

What do you fight for as a Psychologist? What makes it hard? Canadian Psychologists' engagement in social justice

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Social Justice

- Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC, 2021) –
 - *“actively work in the areas of social justice, advocacy, inclusion, and community engagement”*
- Social justice is fundamental **central to clinical care**, and requires **an active commitment**.
- The goal of the study was to survey Canadian psychologists on the **social justice issues** having the most impact on their clients, **involvement in advocacy**, and **barriers interfering** with their advocacy activities.



Who answered?

120 Canadian psychologists completed an online survey titled “What do You Fight For, and What Makes it so Hard?”.

Messages regarding survey sent to Psychologists across Canada on multiple occasions.

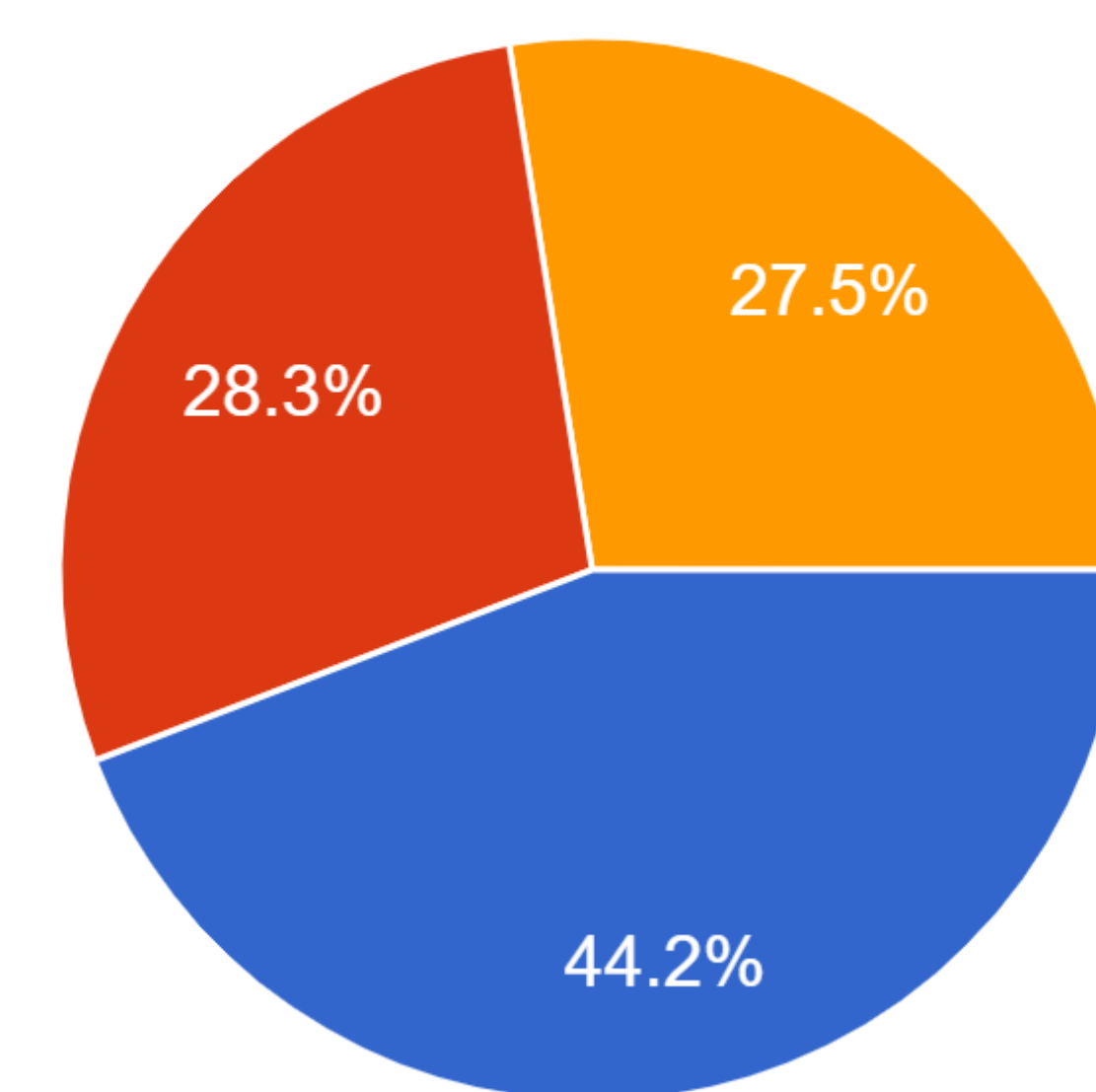
Survey began October 2021

Province	Respondents
Alberta	7
BC	12
Manitoba	1
New Brunswick	17
Newfoundland and Labrador	1
Nova Scotia	26
Ontario	52
Prince Edward Island	2
Saskatchewan	1
Nunavut	1

Background of Participants

What stage of your career are you in?

