
- Copyright
- Immigration Law

2020
- 3851
- 5306
- Copyright
- Immigration Law

Legend:
- Number of unique questions
- Number of users
- Top tag
- Top topic

Data Assortment And Analysis

Analysis of Law Stack Exchange offers access to a wide variety of information regarding legal issues and practices due to its ubiquitous nature.

The number of unique questions on Law Stack Exchange since 2015 has grown to over 18,000, spanning 26 legal topics. Three topics (Energy and Infrastructure Law, Insolvency Law, and Sports Law) had no relevant questions based on our topic modelling analysis.

Topic Modeling

Our approach to question classification and data analysis was based on the Topic Modeling method. Normally, in this method, set topics (also known as labels) are chosen by analysts based on previously determined criteria. Each topic is assigned a number of marker words, for which the datasets (here the question texts) are crawled for. After tallying and analysis a preliminary topic is assigned to each question based on the occurrence of topic marker words in its text.

At the onset of our study, topic marker words were chosen to be the tags by which the platform's users use to sort their questions. After further analysis, this approach proved not to be as beneficial to our study as expected. As such, we chose to utilize an alternate method of parsing and tagging of data instead of the traditional noun and verb word tagging. This method allowed us to evaluate the types of questions seen on Law Stack Exchange posts, which corresponded to the different legal issues raised on the platform, and the tags utilized by its user base.

We chose to assign specific legal terms and trigger words as topic markers. These terms were chosen based on the insight and expertise of our legal experts to reflect the initial findings of our study. In addition to providing insight into the more common questions among various topics, this study revealed some of the legal practice areas most commonly referred to and needed on the platform.

Initial Topic Sets

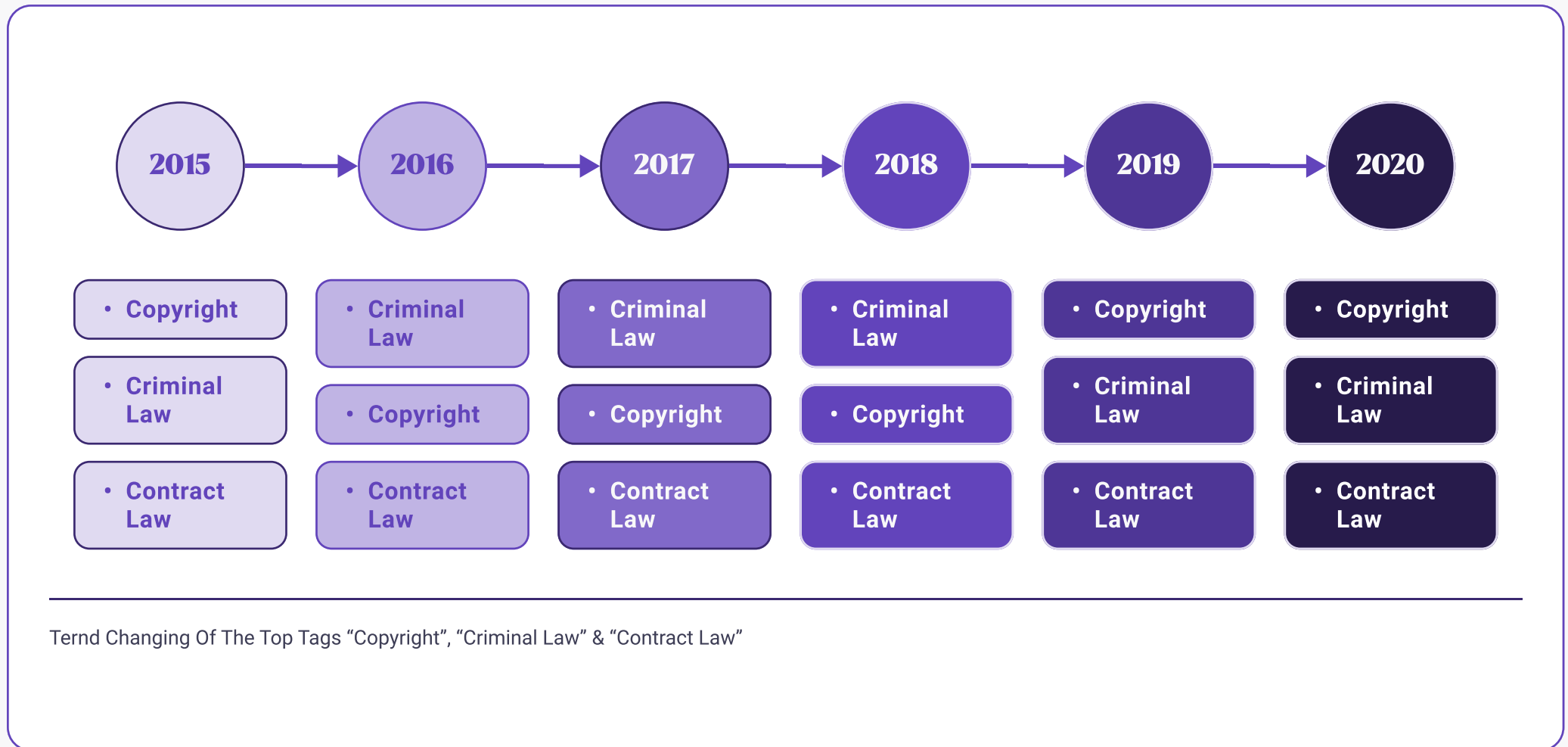Within a total of 23 topics, "Immigration law" is the topic with the highest question volume at 13.16%, followed by "Public Law" at 13.15%, and "Commercial Law" at 10.66%. We see the exact same pattern when looking at how many times users view and/or read questions, with "**Immigration Law**" receiving 13345670 views, "**Public Law**" receiving 13250407 views, and "**Commercial Law**" receiving 10350450 views.
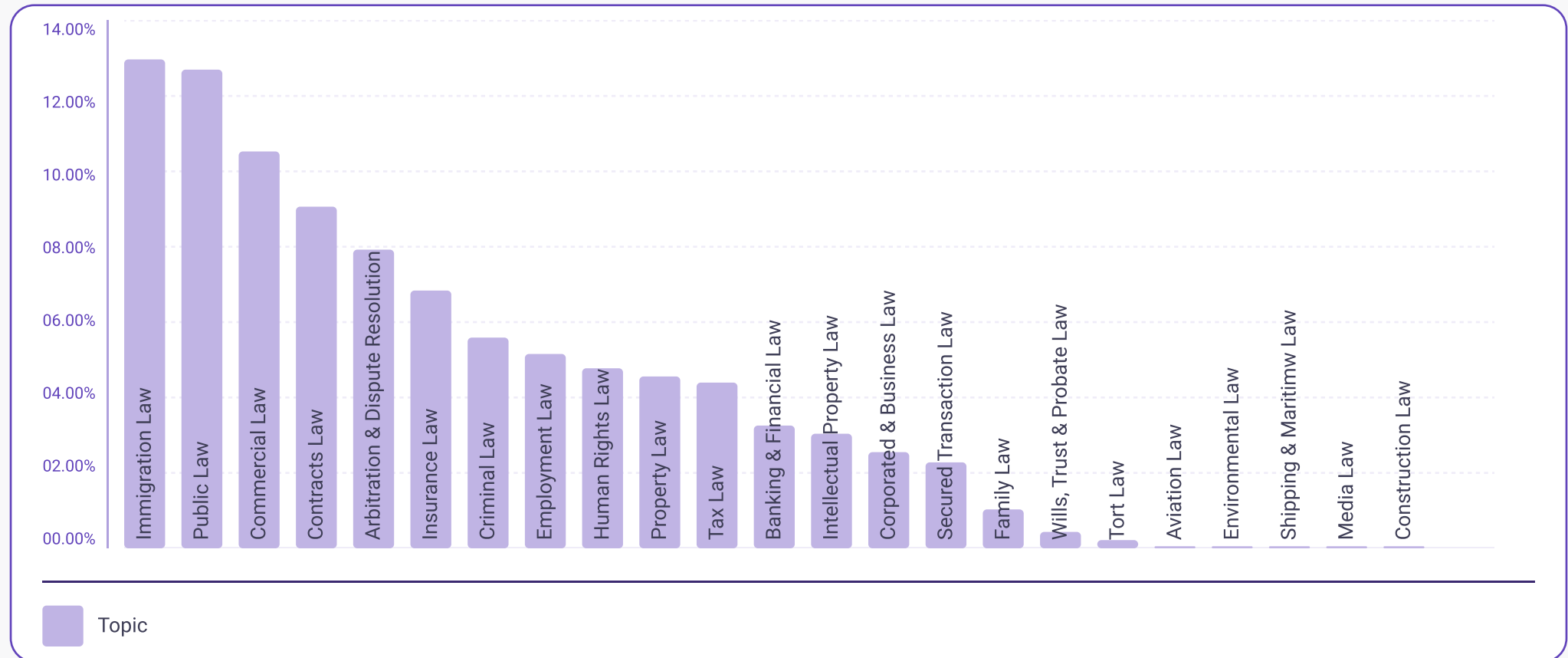
Data Assortment And Analysis

