

Advancing Domestic Violence Intervention: An Integrated Study on Expert Perspectives in the Czech Republic



Every year in the Czech Republic, approximately 1,300 perpetrators involved in domestic violent incidents are evicted from their homes by the police. This study delves into a comprehensive spectrum of issues based on expert insights (n=573). The survey's objective was to identify effective strategies for dealing with perpetrators (DVP), elucidate the operation of the existing intervention system, and gauge professionals' awareness and accessibility to offender-targeted programs. A critical aspect of this endeavor involved comprehending the needs of these professionals, aiming to augment their competence when working with individuals involved in domestic violence. The research drew upon a varied sample of professionals, encompassing judges, prosecutors, probation and offense department officers, representatives from intervention centers, organizations offering offender programs, and police officers. The poster encapsulates a singular, comprehensive exploration of these experts' perspectives, contextualizing them within the current practical application of several measures. This study ultimately aims to contribute to the evolution of a system that both facilitates the rehabilitation of domestic violence perpetrators and fortifies the protection of their victims.



Introducing the Norwegian-funded ViolenceOFF project. The project aims to improve the system of treatment of perpetrators and support of victims in cases of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic. The main objective of the project is to identify good practices and gaps in the current system and to propose effective measures that will improve the situation of victims by reducing the harm caused by violent people.



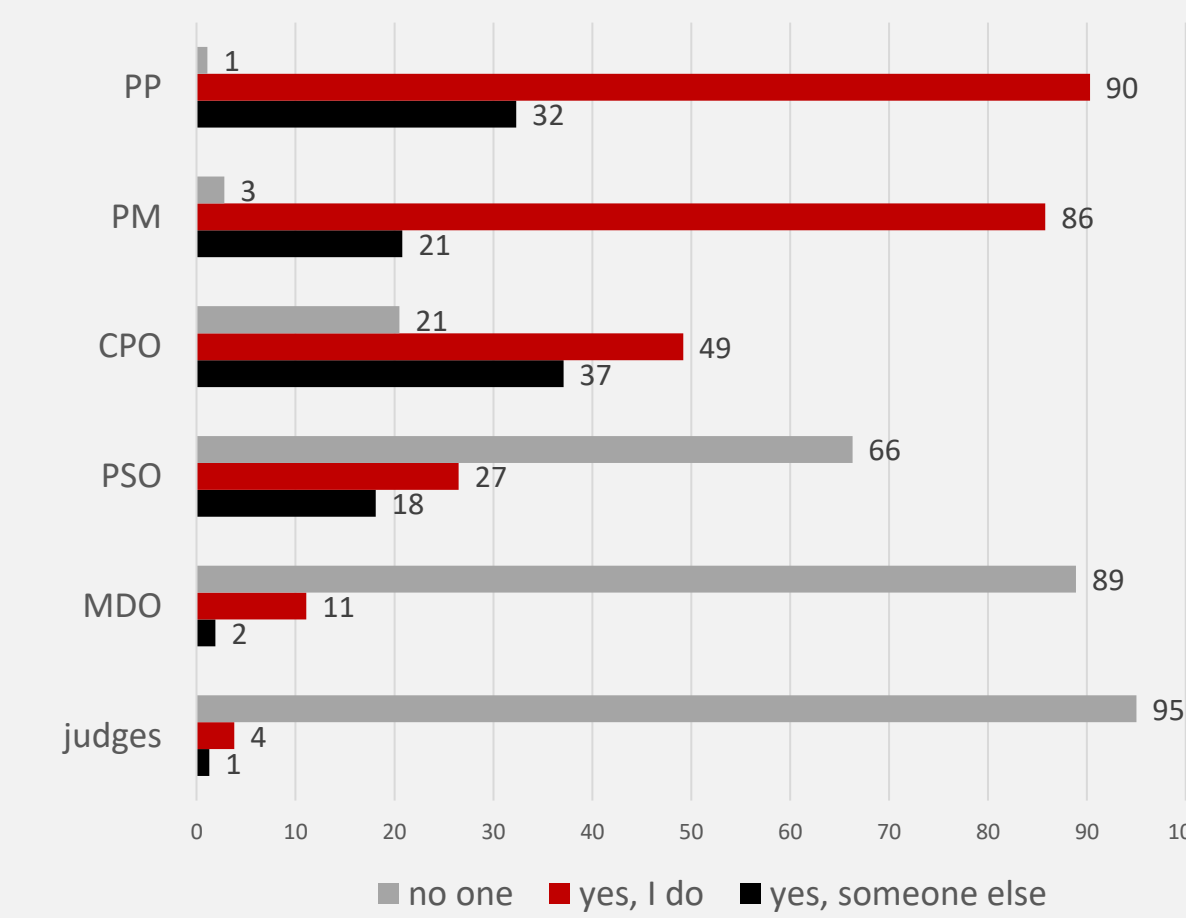
- Project: PDP7 "Improving the treatment of perpetrators and support for victims in cases of domestic and gender-based violence in the Czech Republic"
- Implemented by: The Institute for Criminology and Social Prevention
- Financial support: Norway Grants 2014 - 2021
- Implementation period: 2020-2023
- Project manager: Hana Přesličková

