

# **Accessing Local Data**

**Better Connected: East Sussex Progress through Partnership**

# Accessing Local Data

## Better Connected: East Sussex Progress through Partnership

### Results of questionnaire - Headline report

#### Key findings

- Respondents require a wide range of data in a wide range of geographies, (including comparative geographies and statistical neighbours) to support their work.
- Lack of time to analyse data, and lack of knowledge as to what is available, were significant for more respondents than lack of skilled resources for analysis and interpretation.
- More than half of all respondents considered that data was either not timely enough or not specific enough by geography or client group.
- Solutions to this included more training, and more access to analysis, as well as commissioning shared research and sharing the findings.
- Three-quarters of all respondents wanted better access to partner datasets.
- East Sussex in Figures meets most peoples' needs but for a significant number it does not provide the data or the geography needed.

#### 1. Introduction

A questionnaire on accessing local data was distributed to delegates at the Better Connected: East Sussex Progress through Partnership event on 18 May 2009. Other partners also had an opportunity to complete the questionnaire following the event. See Appendices for questionnaires with results (Appendix 1: results by number of respondents Appendix 2: results by percentage of respondents).

#### 2. Response rate

2.1 A total of 39 responses were received, and some respondents represented more than one Local Strategic Partnership. All LSPs were represented, ranging from 11 representing East Sussex to 6 representing Eastbourne and 6 representing Lewes. (Q1)

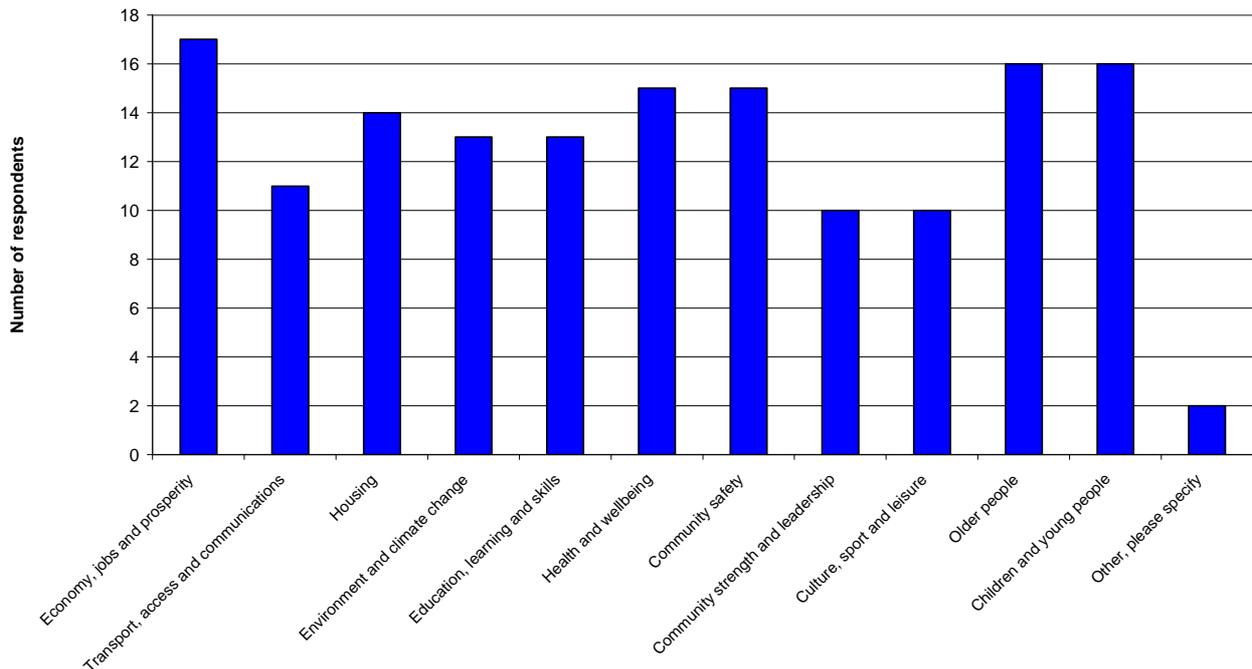
2.2 Respondents were asked which sectors they represented, also allowing for multiple representation. Over half were from local authorities (20), with a further third (14) from the third sector (voluntary/charity organisations). Other respondents came from health (5), police/community safety (5), education/children's services (4) and other public sector (7). The private sector was least represented with 3 respondents. (Q2)

2.3 Most respondents were very willing to discuss their data requirements in more depth (Q9), either by telephone (23%), meeting the team (15%) or by email (39%). This will form the basis for a useful follow-up survey.

