

Participation in Wikipedia's Article Deletion Processes

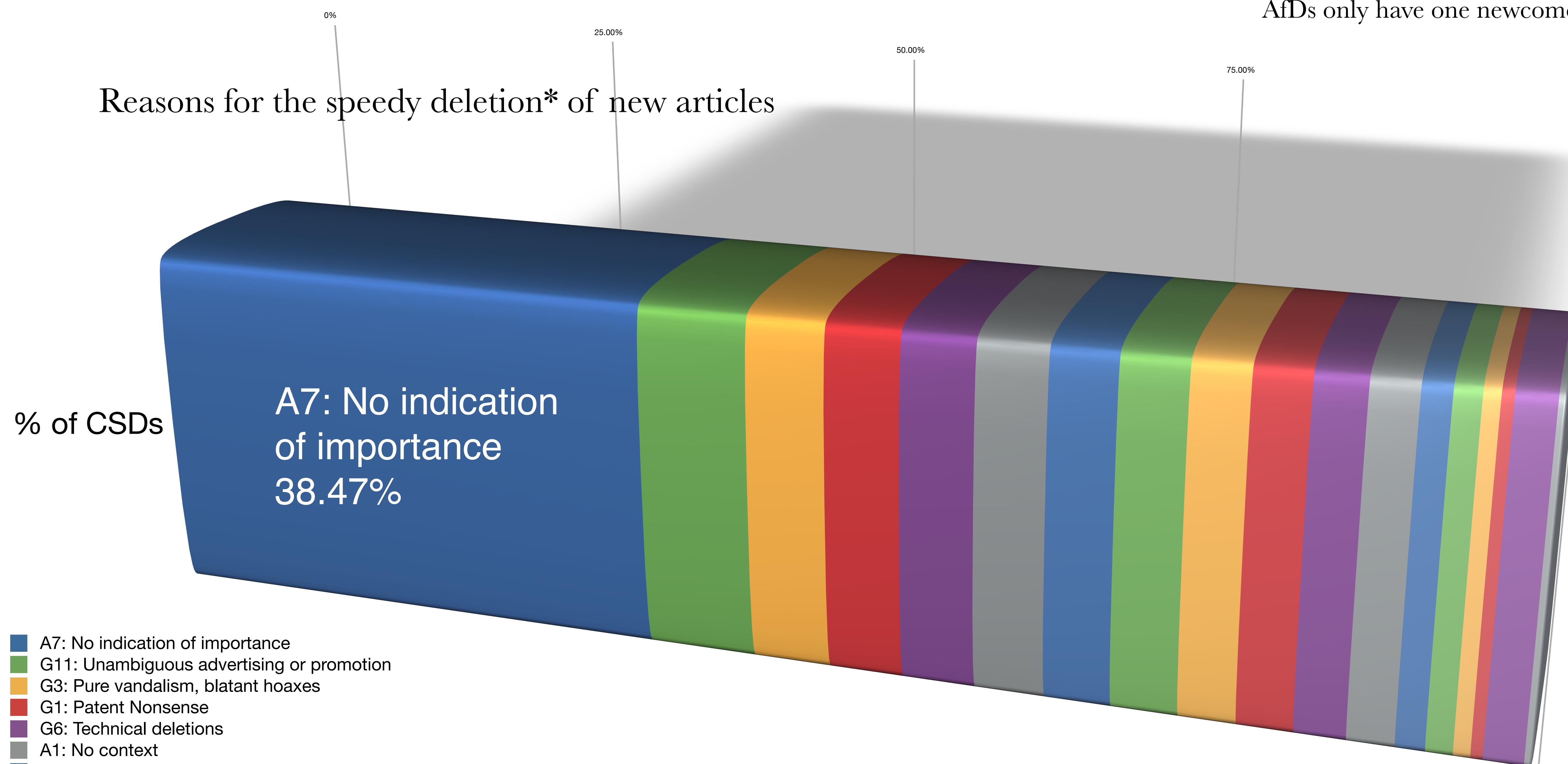
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Why are articles deleted?
What are the processes?
Who participates?

We present results on a study of two levels of Wikipedia's article deletion process: speedy deletions (or CSDs) and articles for deletions (or AfDs). Our findings indicate that the deletion process is heavily frequented by a relatively small number of longstanding users. In analyzing the rationales given for such deletions, it is apparent that the vast majority of such deleted articles are not spam, vandalism, or 'patent nonsense,' but rather articles which could be considered encyclopedic, but do not fit the project's standards.

Key findings

1. About half of all deleted articles from June '07 to Jan '11 were unilaterally deleted by administrators via the CSD process.
2. Surprisingly, spam, vandalism and patent nonsense make up only 8.00%, 5.69% and 5.36% of CSDs respectively, while the more subjective 'No indication of importance' makes up 38.47% of all CSD criteria.
3. With some outliers, AfD discussions have few participants, and those participants are overwhelmingly regulars to the process. 74% of all AfDs are made up entirely of users who have previously participated in an AfD, and 18% of all AfDs only have one newcomer.



*The speedy deletion process enables administrators to unilaterally delete an article for one of the 24 criteria indicated on the left

Numbers of new editors taking part in AfD discussions