METHODOLOGY

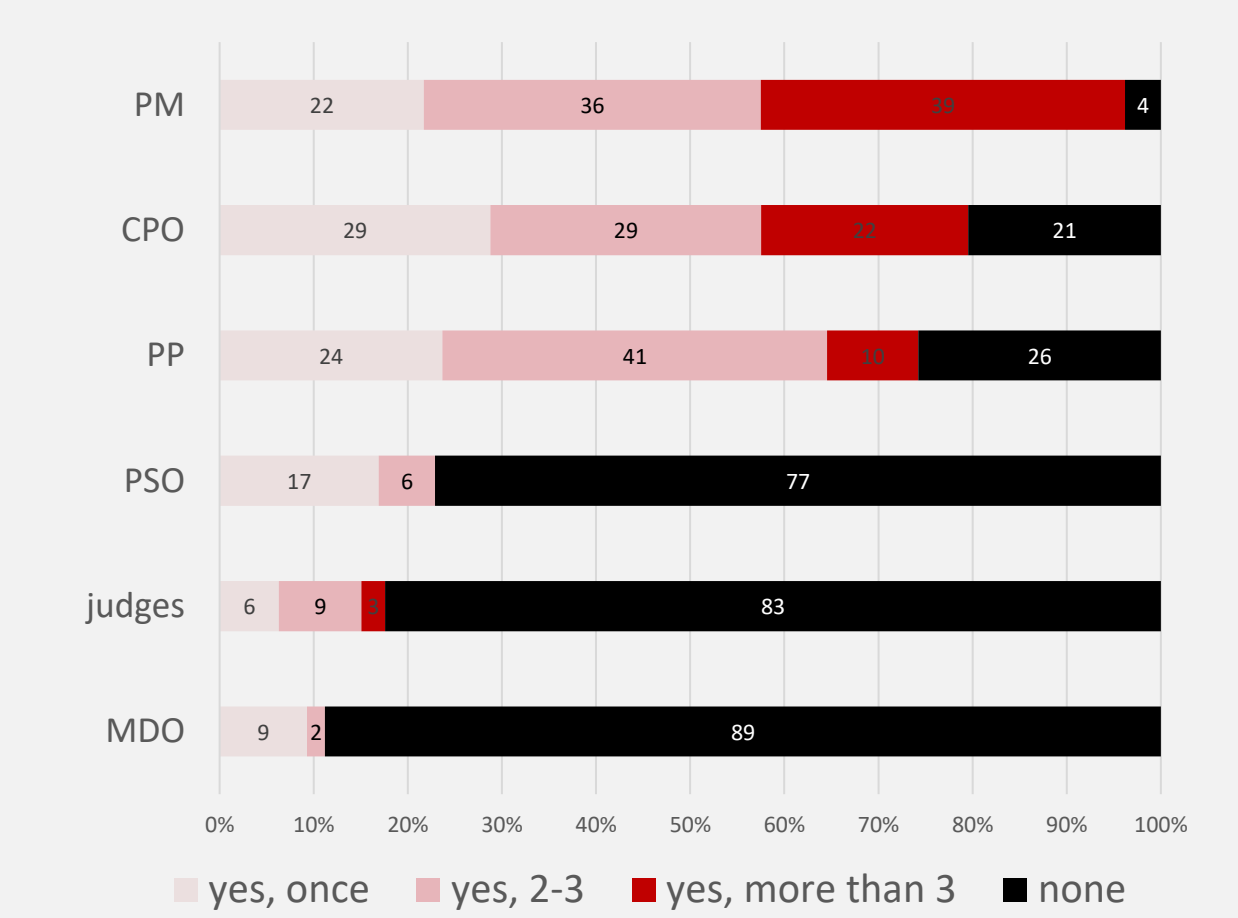
Organization/institution	n	
Criminal police officers (CPO)	132	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mapping the situation and needs in the field of DVP work
Police methodists (PM)	106	
Public prosecutors (PP)	93	
Probation Service Officers (PSO)	83	
Judges	80	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • questionnaire survey • expert analysis • CAWI (Click4Survey)
Misdemeanor Department Officers (MDO)	54	
	548	
Program for DVP providers*	8	
Intervention center with program for DVP providers*	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January - March 2023
Intervention center without program for DVP providers*	5	
Else*	4	
Total	573	*qualitative approach only

