

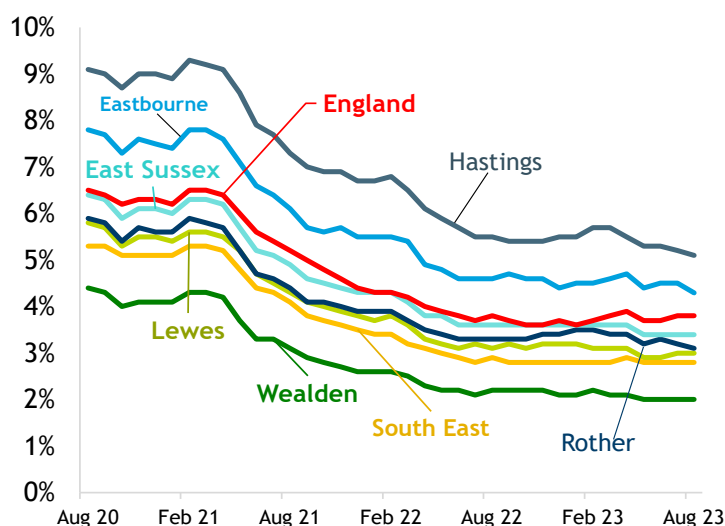
Economic update - September 2023

Key points

- In 2021 238,540 of working aged people (16-64) in East Sussex were economically active (76.2% of all residents aged 16-64) of whom 225,900 were in employment (72.1% of all aged 16-64). This compares with 75.4% of working age in England who were economically active and 71.0% nationally who were in employment.
- The county had a higher proportion of people who were self-employed, with 15.7% of working aged people compared to 11.2% nationally.
- In 2021 the largest sector in the county in terms of employment was Human health and social work, which employed 17.6% of people, up from 15.5% in 2011, whereas the proportion working in Wholesale, retail and motors, which was the largest sector in 2011, fell from 16.0% in 2011 to 14.3% in 2021.
- There are now 10,535 people (August 2023) receiving benefits because they are unemployed (JSA or Universal Credit (UC) searching for work) down 6.8% from 12,305 in August 2022, compared to a 2.4% increase in claimants nationally. 47,487 are now receiving UC (any conditionality), 37,471 of whom are not included in the unemployed Claimant Count above (i.e. not 'Searching for work') in August 2023.
- The economy of East Sussex generated £9.9 billion in 2021, or £18,039 per head (UK £30,221 per head). Total GVA increased by 7.1% between 2020 and 2021, equal to the rise in the UK as a whole, and in 2021 was 13.9% higher than in 2016.
- While pay rates in East Sussex are rising at a similar rate to national wages, median monthly earnings in August 2023, at £2,101 in the county, remain considerably lower than national average (UK=£2,253). (see [page 9](#)).
- Data is now available for some of the labour market variables from the 2021 Census, and more detailed information is being released gradually. The ONS have made some interesting [Census Maps](#) to compare different areas.
- Important note: Census 2021 took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the labour market topic.

Labour market & skills

Claimant rates in East Sussex by district,
August 2020-2023



jobcentreplus

10,535 Unemployed JSA and UC claimants in East Sussex, August 2023

3.4% of the working age population
Lower than England (3.8%)

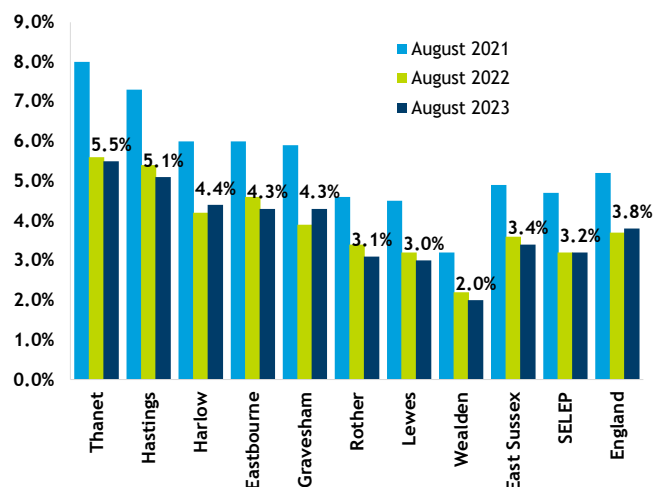
Down ↓ **6.8%** since August 2022 and

Down ↓ **1.8%** since July 2023

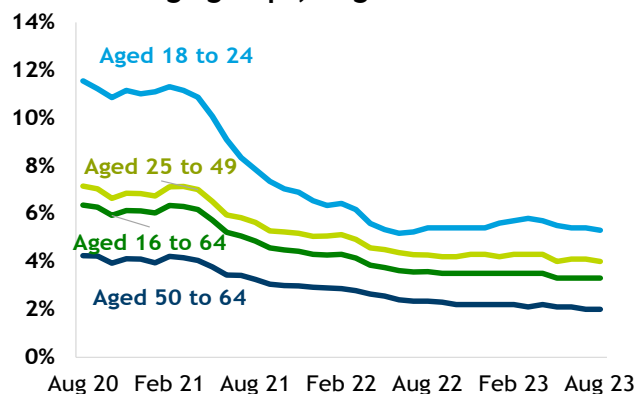
[See [note 1](#)]

Labour market & skills

Claimant rates, top 5 districts in SELEP, East Sussex and districts, August 2021, 2022 and 2023



Claimant rates in East Sussex, all working age and broad age groups, August 2020-2023



- Claimant counts rose in Lewes (up 30) and Wealden (up 15), but fell in Eastbourne (down 90), Rother (down 50), and Hastings (down 25), in the month to August 2023.
- At 5.1%, Hastings has the second highest claimant rate in SELEP and SE region after Thanet in Kent (5.5%) (see chart top left).
- Largest percentage decreases in claimants since August 2022 were in Wealden (-9.7%) and Lewes (-7.3%). All East Sussex districts saw claimant numbers decrease over the year, compared to an increase in England as a whole of 2.4% in the year to August 2023.

Youth unemployment has been declining slower than other age groups

Number of UC/JSA claimants aged 18-24 in East Sussex

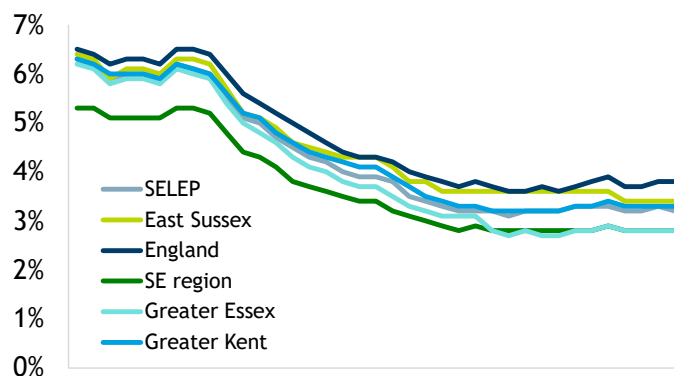
March 2020: 1,810
August 2022: 1,930
August 2023: 1,900

5.3% of people aged 18-24 in East Sussex claiming UC/JSA in August 2023 (4.9% in March 2020)

Down by 20 (1.0%) in month to August 2023 (Number of female claimants has not changed in this period)

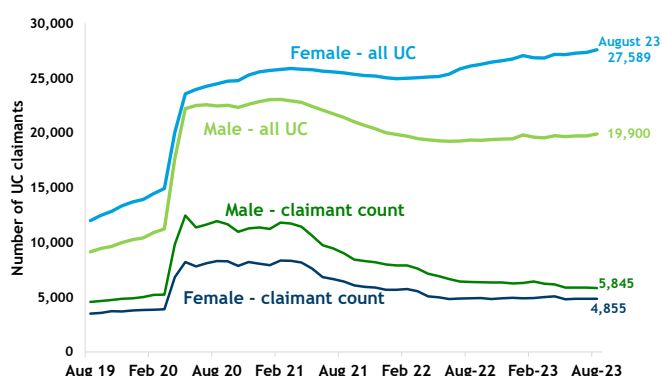
Hastings is the only district to see an increase in young claimants in the year to August 2023 with **8.8%** of young people claiming UC/JSA, including **10.8%** of young males. **9.6%** more young people claiming in August 2023 than August 2022.