We also see that the trend of topics has remained the same over the last six years (2015 - 2020). For each year, the top tags are "Copyright", "Criminal Law", and "Contract Law".

2015	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**
• Copyright	• Criminal Law	• Criminal Law	• Criminal Law	• Copyright	• Copyright
• Criminal Law	• Copyright	• Copyright	• Copyright	• Criminal Law	• Criminal Law
• Contract Law	• Contract Law	• Contract Law	• Contract Law	• Contract Law	• Contract Law

Ternd Changing Of The Top Tags "Copyright", "Criminal Law" & "Contract Law"

Data Assortment And Analysis
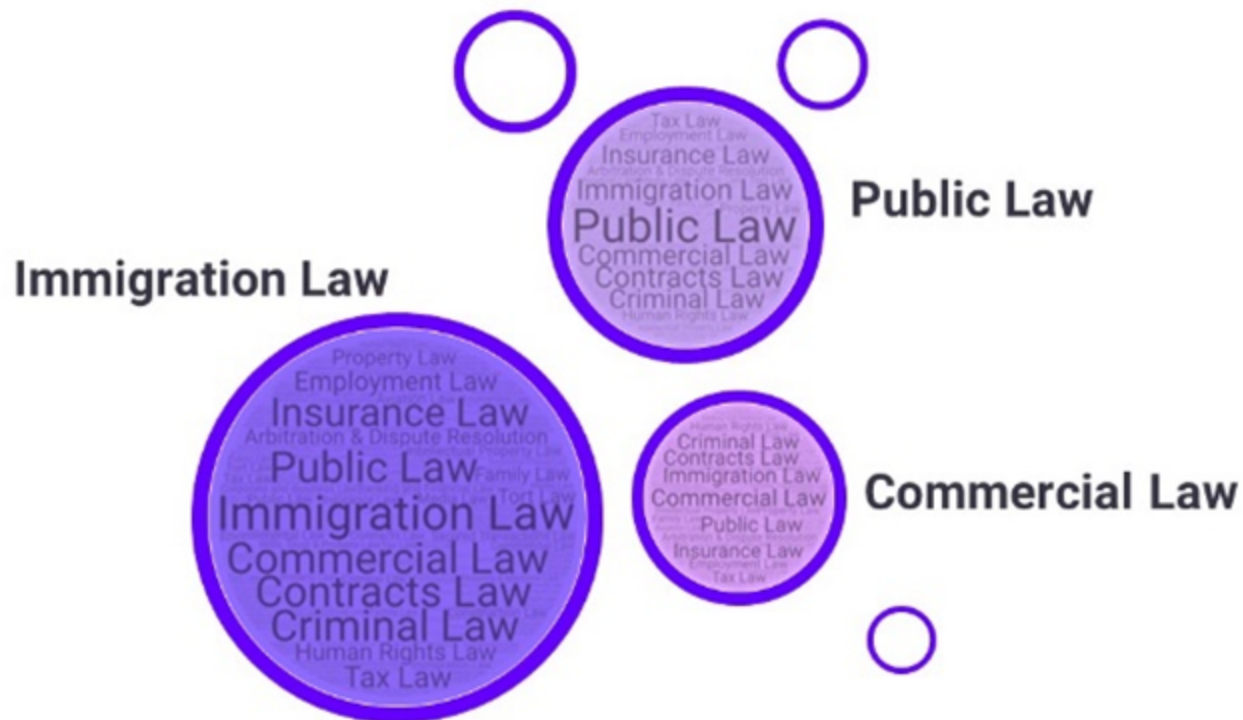
According to our analysis, the topic popularity trend has remained more or less flat over the years, with "Immigration Law" taking the top spot, "Public Law" coming in second, and "Commercial Law" coming in third.