DV SPECIALISATION AND TRAINING

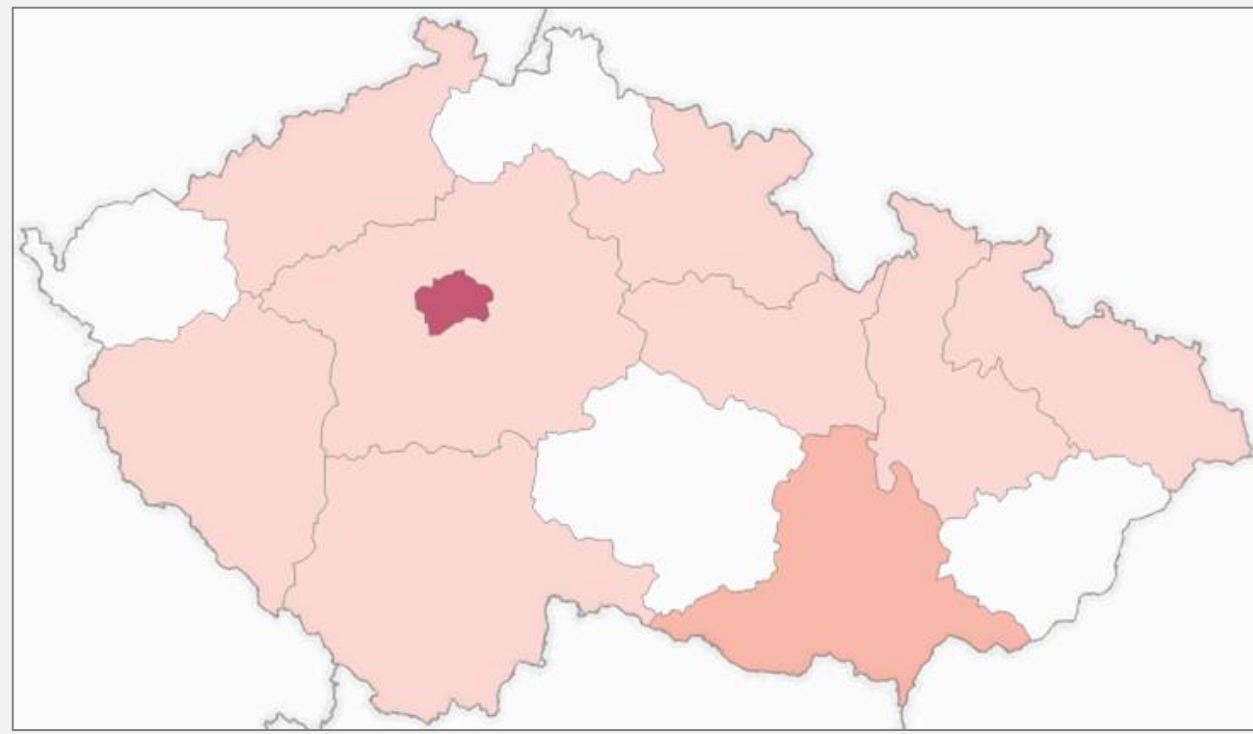
DV specialist in the workplace, %



