

# Selecting databases for literature searching in social care

an Analysis of Studies Included in Systematic Reviews

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# Agenda

## Background and objectives

- Searching for social care topics
- Our objectives
- Method

## Results

- Overall database coverage
- Results from two subgroups: Substance use disorder, Disability

## Conclusion and discussion

# Introduction

# SBU – Swedish Agency for Health Technology Assessment and Assessment of Social Services

National independent agency established in 1987

Undertakes assessments of interventions and methods used in:

- health
- medical and dental services
- social services
- services provided with the support of the Law regulating Support and Service to Persons with Certain Functional Disabilities (LSS)

Participates in, for example, the networks INSIA, INAHTA, Health Technology Assessment Regulation (HTAR), HTAi and the EU HTA Coordination Group

# Objectives

Can we reduce the number of databases used in literature searches for systematic reviews on social care topics, without compromising the methodological rigour?

1. Which databases index the journal articles included in a set of systematic reviews (SRs) within social care?
2. The minimum number of databases needed to find all included journal articles

# **Background: searching for social care topics is complicated**

There is little methodological guidance on selection of databases for the literature searching on social care topics

There is not one dominating database, like Medline in health topics.

# Subgroups of social care in this project

Social care (as defined for this project) = methods or interventions delivered by the social services

Subgroups of social care in this project:

- Crime
- Disability
- Homelessness
- Interpersonal violence
- Labour market interventions
- Substance use disorders

# Methods



# Gold standard set

- 1170 unique journal articles
- included the analysis of 46 SRs
- All SRs from the Campbell Collaboration and from SBU

# Gold standard set for each subgroup

- Crime: 14 SRs with the total of 428 included articles
- Disability: 6 SRs with 146 included articles
- Interpersonal violence: 9 SRs with 185 included articles
- Labour market interventions: 6 SRs with 117 included articles
- Homelessness: 4 SRs with 214 included articles
- Substance use disorders: 7 SRs with 81 included articles

# Databases used in this project

- Academic Search Premier (Ebsco)
- APA PsycInfo (Ebsco)
- CINAHL (Ebsco)
- Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials, CENTRAL (Wiley)
- Criminal Justice Abstracts (Ebsco)
- ERIC (Ebsco)
- Embase (Elsevier)
- Ovid MEDLINE(R) ALL
- Scopus (Elsevier)
- SocINDEX (Ebsco)
- Sociological abstracts incl Social Services Abstracts (Proquest)

# Data collection and analysis

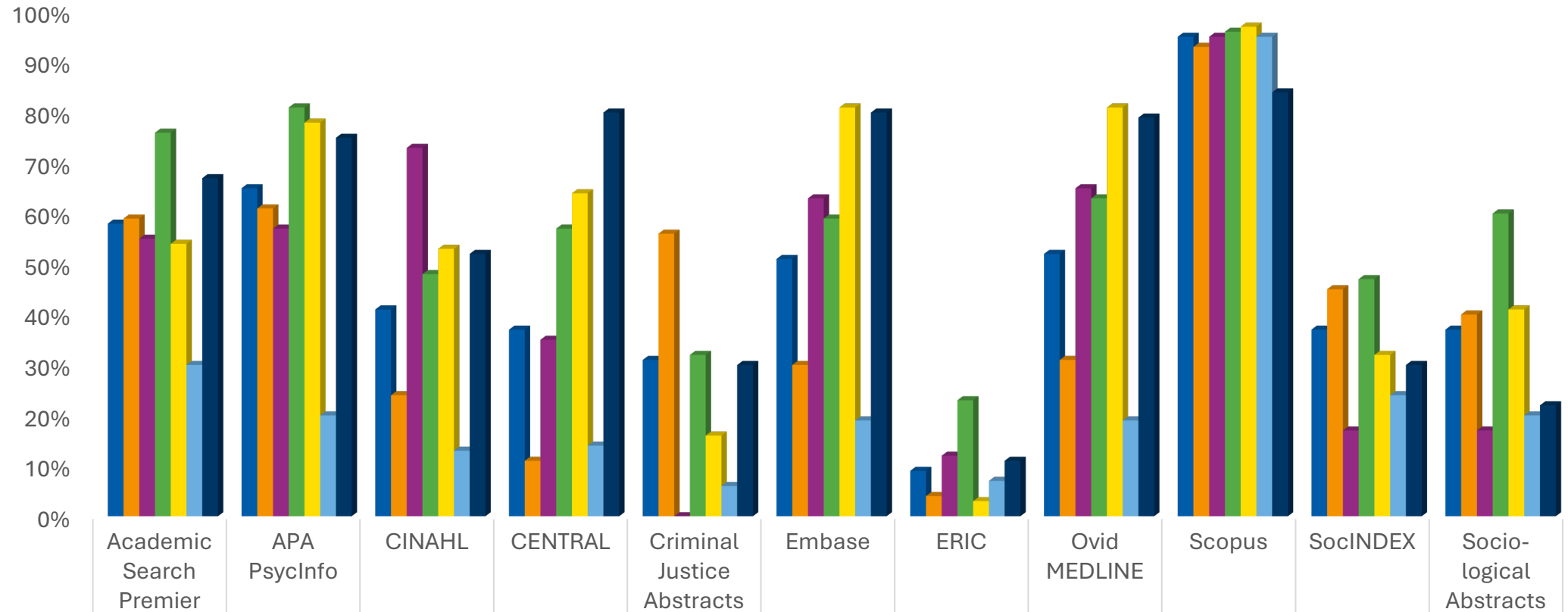
Identification  
and selection of  
SRs relevant to  
our project

References to the  
journal articles  
included in the  
analysis of the  
reviews were  
collected using  
an Excel  
spreadsheet

The indexing  
rates and unique  
references was  
documented for  
each database

# Results

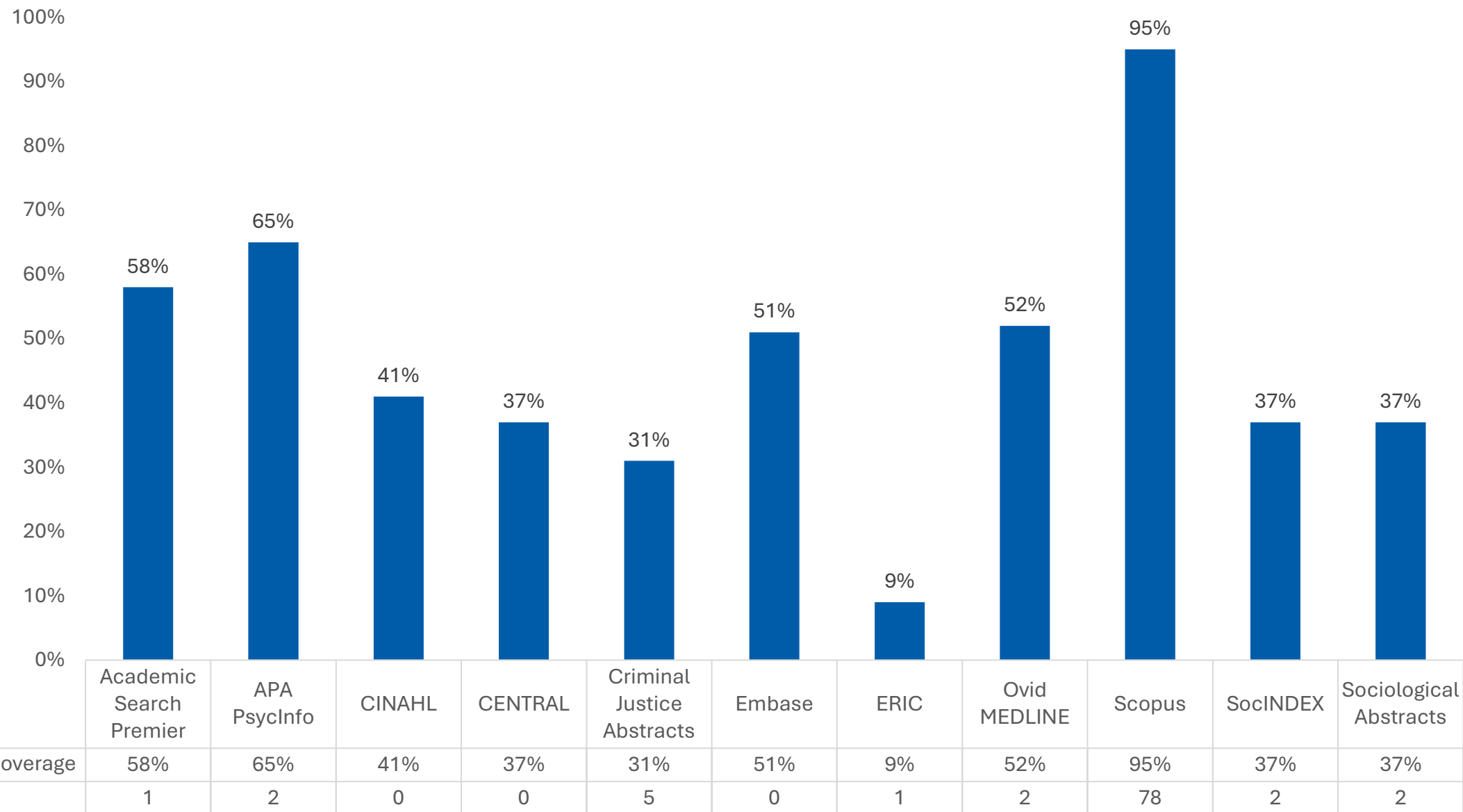
# Overall database coverage (n=1170)