The following is an overview of each legal topic's post volume over the 2015-2020 period.

Topic Popularity Trend From 2015 To 2020
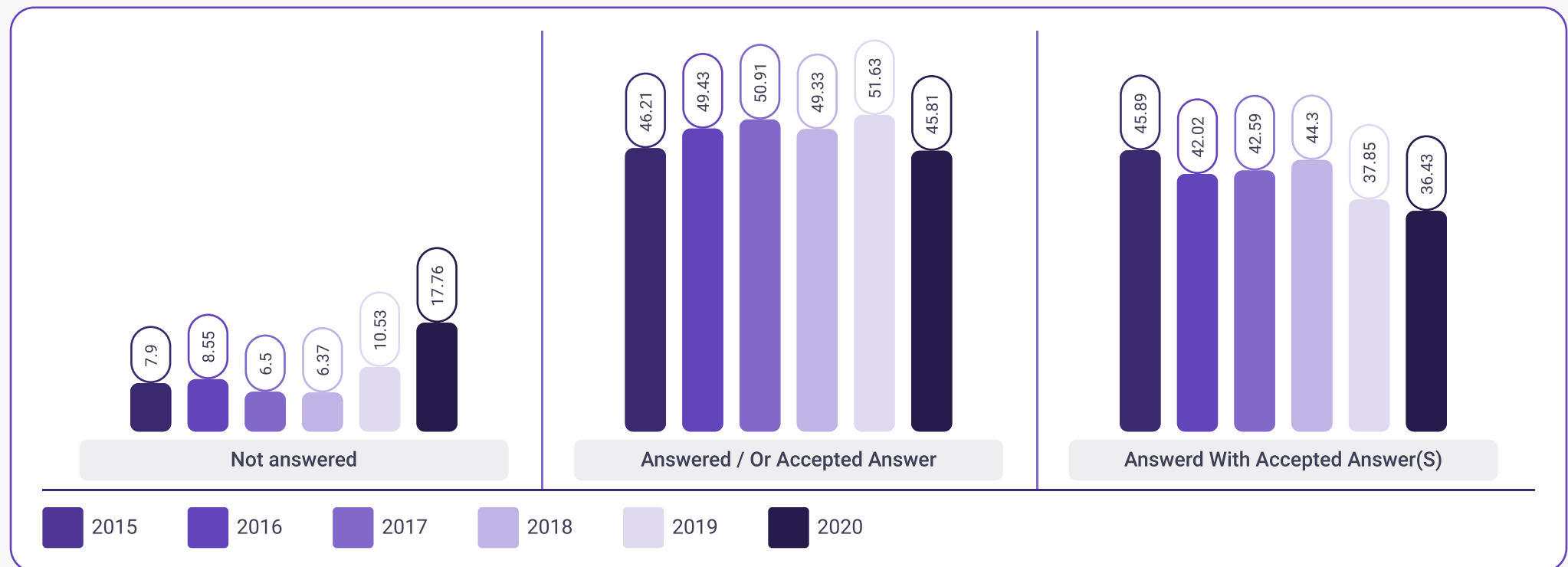
Trend Analysis: Answered Questions

Trend Analysis: Answered Questions

Out of 17,972 unique asked questions, 16,144 (about 90%) have at least one answer, with 1,828 being left without one. Around 7,343 - or nearly half - of the questions answered by the community have at least one accepted answer (meaning that the community and/or the question's original poster has found the answer to be sufficient), while 8,801 do not.

Questions with one answer are the most frequent, with questions with more responses quickly falling off in numbers within the datasets.

Over the last six years, the year 2018 had the most answered questions (about 93.63%), and the year 2020 had the fewest answered questions (about 82.24%). The year 2015 has the highest accepted answer rate among the following six years, even though more questions were answered in 2018.

Not answered: 7.9, 8.55, 6.5, 6.37, 10.53, 17.76

Answered / Or Accepted Answer: 46.21, 49.43, 50.91, 49.33, 51.63, 45.81

Answerd With Accepted Answer(S): 45.89, 42.02, 42.59, 44.3, 37.85, 36.43

Legend: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020

Trend Analysis: Answered Questions

Over the six-year period, questions regarding "Immigration Law", "Public Law", and "Commercial Law" have continued to dominate the trend of legal topics, and have received the most accepted answers.

The table below shows each legal topic's share of answers over the studied timeframe of 2015-2020 by percentage:

Topic	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Grand Total
Arbitration & Dispute Resolution	8.81%	7.81%	7.39%	8.30%	7.95%	8.03%	8.02%
Aviation Law	0.05%	0.05%	0.00%	0.01%	0.03%	0.01%	0.02%
Banking and Financial Law	3.45%	3.84%	3.58%	3.89%	3.88%	3.63%	3.73%
Commercial Law	10.73%	11.01%	10.30%	10.65%	11.03%	10.26%	10.66%
Construction Law	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.01%	0.04%	0.01%
Contracts Law	8.97%	8.40%	8.87%	9.09%	9.38%	8.96%	8.97%
Corporate and Business Law	3.13%	2.78%	2.98%	3.20%	2.90%	2.66%	2.94%
Criminal Law	5.68%	5.58%	6.25%	5.78%	5.05%	6.03%	5.72%
Employment Law	5.61%	0.04%	5.31%	5.05%	6.17%	5.69%	5.53%

Trend Analysis: Answered Questions

Topic	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Grand Total
Environmental Law	0.02%	0.04%	0.02%	0.03%	0.01%	0.01%	0.02%
Family Law	0.77%	0.95%	1.12%	1.15%	1.08%	1.20%	1.07%
Human Rights Law	5.10%	5.05%	5.31%	5.36%	4.73%	5.21%	5.12%
Immigration Law	13.52%	13.46%	12.99%	12.78%	13.07%	13.33%	13.16%
Insurance Law	6.58%	6.64%	6.76%	6.96%	7.54%	6.92%	6.94%
Intellectual Property Law	3.76%	4.15%	3.66%	3.48%	3.01%	3.15%	3.49%
Media Law	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.06%	0.01%	0.00%	0.01%
Property Law	4.17%	4.65%	4.70%	4.33%	4.22%	4.47%	4.42%
Public Law	13.31%	13.50%	13.30%	12.79%	12.62%	13.54%	13.15%
Secured Transactions Law	2.23%	2.12%	2.47%	2.44%	2.12%	2.11%	2.25%
Shipping & Maritime Law	8.81%	0.05%	0.02%	0.00%	0.01%	0.01%	0.02%