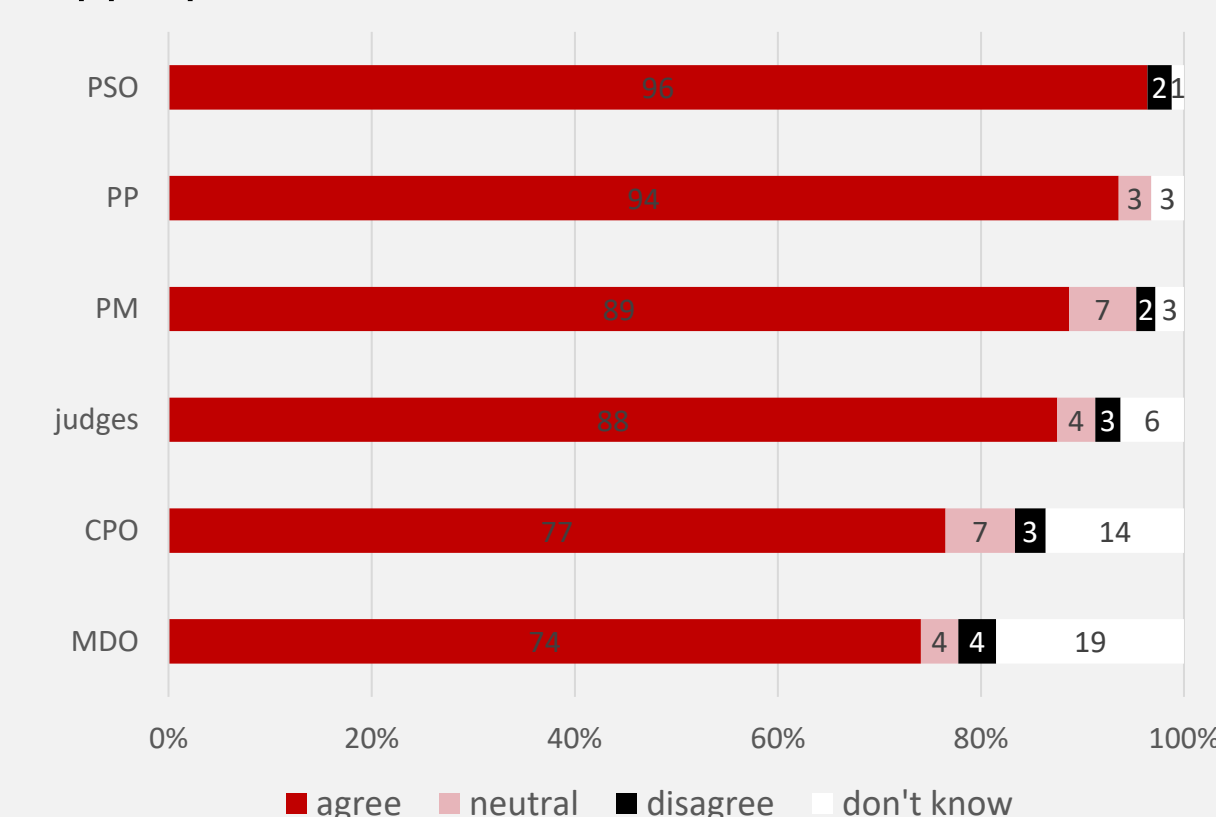
Training focused on DV issues in the last 5 years. %