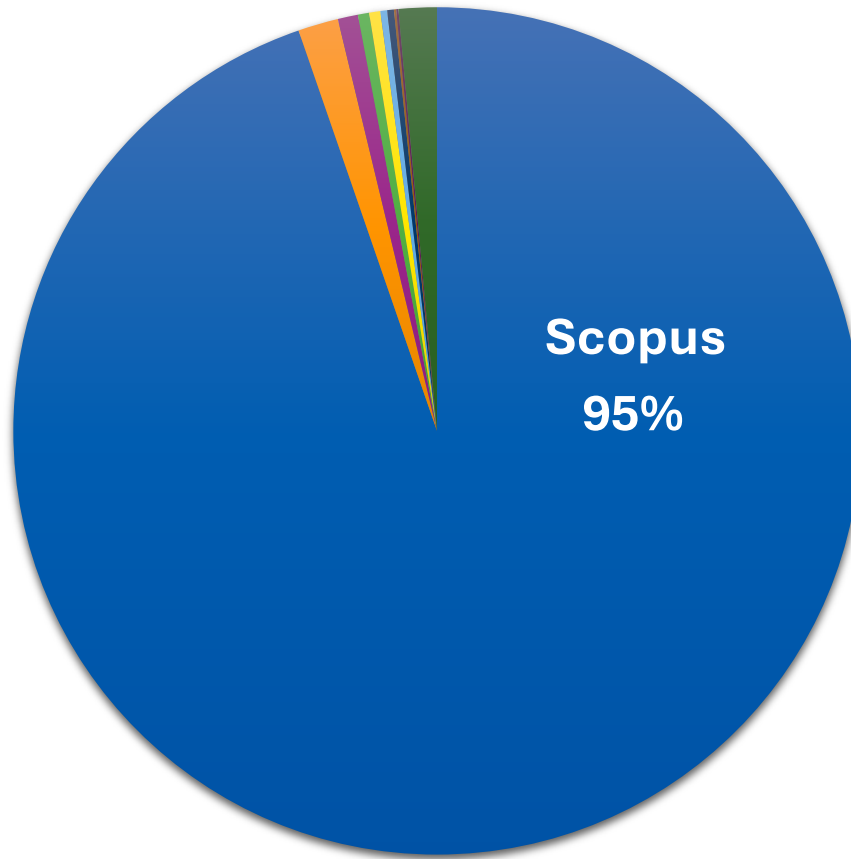
	Academic Search Premier	APA PsycInfo	CINAHL	CENTRAL	Criminal Justice Abstracts	Embase	ERIC	Ovid MEDLINE	Scopus	SocINDEX	Sociological Abstracts
ALL	58%	65%	41%	37%	31%	51%	9%	52%	95%	37%	37%
Crime	59%	61%	24%	11%	56%	30%	4%	31%	93%	45%	40%
Disability	55%	57%	73%	35%	0%	63%	12%	65%	95%	17%	17%
Interpersonal violence	76%	81%	48%	57%	32%	59%	23%	63%	96%	47%	60%
Homelessness	54%	78%	53%	64%	16%	81%	3%	81%	97%	32%	41%
Labour market interventions	30%	20%	13%	14%	6%	19%	7%	19%	95%	24%	20%
Substance use disorders	67%	75%	52%	80%	30%	80%	11%	79%	84%	30%	22%

■ ALL
 ■ Crime
 ■ Disability
 ■ Interpersonal violence
 ■ Homelessness
 ■ Labour market interventions
 ■ Substance use disorders

# Overall database coverage - all subgroups combined (n=1170)



## Overall database combinations - all subgroups combined (n=1170)

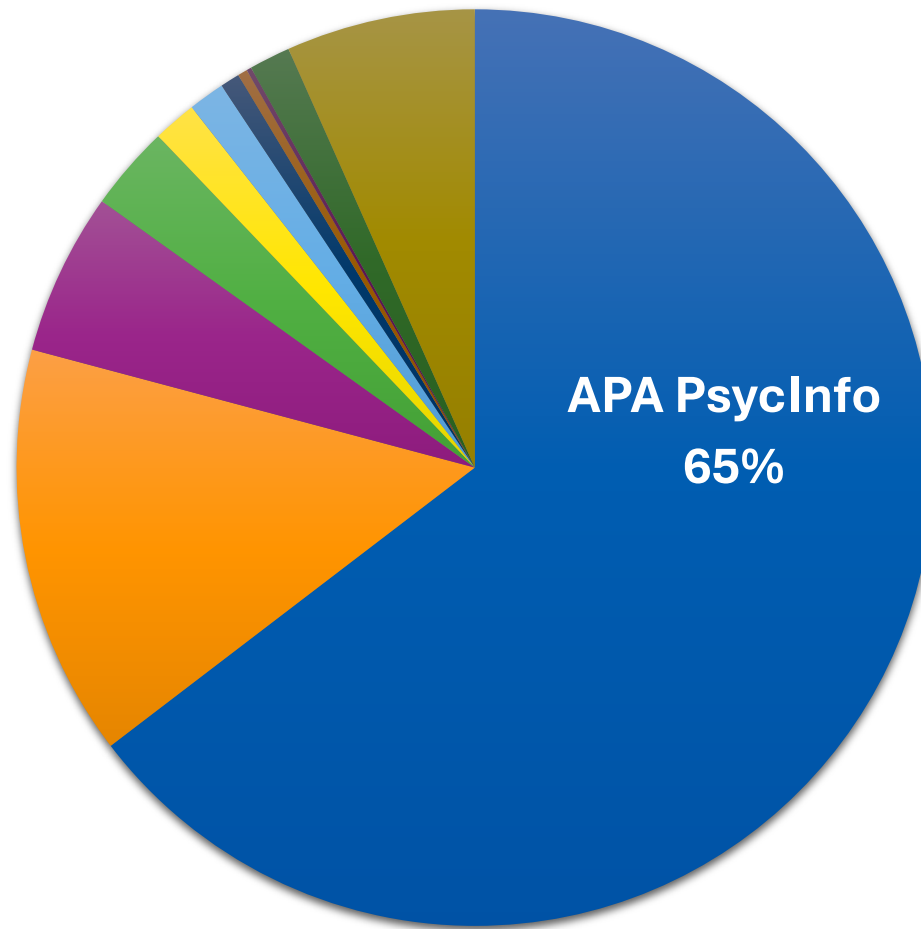


Scopus - 95%  
+ SocINDEX - 96%  
+ Criminal Justice Abstracts - 97%  
+ Sociological Abstracts - 97%  
+ CENTRAL - 98%  
+ APA Psycinfo AND Ovid MEDLINE AND  
Academic Search Premier AND ERIC - 99%

- Scopus (n=1108)
- SocINDEX (n=18)
- Criminal Justice Abstracts (n=9)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=5)
- CENTRAL (n=5)
- APA PsycInfo (n=3)
- Ovid MEDLINE (n=3)
- Academic Search Premier (n=1)
- ERIC (n=1)
- Not in searched databases (n=17)



## Overall database combinations - all subgroups combined (n=1170) WITHOUT SCOPUS



APA PsycInfo - 65%  
+ Academic Search Premier - 79%  
+ Ovid MEDLINE - 85%  
+ SocINDEX - 88%  
+ Sociological Abstracts - 89%  
+ Criminal Justice Abstracts - 91%  
+ CINAHL - 91%  
+ ERIC - 92%  
+ CENTRAL OR Embase - 92%

- APA PsycInfo (n=756)
- Academic Search Premier (n=170)
- Ovid MEDLINE (n=67)
- SocINDEX (n=35)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=18)
- Criminal Justice Abstracts (n=15)
- CINAHL (n=8)
- ERIC (n=4)
- CENTRAL OR Embase (n=2)
- Not in searched databases (n=17)
- Scopus UNIQUE (n=78)

## Database coverage - Substance use disorders (n=81)

120%

100%

80%

60%

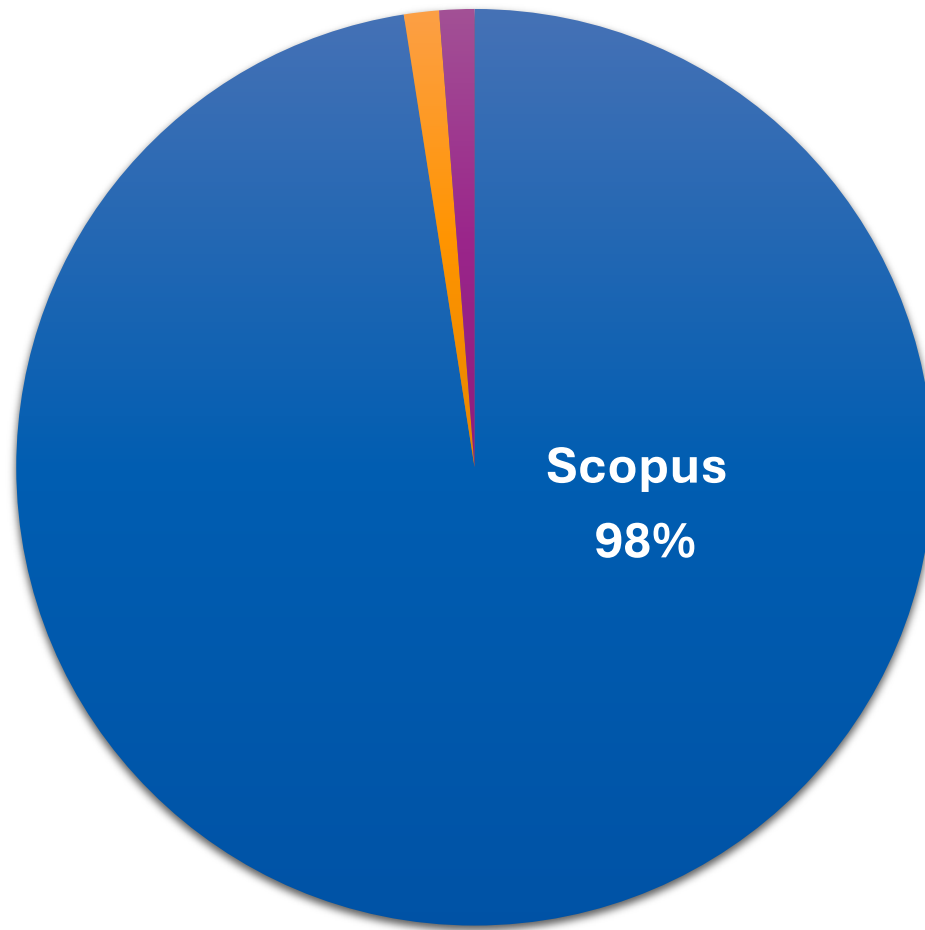
40%

20%

0%

	Academic Search Premier	APA PsycInfo	CINAHL	CENTRAL	Criminal Justice Abstracts	Embase	ERIC	Ovid MEDLINE	Scopus	SocINDEX	Sociological Abstracts
Database coverage	74%	86%	60%	91%	33%	90%	11%	88%	98%	33%	22%
Unique hits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