Claimant rates East Sussex, SELEP and comparators, August 2020 - 2023



Aug 20 Feb 21 Aug 21 Feb 22 Aug 22 Feb 23 Aug 23

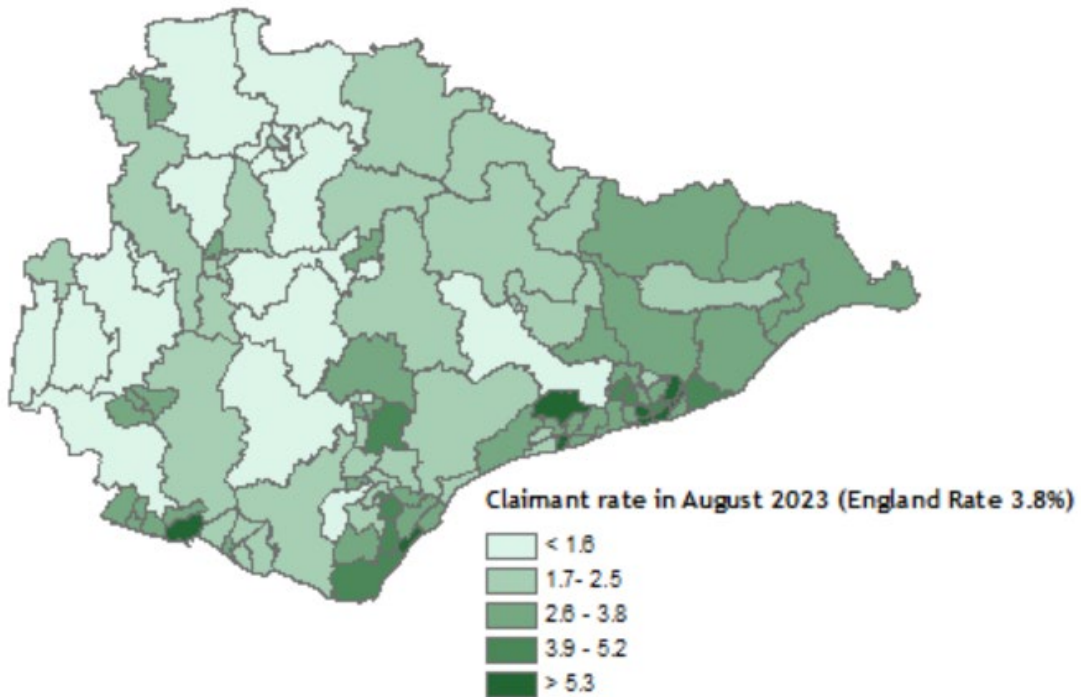
Male and female claimants of Universal Credit and UC/JSA unemployed claimant count, August 2019-2023, East Sussex



- While the number of male unemployed UC/JSA claimants is higher than the number of female claimants (see dark green - male and blue - female lines, labelled 'Claimant count', left), the number of female claimants in all UC conditionality groups (light blue line) is much higher than the number of males (light green line) claiming (see chart left), and numbers are increasing faster than males in August 2023.

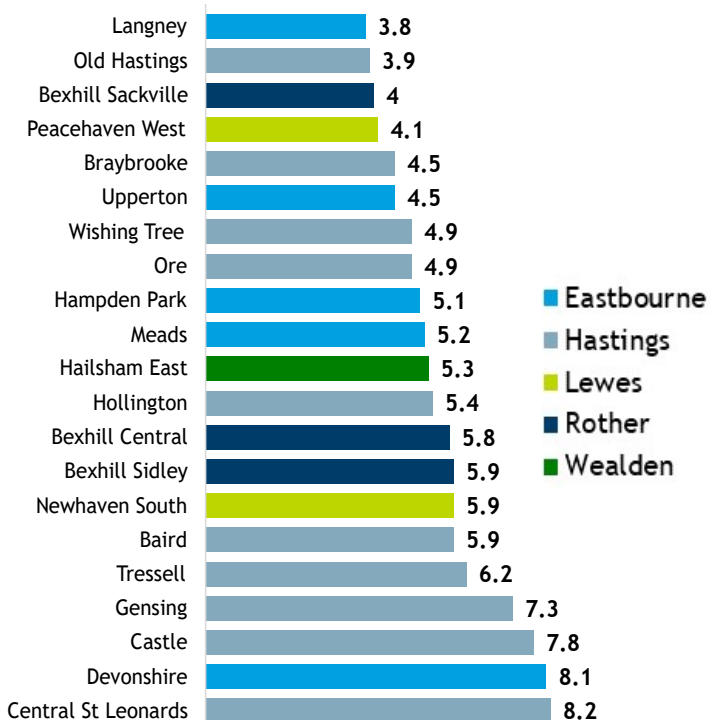
Labour market & skills

Map showing claimant rate in August 2023 by (post 2019) ward in East Sussex



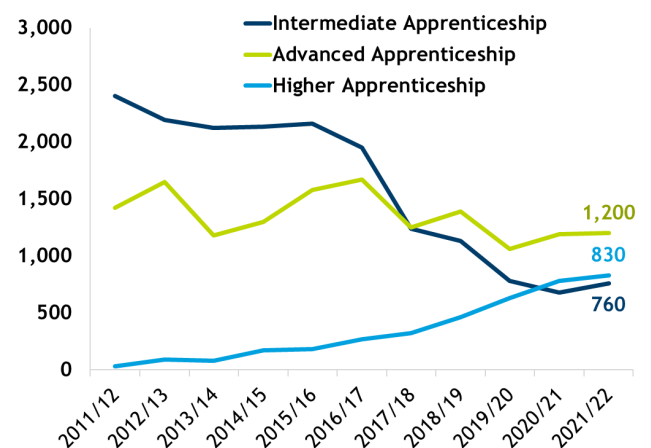
- Wards: 21 post 2019 wards (see map above) have rates above or at the England average (3.8%), with the highest rates in Central St Leonards (8.2%), Castle (7.8%) and Gensing (7.3%) in Hastings, and Devonshire (8.1%) in Eastbourne.
- This includes 10 wards in Hastings, 5 in Eastbourne, 3 in Rother, 2 in Lewes and 1 in Wealden.
- 43 (post 2019) wards saw an increase in claimant numbers in the month to August 2023, while 47 wards saw a decline.

Claimant rate in August 2023, (post 2019) wards above the national average (3.8%)



Apprenticeships

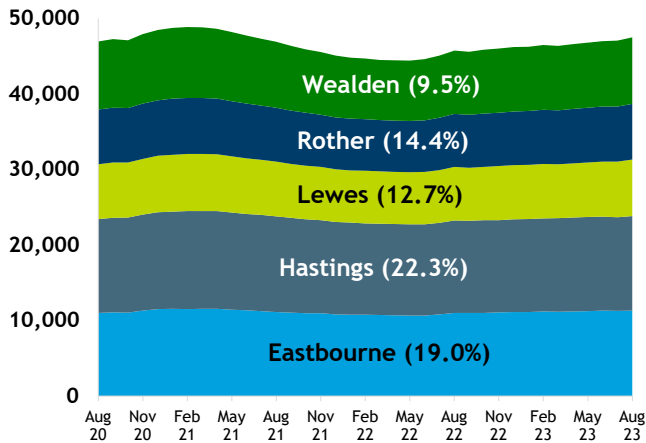
East Sussex apprenticeship starts, 2011-2022



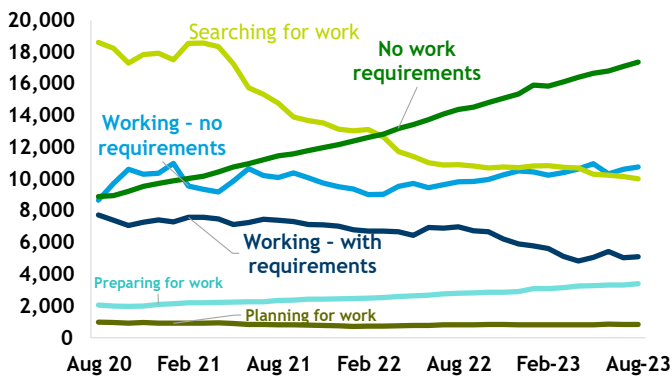
There were 13,720 apprenticeship starts in East Sussex between 2017 and 2022. Apprenticeship starts in East Sussex in 2021/22 were up 5% on the previous year. Intermediate level apprenticeship starts in 2021/22 rose by 12% [see [note 3](#)].