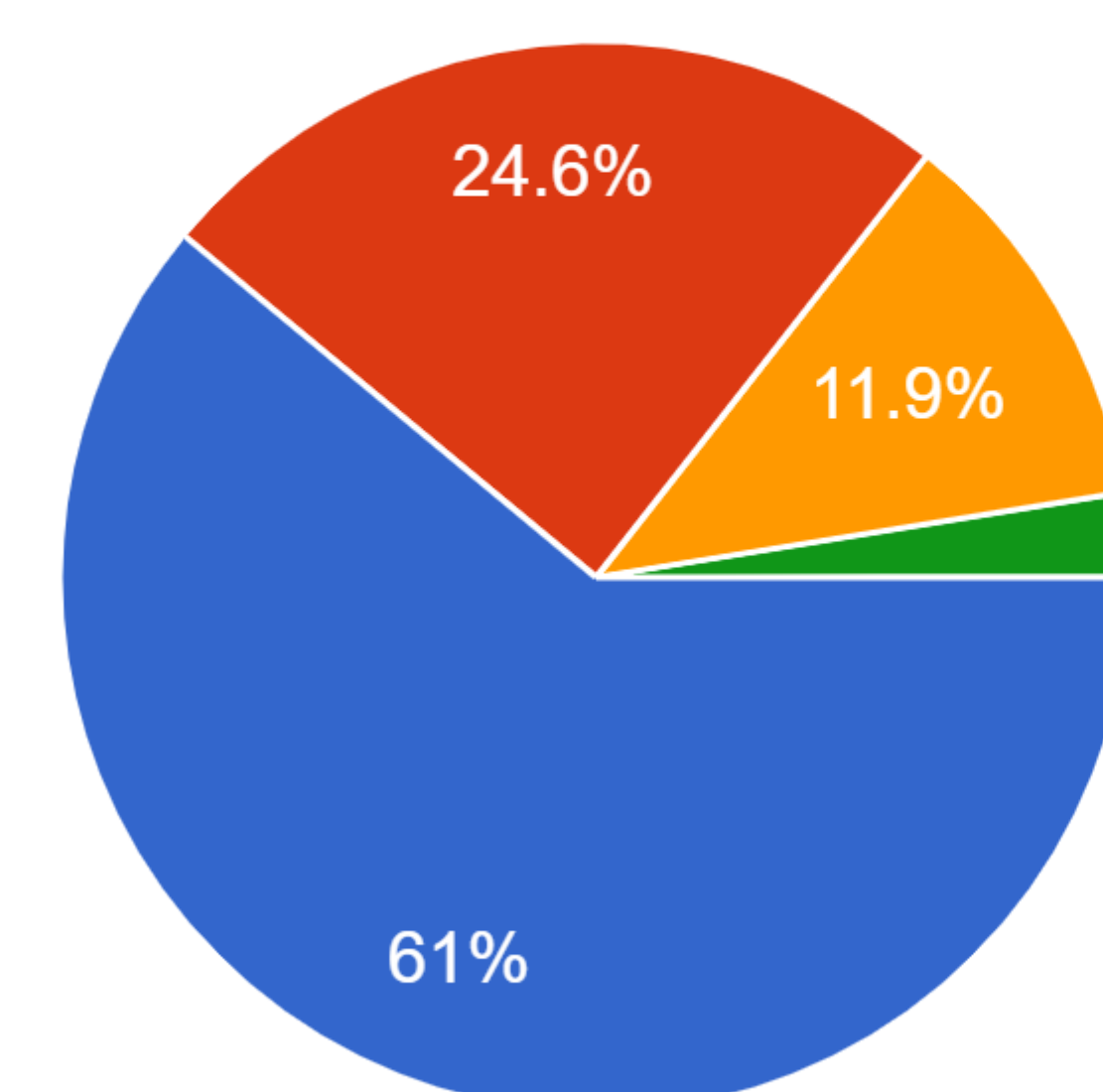
120 responses



- Early (< 10 years)
- Mid (10 – 19 years)
- Late (20+ years)

How much training in social justice did you receive in your graduate training?