#### 3. Local data

3.1 All topic areas suggested in Q3 were required by at least 10 respondents. Economy, jobs and prosperity were needed by 17 respondents, while data for groupings of the population (older people, and children and young people) were required by 16 respondents each. Other key priorities suggested included equality/diversity data, rurality, social deprivation and voluntary sector activity.

### What are the key priorities in your area that require additional data?



3.2 Data is needed by respondents for all the work areas suggested in the survey (Q4). Frequency of use varies with work type, as follows:

- a) background/contextual data is required by 18% of respondents every day, while 25% require data every week, and 31% monthly. Few only need data annually for this purpose.
- b) as a performance measure, data is required less frequently, with most respondents requiring data monthly (29%) or within the last six months (18%).
- c) policymaking again requires data on a less frequent basis, with 29% requiring data in the last six months and a further 23% once or twice a month.
- d) bidding for funding requires data on a more occasional basis. 36% of respondents required data for this purpose within the last six months, while a further 18% required data annually.

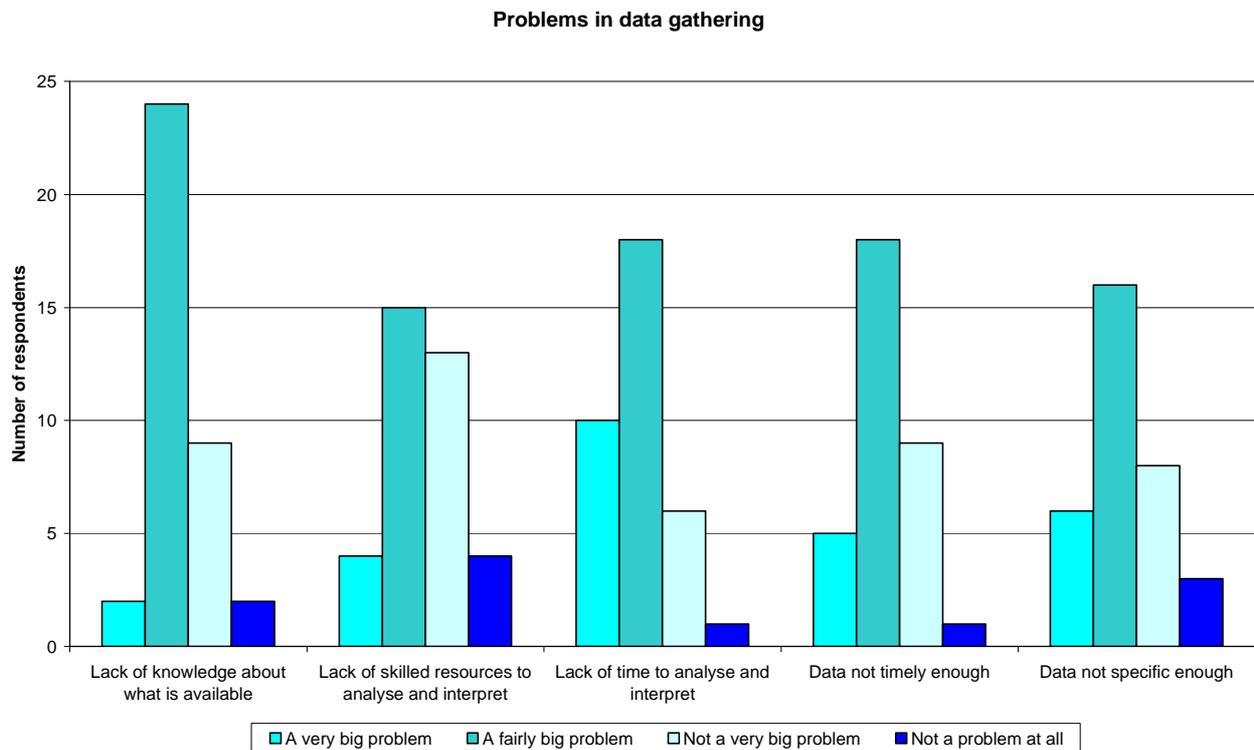
Other work areas suggested include crime, CAA/LAA work, to influence partnership and community behaviour, and for management development.