Labour market & skills

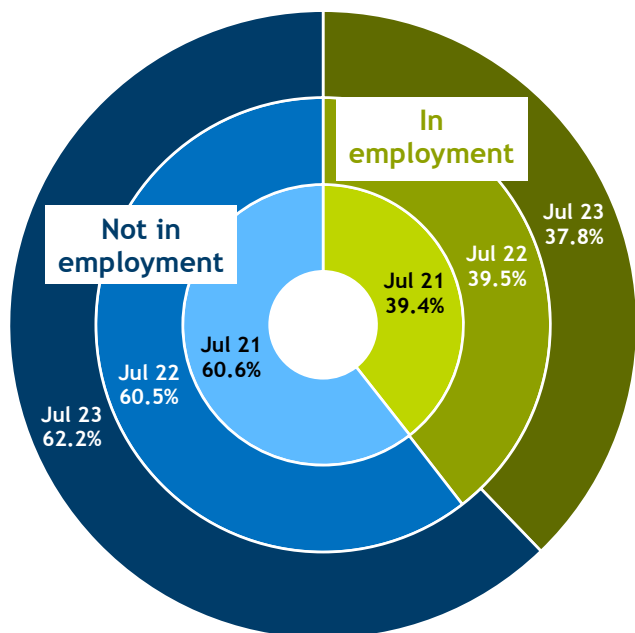
Universal Credit claimants by district, August 2020-2023 (inc % working age claiming in August 2023)



Universal Credit claimants by conditionality - August 2020 - 2023



Employment indicator of Universal Credit claimants in East Sussex - June 2021, 2022 and 2023



In East Sussex in August 2023 there were:

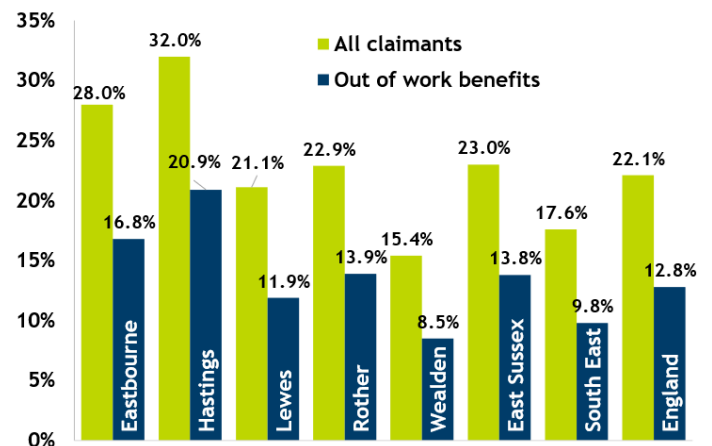
47,487 people claiming UC
(14.9% of working age people)

Up **2,053** (4.3%) since August 2022

Up **585** (1.2%) since August 2021

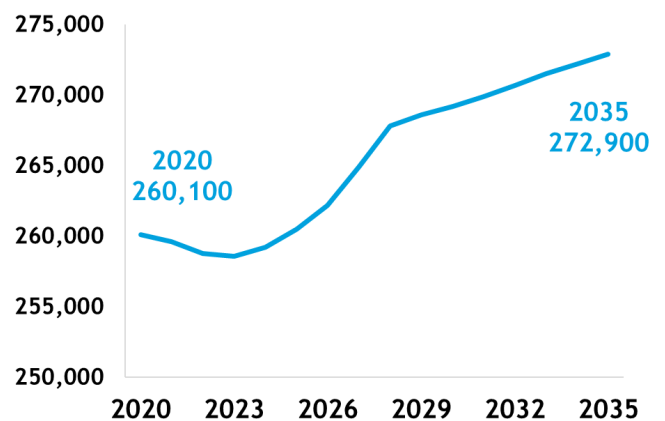
In July 2023, **37.8%** of all UC claimants were in employment, down from 39.5% in July 2022 [see note 4]

Percentage of working age people claiming any DWP benefit and Out-of-work benefits in February 2023, districts, East Sussex and comparators [see note 6]



Workforce projections for East Sussex (dwelling-led) - projected number of economically active people aged 16-74

[see note 17]



Labour market

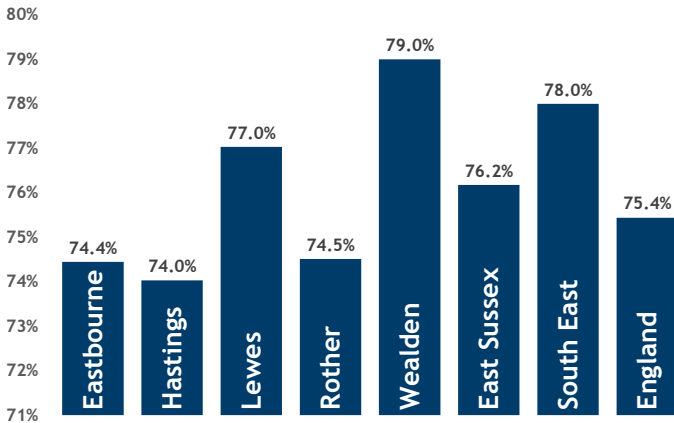
Census 2021 results are now available [\[see note 5\]](#)

Data is now available for some of the labour market variables from the 2021 Census, and more detailed information is being released over the course of this year and next.

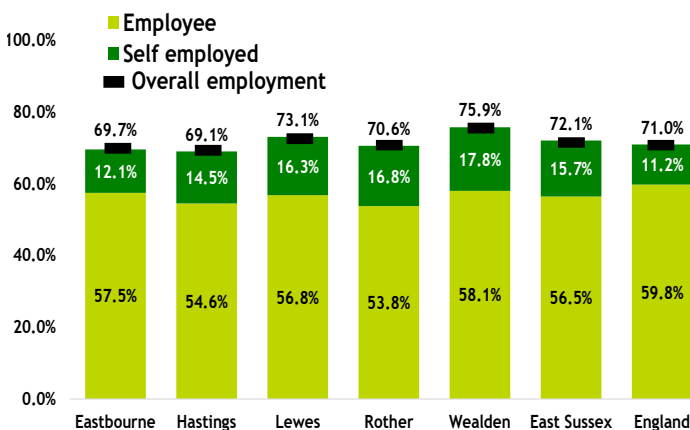
It is important to note that the 2021 Census took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the labour market topic.

Note that the economically active population included people who were on furlough at the time of Census 2021, who were considered to be temporarily away from work. In East Sussex, HMRC data estimated that 32,100 employees were enrolled on the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme at 31 March 2021, while 17,000 self-employed people made a claim to the fourth grant of the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (30 April 2021).

Economic activity rates in 2021- percentage of the working age population (16-64)



Employees and self-employed in 2021 (Aged 16-64)



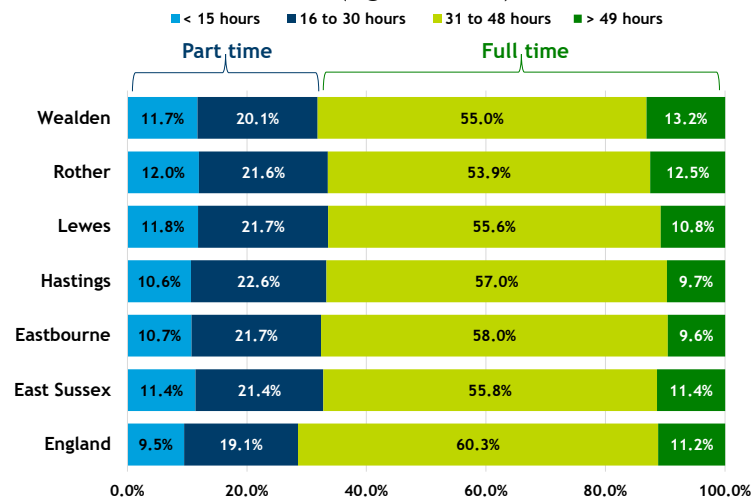
Economic activity and inactivity

- Economic activity rates have fallen in all districts, regionally and nationally since 2011, and economic activity rates are lower across the county than the national average.
- 2021 there were 238,540 working age people in East Sussex who were economically active (76.2% of all people aged 16-64 years) of whom 225,900 were in employment (72.1% of people aged 16-64). This compares with 75.4% of 16-64 year olds in England who were economically active and 71.0% nationally who were in employment. Economic activity rates in the County were higher than the National average in Lewes and Wealden for working age people, but lower than the national average in all other districts.
- Wealden has the highest economic activity rate of the working age population in the County with 79.0% of those aged 16-64 being economically active in the district.

Employees and self-employment

- A higher proportion of working age adults in East Sussex are self-employed (15.7%) compared to the national average (11.2%). Wealden had the highest rate of self-employed people aged 16-64 at 17.8%, but all districts had rates above the national average.
- 48.5% of employed adults (aged 16-64) in the county were working full-time (more than 31 hours per week) (50.8% in England) in 2021. 8.2% of the working age population of East Sussex were working very long hours (48 hours or more), compared to 7.9% nationally.
- There was a higher percentage of part-time workers (23.6%) in the county compared to the national average (20.3%).