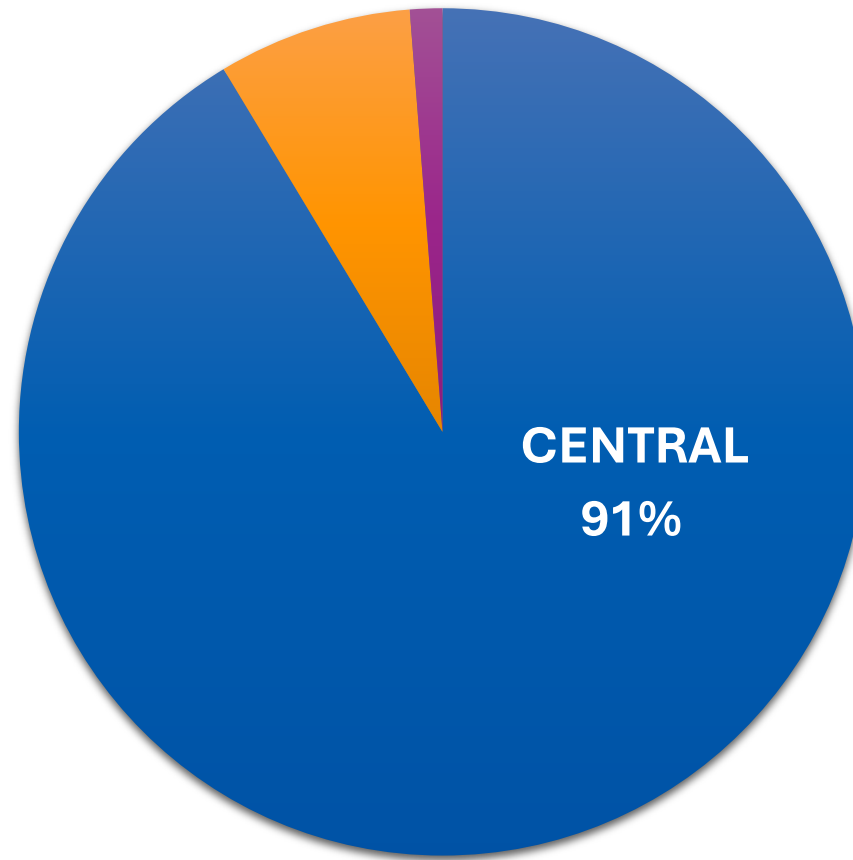
## Database combinations - Substance use disorders (n=81)



Scopus - 98%  
+ CENTRAL OR Embase - 99%

- Scopus (n=79)
- Embase OR CENTRAL (n=1)
- Not in searched databases (n=1)

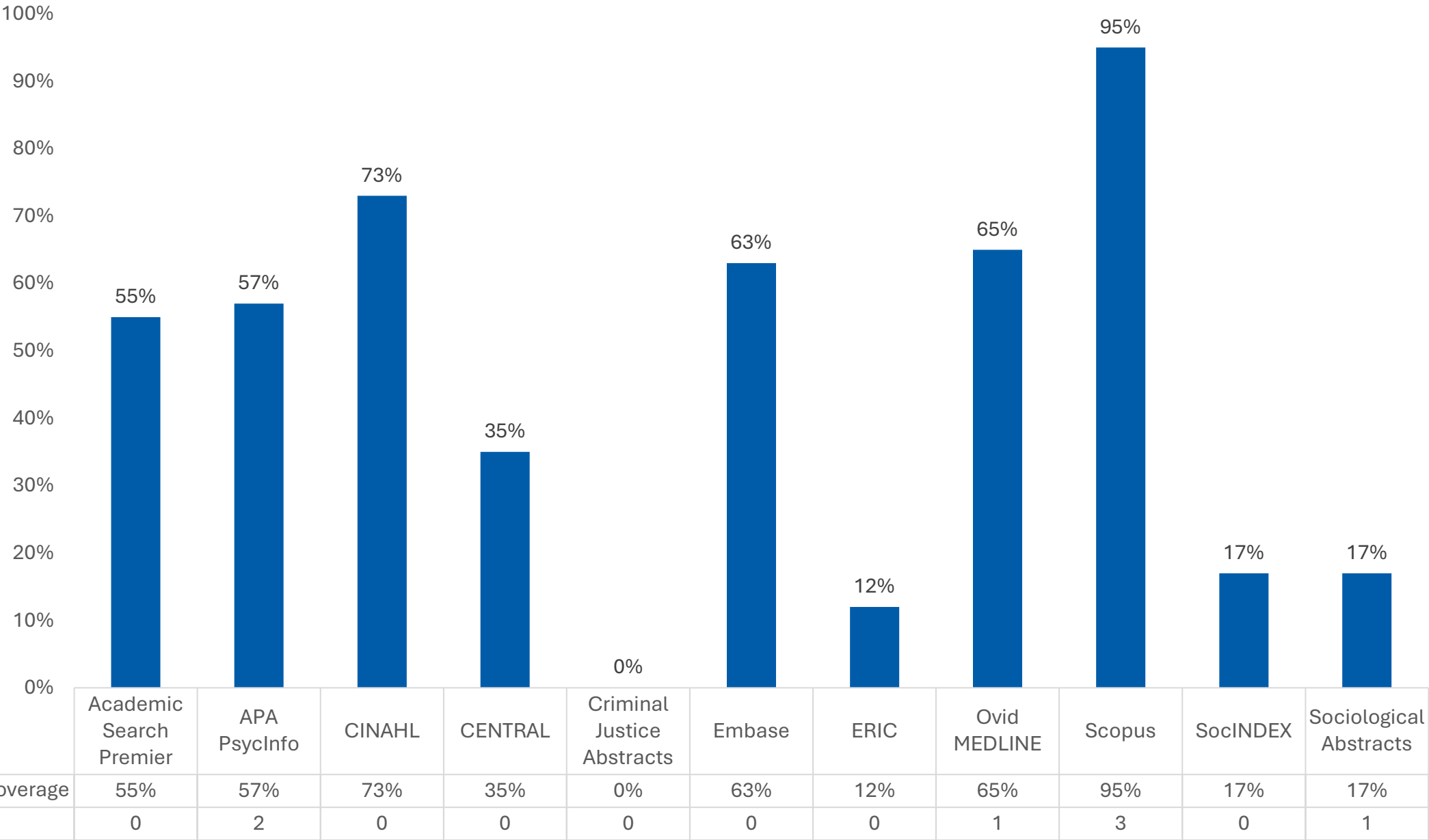
## Database combinations - Substance use disorders (n=81) – WITHOUT SCOPUS



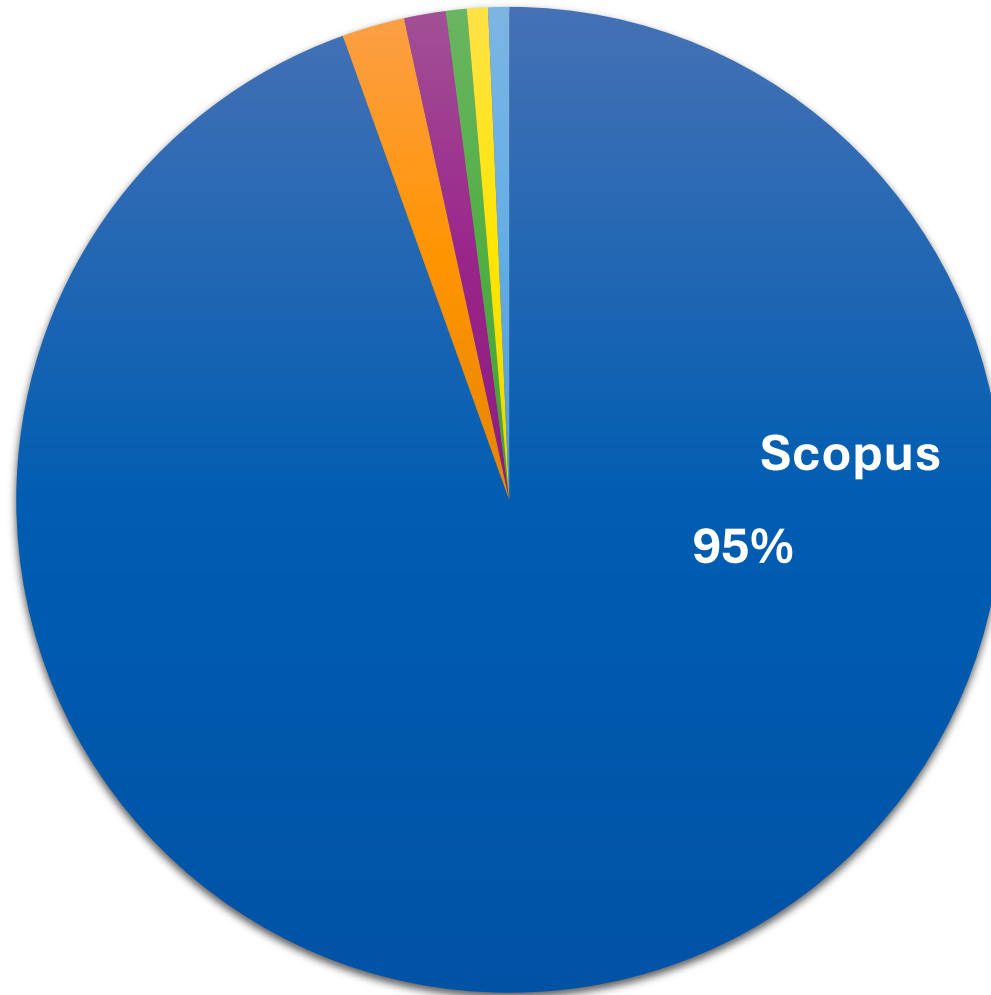
CENTRAL - 91%  
+ APA Psycinfo - 99%

- CENTRAL (n=74)
- APA PsycInfo (n=6)
- Not in searched databases (n=1)

Database coverage - Disability (n=146)



## Database combinations - Disability (n=146)



Scopus - 95%

+ APA PsycInfo - 97%

+ Ovid MEDLINE - 98%

+ Sociological Abstracts OR CINAHL OR CENTRAL - 99%

■ Scopus (n=138)

■ APA PsycInfo (n=3)

