

Identification of social media users that perpetuate xenophobic attitudes and narratives in SA Elections

Political Polarisation and Network Analysis in South African Election Discourse

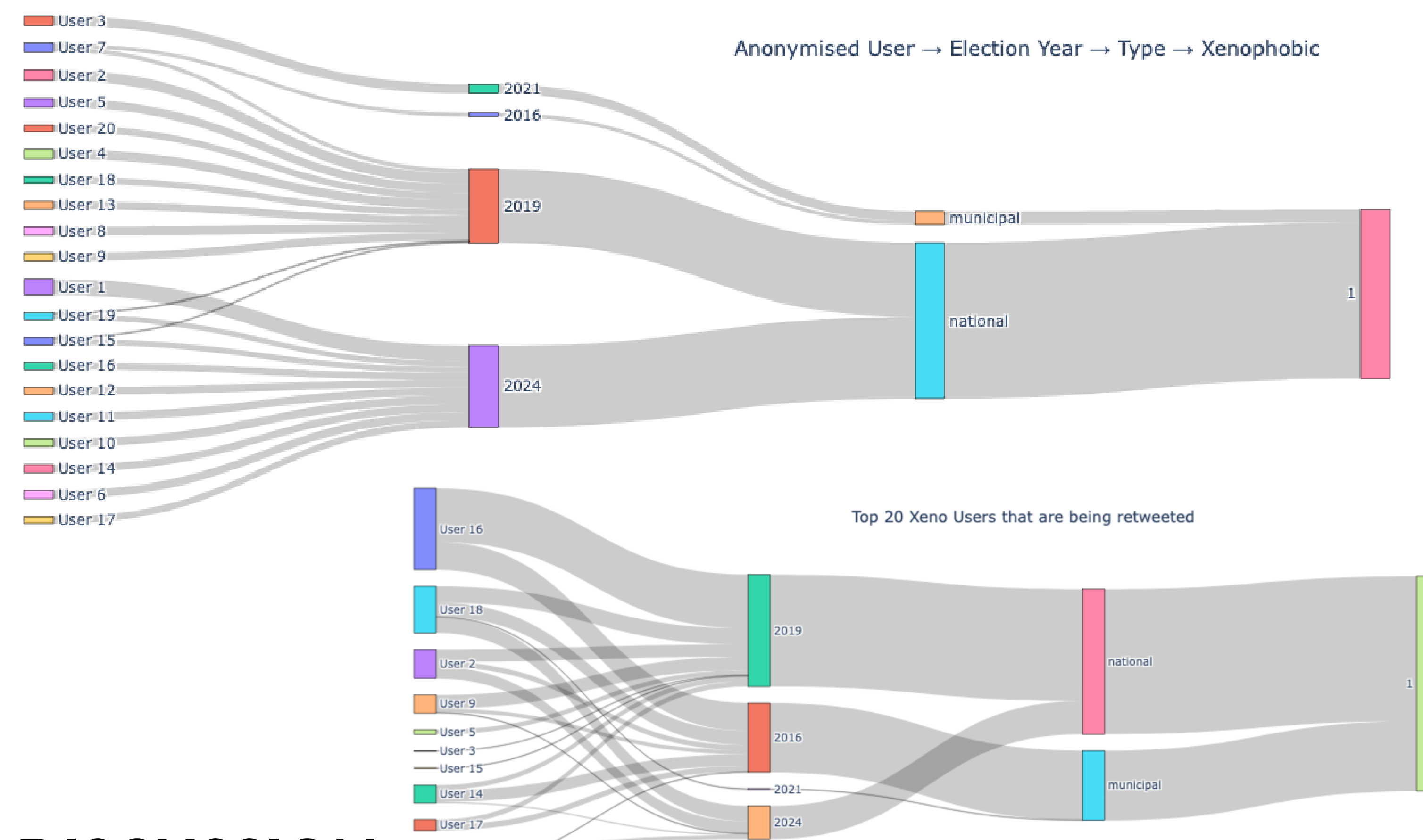
INTRO

- Identifying xenophobic and hate speech tweets are hard, social media companies remove explicit posts.
- Trained model with an external xenophobic data set.