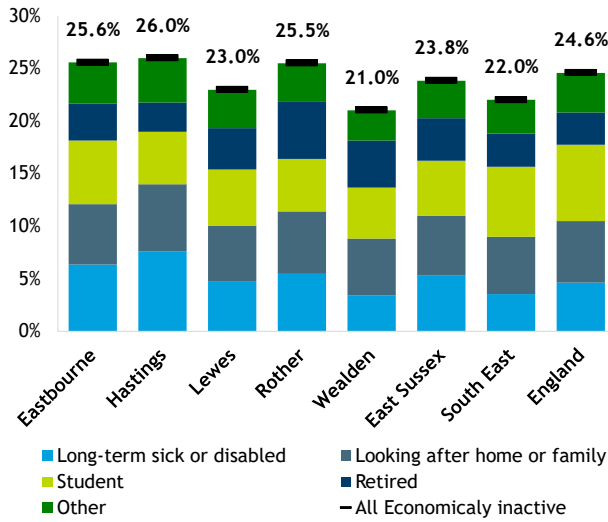
Hours worked in 2021 (Aged 16-64)



Labour market

Economic inactivity

Economically inactive in 2021 by type (working age 16-64)

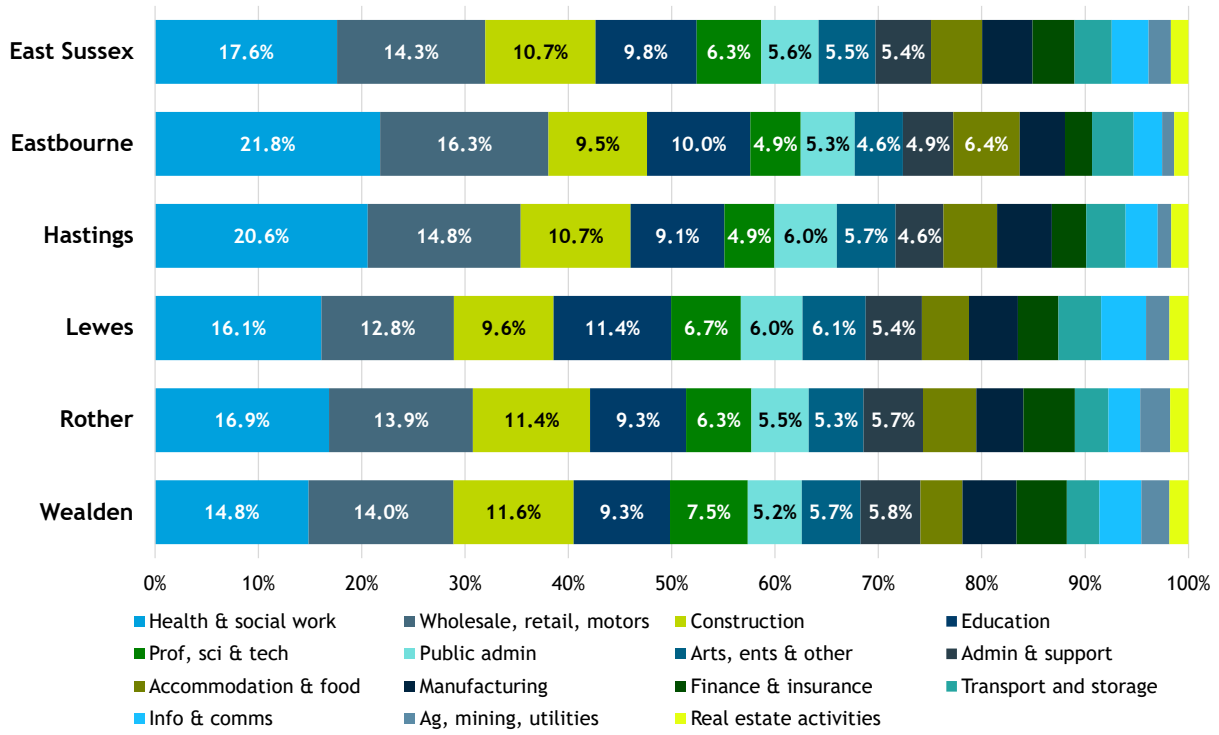


- In 2021, 23.8% of the county’s working age population (16-64) were economically inactive, compared to 24.6% in England.
- More than a quarter of the working age population are economically inactive in three of the county’s districts (Hastings 26.0%, Eastbourne 25.6% and Rother 25.5%) compared to 24.6% of economically inactive 16-64 year olds in England.
- In the county in 2021, 4.0% of the working age population was economically active and unemployed, compared to 4.4% nationally. The highest rates are in Hastings (5.0%) and Eastbourne (4.8%).
- While 5.3% of adults 16-64 in the county were inactive because they were long-term sick or disabled, similar to the national average (4.6%), in Hastings 7.6% were inactive for this reason, compared to just 3.4% in Wealden.

Industry of employment

- Employment in Health and social care, and Wholesale, retail and motors dominates in the county.
- The structure of the labour force has changed since 2011. In 2021 the largest sector in the county in terms of employment was Human health and social work, which employed 17.6% of people, up from 15.5% in 2011, whereas the proportion working in Wholesale, retail and motors, which was the largest sector in 2011, fell from 16.0% in 2011 to 14.3% in 2021. Once again, the pandemic maybe a factor in these changes.
- Eastbourne had the highest percentage of employed adults working in the Human health and social work sector (21.8%) of all districts/UAs in the country. It also has the highest proportion (3.5%) of people working in the Residential care sub-sector.
- Hastings (2.2%) and Lewes (1.9%) had the highest proportion of people working in the Creative, arts and entertainment activities sub-sector outside of the London boroughs and Brighton and Hove.

Percentage of people working in different industrial sectors in 2021



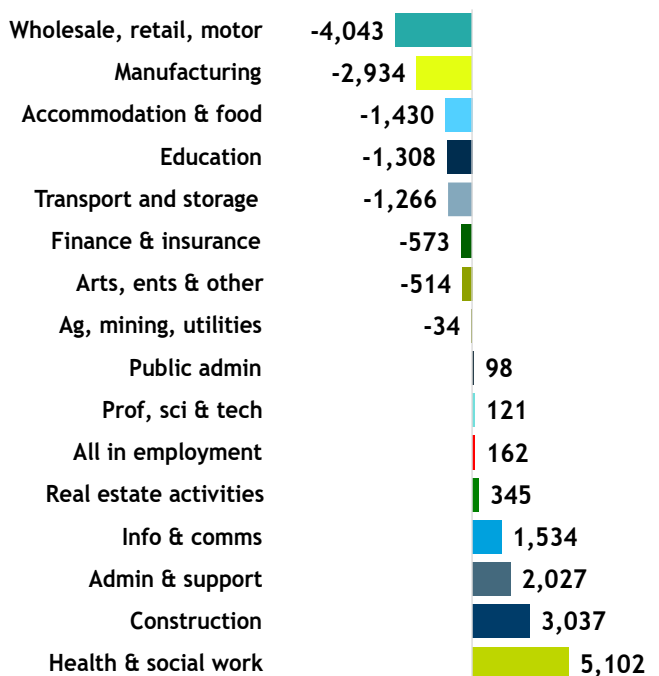
Labour market



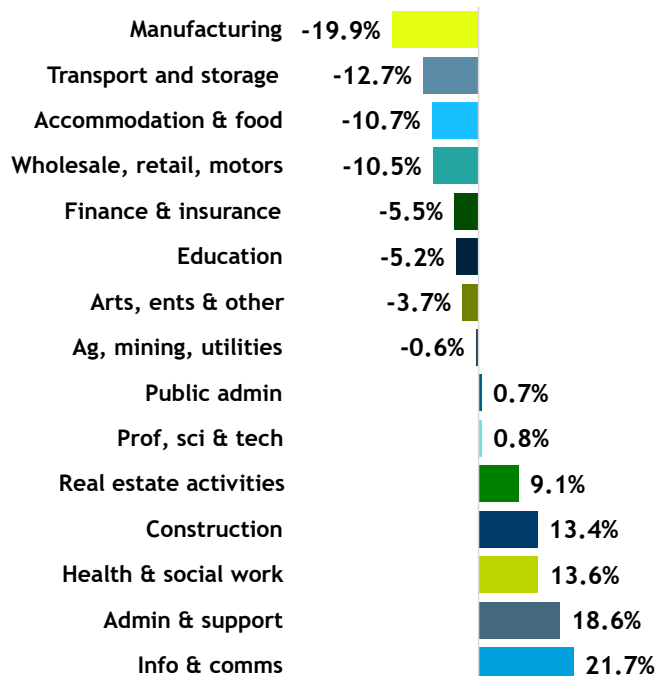
Industry of employment - change since 2011

- The sector that grew the most in East Sussex was Information and communication, where the number of people employed grew by 21.7% between 2011 and 2021, although this sector still only represents 3.6% of overall employment (up from 2.9% in 2011) (see charts below and previous page).
- The biggest fall was seen in the Manufacturing sector where the number employed declined by 19.9% over the 10 years (a steeper decline than in England where numbers fell by 14.3%).
- 4.9% were employed in Manufacturing in 2021, compared to 6.1% in 2011. The fall in manufacturing was greatest in Lewes, where 25.4% fewer people were employed in manufacturing in 2021 than in 2011.