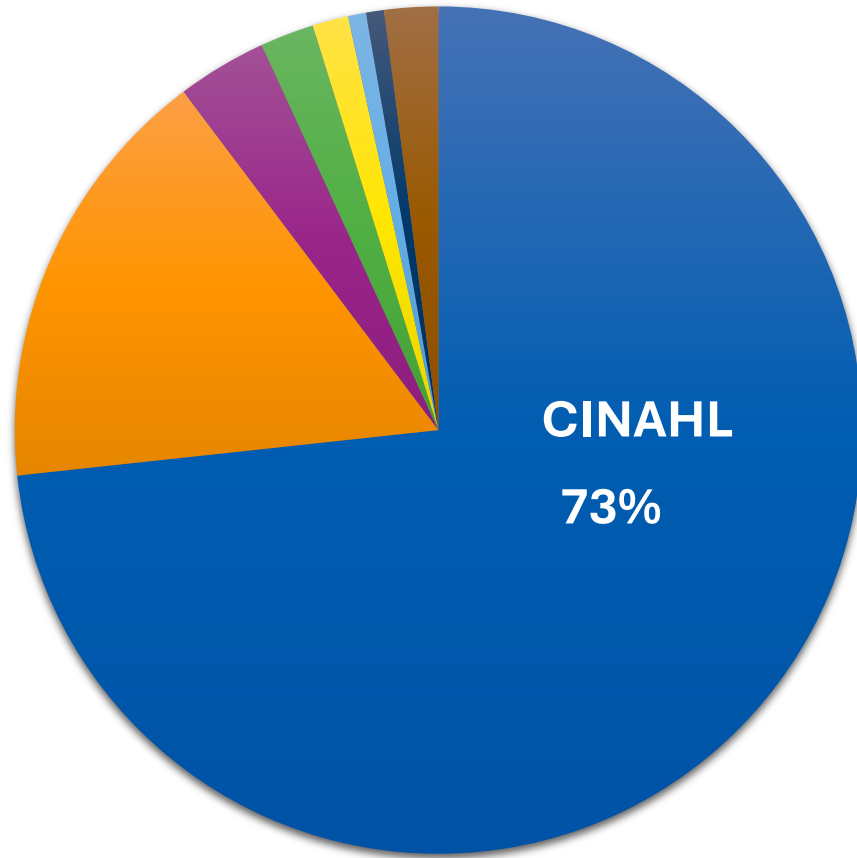
■ Ovid MEDLINE (n=2)

■ Sociological Abstracts (n=1)

■ CINAHL OR CENTRAL (n=1)

■ Not in searched databases (n=1)

## Database combinations - Disability (n=146) – WITHOUT SCOPUS



CINAHL - 73%  
+ APA Psycinfo - 90%  
+ Ovid MEDLINE - 93%  
+ Sociological Abstract - 95%  
+ ERIC - 97%

- CINAHL (n=107)
- APA PsycInfo (n=24)
- Ovid MEDLINE (n=5)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=3)
- ERIC (n=2)
- SocINDEX(n=1)
- Not in searched databases (n=1)
- Scopus UNIQUE (n=3)

# Conclusions



# Conclusion

**Q1: Which databases index the journal articles in a set of systematic reviews within social care?**

Answer:

- Scopus has the highest coverage (95%) of articles in our GS, both in total and regardless of subgroup.
- The performance of the other databases varies significantly across the different subgroups.
- SocIndex and Sociological Abstracts covers relatively few (37%) of the included articles and only two unique articles each.

# Conclusion

**Q2: The minimum number of databases needed to find all included articles?**

Answer: for most of the subgroups **3 databases\*** is enough to cover 99%

Substance use disorder: 2 databases

Interpersonal violence: 3 databases

Crime: 3 databases (98%)

Homelessness: 2 databases

Disability: 4 databases

Labour Market Interventions: 3 databases (97%)

\*If scopus is included

# Discussion

- How many articles are acceptable to miss?  
(Sensitive search filters has normally 95-100% recall.)
- If a database contains 95% of relevant articles –how many will be found when searching?
- How much time and effort are your SR team willing to invest trying to find the last few percentage of relevant articles?

# Limitations / Future research

Focus on the practical use for *our* institution:

- Grey literature
- Databases indexed, not searched
- Some important databases are not included in the analysis (ASSIA, IBSS etc)
- We have not taken into account how the GS was created
- The definition of Social care could be discussed

# Implications for practice

The results can be useful when:

- Selecting databases for focused searches (pilot studies etc)
- Selecting databases for systematic reviews (which DB is useful for what topic, how many)
- Managing Database Collection

Further work:

- Difference between Indexed references and references found when searching.
  - How can we search Scopus more effectively?

# Main message:



Most articles included in SRs in social care are indexed in Scopus!



Scopus –the go-to database for social care?



Exhaustive searching can be done in fewer databases (2-4) than what is normally used (11) in SRs in Social Care



Informed choice when selecting databases –this project can be part of an evidence base



Resources can be reallocated (developing the searches, search gray literature etc)

# Thank you!

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Scan the QR code to find  
the presentation and  
supplementary data

# Supplementary material

Systematic reviews used to collect the gold standard. Divided into subgroups



# Substance use disorders

Title	Organization
12-step programs for reducing illicit drug use	Campbell Collaboration
Cognitive-behavioural treatment for amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS)-use disorders	Campbell Collaboration
Effects of early, computerized brief interventions on risky alcohol use and risky cannabis use among young people	Campbell Collaboration
Family Behavior Therapy (FBT) for Young People in Treatment for Non-opioid Drug Use: A Systematic Review	Campbell Collaboration
Functional Family Therapy (FFT) for Young People in Treatment for Non-opioid Drug Use: A Systematic Review	Campbell Collaboration
Multidimensional Family Therapy (MDFT) for Young People in Treatment for Non-opioid Drug Abuse: A Systematic Review	Campbell Collaboration
Recovery schools for improving behavioral and academic outcomes among students in recovery from substance use disorders: a systematic review	Campbell Collaboration

# Disability

Title	Organization
Effectiveness of interventions for improving livelihood outcomes for people with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review	Campbell Collaboration
Effectiveness of interventions for improving social inclusion outcomes for people with disabilities in low- and middle-income countries: A systematic review	Campbell Collaboration
Individualized funding interventions to improve health and social care outcomes for people with a disability: A mixed-methods systematic review	Campbell Collaboration
Multifaceted interventions for supporting community participation among adults with disabilities: A systematic review	Campbell Collaboration

Title	Organization
<p>Wheelchairs and wheelchair accessories</p> <p>A systematic review and assessment of medical, economic, social and ethical aspects: Qualitative studies</p>	SBU
<p>Wheelchairs and wheelchair accessories</p> <p>A systematic review and assessment of medical, economic, social and ethical aspects: Quantitative studies</p>	SBU

# Interpersonal Violence

Title	Organization
Advocacy Interventions to Reduce or Eliminate Violence and Promote the Physical and Psychosocial Well-Being of Women who Experience Intimate Partner Abuse: A Systematic Review	Campbell collaboration
Family group decision-making for children at risk of abuse or neglect: A systematic review	Campbell Collaboration
Kinship Care for the Safety, Permanency, and Well-being of Children Removed from the Home for Maltreatment: A Systematic Review	Campbell Collaboration
Technology-based and digital interventions for intimate partner violence: A systematic review and meta-analysis	Campbell Collaboration
The promotion of well-being among children exposed to intimate partner violence: A systematic review of interventions	Campbell Collaboration
Psychological and psychosocial treatment interventions for people with intellectual disabilities who have been exposed to sexual violence - A Systematic Review including Ethical Aspects	SBU

Title	Organization
Psychological and psychosocial interventions for children aged 7 years or younger who have been exposed to sexual violence – A Systematic Review including Ethical Aspects	SBU
Primary care interventions provided to families where children have been subjected to abuse and neglect	SBU
[Interventions Concerning Older Persons Who Have Been Subjected to Intimate Partner Violence]	SBU

# Crime

Title	Organization
Cognitive and behavioral radicalization: A systematic review of the putative risk and protective factors	Campbell Collaboration
Effects of bystander programs on the prevention of sexual assault among adolescents and college students: A systematic review	Campbell Collaboration
Effects of second responder programs on repeat incidents of family abuse: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis	Campbell Collaboration
[Outpatient interventions to prevent youth recidivism]	SBU
Focused deterrence strategies effects on crime: A systematic review	Campbell Collaboration
Hot spots policing of small geographic areas effects on crime	Campbell Collaboration
Psychosocial interventions preventing gang-related crime among children and young adults under the age of 30	SBU
Juvenile Curfew Effects on Criminal Behavior and Victimization: A Systematic Review	Campbell Collaboration

Title	Organization
Risk and needs assessment regarding reoffending in adolescents	SBU
Multiagency programs with police as a partner for reducing radicalisation to violence	Campbell Collaboration
Online interventions for reducing hate speech and cyberhate: A systematic review	Campbell Collaboration
Opioid-specific medication-assisted therapy and its impact on criminal justice and overdose outcomes	Campbell Collaboration
Organized crime groups: A systematic review of individual-level risk factors related to recruitment	Campbell Collaboration
The Effects on Re-offending of Custodial vs. Non-custodial Sanctions: An Updated Systematic Review of the State of Knowledge	Campbell Collaboration