Trend Analysis: Answered Questions

Topic	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Grand Total
Tax Law	3.80%	7.81%	451%	4.14%	4.58%	4.30%	4.30%
Tort Law	0.05%	7.81%	0.15%	0.17%	0.14%	0.13%	0.13%
Wills, Trust & Probate Law	0.23%	7.81%	0.31%	0.35%	0.43%	0.29%	0.31%

Trend Analysis: Answer Times
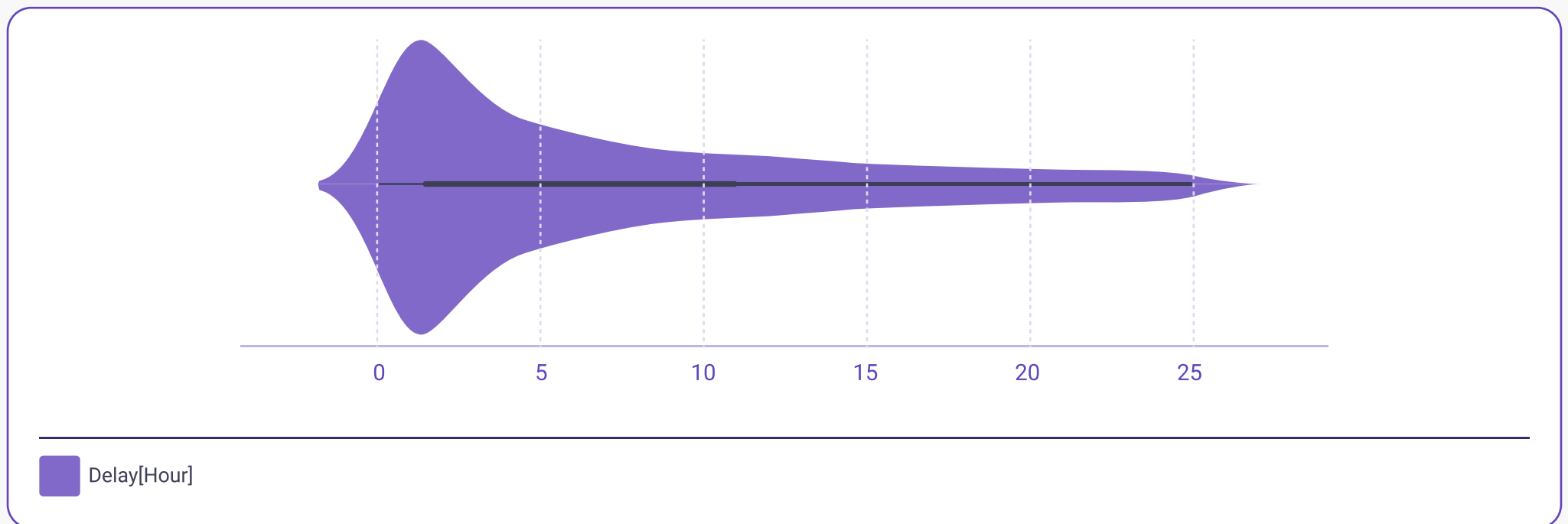
Trend Analysis: Answer Times

Exchange can be a valuable resource on determining the most prevalent legal trends and the availability of legal expertise in the corresponding fields.

Data acquired from analysis of time data on the platform can be aggregated and presented as follows:

More than 75% of questions on expert topics are answered in a median timeframe of 12 hours. Approximately half of the questions are answered within the first four hours.

Since a question may have multiple answers, the mean differences between posting a question and getting all answers are calculated. After removing the outliers, the data is plotted with the time dimension measured in hours.

Delay[Hour]

Trend Analysis: Answer Times

The following is the duration of time it takes for an answer to be received after a question has been posted. The chart shows that, generally, 2020 had the shortest response time (an average of 3.5 hours) in comparison to the other five years, and 2015 had the longest (an average of 7 hours).