3.3 All geographies specified in the survey are 'fairly relevant' or 'very relevant' to most respondents (Q5). The most significant was county level (92% fairly or very relevant), district (90%), ward (85%) and regional (80%). The main geographies identified as 'not very relevant' to some respondents were national (13%), and super output areas (10%). Other geographies required include Local Partnerships for Schools areas, sub-region, market towns, individual properties/people; community risk profiles; infrastructure/accessibility.

3.4 Use of comparative data varied (Q6), with all respondents using regional and district data in some form, while one respondent did not use national, other counties or statistical neighbours data. District data was used 'very often' by over one third of all respondents, and regional data was used 'often' by over half. When combining 'very often' and 'often' responses, district data is used for comparative purposes by 69%, national and regional by 62% each, and statistical neighbours by 49%. Only other counties data is used much less frequently, by only 23% of

respondents. Other comparative data suggested included Local Partnerships for schools; family groups; local authority types; community profiling; citizen profiling.

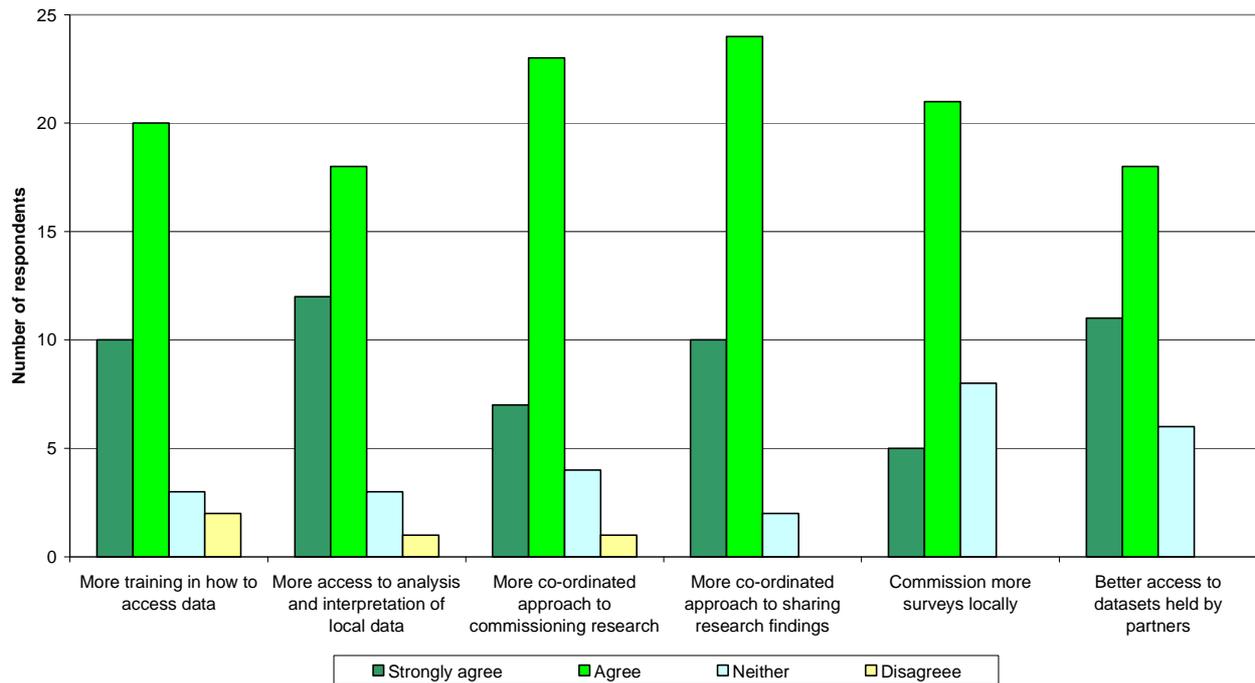
3.5 Few respondents considered that they had ‘no problem’ in gathering the data required (Q7). One quarter of all respondents identified lack of time to analyse and interpret data as a ‘very big problem’, while for 46% this was a ‘fairly big problem’. Lack of knowledge about what is available was identified by 62% as a ‘fairly big problem’. The chart below shows the number of respondents and their responses. Other problems also highlighted included: consistency of data; some data is not there; data quality controls.