CURRENT PROGRAMS FOR DVP



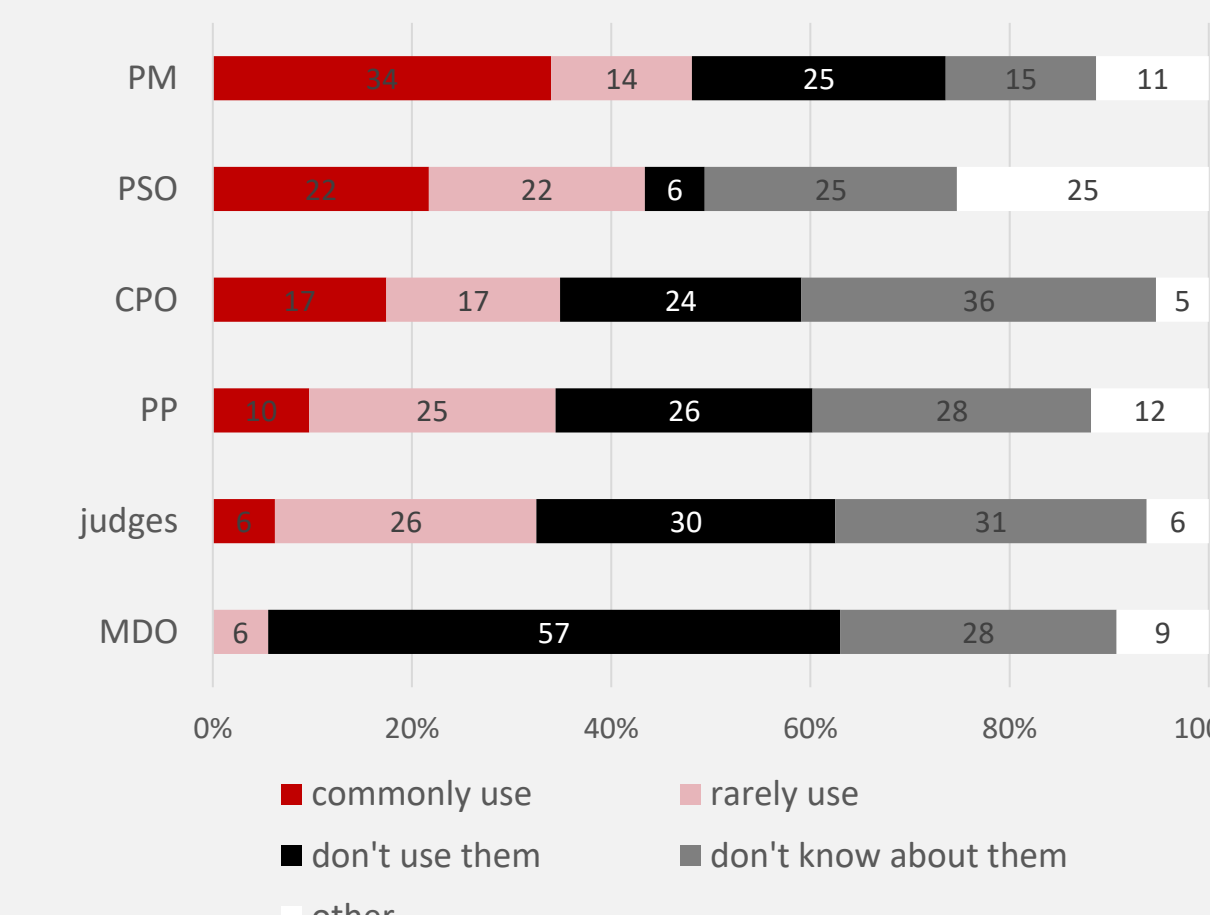
Each region should have at least one program available for violent persons that is appropriate for convicted DV offenders, %



- Fifteen DVP programs are currently available in the Czech Republic.
- Programs are long-lasting and intensive, but they lack a systemic umbrella.
- The four programs are based on the perspective of protecting children at risk of domestic violence.
- Four programs are offered by organizations that run an intervention center.
- The number of organizations varies depending on funding and availability of experts.
- No dedicated DVP program is available in the four counties.
- There is no specialized program for perpetrators of domestic violence in Czech prisons.

USE OF PROGRAMS FOR DVP

Use of therapeutic programs for DVP? %



Police Methodists - refer to programs, hand out leaflets, not executive officers, often inexperienced police officers.

Probation Service Officers - Courts infrequently mandate enrolment in such programs and therefore do not frequently utilize them.

Offence Department - high workload associated with sentencing and control.