# Homelessness

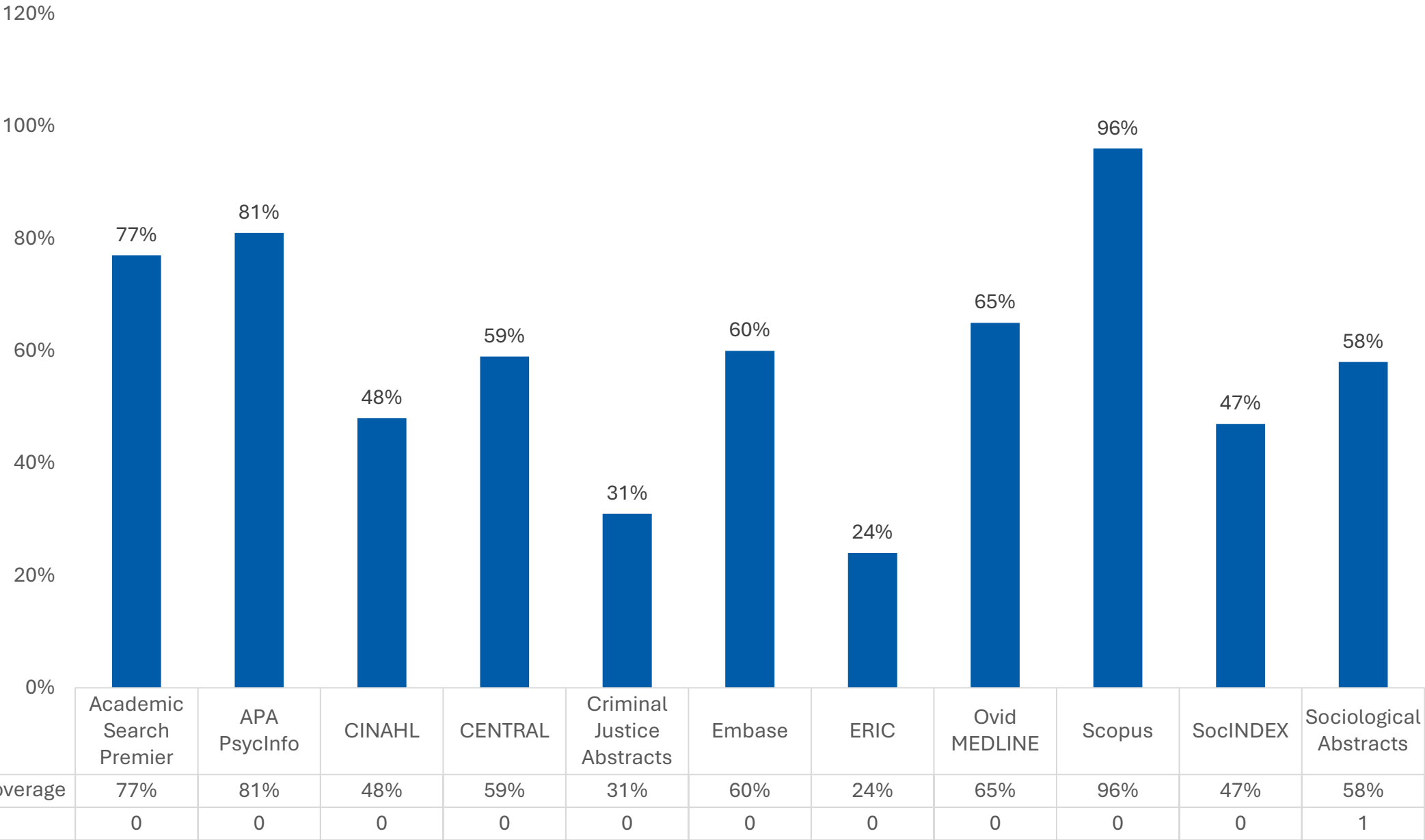
Title	Organization
A comprehensive review of prioritised interventions to improve the health and wellbeing of persons with lived experience of homelessness	Campbell Collaboration
Accommodation-based interventions for individuals experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness	Campbell Collaboration
Effectiveness of interventions to reduce homelessness: a systematic review and meta-analysis	Campbell Collaboration
Exploring the effect of case management in homelessness per components: A systematic review of effectiveness and implementation, with meta-analysis and thematic synthesis	Campbell Collaboration



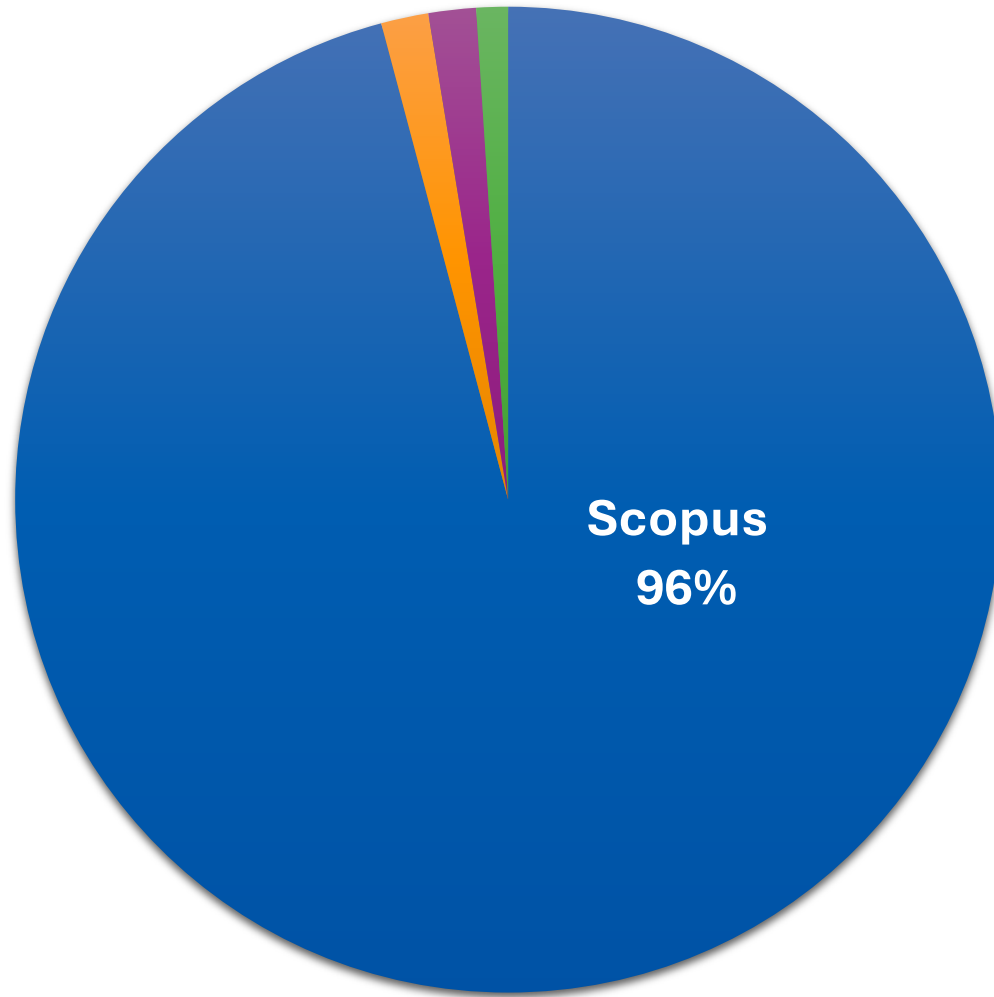
# Labour market interventions

Title	Organization
Active Labour Market Programme Participation for Unemployment Insurance Recipients: A Systematic Review	Campbell Collaboration
Effects of return-to-work interventions for persons on long-term sick-leave due to mood-, anxiety- or adjustment disorders	SBU
Effects of active labour market programs for long-term social assistance recipients	SBU
Interventions for improving employment outcomes for persons with autism spectrum disorders: A systematic review update	Campbell Collaboration
Interventions to improve the labour market outcomes of youth: A systematic review of training, entrepreneurship promotion, employment services and subsidized employment interventions	Campbell Collaboration
Reducing unemployment benefit duration to increase job finding rates: a systematic review	Campbell Collaboration

Database coverage - Violence (n=193)



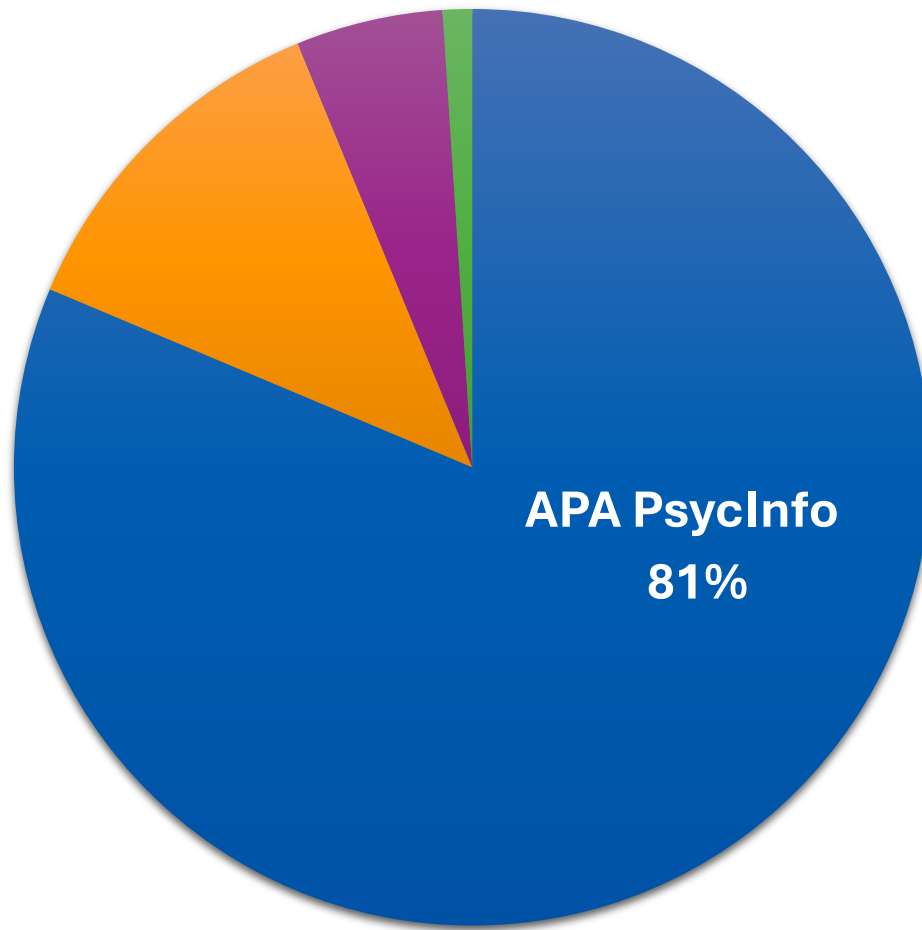
## Database combinations – Violence (n=193)



Scopus - 96%  
+ Sociological Abstract - 97%  
+ CINAHL - 99%

- Scopus (n=185)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=3)
- CINAHL (n=3)
- Not in searched databases (n=2)