118 responses



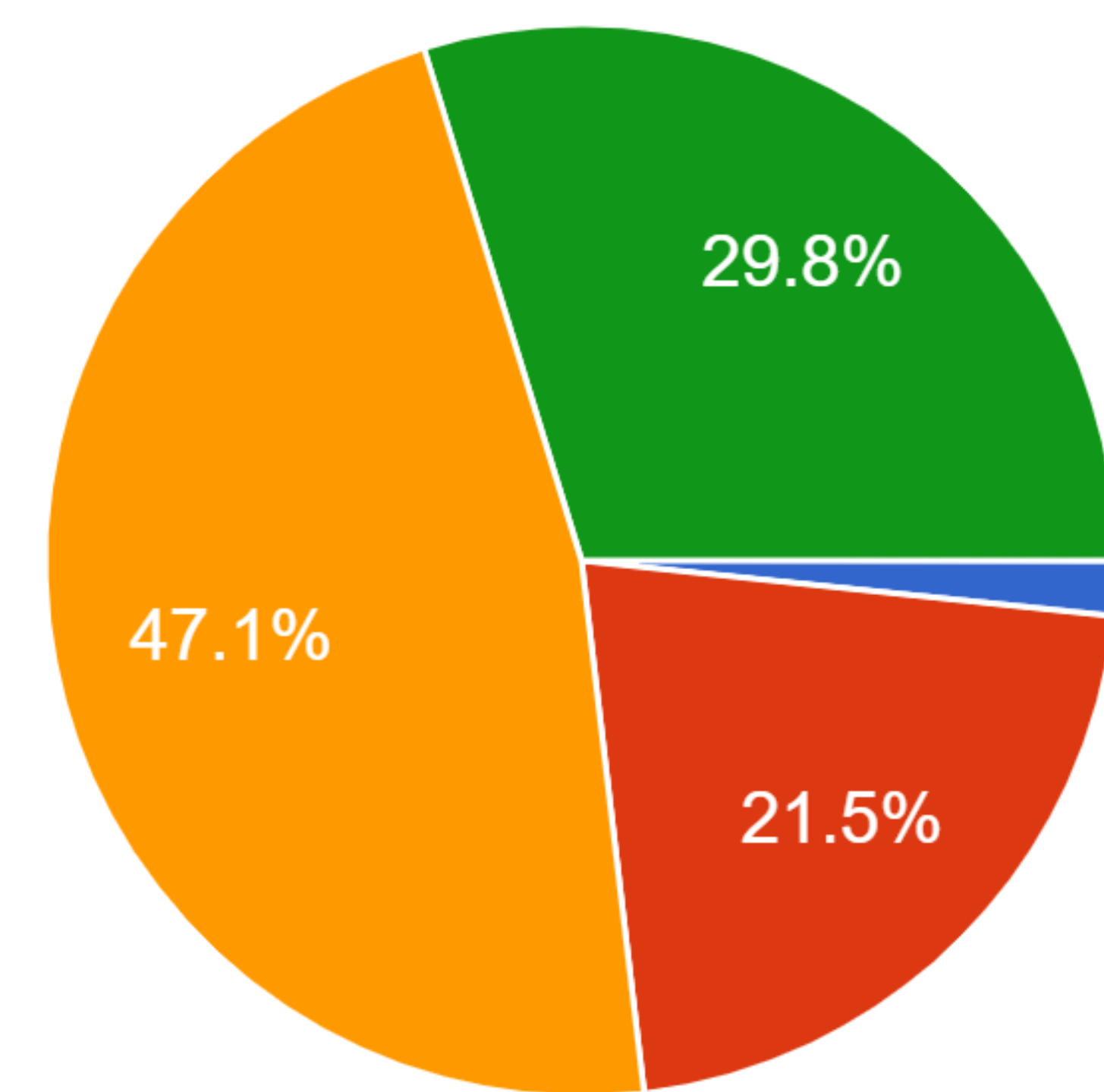
- None
- A little (a few lectures or a workshop)
- A moderate amount (an entire course or placement)
- A great deal (this was a focus of your training)