Organization/institution	CPO	PM	PP	PSO	Judges	MDO	total
No (suitable) programs available	3	3	10	22	5	1	44
Not within our competence/we are not authorized	14	0	6	1	11	10	42
Few cases	3	3	1	11	4	5	27
We don't know about them/little information	5	0	7	0	7	6	25
There's no interest in them	3	3	0	1	4	2	13
They don't make sense	0	0	3	0	3	2	8

Public Prosecutors - high workload, programs not suitable for offenders, not needed.
good practice example: "When the Probation and Mediation Service (PMS) recommends a program, I endeavor to guide the case towards mandating program completion. If the decision is mine, I take the PMS's recommendation seriously and typically impose the program as part of the sentence."
Judges - not suitable conditions for imposition, not suitable for the offender, it is a matter of expediency.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

A UNIFIED INSTITUTIONALISED NATIONAL SYSTEM OF WORK WITH DVP

- Comprehensive programs for DVP.
- programs for victims & the whole family.
- In and outside prison, for people from excluded localities and for unmotivated offenders
- Mandatory programs for offenders convicted of DV.
- Comprehensive portfolio of programs available.

THE NEED FOR EARLY INTERVENTION - INSPIRATION FROM AUSTRIAN REGULATION

- Initiate contact with the service provider upon referral or initial interaction.
- Maintain a strict no-contact rule with the victim during eviction procedures.
- Regularly implement expulsion to deter potential incidents.
- Enforce program concurrently with eviction notice.
- Offer assistance at first contact.

INTERDISCIPLINARY COOPERATION

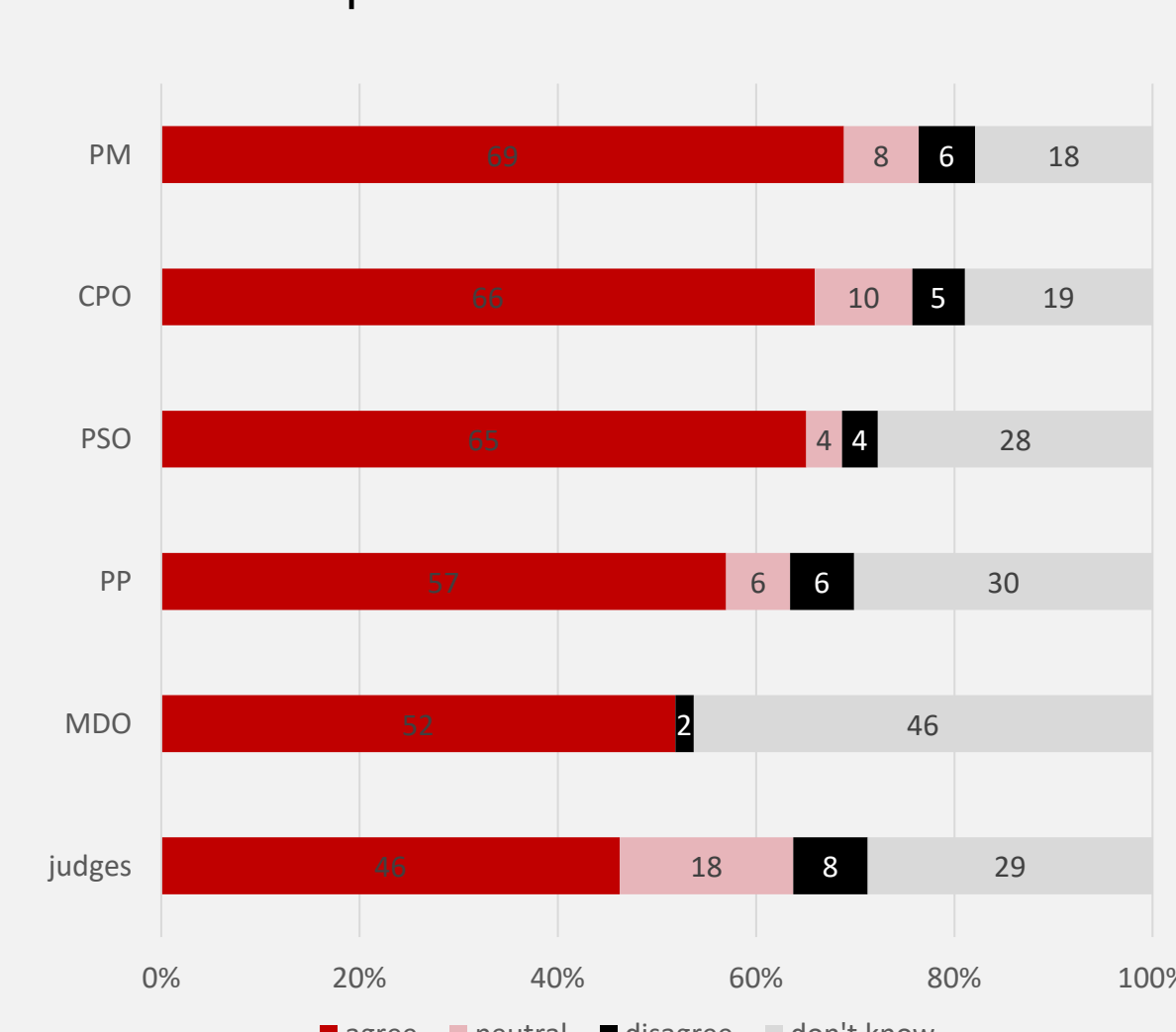
- Greater involvement of the child services in the outset.
- Engage probation services early, balancing against officer capacity
- Adopt an all-encompassing approach to case oversight.
- Forge connections with prevention groups across districts and regions.
- Emphasize persistent and focused case management.