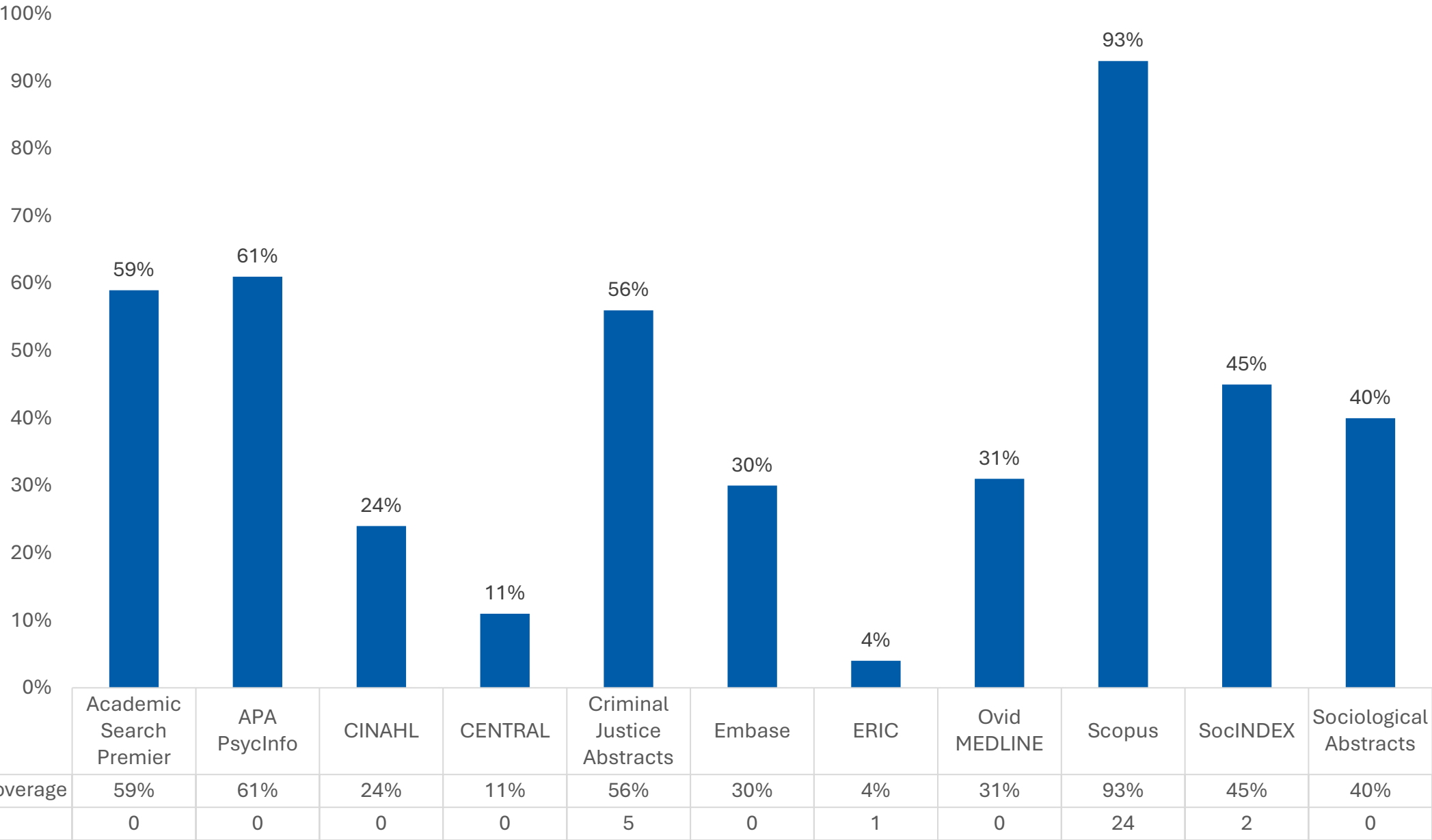
**Database combinations - Violence (n=193)  
– WITHOUT SCOPUS**



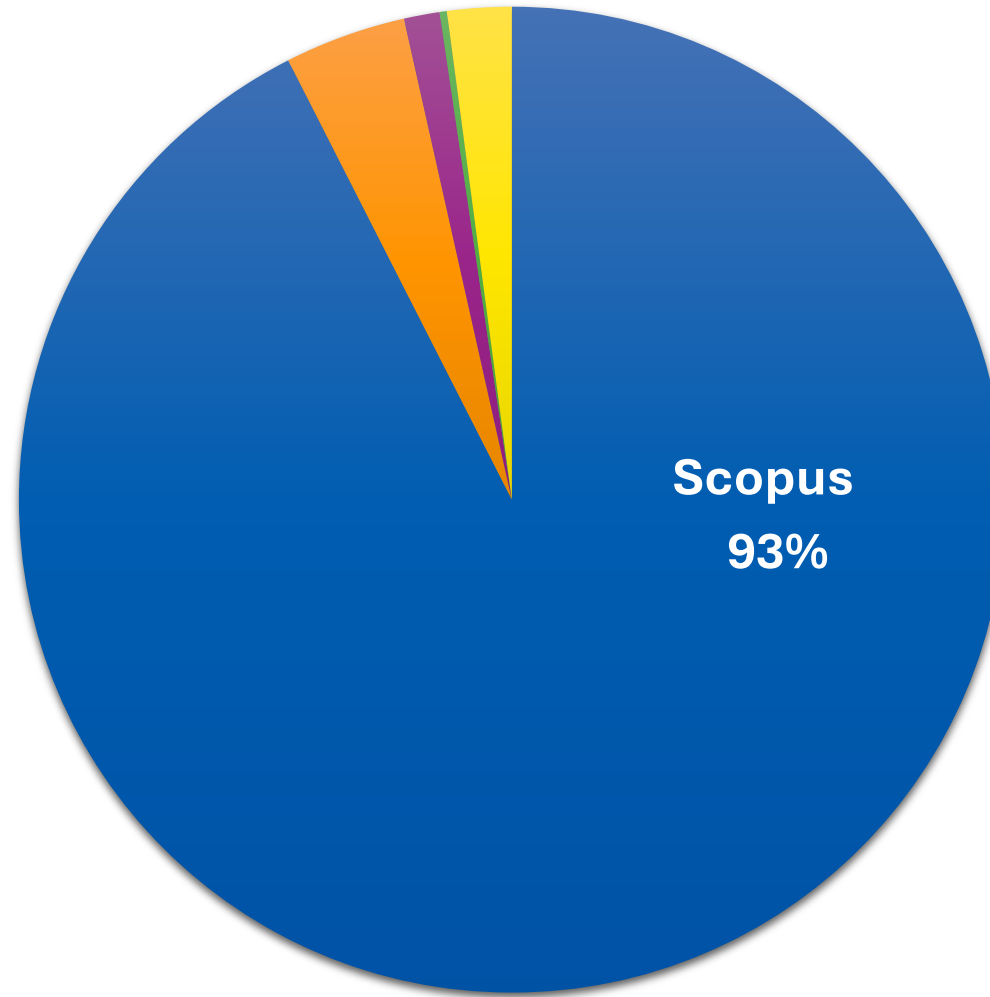
APA Psycinfo - 81%  
+ Ovid MEDLINE - 94%  
+ Sociological Abstract - 99%

- Psycinfo (n=157)
- Medline (n=24)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=10)
- Not in searched databases (n=2)

Database coverage - Crime (n=427)



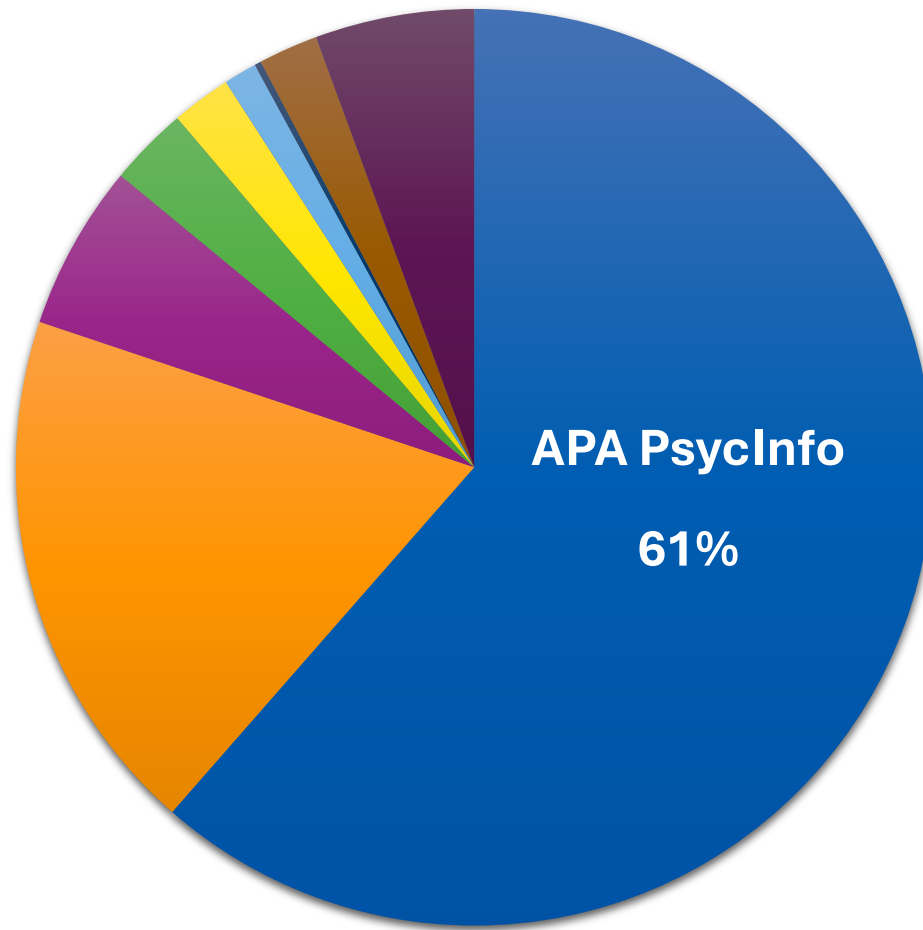
## Database combinations – Crime (n=427)



Scopus - 93%  
+ Criminal Justice Abstracts - 96%  
+ SocINDEX - 98%

- Scopus (n=395)
- Criminal Justice Abstracts (n=17)
- SocINDEX (n=5)
- ERIC (n=1)
- Not in searched databases (n=9)