3.6 Six potential solutions were suggested as ways to address these problems (Q8). Most respondents ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ to more training (77%) and more access to analysis and interpretation (77%). Commissioning shared research and sharing those findings were popular with 77% and 87% of respondents respectively.

3.7 Other solutions suggested included: link to local universities; increase frequency of research; legal obligation on utility companies to provide local and timely data; all partners to create a shared resource.

### Possible solutions to data gathering problems



## 4. East Sussex in Figures (ESiF)

4.1 Use of ESiF was explored in Q10. The majority of respondents either used ESiF themselves or their organisation used the system. However, 21% of respondents did not use ESiF at all.

4.2 How ESiF meets user needs was considered in Q11. A number of respondents did not complete this section at all, either because they do not use ESiF or for other reasons. Responses to this question showed that, while ESiF meets some needs completely, others are not being met by either data or by geography.

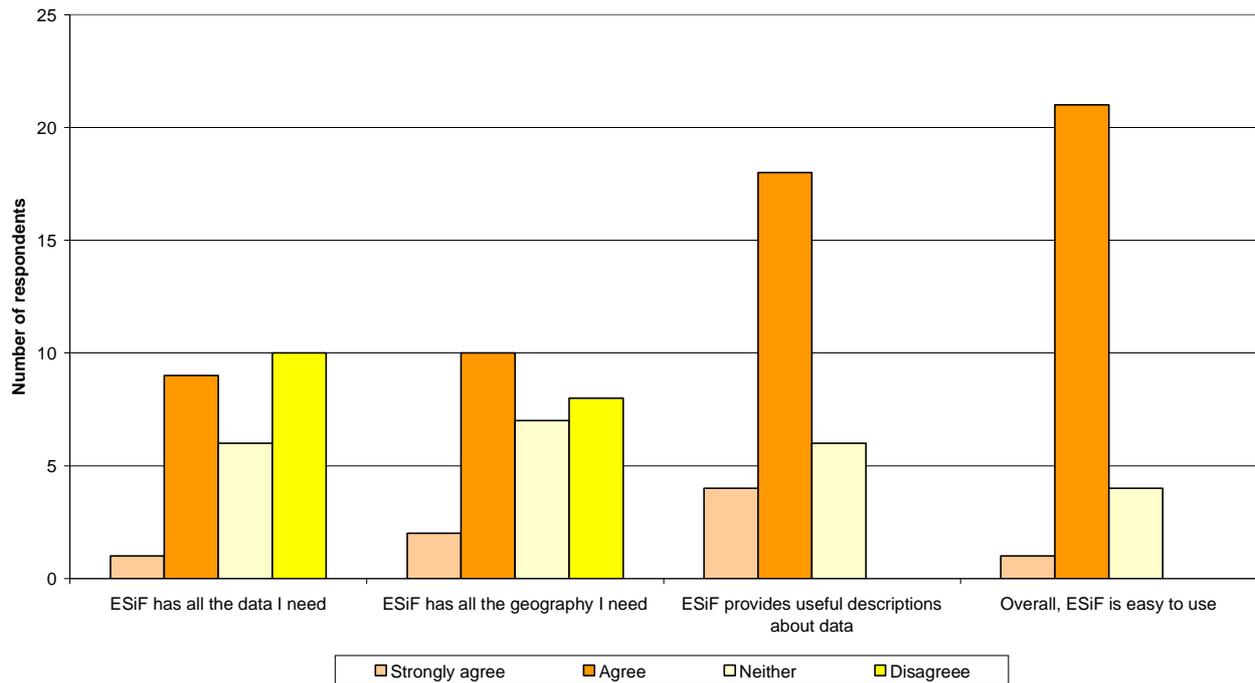
a) data: 26% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that ESiF had all the data they need, while a further 26% disagreed with this statement.

b) geography: 31% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that ESiF had all the geography they need, while a further 21% disagreed with this statement.

c) descriptions about data: 57% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the data descriptions were useful.

d) ease of use: 56% agreed or strongly agreed that ESiF is easy to use.