Delay[Hour]
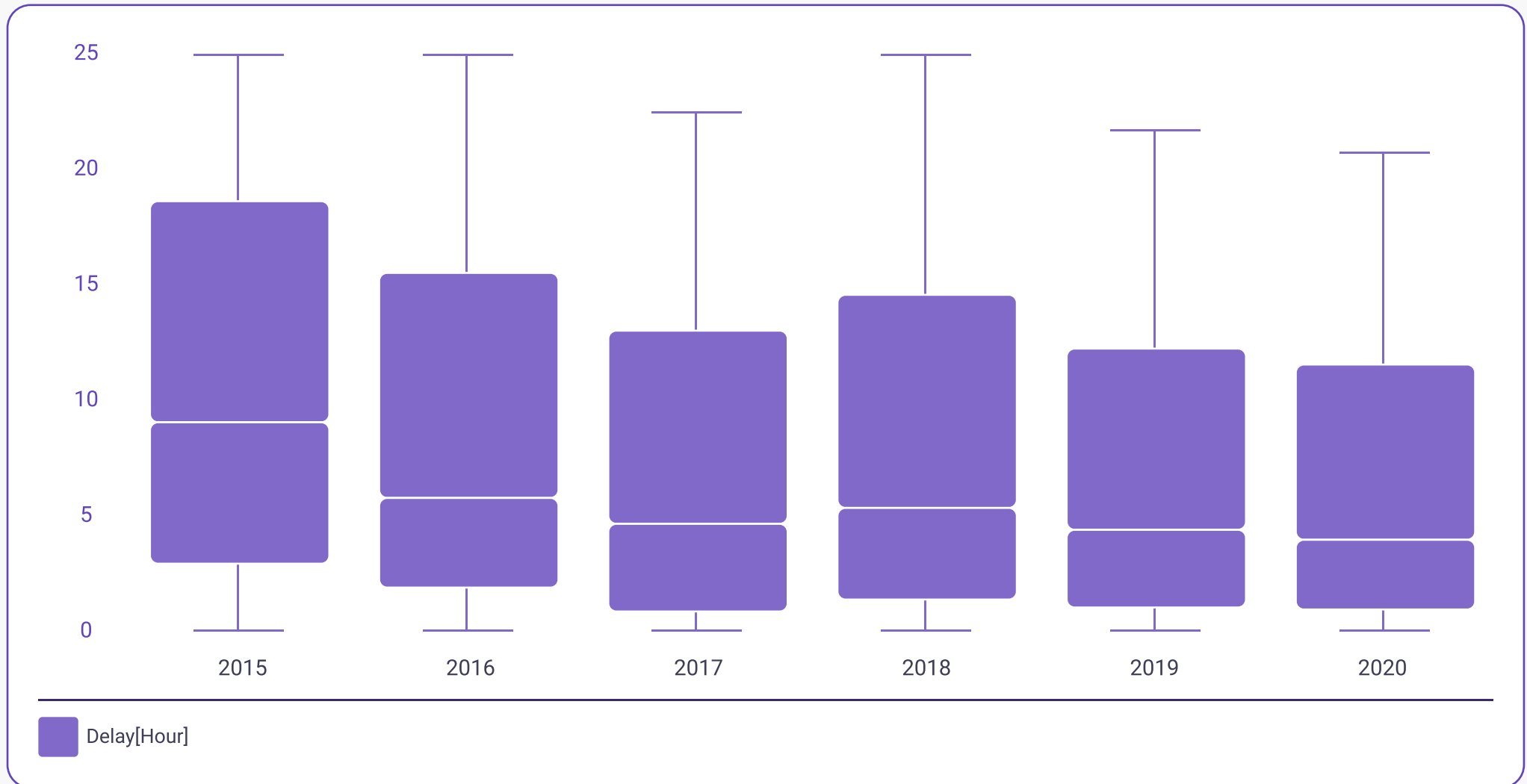
Popular Legal Topics

A total of 17972 questions have been viewed at least 6 and at most 206225 times. As shown in the plot below, we see the distribution of views over equally sized bins decreases over time, and at an increasing rate each year. After eliminating the outliers, the question views range is between 70 to 355 per question.

From our analysis of the dataset, it is clear that "Immigration Law" related questions get the most views at 13345670 times, followed by "Public Law" related questions with 13250407 views, and "Commercial Law" related questions with 10350450 views.

Most Popular Question Asked on Legal Stack Exchange

Do you need a driver's license to travel in the U.S.?

Asked 6 years, 4 months ago   Active 2 years, 7 months ago   Viewed 215k times

The question was asked on 2015-05-28, has seven answers, and has been viewed 215,000 times as of October 2021.
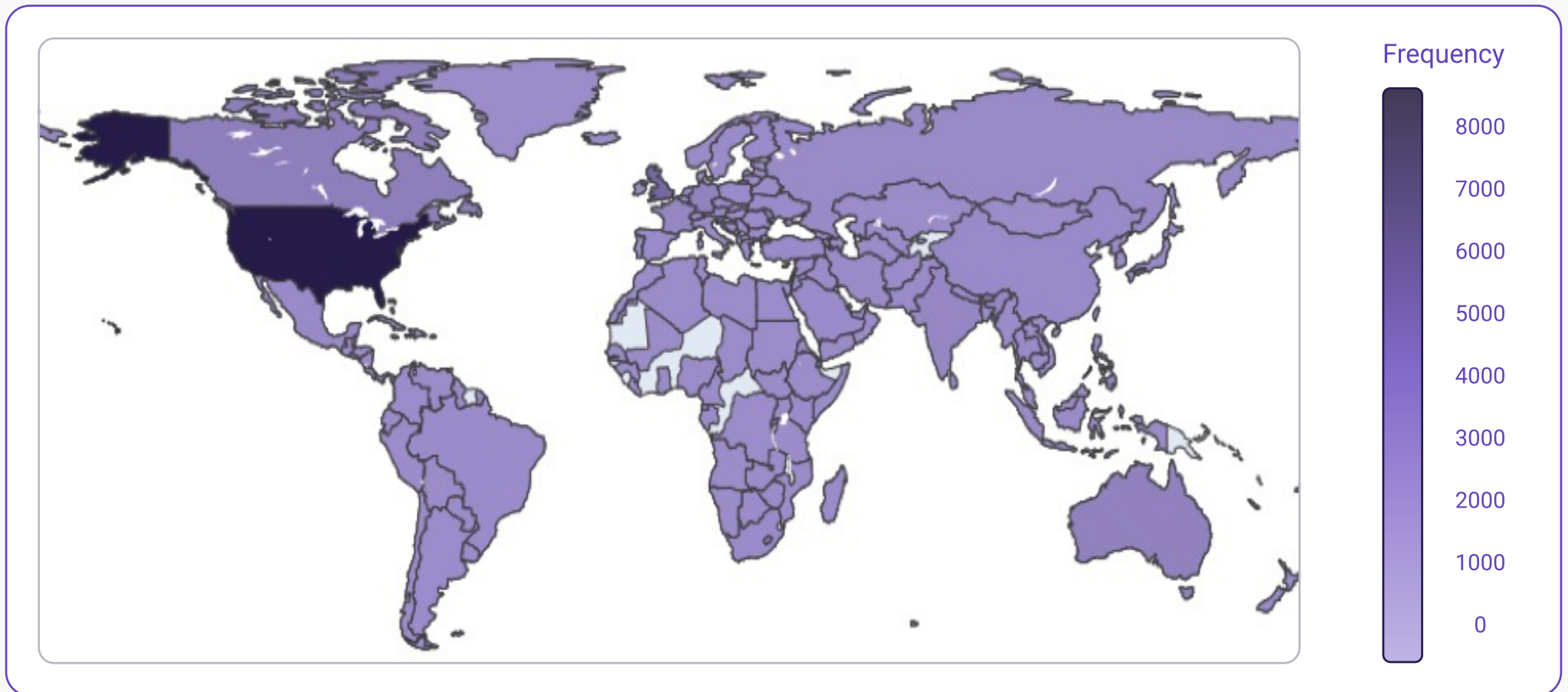
Question Volume By Country

Question Volume By Country

The United States has been the origin of most questions posed on the platform. Despite this, it must be kept in mind that the fact that Stack Exchange as a platform is based in the US can influence the prevalence and popularity of the platform in the country, and skew geographic data gathered in US' favor.

Question Volume By Country

Over the six-year period, questions regarding "Immigration Law", "Public Law", and "Commercial Law" have continued to dominate the trend of legal topics, and have received the most accepted answers.

The table below shows each legal topic's share of answers over the studied timeframe of 2015-2020 by percentage:

Country	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total Of Questions
United States	1032	1293	1345	1603	1664	1873	8810
United Kingdom	262	397	388	421	533	555	2556
Canada	134	181	134	141	173	184	947
Australia	117	141	86	87	132	132	695
Germany	59	96	90	95	143	197	680
India	34	55	64	38	77	91	359
France	47	67	52	49	76	67	358
China	12	25	25	28	34	48	172

Top 5 Topics
In The Top 5 Countries

Trend Analysis: Answer Times

Based on data trends from tag analysis of posts originating from the five top ranking countries on Law Stack Exchange, the most popular general tags utilized by users are: united-states, united-kingdom, criminal-law, copyright, and contract-law. However, based on our legal term-based data analysis model, the five top tags per country are respectively criminal-law, copyright, contract-law, employment-law, and constitutional-law.