METHODS

- Sentiment Analysis
- Train with external data set, evaluate
 - Logistic Regression
 - Decision Trees
 - Transformer models
- Best results with DistilBERT

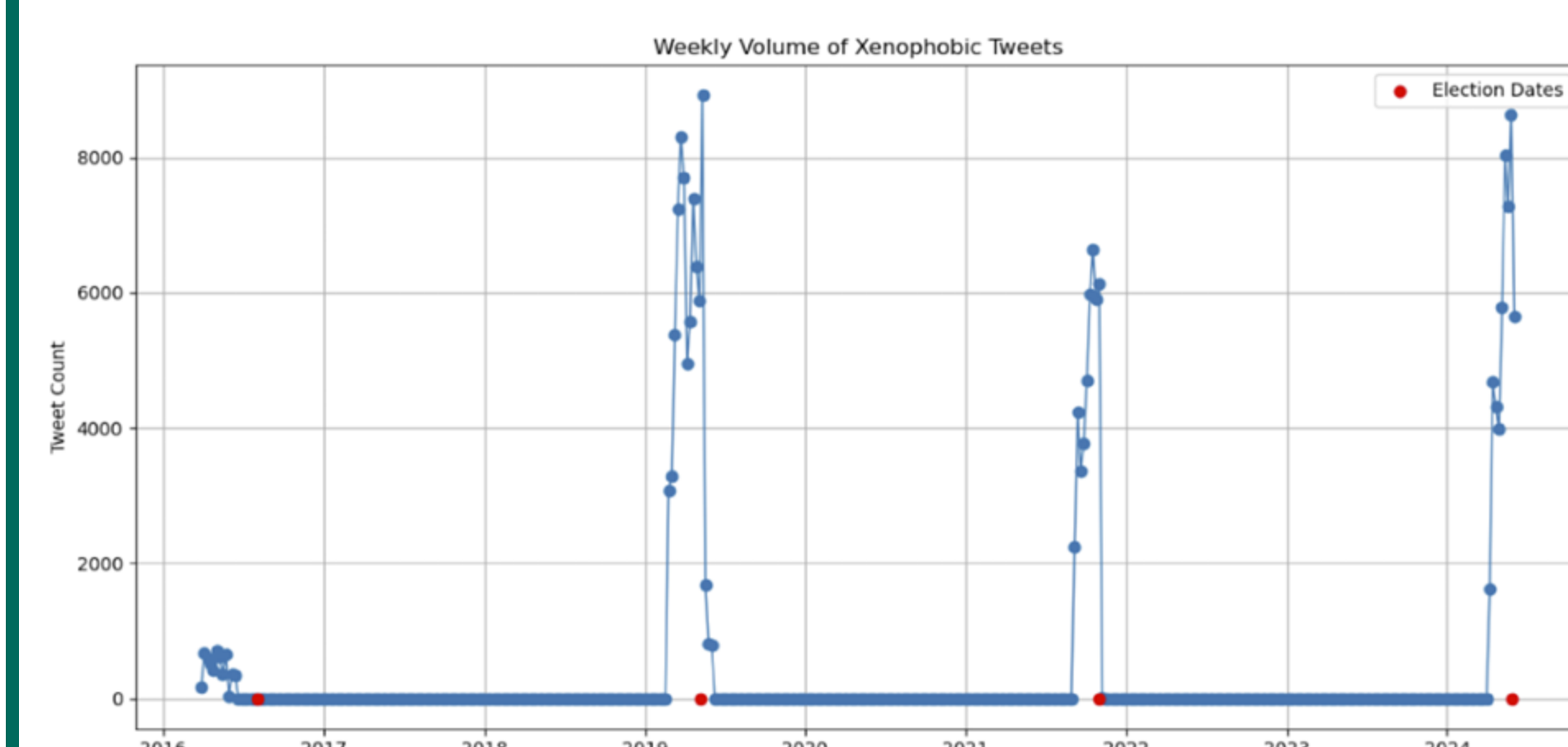
RESULTS



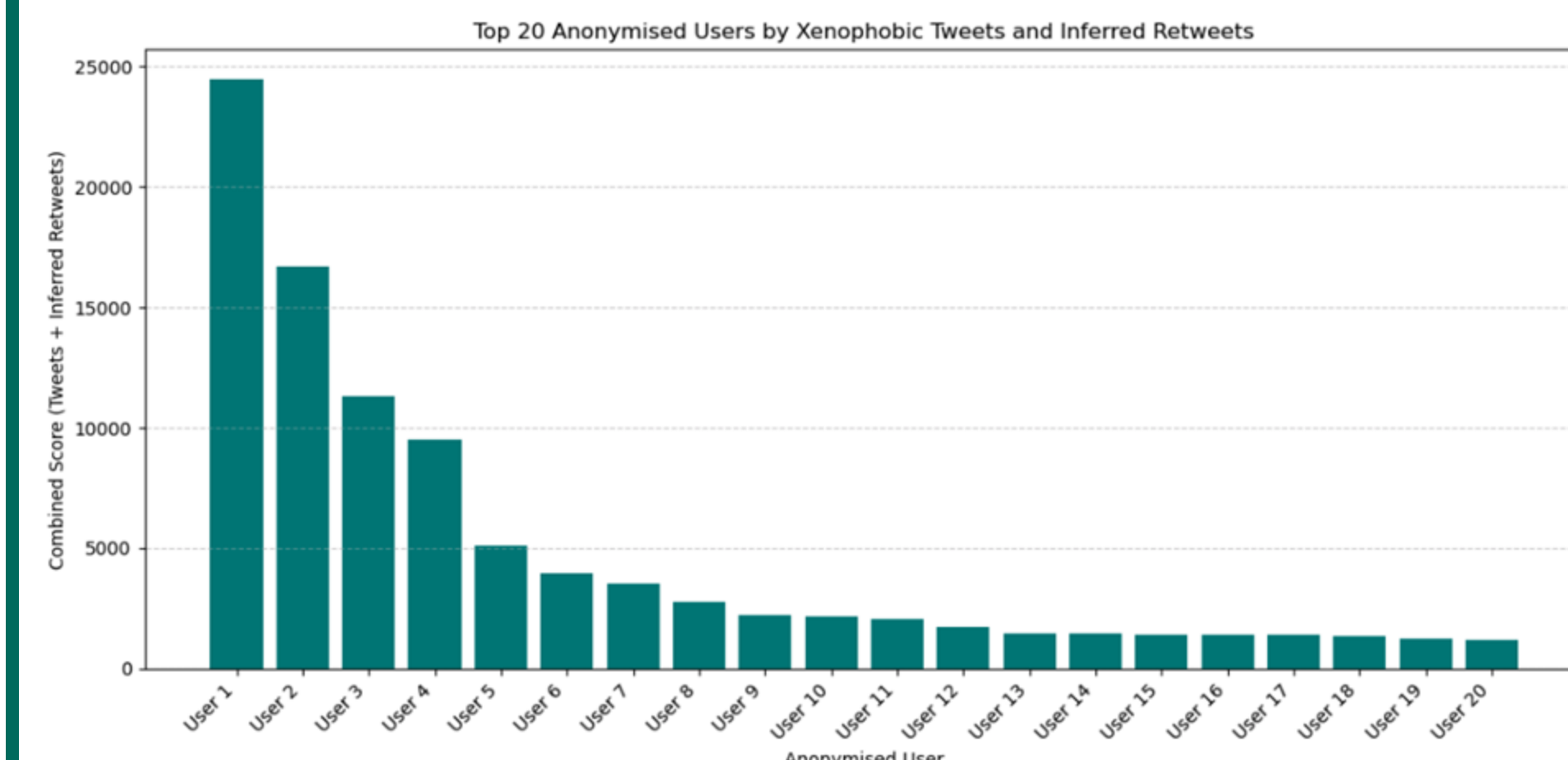
DISCUSSION

- Most xenophobic posts occurred during National elections
- 11 of the top 20 users who are being retweeted often, and that have at least one xenophobic tweet, have screen names that are linked to political parties.
- Even though explicit xenophobic and hate speech is removed by the social media companies, our trained model is still able to detect xenophobic, hate or other forms of negative speech.