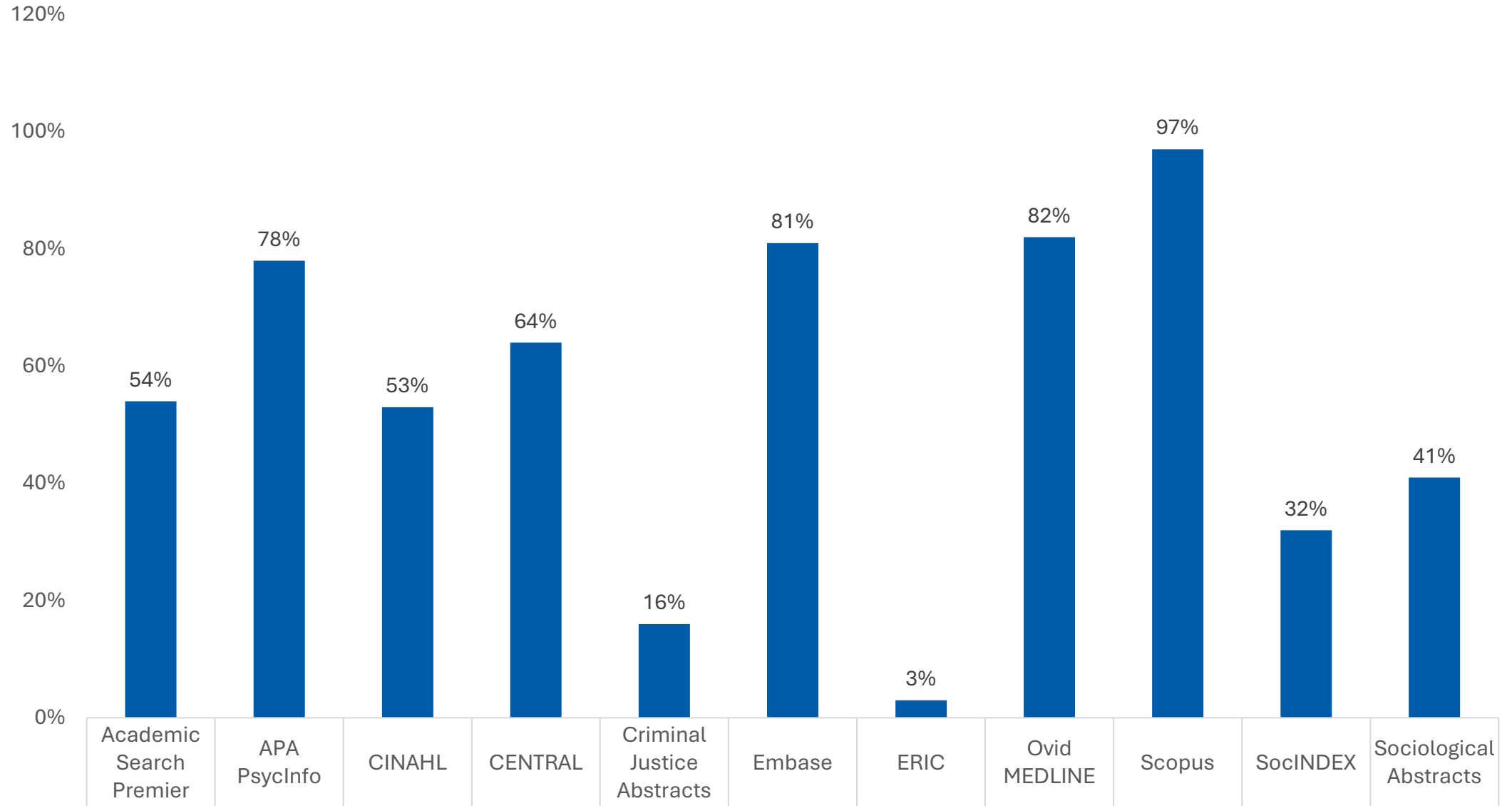
## Database combinations – Crime (n=427) – WITHOUT SCOPUS



APA PsycInfo - 61%  
+ Criminal Justice Abstracts - 80%  
+ Academic Search Premier - 86%  
+ Ovid MEDLINE - 89%  
+ Sociological Abstracts - 91%  
+ SocINDEX - 92%  
+ ERIC - 93%

- APA PsycInfo (n=263)
- Criminal Justice Abstracts (n=80)
- Academic Search Premier (n=25)
- Ovid MEDLINE (n=12)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=9)
- SocINDEX (n=5)
- ERIC (n=1)
- Not in searched databases (n=9)
- Scopus UNIQUE (n=24)

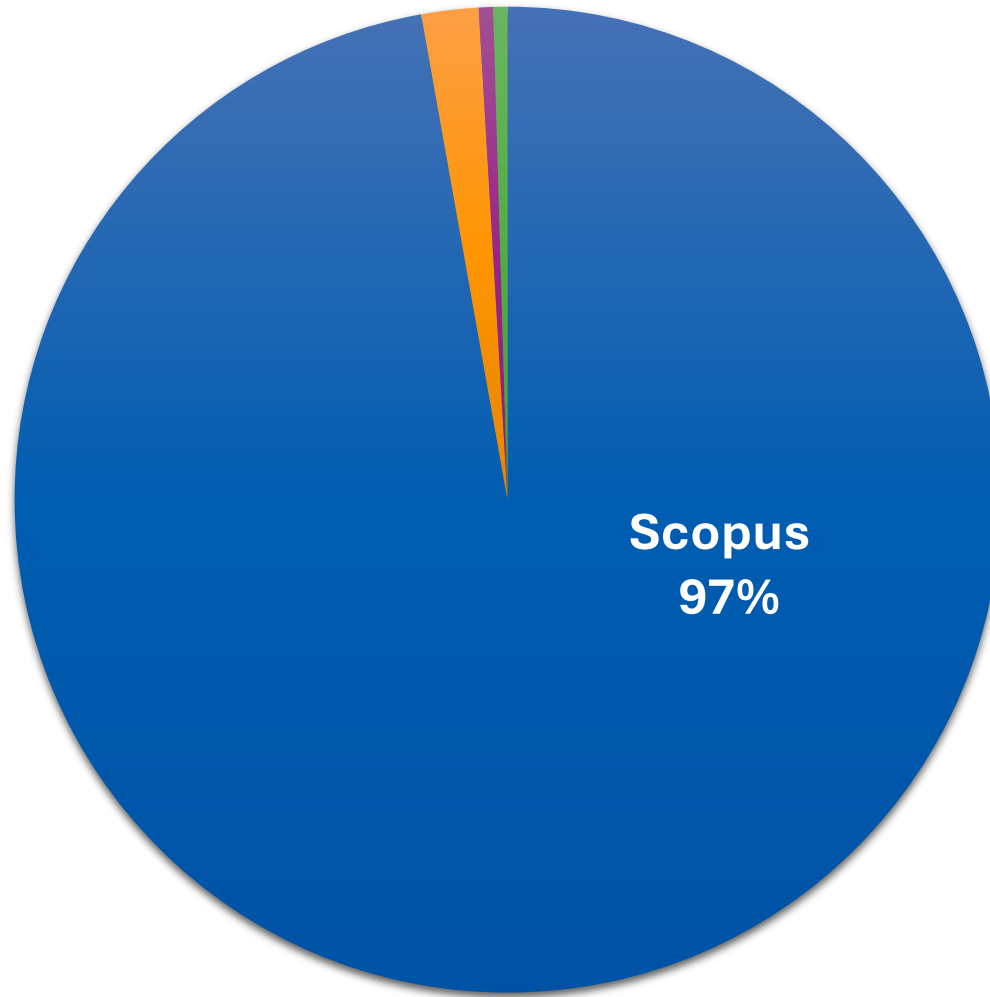
## Database coverage - Homelessness (n=214)



Database coverage	54%	78%	53%	64%	16%	81%	3%	82%	97%	32%	41%
Unique hits	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0



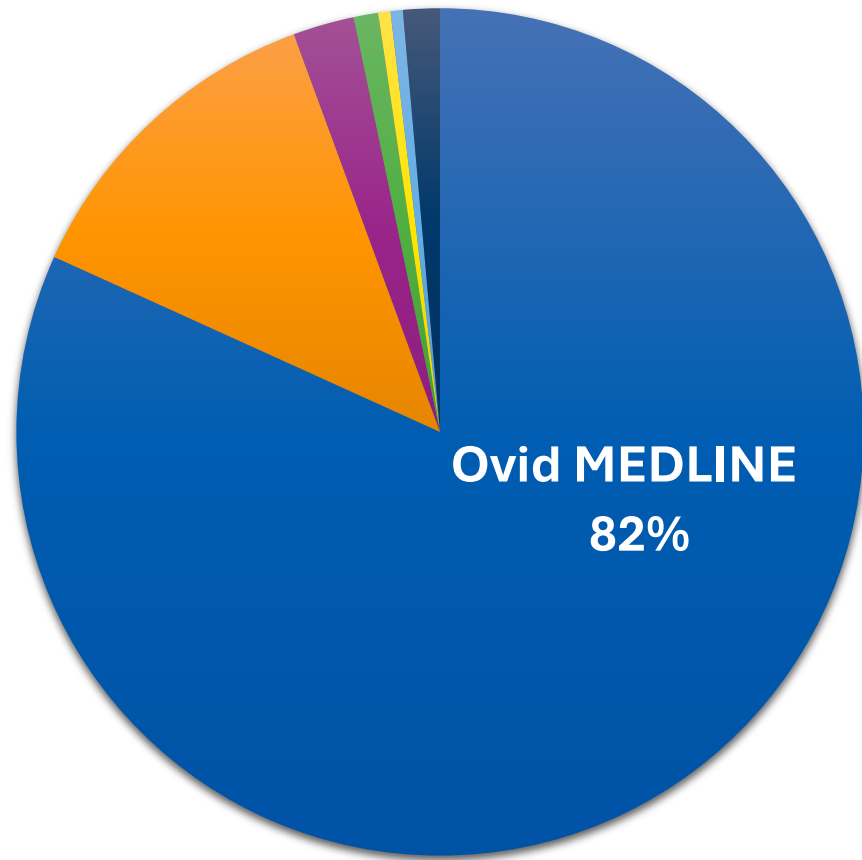
## Database combinations – Homelessness (n=214)



Scopus - 97%  
+ Sociological Abstracts - 99%

- Scopus (n=208)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=4)
- Ovid MEDLINE (n=1)
- CENTRAL OR Embase (n=1)