EDUCATION & AWARENESS

- Address the capacity gap by increasing the number of trained specialists.
- Prioritize police training to improve the quality of initial victim contact.
- Strengthen the understanding and response of judges and child services.
- Promote public and professional understanding.

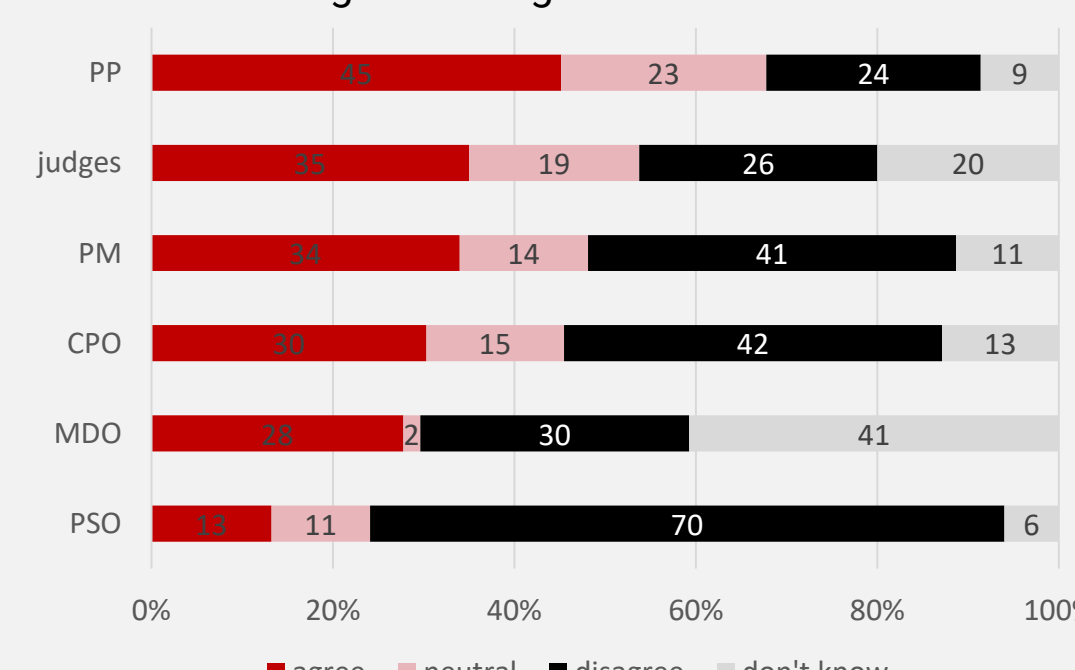
CHALLENGES WITH OBLIGED DVP CLIENTS

There should be a methodology for selecting DVP for therapeutic intervention. %



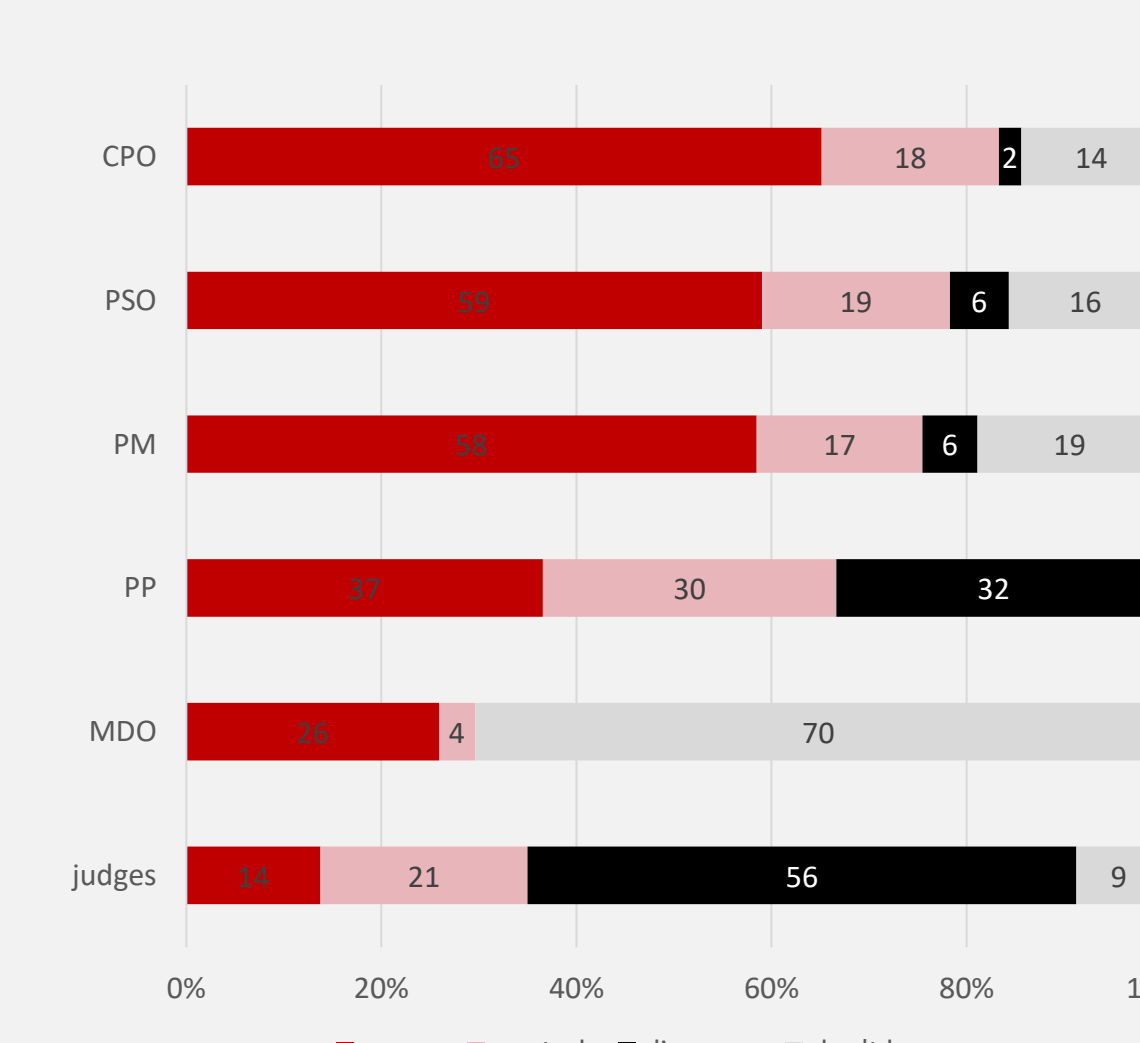
- Experts would appreciate a recommendations rather than a methodology
- The program attendance can be seen as a motivational element in criminal proceedings
- However, the question is working with unmotivated DVP

There is no point in working with DVP who are not motivated enough to change. %



PUNITIVITY TOWARDS DV

Convicted perpetrators of domestic violence receive too lenient sentences. %



Imposing higher penalties:

- **Stricter Recurrence Sentences:** Implement tougher consequences for repeated domestic violence offenses.
- **Elevated Misdemeanor Penalties:** more substantial fines to ensure meaningful impact.
- **Balanced Penalty System:** Equalize penalties for offenses committed by strangers and acquaintances.
- **Swift Judicial Action:** Demand immediate court response to violations of active sanctions.