Actual change in industry of employment in East Sussex, 2011-2021



Percentage change in industry of employment 2011-2021

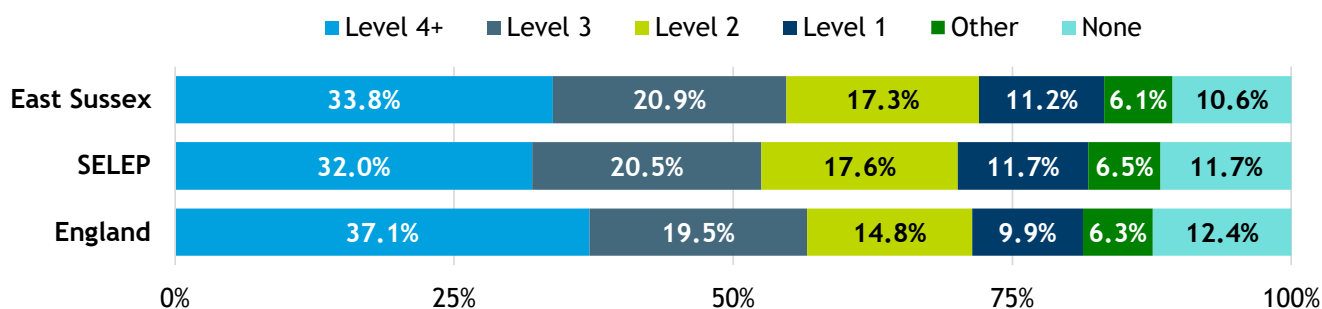


Small area data on industry sectors from Census 2021

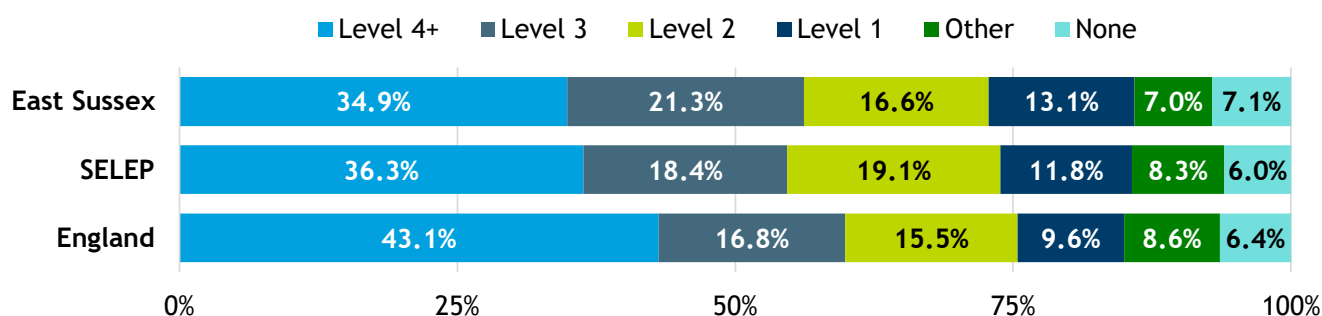
- At small area level (MSOA) some sectors are much larger in some parts of the county than in the country as a whole.
- Employment in the Residential Care sub-sector is much higher in parts of East Sussex than the rest of the country. The MSOA Eastbourne 010 (Pier) had the highest percentage of people in this sub-sector of all MSOAs in the country at 6.0%, with four MSOAs in the county being among the highest 20 MSOAs nationally for employment in Residential Care.
- Hastings 011 (Central St Leonards) had 5.5% of people employed in the Creative, Arts and Entertainment sector, the highest proportion of any MSOA in the country outside London.
- In broad industry sections, more than a quarter of adults in Eastbourne 010 (Pier) and Eastbourne 008 (Upperton) were working in the Human Health and Social Work sector.

- In 2021, a lower proportion of working-age (aged 16-64) people in the county had level 4 qualifications than nationally, whether we look at the Census 2021 data or the Annual Population Survey (APS).
- A slightly lower proportion of working age people had no qualifications compared to England when we look at the data from Census 2021. However, a slightly higher proportion of working-age people in East Sussex appeared to have no qualifications in December 2021 when looking at the APS.

Qualifications of the population aged 16-64 (highest qualification), Census 2021 [see [note 5](#)]



Qualifications of the working-age population (aged 16-64) (highest qualification), December 2021 (from Annual Population Survey - see [note 7](#))



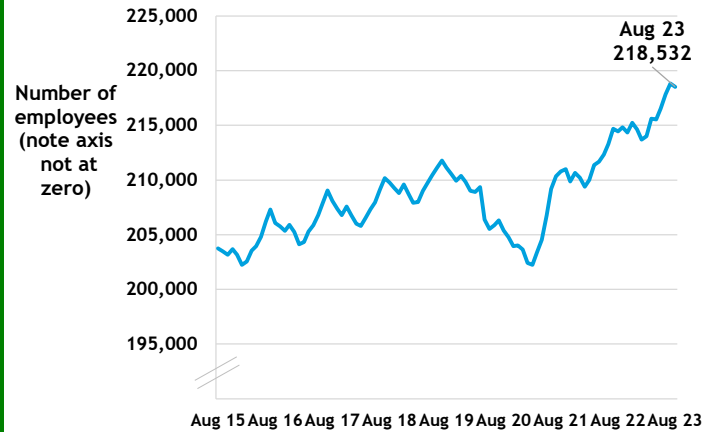
Census key points

- The overall number of schoolchildren and full-time students aged five years and over has decreased since 2011, when it was 88,250. While the proportion of students as a percentage of the total population aged 5 and over has remained largely static in England (20.4% in 2021 vs 20.5% in 2021), in East Sussex, it has fallen from 17.7% in 2011 to 16.8% in 2021.
- 33.8% of residents aged 16-64 years (105,930 people) had NVQ Level 4 or above qualifications (for example, Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diploma, Bachelor's degree and post-graduate qualifications). This is slightly lower than the English national average (37.1%).
- In 2021, 10.6% of the population aged 16 to 64 (33,310 people) reported having no qualifications. This is lower than the English national average of 12.4%.
- Apprenticeships were the highest qualification for 4.3% of working age people (13,610).
- Within East Sussex, the district with the highest percentage of the working age population with Level 4 or above qualifications was Lewes with 37.4% (21,220) and the lowest percentage was Hastings, with 30.6% (17,220).
- Comparisons between 2011 and 2021 data for highest level of qualifications are not possible due to changes in how the questions were asked. (see charts above and [note 7](#) at end).

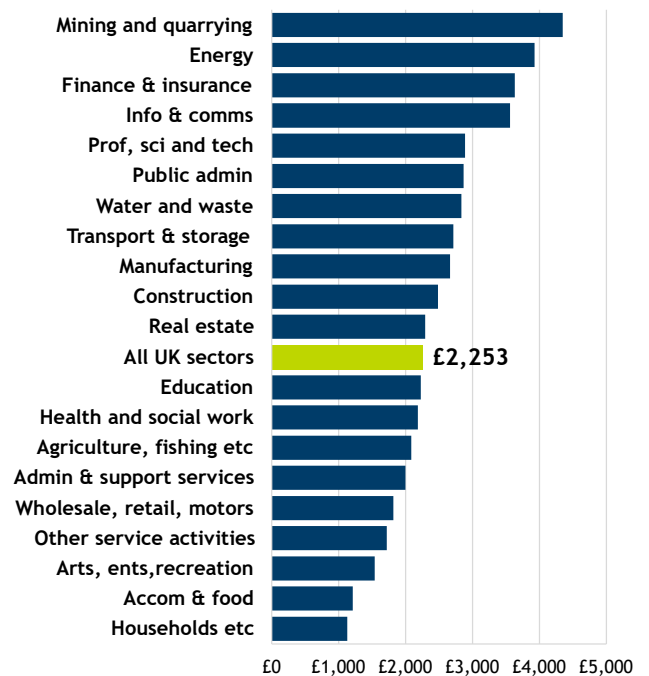
Wages and employment £

- Comparatively low workplace pay (from ASHE) in the county (£579 pw), which increased significantly in 2021 and 2022 -see [note 10](#) for more information (see chart bottom right).
- Employment rates (employees as a percentage of working age people aged 16-64) are lower in most districts and boroughs of East Sussex than the national and regional averages: lowest in Hastings and Rother and highest in Wealden (see chart bottom left).
- At 218,532 the number of employees in August 2023 is marginally lower than the peak seen in July 2023 (218,853, see chart top right).
- Median monthly earnings at £2,101 in the county (August 2023) are also considerably lower than national (UK=£2,253) and regional (£2,395) averages (see chart below).
- This can be explained because wage levels in the dominant sectors for employment in the county: Health; Wholesale, retail and motors; and Accommodation and Food are all below the national average wage and are lowest in the Accommodation and Food sector (excl. Household sector - see chart right).