The five most prevalent topics on the platform in the top five geographic locations were aggregated based on our legal term analysis model, and are as follows:

United States	United Kingdom	Canada	Australia	Germany
• Criminal Law • Copyright • Contract Law • Constitutional Law • Employment	• Criminal Law • Copyright • Contract Law • European Union • GDPR	• Contract Law • Copyright • Criminal Law • Employment • Rental Property	• Criminal Law • Contract Law • Copyright • Privacy • Employment	• European Union • Criminal Law • Copyright • Contract Law • Privacy

• The Top Five Countries Share Common Tags Of "**Criminal Law**", "**Copyright**", And "**Contract Law**".

Tags And Topics

According to the analysis of topic trends for the six years (2015 - 2020) for all countries listed in the dataset, we can determine that "Criminal Law" takes up 7.18% of questions, "Contract Law" 4.08%, and "Employment Law" 2.24%. With a slight difference, the trend for legal tags for all countries listed in the dataset are "Criminal Law", "Copyright" and "Contract Law" with frequencies of respectively 1312, 1108 and 746, which is in accordance with the topics trend.

- As Can Be Seen From Our Analysis Of The Top 5 Countries, "Copyright" Was Present In 4 Of The Top 10 Tags In Each Of The Countries In 2015.

- As Of 2016, "Copyright" And "Criminal Law" Were Both Among The Top 10 Tags In 4 Out Of 5 Countries.

- All Five Countries In 2017 And 2018 Had The "Criminal Law" Among Their Top Ten Tags.

- In 2019, "Contract Law" Was The Common Tag.

- All 5 Of The Top Countries Had "Copyright" And "Contract Law" In Their Top Ten Tags For 2020.

- Overall, The Following Topics Have Been Trending In The Top Five Prolific Countries On The Platform:

Tags And Topics

United States
- Criminal Law
- Employment Law
- Public Law
- Intellectual Property Law
- Family Law
- Construction Law
- Corporate And Business Law
- Insurance Law
- Commercial Law
- Contracts Law

United Kingdom
- Employment Law
- Public Law
- Intellectual Property Law
- Construction Law
- Criminal Law
- Secured Transactions Law
- Family Law
- Wills, Trust & Probate Law
- Environmental Law
- Commercial Law

Canada
- Public Law
- Family Law
- Employment Law
- Criminal Law
- Sports Law
- Secured Transactions Law
- Intellectual Property Law
- Immigration Law
- Environmental Law
- Insurance Law

Australia
- Criminal Law
- Secured Transactions Law
- Public Law
- Tort Law
- Media Law
- Contracts Law
- Construction Law
- Commercial Law

Germany
- Insurance Law
- Employment Law
- Criminal Law
- Public Law
- Intellectual Property Law
- Immigration Law
- Commercial Law

Network For Multi–Jurisdictional Questions

Network For Multi-Jurisdictional Questions

The United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Germany were the top five countries regarding intra-jurisdictional questions.

Among the top countries included in this dataset are the United States and the United Kingdom, with 40 questions (25 from US on the UK, 15 from UK on the US) were asked.

Country	Uinted States	United Kingdom	Canada	Australia	Germany
United States	131	15	4	2	4
United Kingdom	25	50	9	5	0
Canada	6	0	34	4	0
Australia	0	0	8	11	0
Germany	4	0	0	0	15
China	4	0	0	0	0
Sweden	0	2	0	0	1
Ireland	0	3	0	0	0

Network For Multi-Jurisdictional Questions

Country	Uinted States	United Kingdom	Canada	Australia	Germany
Italy	0	2	0	1	0
Norway	0	0	0	0	1
Luxembourg	0	0	0	0	2
South Korea	0	0	1	0	0

South Korea

Canada

Sweden

Norway

United States

United Kingdom

Germany

Luxembourg

Ireland

Australia

Italy

China
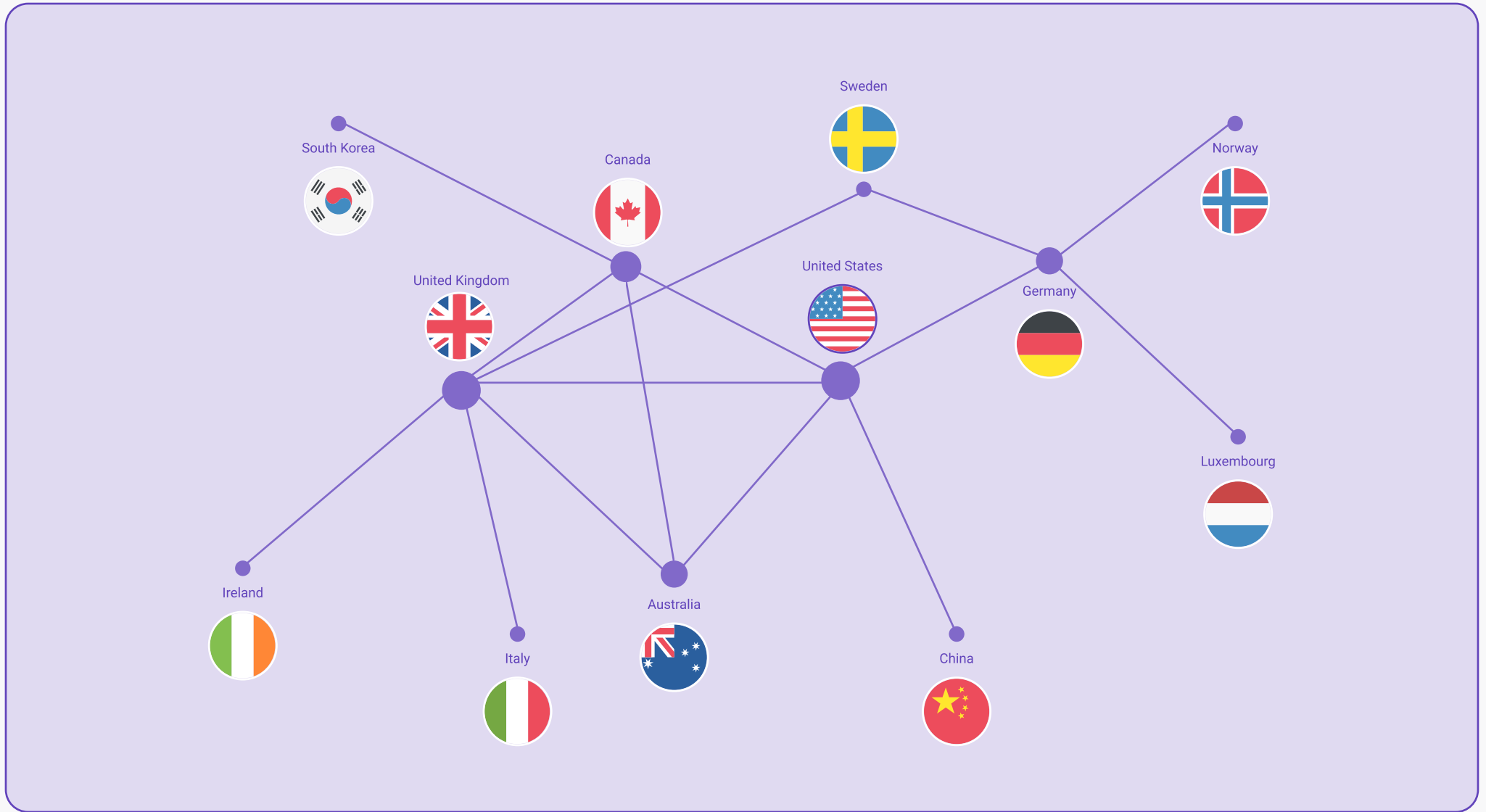
Marker Word Frequency Variation Over Time