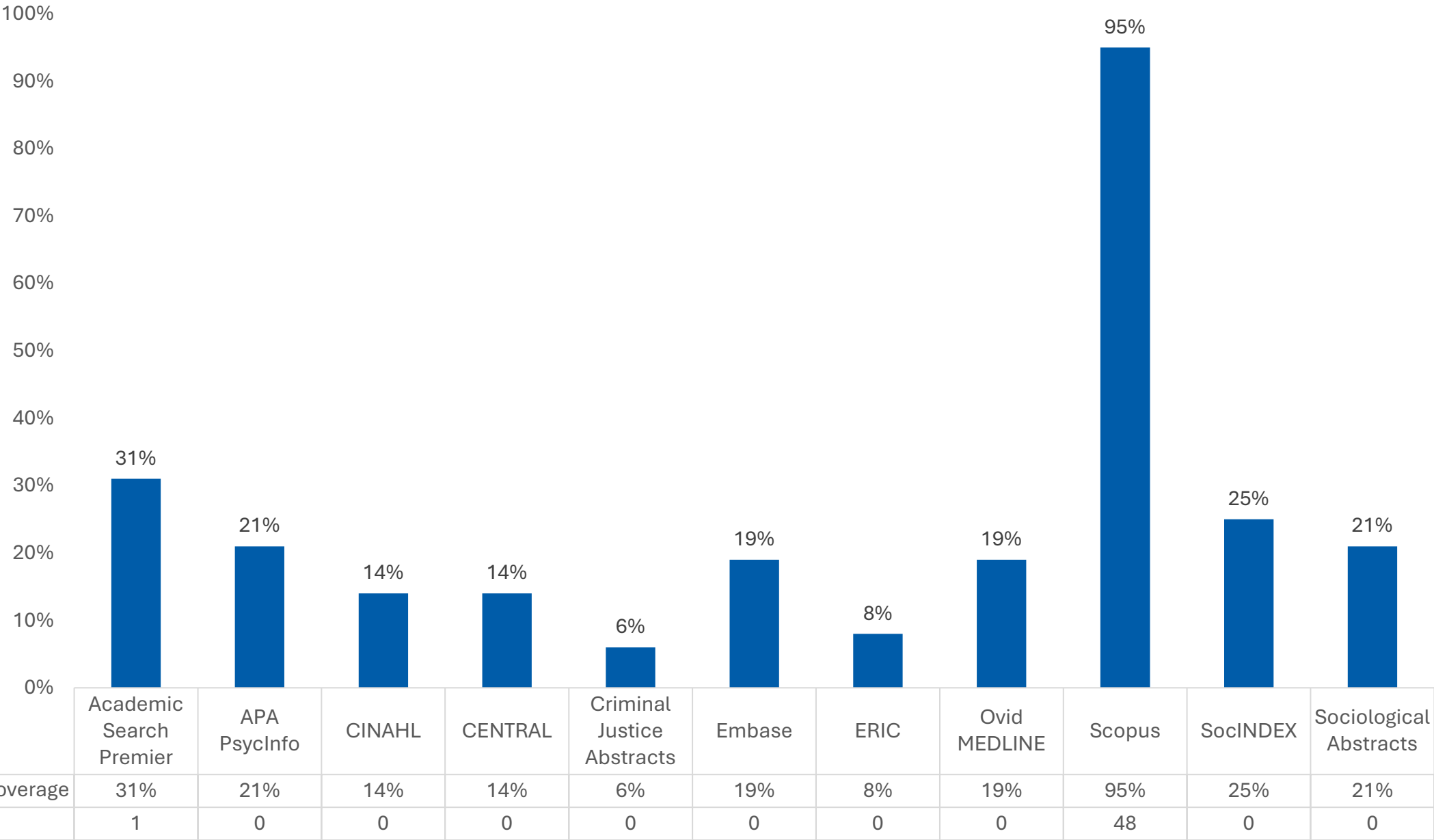
## Database combinations - Homelessness (n=214) – WITHOUT SCOPUS



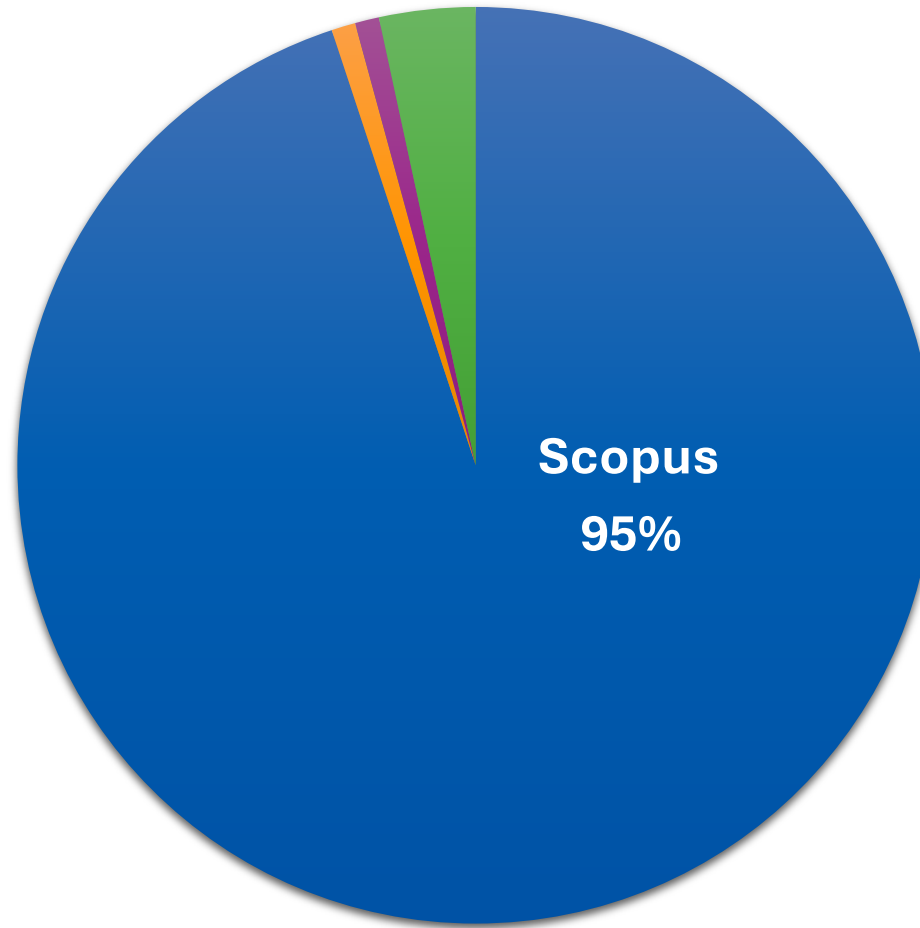
Ovid MEDLINE - 82%  
+ APA PsycInfo - 94%  
+ SocINDEX - 97%  
+ Sociological Abstracts - 98%  
+ CINAHL OR Academic Search Premier - 98%  
+ CENTRAL OR Embase - 99%

- Ovid MEDLINE (n=175)
- APA PsycInfo (n=27)
- SocINDEX (n=5)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=2)
- CINAHL OR Academic Search Premier (n=1)
- CENTRAL OR Embase (n=1)
- Scopus UNIQUE (n=3)

Database coverage - Labour market interventions (n=118)



## Database combinations - Labour market interventions (n=118)



Scopus - 95%

+ Academic Search Premier - 96%

+ SocINDEX OR Sociological Abstract - 97%

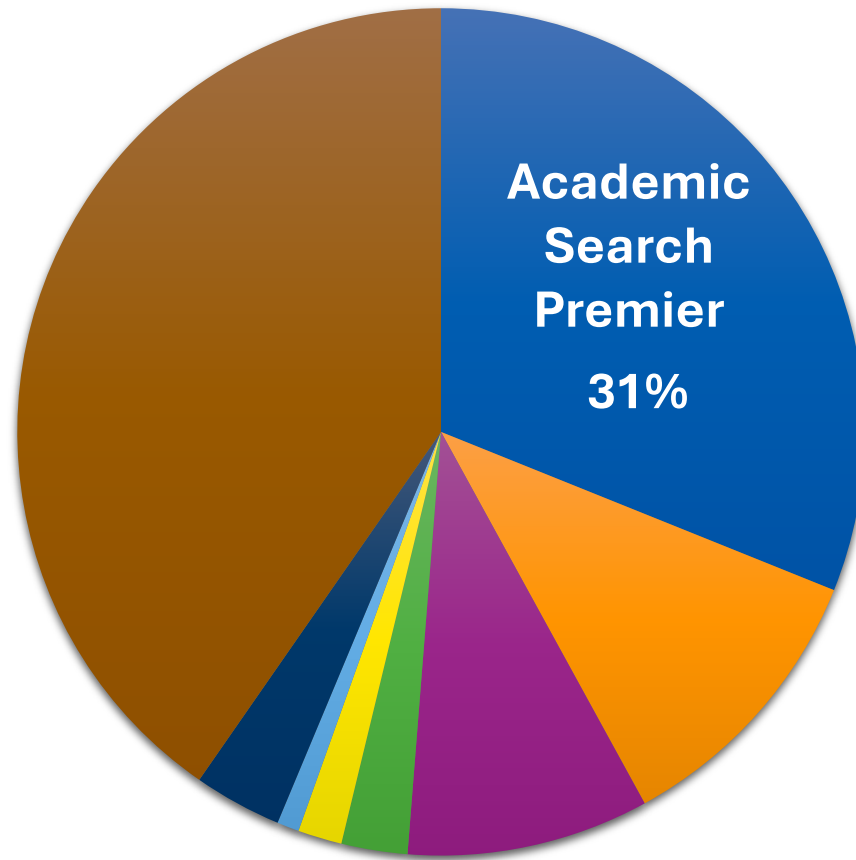
■ Scopus (n=112)

■ Academic Search Premier (n=1)

■ SocINDEX OR Sociological Abstracts (n=1)

■ Not in searched databases (n=4)

## Database combinations - Labour market interventions (n=118) – WITHOUT SCOPUS



Academic Search Premier - 31%  
+ SocINDEX - 42%  
+ Embase OR Ovid MEDLINE - 52%  
+ Sociological Abstracts - 54%  
+ ERIC - 56%  
+ APA PsycInfo - 57%

- Academic Search Premier (n=37)
- SocINDEX (n=13)
- Embase OR Ovid MEDLINE (n=11)
- Sociological Abstracts (n=3)
- ERIC (n=2)
- APA PsycInfo (n=1)
- Not in searched databases (n=4)
- Scopus UNIQUE (n=48)