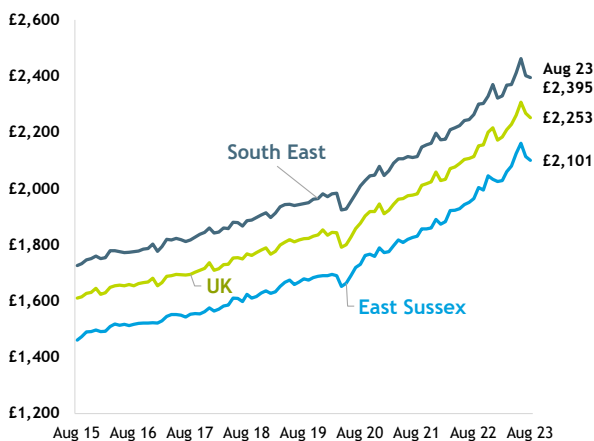
Total number of employees (PAYE RTI) August 2015-August 2023, East Sussex [see [note 9](#)]



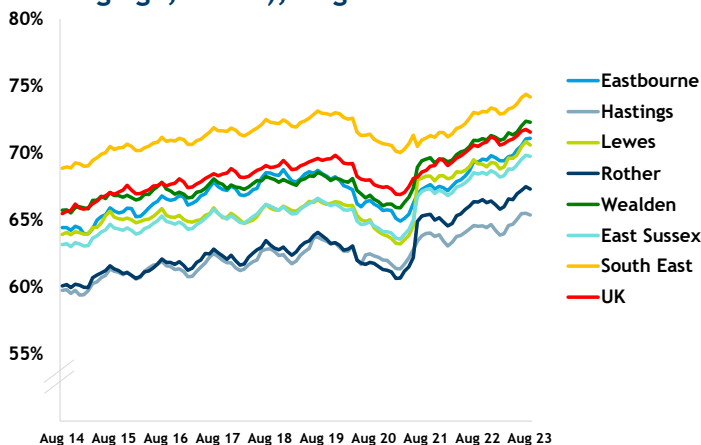
Median pay by industry (PAYE RTI) in the UK, August 2023



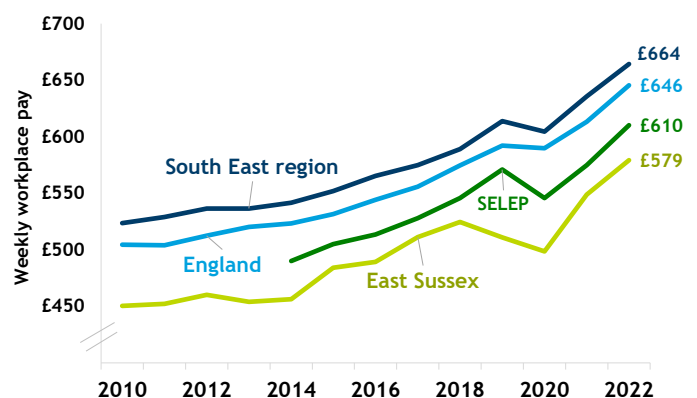
Median monthly earnings from PAYE Real Time Information (RTI), August 2015-2023



Employment rate from PAYE RTI (employees per working age, 16-64), August 2014-2023

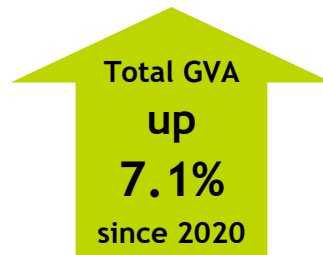
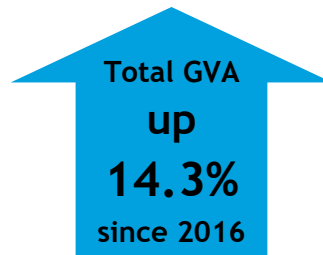
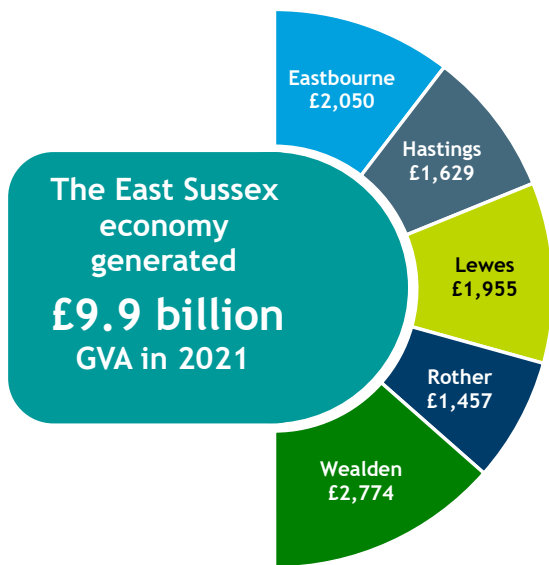


Workplace-based median full-time weekly earnings, 2010-2022 [from ASHE - see [note 10](#)]



Gross Value Added





- Total GVA grew by 36.7% in the county between 2011 and 2021, slightly lower than growth of 38.8% in the UK as a whole and 39.6% in the SE region [see [note 11](#)].
- GVA per head in the county grew from £16,489 in 2020 to £18,039 in 2021. In 2021 it was just 59.7% of the UK figure of £30,221. The rise of 9.4% was larger than the national increase in GVA per head. But because revised 2021 Census based population estimates for the period 2012-2020 have not yet been released, ONS recommend treating changes in GVA with caution - see note.
- While Real estate is the largest sector in the county at 26% of GVA, if we take out 'Owner-occupied imputed rental' (OOIR - [see [note 12](#)]), which reflects property prices in an area, Health, Wholesale, retail and motors, and Education are the largest sectors.
- There is much variation at district level, especially when OOIR is not included. For example, Health and Social work make up 22% of the GVA of Eastbourne compared to 9% in Lewes and Wealden.
- Transportation and Storage (up 42%), Agriculture, mining and utilities (up 26%) and Construction (up 25%) were the industries seeing the largest growth in the county in 2020-21.



2021: **£/🕒**
GVA per hour:
£30.97
80.8% of UK average [[note 13](#)]

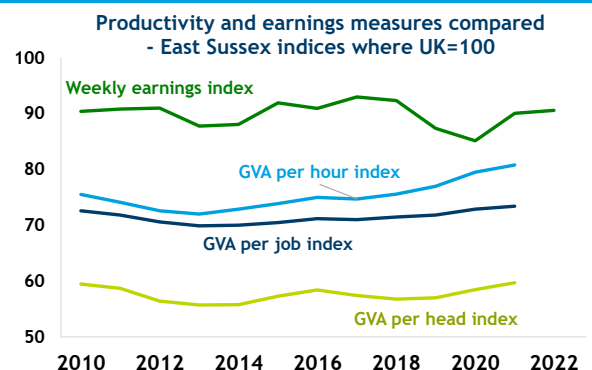
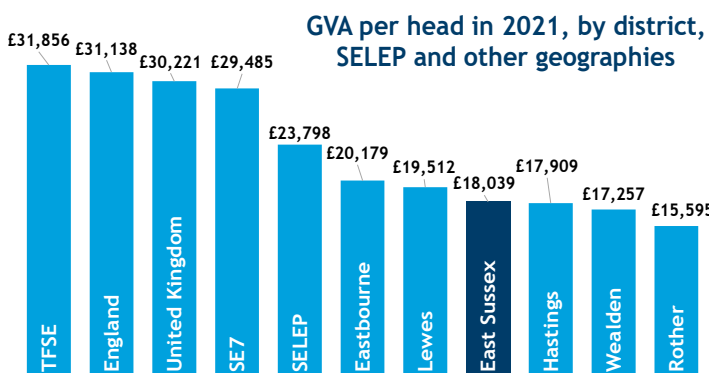
2021: **£/👤**
GVA per head:
£18,039
59.7% of UK average

4 sectors account for more than half of total GVA in East Sussex (2021):