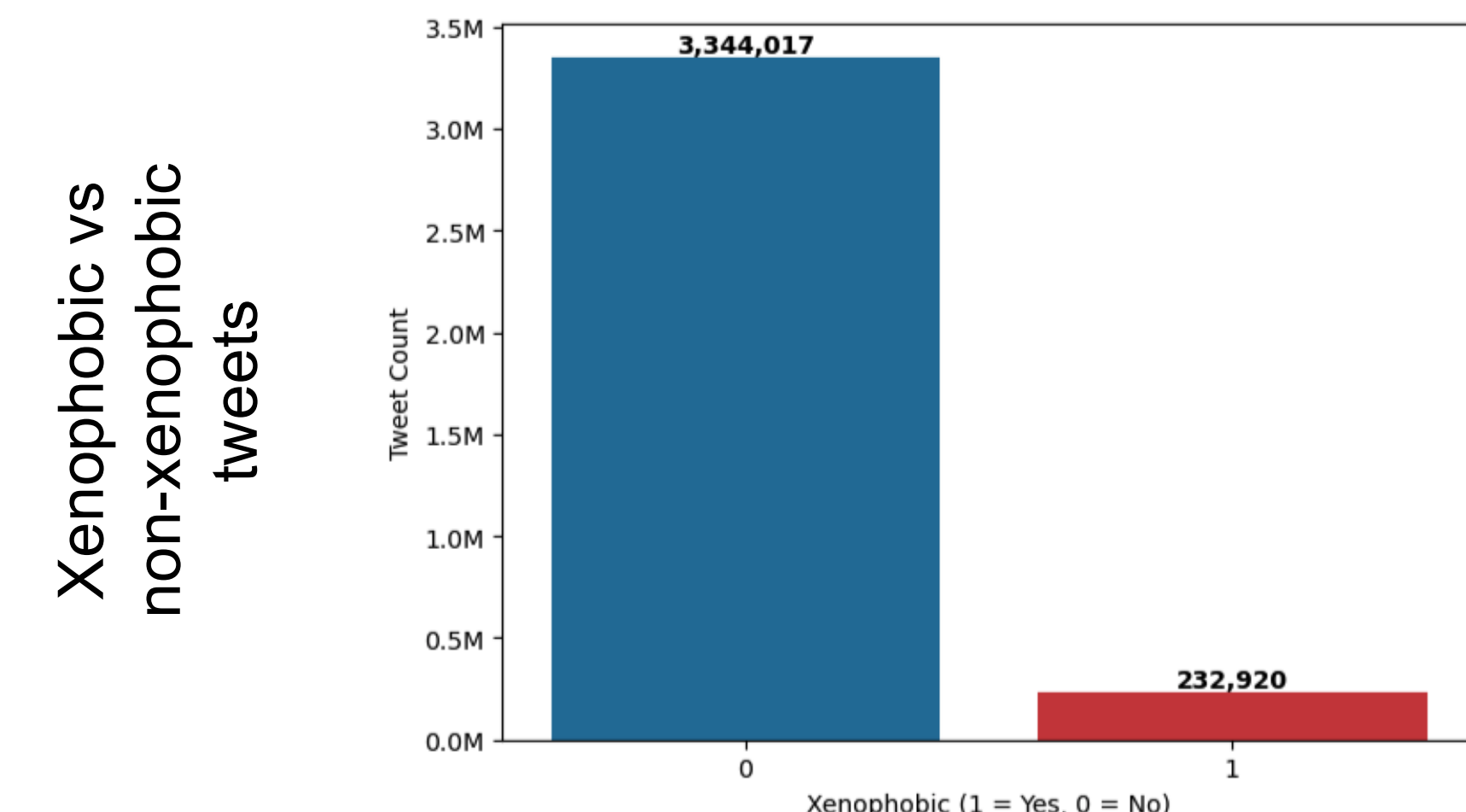
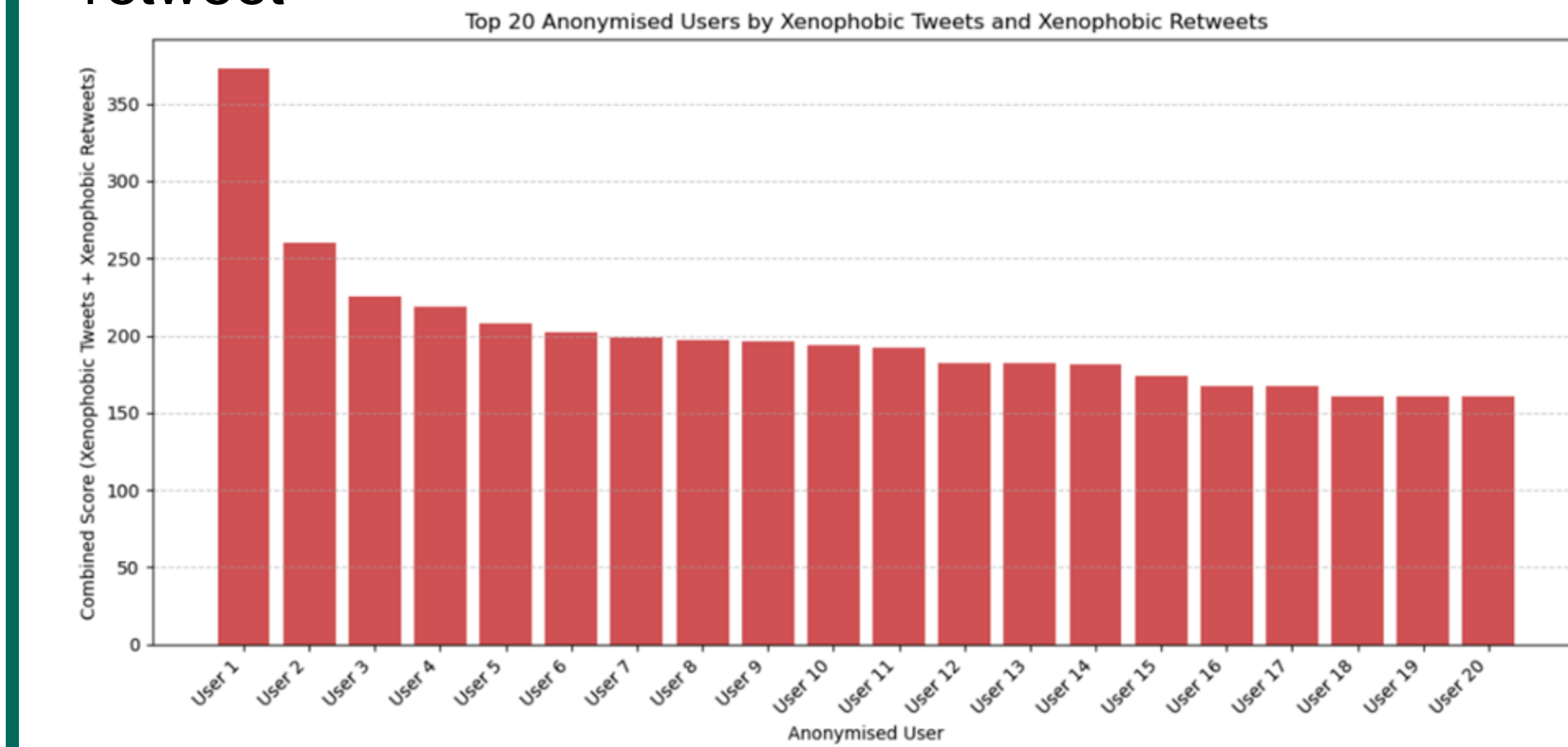
Xenophobic Tweets and Elections - National elections: 2019 and 2024



Top 20 users that, with at least 1 xenophobic tweet and are retweeted often



Top 20 users by xenophobic tweet and xenophobic retweet



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