### East Sussex in Figures use



4.3 ESiF Training was considered in Q12. The responses showed that 7 respondents had completed a training course and found it useful, and a further 18 respondents would be interested in training for themselves or their organisation.

4.4 Respondents were asked whether they had data which could be included in ESiF (Q13). 12 respondents offered data and will be contacted further about this. Data on health and social care, house condition, faith, empty homes and fire and rescue incidents was specified, and a number of other leads suggested.

4.5 ESiF has a User Group and respondents were asked whether they or their organisation might be interested in joining (Q14). A total of 12 respondents are interested in joining.

## 5. Other issues

5.1 Additional comments made include:

- Additional data needed: on environmental data; more voluntary sector data; more health data; more recycling data e.g. cardboard, domestic energy; tree planting and allotments; local authority buildings data; PSAs. Environment Agency keen to work with partners and share relevant data.
- Additional geographical split: separation of urban and rural required in Rother.
- Research: more needed between censuses.
- Improvements to ESiF system: to flag up when description/definitions change; clarify when old data is the most recent; no sport and leisure category; indicator for "people who looked at this dataset also looked at..".
- Other ESiF suggestions: demonstrate system at Wealden; strengthen user group; help offered to deliver training to community groups.

## 6. Conclusions and potential ways forward

6.1 A wide range of data is used for many different purposes and geographies. Lack of time to analyse data and knowledge of what is available were raised as particular issues. In terms of data, there are issues about timeliness, i.e. data is too old to be of use and data isn't readily available to meet some specific geographies.

Respondents felt that more training was required and that there should be more access to analysis. Respondents also expressed an interest in commissioning shared research and the ability to share findings. Improving access to partner datasets was also identified as a potential solution to issues. There were offers by respondents to share their organisation's data.

East Sussex in Figures meets most people's needs, but there is some demand for additional data and data presented for specific geographies.

6.4 Potential ways forward:

### Training

- Promote ESiF User training through LSP Co-ordinators
- Arrange ESiF demonstrations to Local Strategic Partnerships
- Follow up individual requests for ESiF User training
- Continue to advertise in the ESSP newsletter
- Include advert for training on ESiF website home page
- Consider developing training skills within LSPs to cascade to partners

### Partner liaison

- Respond to individual comments raised by delegates
- Extend East Sussex in Figures User Group. Invite respondents who expressed an interest in attending and circulate papers of previous meetings including dates of next meeting
- Follow up offers of data sharing
- Develop a programme for liaising with users about data needs and explain why data may not be available
- Develop a programme for publishing additional data and ensure that they meet priorities set out in Pride of Place

### Research and analysis

- Partners need to consider how research could be jointly commissioned
- Results of jointly commissioned research could be published on ESiF

### ESiF improvements

- ESiF User Group to consider suggestions for improvements and assist in prioritising developments

### Next Steps:

Circulate draft report to LSP Chairs and Co-ordinators for comments and approval	July 2009
Publish report on ESSP or East Sussex in Figures website (TBC)	August 2009
Identify next steps with LSP Chairs	August 2009

# Accessing Local Data

## Better Connected: East Sussex Partnerships together Event

18 May 2009

This survey is an opportunity for you to tell us about how you access local data. We need to understand what is working well and where there are problems with data gathering, sharing and analysing local data. You may also be able to help identify where we can make improvements. The results of this survey will help to inform a report about accessing local data which is being funded by Progress Through Partnership.