-  Real Estate - including owner occupiers imputed rental (25%) (OOIR accounts for 20%)
-  Health (11%)
-  Wholesale, retail & motors (11%)
-  Education (9%)

If we exclude OOIR [see [note 12](#)], different sectors make a higher than average contribution to GVA in the districts:

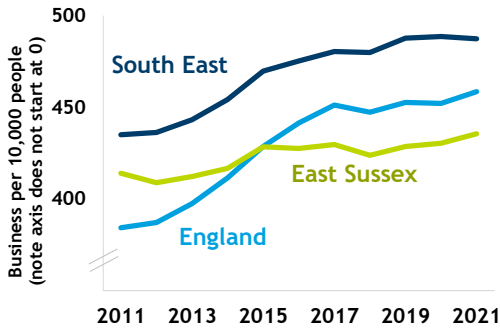
Eastbourne: Health and Social work (22.4%), Wholesale, retail etc. (13.6%), Education (11.0%)
Hastings: Health (19.7%), Manufacturing (16.6%)
Lewes: Public admin (17.1%); Wholesale etc (12.6%)
Rother: Education (12.9%); Construction (12.7%)
Wealden: Construction (16.3%); Wholesale, retail etc (13.7%); Manufacturing (12.5%)
 Wholesale, retail etc saw the largest rise over 2011-21 (£402m), followed by Construction (£291m), Health and social work (£261m), Real Estate (excl. OOIR) (£242m), and Manufacturing (£203m).



Businesses



Active businesses per 10,000 population [see note 15]



East Sussex has fewer businesses per head than average for the region and growth is slowing

86.7% of business units in the county have fewer than 10 employees (2022) (National figure 85.1%)
74.1% have fewer than 5. East Sussex has relatively few medium and large businesses (50+ employees) [see note 16]

24,335 active businesses in East Sussex in 2021 up from **24,055** in 2020

Fastest growing sectors in the county (2017-2022) (in terms of number of business units)



Construction - up 14% Lower than national rise (England up 18%)



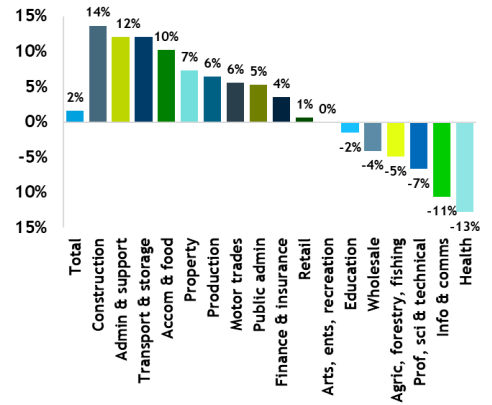
Business administration and support services - up 12% (England up 0.5%)



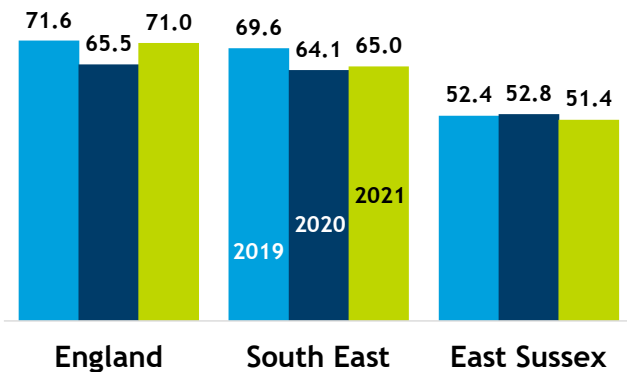
Transport and Storage - up 12% (England up 22%)

Active businesses Up 4% since 2016, and up 1.2% since 2020

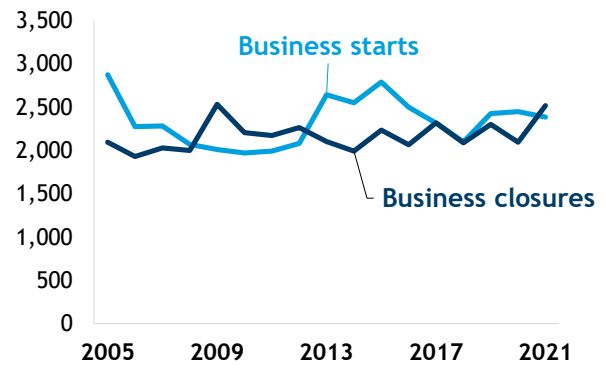
Change in number of business units by sector in East Sussex, 2017-2022



New business registration rates, 2019-21

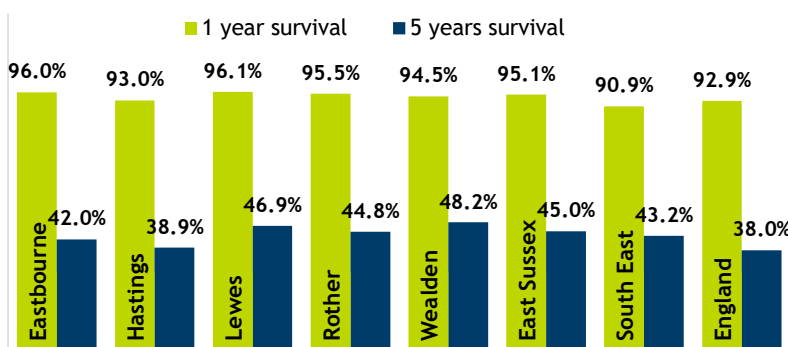


Business births and deaths in East Sussex 2005-21



45.0% of businesses in East Sussex started in 2016 survived their first five years 5 year business survival rates for the county are higher than the England average (38.0%)

1- and 5-year business survival rates in 2021



- More business closures (2,520) in 2022 than business starts (2,385).
- Change in business births and deaths - 65 fewer new business starts than in 2020, and 425 more business closures.
- Business births still higher than in 2018.
- Of 2,135 businesses with more than 10 employees, 65 (3.0%) were classed as 'high growth' businesses (England 3.9%).

Growth measures - June 2023

Infrastructure and GVA

Growth measure	Contribute to unlocking key employment floor space allocated in Local Plans (Square metres)	Achieve average annual housing completions of 1,504 in East Sussex to 2020 in accordance with our Local Plans (Source: East Sussex County Council On-line Housing Monitoring Database)	Increase GVA per capita by 20% by 2020 (Source: Office for National Statistics)
2015	Glovers House and Sovereign House: 4,690	1,358 (2014-15 data)	£14,983 Up 21.1% 2005-15
2016		1,509 (2015-16 data)	£15,764 Up 22.8% 2006-16
2017	Swallow Business Park: 3,409	1,446 (2016-17 data)	£16,032 Up 22.3% 2007-17
2018	Newhaven Eastside (South) Business Park: 2,322	1,316 (2017-18 data)	£16,279 Up 16.5% 2008-18
2019	DPQR Welcome Building: 2,650 High Weald Hse: 2,385 Newhaven Eastside: 3,529	1,734 (2018-19 data)	£16,887 Up 25.1% 2009-19
2020	Eastbourne Fishermens: 310	1,852 (2019-20 data)	£16,489 Up 21.6% 2010-20
2021	Lewes Creative Hub: 533	1,549 (2020-21 data)	£18,039 Up 33.3% 2011-21
2022	Eastbourne Food Street: 440	1,606 (2021-22 data)	
2023	Observer Building (Hastings): 2,100 Seven Sisters Country Park: 233 Plumpton (Skills for Rural Businesses post-Brexit): 1,570		

Employment and unemployment

Growth measure	Maintain the employment rate for East Sussex at a higher level than the England rate to 2020** (Source: Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey, NOMIS/ONS)	Maintain the Claimant Rate for East Sussex at below the England rate to 2020 (Source: Office for National Statistics/NOMIS)	Maintain the 18-24 Claimant Rate for East Sussex at below the England rate (Source: Department for Work and Pensions/StatXplore)
2014	74.1% +2.4% points higher than England (Mar)	2.1% -0.6% points lower than England (April)	4.2% -0.3% points lower than England (April)
2015	73.1% 0.2% points higher than England (Mar)	1.5% -0.4% points lower than England (April)	3.1% +0.1% points higher than England (April)
2016	73.8% -0.1% points lower than England (Mar)	1.4% -0.4% points lower than England (April)	2.8% Equal to England (April)
2017	75.5% +1.1% points higher than England (Mar)	1.5% -0.4% points lower than England (April)	2.7% -0.1% points lower than England (April)
2018	74.6% -0.6% points lower than England (Mar)	2.2% +0.1% points higher than England (April)	3.6% +0.6% points higher than England (Apr)
2019	73.6% -2.0% points lower than England (Mar)	2.5% -0.1% points lower than England (April)	4.2% +0.6% points higher than England (Apr)
2020	80.0% +3.8% points higher than England (Mar)	5.2% +0.2% points higher than England (April)	8.3% +1.7% points higher than England (Apr)
2021	75.0% +0.2% points lower than England (Mar)	6.3% equal to England (April)	10.9% +1.9% points higher than England (Apr)