Advocacy



Advocating for the science and profession of psychology is

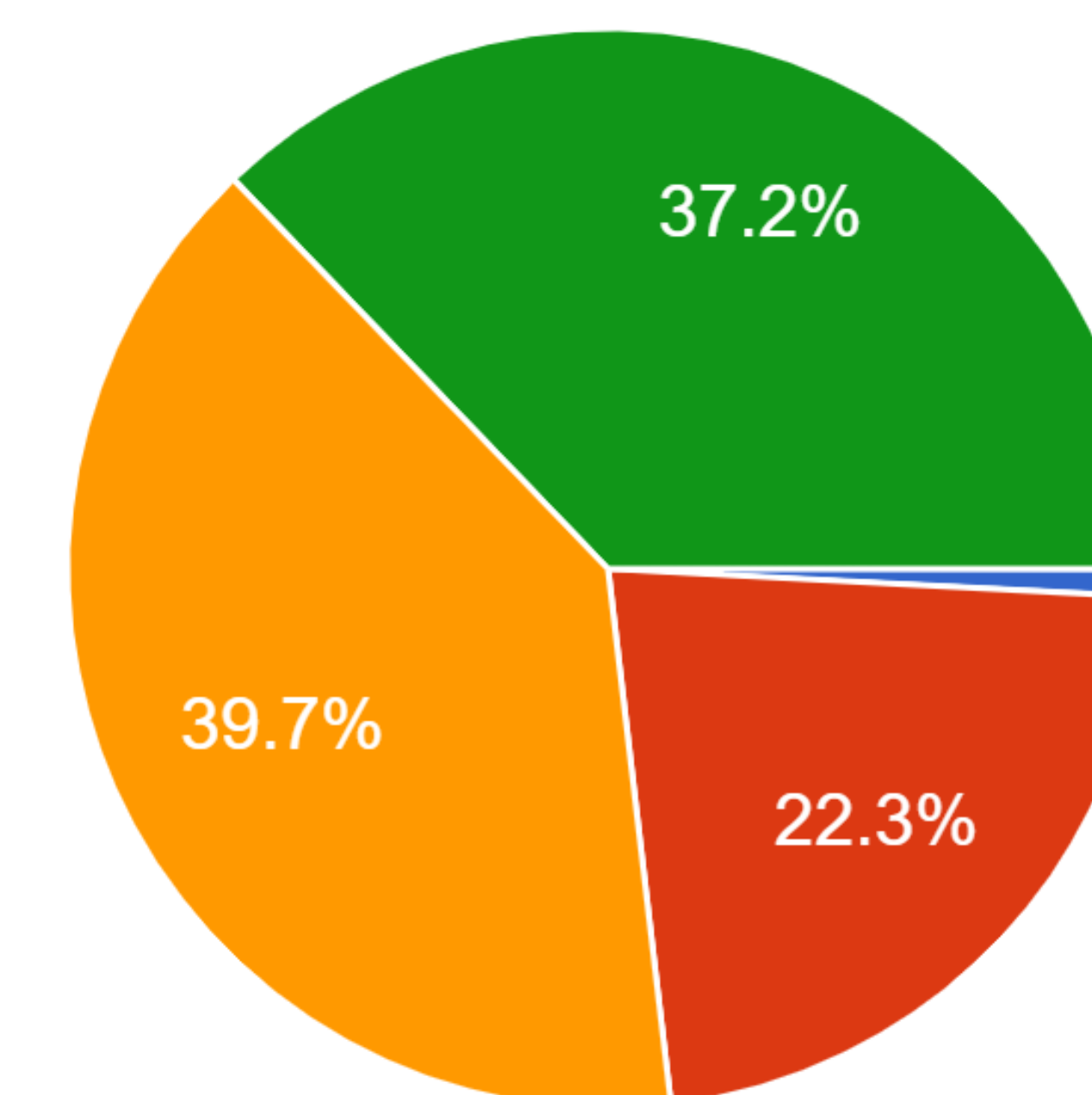
121 responses



- Not at all important to me
- Somewhat important to me
- Very important to me
- Extremely important to me

Advocating for social justice issues is

121 responses



- Not at all important to me
- Somewhat important to me
- Very important to me
- Extremely important to me



MOST FREQUENT SOCIAL JUSTICE AREAS OF INTEREST REPORTED:

Access to Services

Social Determinants of Health (e.g. Poverty and Housing)