The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

### Tell us about your organisation

<b>Q1</b>	<b>Which LSP do you belong to? - tick any that apply</b>	
	<i>East Sussex</i> .....	11
	<i>Eastbourne</i> .....	6
	<i>Hastings</i> .....	7
	<i>Lewes</i> .....	6
	<i>Rother</i> .....	8
	<i>Wealden</i> .....	9
<b>Q2</b>	<b>Which of the following interests does your organisation represent? - tick any that apply</b>	
	<i>Local Authority</i> .....	20
	<i>Health</i> .....	5
	<i>Police/Community Safety</i> .....	5
	<i>Education/Children Services</i> .....	4
	<i>Other public sector</i> .....	7
	<i>Third sector (voluntary/charity)</i> .....	14
	<i>Private sector</i> .....	3

### Tell us how data supports your work

<b>Q3</b>	<b>What are the key priorities in your local area that require additional data? tick any that apply</b>	
	<i>Economy, jobs and prosperity</i> .....	17
	<i>Transport, access and communications</i> .....	11
	<i>Housing</i> .....	14
	<i>Environment and climate change</i> .....	13
	<i>Education, learning and skills</i> .....	13
	<i>Health and wellbeing</i> .....	15
	<i>Community safety</i> .....	15
	<i>Community strength and leadership</i> .....	10
	<i>Culture, sport and leisure</i> .....	10
	<i>Older people</i> .....	16
	<i>Children and young people</i> .....	16
	<i>Other, please specify</i> .....	2

**Q4 How often do you use data to support your work in the following areas?**

	Almost every day	At least once a week	Once or twice a month	Within the last 6 months	Annually	Never used	Don't know
<i>As background or contextual information</i>	7	10	12	8	1	0	0
<i>To measure performance</i>	2	5	11	7	5	2	1
<i>To devise a policy</i>	0	4	9	11	5	2	0
<i>To support a bid for funding</i>	0	3	4	14	7	2	1
<i>Other, please specify</i>							

3

**Q5 How relevant are the following geographies to your work?**

	Very relevant	Fairly relevant	Not very relevant	Not relevant at all	Don't Know
National	7	22	5	0	0
Regional	8	23	3	0	0
County	26	10	0	0	0
District	29	6	0	1	0
Ward	20	13	1	2	0
Parish	21	7	3	1	0
Super output area	16	8	4	2	1
<i>Other, please specify</i>					

4

**Q6 How often do you use comparative data from the following sources in your work?**

	Very often	Often	Not very often	Never	Don't know
National	6	18	9	1	0
Regional	4	20	11	0	0
Other counties	2	7	20	1	0
Districts	14	13	5	0	0
Statistical neighbours	7	12	10	1	0
<i>Other, please specify</i>					

2

**Q7 Thinking about how and where you gather your data, how much of a problem are the following for your organisation?**

	A very big problem	A fairly big problem	Not a very big problem	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Lack of knowledge about what is available	2	24	9	2	0
Lack of skilled resources to analyse and interpret data	4	15	13	4	0
Lack of time to analyse and interpret data	10	18	6	1	0
Data not timely enough	5	18	9	1	0
Data not specific enough (by geography pr client group)	6	16	8	3	0
<i>Other, please specify</i>					

3

**Q8 How much do you agree or disagree that the following solutions would improve the problems above?**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
More training in how to access data	10	20	3	2	0
More access to analysis and interpretation of local data	12	18	3	1	0
More coordinated approach to commissioning research	7	23	4	1	0
More coordinated approach to sharing the findings of local research	10	24	2	0	0
Commission more surveys locally	5	21	8	0	0

Better access to data sets held by partners	11	18	6	0	0
<i>Other, please specify</i>					5

<b>Q9</b>	<b>Would you be willing to discuss your experiences with us in more depth?</b>	
	No .....	5
	Yes, I'd prefer to chat about them by telephone .....	9
	Yes, I'd prefer to meet with your team to discuss further .....	6
	Yes, I'd prefer to provide more information by email .....	15

## Tell us about East Sussex in Figures (ESiF)

<b>Q10</b>	<b>Do you and or your organisation use ESiF to obtain data?</b>	
	Yes, I use ESiF.....	22
	Yes, my organisation uses ESiF .....	18
	No, my organisation doesn't use ESiF (go to Q15) .....	8

<b>Q11</b>	<b>How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</b>					
		<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
	has all the data I need	1	9	6	10	0
	has all the geography I need	2	10	7	8	0
	provides useful descriptions about data	4	18	6	0	0
	Overall, ESiF is easy to use	1	21	4	0	0