Studying the top ten words of each year shows that "**Copyright**" and "**Crime**" each with a frequency of **6(10%)**, respectively, topped the trend over the years. Terms like "Term", "Lawyer", "License", and "Rule" occur equally, but since they are general terms, they don't provide much analytical value. By examining the frequency of these terms, it is clear that "Copyright" with a total frequency of 12648 still has the lead.

"GDPR" is the second most widely used legal term, with a frequency of 1214.
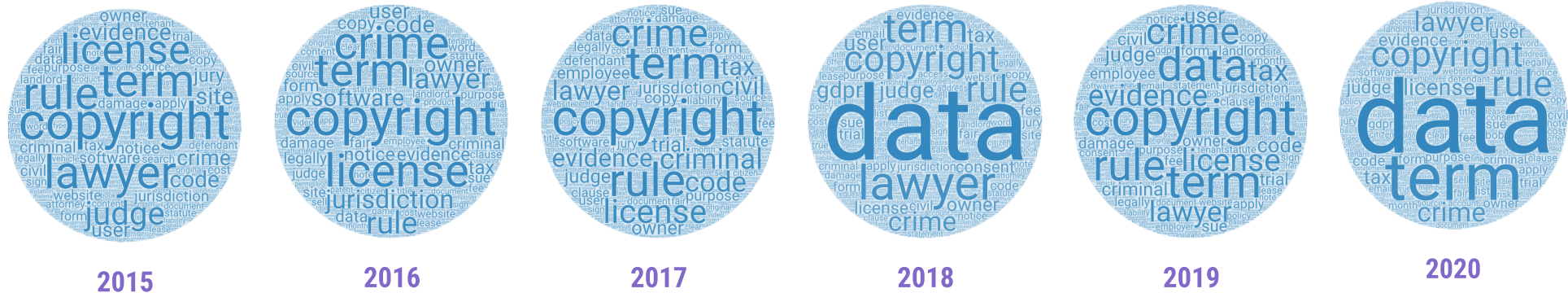
2015   2016   2017   2018   2019   2020

Marker Word Frequency Variation Over Time

2015		2016		2017		2018		2019		2020	
Words	Counts	Words	Counts	Words	Counts	Words	Counts	Words	Counts	Words	Counts
Copyright	1597	Copyright	2274	Copyright	2044	Data	2868	Copyright	2458	Data	2239
Term	1091	Term	1583	Term	1493	Copyright	2158	Data	2343	Copyright	2117
Lawyer	1088	License	1503	Rule	1355	Lawyer	1573	Term	1928	Term	1750
License	1068	Crime	1107	Crime	1349	Term	1554	Rule	1747	Lawyer	1647
Rule	918	Jurisdiction	1049	License	1341	Rule	1489	Evidence	1614	Rule	1601
Judge	797	Lawyer	1041	Lawyer	1244	Crime	1477	Crime	1596	Crime	1583
Evidence	785	Rule	1010	Criminal	1114	Judge	1435	License	1578	License	1492
Jurisdiction	778	Software	1004	Evidence	1087	License	1331	Lawyer	1484	Judge	1324
Crime	714	Code	972	Jurisdiction	1014	GDPR	1214	Employee	1470	Evidence	1285
Code	705	Evidence	934	Employee	953	Jurisdiction	1211	Judge	1313	Jurisdiction	1271