Mental Health and Stigma

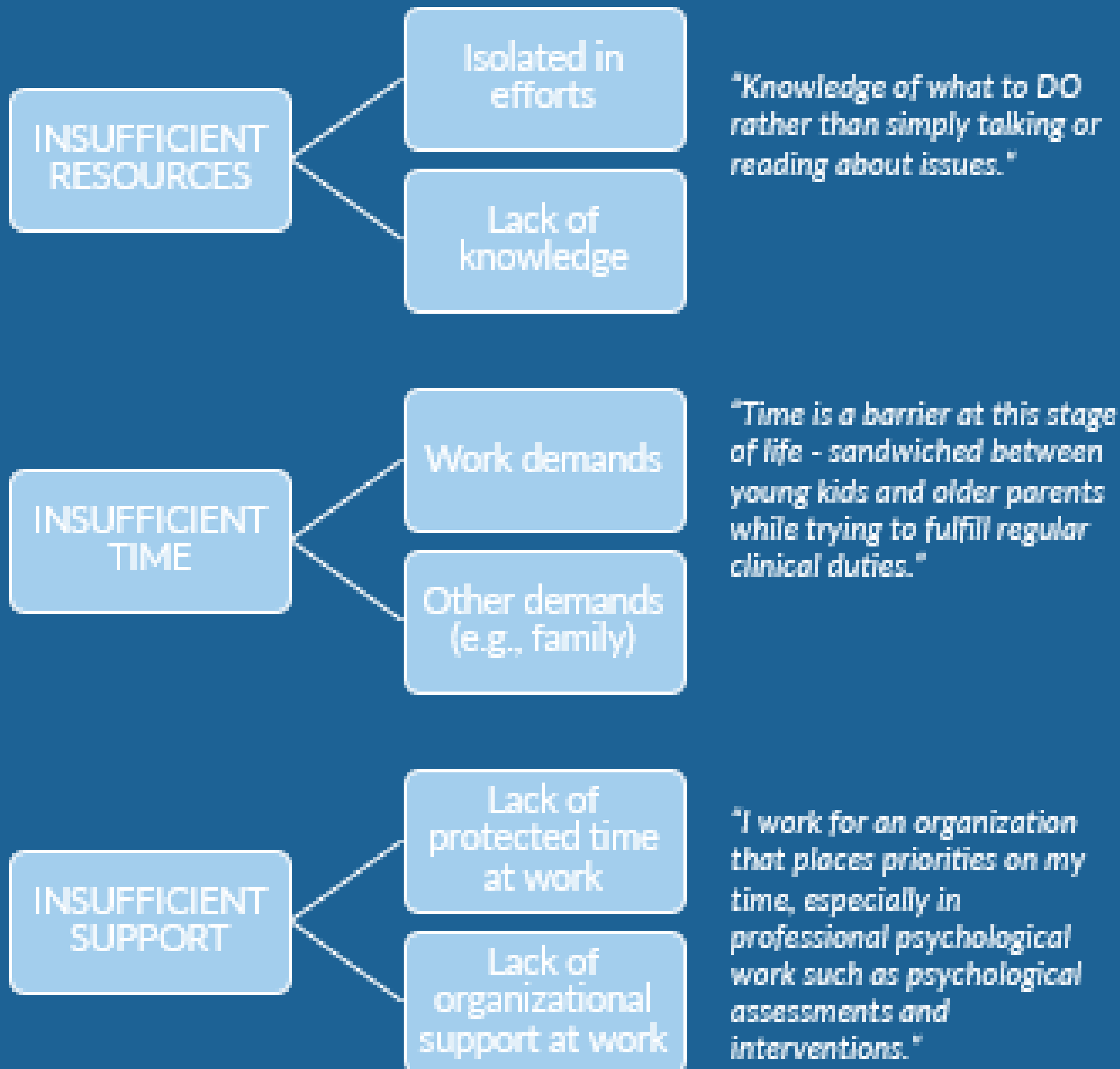
Human Rights

Lack of Diversity within the Profession

Violence Against Women

Racism