<b>Q12</b>	<b>Have you attended an ESiF training Course?</b>	
	Yes, I found it useful .....	7
	Yes, but I didn't find it was useful for my needs.....	0
	No, but I would be interested for myself or my organisation.....	18
	I don't feel I need to attend the training course .....	4

<b>Q13</b>	<b>Does your organisation have any data that you would like to include in ESiF?</b>	
	No .....	9
	Yes .....	7
	<i>If yes, please summarise here and we will get in touch with you to discuss it further</i>	12

<b>Q14</b>	<b>Would you or a member of your organisation be interested in joining the ESiF user group?</b>	
	Yes, I would.....	1
	Yes, a member of my organisation would .....	11
	No .....	10

<b>Q15</b>	<b>Are there any other comments that you would like to make about accessing local data?</b>	12
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## Tell us about yourself

<b>Q16</b>	<b>Name and/or job title</b>	38
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<b>Q17</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	38
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<b>Q18</b>	<b>Email address and/or contact details</b>	38
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**Thank you for taking part in this survey.**

**Research and Information Team**

**East Sussex County Council**

**18 May 2009**

## Appendix 2: Results by percentage of respondents

# Accessing Local Data

## Better Connected: East Sussex Partnerships together Event

18 May 2009

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The survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

### Tell us about your organisation

<b>Q1</b>	<b>Which LSP do you belong to? - tick any that apply</b>	
	<i>East Sussex</i> .....	28.2%
	<i>Eastbourne</i> .....	15.4%
	<i>Hastings</i> .....	17.9%
	<i>Lewes</i> .....	15.4%
	<i>Rother</i> .....	20.5%
	<i>Wealden</i> .....	23.1%
<b>Q2</b>	<b>Which of the following interests does your organisation represent? - tick any that apply</b>	
	<i>Local Authority</i> .....	51.3%
	<i>Health</i> .....	12.8%
	<i>Police/Community Safety</i> .....	12.8%
	<i>Education/Children Services</i> .....	10.3%
	<i>Other public sector</i> .....	17.9%
	<i>Third sector (voluntary/charity)</i> .....	35.9%
	<i>Private sector</i> .....	7.7%

### Tell us how data supports your work

<b>Q3</b>	<b>What are the key priorities in your local area that require additional data? tick any that apply</b>	
	<i>Economy, jobs and prosperity</i> .....	43.6%
	<i>Transport, access and communications</i> .....	28.2%
	<i>Housing</i> .....	35.9%
	<i>Environment and climate change</i> .....	33.3%
	<i>Education, learning and skills</i> .....	33.3%
	<i>Health and wellbeing</i> .....	38.5%
	<i>Community safety</i> .....	38.5%
	<i>Community strength and leadership</i> .....	25.6%
	<i>Culture, sport and leisure</i> .....	25.6%
	<i>Older people</i> .....	41.0%
	<i>Children and young people</i> .....	41.0%
	<i>Other, please specify</i> .....	5.1%

Q4	How often do you use data to support your work in the following areas?	Almost every day	At least once a week	Once or twice a month	Within the last 6 months	Annually	Never used	Don't know
		<i>As background or contextual information</i>	17.9%	25.6%	30.8%	20.5%	2.6%	0.0%
	<i>To measure performance</i>	5.1%	12.8%	28.2%	17.9%	12.8%	5.1%	2.6%
	<i>To devise a policy</i>	0.0%	10.3%	23.1%	28.2%	12.8%	5.1%	0.0%
	<i>To support a bid for funding</i>	0.0%	7.7%	10.3%	35.9%	17.9%	5.1%	2.6%
	<i>Other, please specify</i>							7.7%

Q5	How relevant are the following geographies to your work?	Very relevant	Fairly relevant	Not very relevant	Not relevant at all	Don't Know
		National	17.9%	56.4%	12.8%	0.0%
	Regional	20.5%	59.0%	7.7%	0.0%	0.0%
	County	66.7%	25.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	District	74.4%	15.4%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%
	Ward	51.3%	33.3%	2.6%	5.1%	0.0%
	Parish	53.8%	17.9%	7.7%	2.6%	0.0%
	Super output area	41.0%	20.5%	10.3%	5.1%	2.6%
	<i>Other, please specify</i>					10.3%