Marker Word Frequency Variation Over Time

Copyright

Term

License

Rule

Lawyer

Crime

Data

Jurisdiction

Judge

Evidence

Employee

Code

GDPR

Criminal
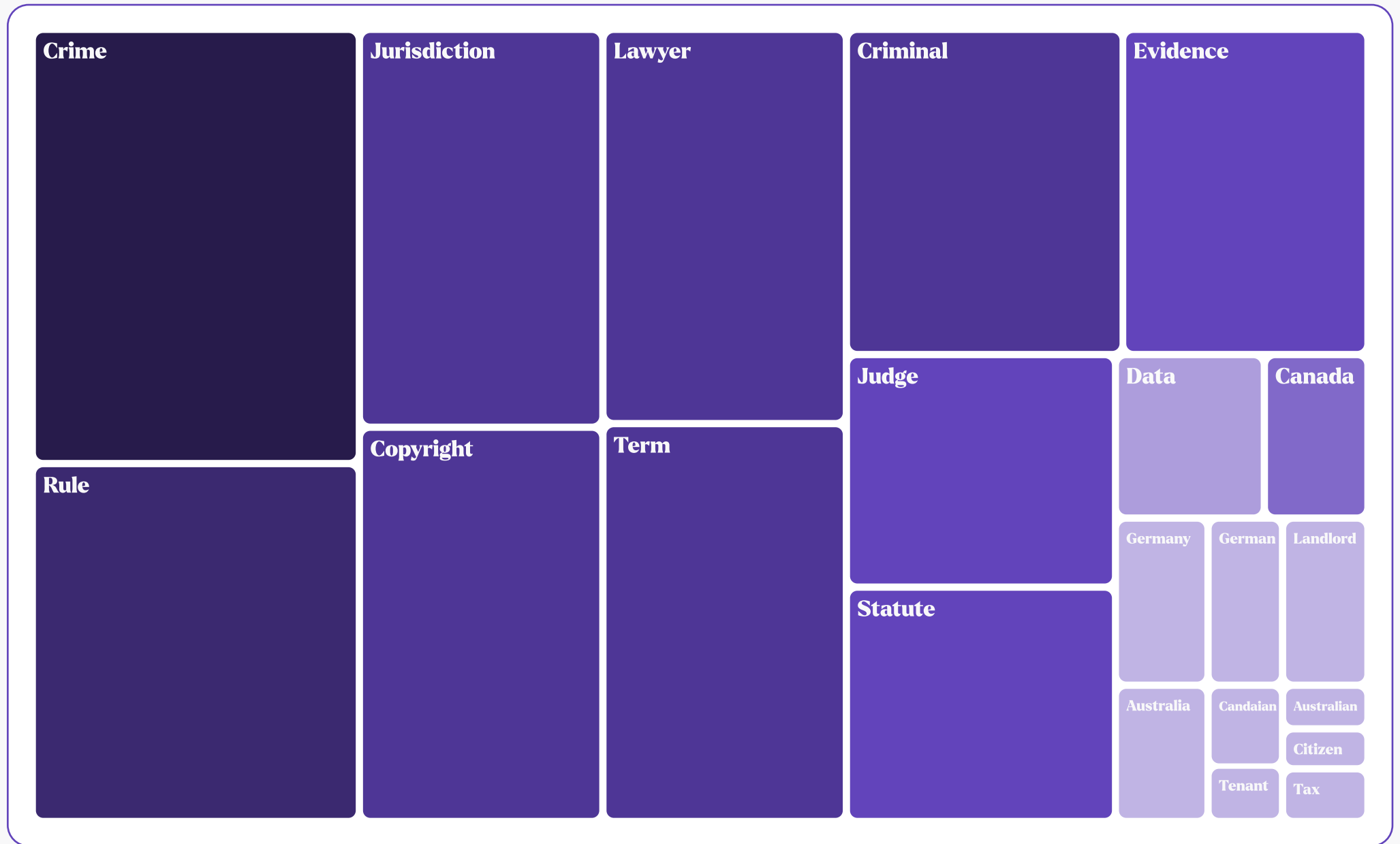
Software

Word Clouds By Country
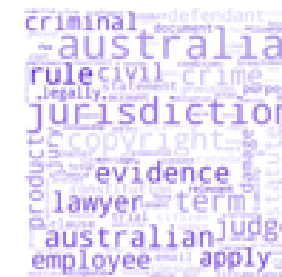
Word Clouds By Country

Aggregated data on the top ten most frequented words in the top five countries shows that "Copyright" 7429 occurrences, followed by "Crime" and "Criminal" with 9013 and 6142 occurrences respectively.

United States		United Kingdom		Canada		Australia		Grmany	
Words	Counts	Words	Counts	Words	Counts	Words	Counts	Words	Counts
Crime	5734	Data	1722	Canada	1359	Australia	957	Germany	1305
Rule	5279	Crime	1697	Jurisdiction	722	Jurisdiction	771	German	912
Lawyer	4752	Copyright	1594	Landlord	638	Term	472	Crime	690
Judge	4472	Term	1525	Copyright	634	Copyright	457	Data	553
Criminal	4423	Jurisdiction	1457	Lawyer	562	Evidence	430	Copyright	510
Jurisdiction	4400	Rule	1363	Term	543	Australian	417	Criminal	481
Evidence	4374	Evidence	1318	Candian	537	Crime	404	Jurisdiction	405
Copyright	4234	Criminal	1238	Rule	553	Rule	383	Citixen	395
Term	4186	Lawyer	1162	Crime	488	Judge	382	Tax	385
Statute	3481	Judge	1080	Tenant	474	Lawyer	345	Rule	381

Word Clouds By Country

Crime

Jurisdiction

Lawyer

Criminal

Evidence

Rule

Copyright

Term

Judge

Data

Canada

Statute

Germany

German

Landlord

Australia

Candaian

Australian

Citizen

Tenant

Tax

Conclusions

Conclusions

The 106% growth in Law Stack Exchange's community from 2015 to 2020 is phenomenal. As of 2020, the community has had 26,000 unique users on its platform, which is yet another testament of its astonishing performance. Due to this growth, the platform has become a hotspot for community discourse between lawyers, legal experts, and prospective clients, which marks Law Stack Exchange as a golden opportunity for data analysis and market research.

By reviewing the community's trends, we observe that the majority of questions asked were regarding "Immigration Law", "Public Law", and "Commercial Law" topics.

As we explore this trend via analysis of tags, we can observe that the most popular tags have been "Copyright", "Criminal Law", and "Contract Law" for the duration which falls under this study's purview, each of which fall into "Intellectual Property Law", "Criminal Law", and "Contract Law" fields respectively.

"Copyright" is the most commonly used term in the community.

Aggregated geographic user data shows that users and community members from the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and Germany asked around 76% of questions on the community, and that the most intra-jurisdictional questions posed on the platform have been between the US and the UK.

"Crime" and "Criminal Law" have been the terms with the most occurrences as both topic and tag in these two countries.

Additionally, our analysis of the datasets has shown that the most popular practice area for the online law community has been "Intellectual Property".

Conclusions

The increasing digitalization of the legal field, legal practices and practitioners around the world are accelerating their online presences and marketing efforts. This trend, driven- in part- by the implications of the global Covid-19 pandemic for mostly offline business models, makes apparent the need for a more digital and data-driven business model in the legal industry.

Studies on the state of the legal industry and its market- such as the study at hand- can provide invaluable insight and data, which can be utilized in the process of transition and adaptation to the ever increasing digital and online nature of the market, and for digital marketing, business development, and business intelligence efforts in this field.

As a platform aiming to facilitate this transition in the field of law and create fresh opportunities for legal practitioners who wish to take advantage of this trend, we have chosen to make this study accessible to the public, so that you may utilize in your business' online and digital efforts.

Thanks For Your Time

Please feel free to contact us for any inquiries at:

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