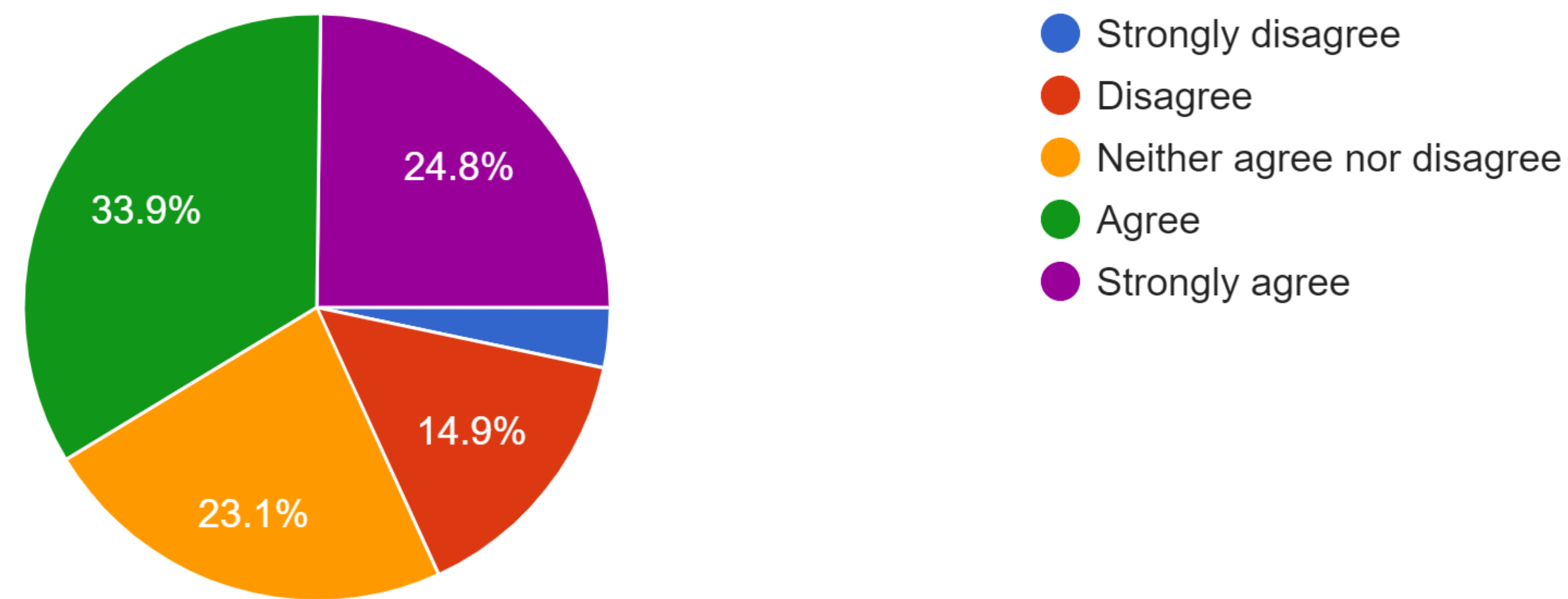
Although advocacy was rated as an important professional activity for most psychologists, three categories of barriers were reported.