Q6	How often do you use comparative data from the following sources in your work?	Very often	Often	Not very often	Never	Don't know
		National	15.4%	46.2%	23.1%	2.6%
	Regional	10.3%	51.3%	28.2%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other counties	5.1%	17.9%	51.3%	2.6%	0.0%
	Districts	35.9%	33.3%	12.8%	0.0%	0.0%
	Statistical neighbours	17.9%	30.8%	25.6%	2.6%	0.0%
	<i>Other, please specify</i>					5.1%

Q7	Thinking about how and where you gather your data, how much of a problem are the following for your organisation?	A very big problem	A fairly big problem	Not a very big problem	Not a problem at all	Don't know
		Lack of knowledge about what is available	5.1%	61.5%	23.1%	5.1%
	Lack of skilled resources to analyse and interpret data	10.3%	38.5%	33.3%	10.3%	0.0%
	Lack of time to analyse and interpret data	25.6%	46.2%	15.4%	2.6%	0.0%
	Data not timely enough	12.8%	46.2%	23.1%	2.6%	0.0%
	Data not specific enough (by geography pr client group)	15.4%	41.0%	20.5%	7.7%	0.0%
	<i>Other, please specify</i>					7.7%

Q8	How much do you agree or disagree that the following solutions would improve the problems above?	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		More training in how to access data	25.6%	51.3%	7.7%	5.1%
	More access to analysis and interpretation of local data	30.8%	46.2%	7.7%	2.6%	0.0%
	More coordinated approach to commissioning research	17.9%	59.0%	10.3%	2.6%	0.0%
	More coordinated approach to sharing the findings of local research	25.6%	61.5%	5.1%	0.0%	0.0%
	Commission more surveys locally	12.8%	53.8%	20.5%	0.0%	0.0%

Better access to data sets held by partners	28.2%	46.2%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%
<i>Other, please specify</i>					12.8%

<b>Q9</b>	<b>Would you be willing to discuss your experiences with us in more depth?</b>	
	No .....	12.8%
	Yes, I'd prefer to chat about them by telephone .....	23.1%
	Yes, I'd prefer to meet with your team to discuss further .....	15.4%
	Yes, I'd prefer to provide more information by email .....	38.5%

## Tell us about East Sussex in Figures (ESiF)

<b>Q10</b>	<b>Do you and or your organisation use ESiF to obtain data?</b>	
	Yes, I use ESiF.....	56.4%
	Yes, my organisation uses ESiF .....	46.2%
	No , my organisation doesn't use ESiF (go to Q15) .....	20.5%

<b>Q11</b>	<b>How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</b>					
		<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neither</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
	has all the data I need	2.6%	23.1%	15.4%	25.6%	0.0%
	has all the geography I need	5.1%	25.6%	17.9%	20.5%	0.0%
	provides useful descriptions about data	10.3%	46.2%	15.4%	0.0%	0.0%
	Overall, ESiF is easy to use	2.6%	53.8%	10.3%	0.0%	0.0%

<b>Q12</b>	<b>Have you attended an ESiF training Course?</b>	
	Yes, I found it useful .....	17.9%
	Yes, but I didn't find it was useful for my needs.....	0.0%
	No, but I would be interested for myself or my organisation.....	46.2%
	I don't feel I need to attend the training course .....	10.3%

<b>Q13</b>	<b>Does your organisation have any data that you would like to include in ESiF?</b>	
	No .....	23.1%
	Yes .....	17.9%
	<i>If yes, please summarise here and we will get in touch with you to discuss it further</i>	30.8%

<b>Q14</b>	<b>Would you or a member of your organisation be interested in joining the ESiF user group?</b>	
	Yes, I would.....	2.6%
	Yes, a member of my organisation would .....	28.2%
	No .....	25.6%

<b>Q15</b>	<b>Are there any other comments that you would like to make about accessing local data?</b>	30.8%
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## Tell us about yourself

<b>Q16</b>	<b>Name and/or job title</b>	97.4%
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<b>Q17</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	97.4%
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<b>Q18</b>	<b>Email address and/or contact details</b>	97.4%
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**Thank you for taking part in this survey.**

**Research and Information Team**

**East Sussex County Council**

**18 May 2009**