How do we engage in Social Justice?

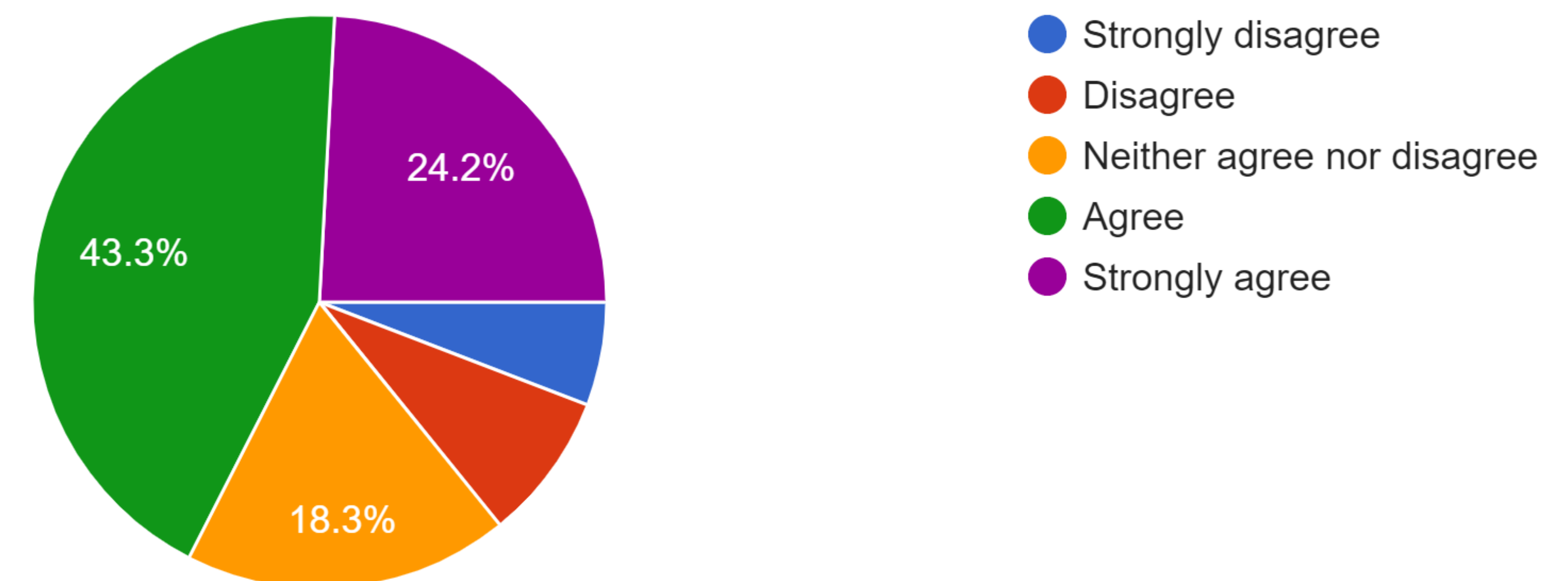
How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement: Training and/or experience in social justice advocacy should be a requirement to become licensed/registered.

121 responses



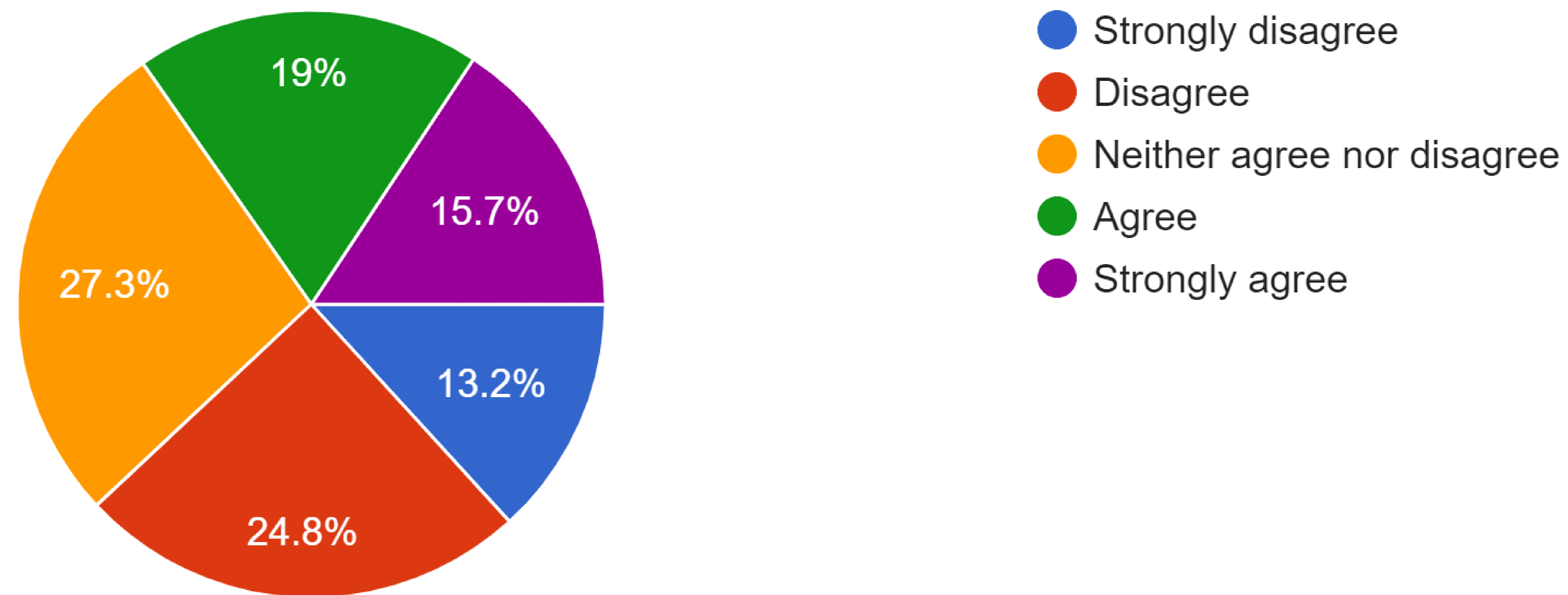
How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement: Learning about social justice should be a required professional development activity to maintain licensure/registration.

120 responses



How much do you agree/disagree with the following statement: Advocating for social justice should be a required professional development activity to maintain licensure/registration.

121 responses





What did we learn

- SMALL SAMPLE, Can't generalize
 - However those that responded did so for a reason
- Advocacy is important, areas that respondents viewed as important may not be where we are focusing which may be part of the lack of engagement
- Practicing Psychologists experience significant barriers and lack of clarity regarding support to advocate for social justice and equity in their practice, and to increase engagement more time and structure may be required (E.G. join the working group)
- Psychologists are divided in how to make this a part of their professional life
- Any legislation, regulation will have to be done thoughtfully.