Growth measure	Maintain the employment rate for East Sussex at a higher level than the England rate to 2020** (Source: Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey, NOMIS/ONS)	Maintain the Claimant Rate for East Sussex at below the England rate to 2020 (Source: Office for National Statistics/NOMIS)	Maintain the 18-24 Claimant Rate for East Sussex at below the England rate (Source: Department for Work and Pensions/StatXplore)
2021 Census % of age 16-64	% of aged 16-64 in employment 72.1% (England 71.0%) 1.1% higher than England	% of aged 16-64 unemployed 4.0% (England 4.4%) 0.4% lower than England	% of aged 18-24 unemployed 10.2% (England 9.8%) 0.4% higher than England
2022	77.1% +1.7% points higher than England (Mar)	3.9% equal to England (April)	5.6% +1.0% points higher than England (Apr)
2023	73.1% -2.6% points lower than England (Mar)	3.6% -0.3% points lower than England (April)	5.7% +0.8% points higher than England (Apr)

Qualifications

Growth measure	Increase the percentage of working age residents in East Sussex with a Level 4 qualification to at least 35% by 2020** (Source: Annual Population Survey, Nomis/ONS)	Reduce the percentage of working age residents in East Sussex with no qualifications or qualified only to NVQ1 to below the England level by 2020** (Source: Annual Population Survey, Nomis/ONS)
2014	36.6% +0.9% points higher than England (Dec)	19.4% -1.2% points lower than England (Dec)
2015	30.9% -5.8% points lower than England (Dec)	23.2% +3.2% points higher than England (Dec)
2016	34.0% -3.8% points lower than England (Dec)	22.5% +3.4% points higher than England (Dec)
2017	37.7% -0.5% points lower than England (Dec)	15.5% -3.0% points lower than England (Dec)
2018	37.0% -2.0% points lower than England (Dec)	20.9% +2.7% points higher than England (Dec)
2019	35.6% -4.4% points lower than England (Dec)	19.2% +1.6% points higher than England (Dec)
2020	36.4% -6.4% points lower than England (Dec)	18.1% +2.0% points higher than England (Dec)
2021	34.9% -8.2% points lower than England (Dec)	20.2% +4.2% points higher than England (Dec)
2021 Census % of age 16-64	33.8% -3.3% points lower than England (Census 2021)	21.8% -0.5% points lower than England (Census 2021)
2022	ONS have changed the definitions used in the qualifications data so further time series cannot be used	ONS have changed the definitions used in the qualifications data so further time series cannot be used

** At sub-regional level the APS is subject to sampling variability which means that the data is not very reliable. The ONS provide confidence intervals for APS data, but at even county level these intervals can be very broad, for example, for people with Level 4 qualifications, for Jan-Dec 2020, the confidence interval for East Sussex was 3.7%, meaning that there is a 95% chance that the true figure could lie anywhere between 36.8 ± 3.7 i.e. between 33.1% and 40.5%. This explains why there appear to be wild swings in the qualifications and employment data, but this may not be reflected in the situation on the ground.

With the release of the data from the 2021 Census, it has become apparent that even the data at national level is quite inaccurate. In the year to December 2021, the APS reported that the proportion of working age people with Level 4+ qualifications in England was 43.1%, whereas in fact the proportion in March 2021 (Census) was 37.1%. When looking at those with low or no qualifications, APS said that 16.0% had no or level 1 qualifications in England but the Census put this proportion at 22.3% in England. This suggests that the sample used for the APS generally overestimates those with better qualifications.

Further information and sources

This publication is produced as an aid to understanding the mechanisms at work in the economy of East Sussex. The sources for all the data are given in this section.

Labour Market and Skills

Note 1 The Claimant Count of people claiming JSA and Universal Credit because they are searching for work is considered to be the most reliable and up to date source for unemployed claimant data. Detailed data is available on [ESiF](#).

Note 2 Following a major boundary review, wards were reviewed for the local elections in May 2018 for Hastings Borough Council and May 2019 for Eastbourne Borough Council, Lewes, Rother and Wealden District Councils. The number of wards in the county increased to 108. Some wards have retained the same name but the boundary has changed, including in Hastings, and as claimant rates are based on the working age population and claimant numbers, some areas appear to have different claimant rates using the new ward boundaries. A [map comparing the old and new ward boundaries is available in ESiF](#).

Note 3 Broader participation data for [FE](#) and [apprenticeships](#) comes from the FE Data Library, on the Gov.UK website, and is published on [ESiF](#).

Note 4 Data is published on ESiF on the number of [people](#) and [households](#) claiming Universal Credit (UC), and people on Universal Credit by [duration of claim](#). We have also now published data on the [number of households on UC who receive a local housing allowance](#) element with their benefit which does not actually cover their rent. Other claimant data can also be found in [ESiF](#) and on the DWP's [StatXplore](#) website.

Note 5 Data is now available for some of the labour market variables from the 2021 Census, and more detailed information is being released over the next year or two.

It is important to note that the 2021 Census took place during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, a period of unparalleled and rapid change; the national lockdown, associated guidance and furlough measures will have affected the labour market topic.

Some of the 2021 Census data is now available on ESiF: on [Economic activity and inactivity](#), [Hours worked](#), [Industry of employment](#) and [Qualifications of the adult population](#). Further data is available from the [ONS](#), including [Census maps](#) showing how the districts and small areas in the county compare to the country as a whole.

Note 6 Data for Benefit combinations, including out-of-work benefits is published on [ESiF](#).

Note 7 Qualifications data for working age people is from the Annual Population Survey (APS) which is published on [ESiF](#) and by the ONS on the [Nomis](#) website. Note that sample variability means that some APS data is not very reliable, which may explain the wide variation between years.

With the release of the data from the 2021 Census, it has become apparent that even the APS data at national level is quite inaccurate. In the year to December 2021, the APS reported that the proportion of working age people with Level 4+ qualifications in England was 43.1%, whereas in fact the proportion in March 2021 (Census) was 37.1%. When looking at those with low or no qualifications, APS said that 16.0% had no or level 1 qualifications in England but the Census put this proportion at 22.3% in England. This suggests that the sample used for the APS generally overestimates those with better qualifications.

Note 8 Note that other data on [part-time and full-time working](#) and [employment by industry](#) is available from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) but in this edition of the briefing this has been replaced with the more accurate data from the 2021 Census released in December 2022.

Note 9 Following the economic crisis provoked by the Coronavirus pandemic, the ONS and HMRC started to release administrative data from PAYE records giving the number of employees, median and mean pay down to district level. Data for ITL3 (formerly NUTS3, including East Sussex county) and higher geographies are published monthly, and data for districts is released quarterly and published in [ESiF](#).

Note 10 Earnings data is from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings which is published by ONS and is available on the [Nomis](#) website. We have mostly used [workplace-based median earnings](#) which gives earnings for jobs based in the area, but [residence-based data](#) is also available, which is the earnings of those living in the area. There were temporary factors that increased the headline growth rate in earnings above the underlying rate over the course of the Covid-19 pandemic. Changes in earnings were sharply affected, so ONS published an interesting [blog post](#) discussing how to interpret average earnings data.

Gross value added

Note 11 [Gross value added \(GVA\)](#) data is released annually by the [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#), and GVA per head is calculated using [ONS mid-year-estimate data](#). GVA is a measure of the increase in the value of the economy due to the production of goods and services. Estimates are measured at current basic prices, which include the effect of inflation. The GVA data for 2021 was released in May 2023, and data is now also available for district level Gross Domestic Product (see [ESiF](#)). This year Census 2021 in England and Wales has provided new estimates of the population of areas in 2021, but ONS do not yet have rebased estimates for the intercensal years 2012 to 2020. As a result, there is a discontinuity in the population estimates between 2020 and 2021. ONS have therefore suppressed any annual growth estimates of gross domestic product (GDP) per head for 2020 to 2021 from some of their publications, and strongly advise people not to use these distorted growth rates themselves, but instead to look at annual growth in real GDP to compare the performance of areas over time. GVA per head will be updated on ESiF when new population estimates for 2012-2020 become available.

Note 12 Owner-occupiers' imputed rental (OIR) is part of the GVA data that gives an estimate of the housing services consumed by households who are not actually renting their residence. It can be thought of as the amount that non-renters pay themselves for the housing services that they produce. For the purposes of assessing the county's economic productivity it is sometimes preferable to exclude this from the data. See [ONS website](#) for more information.

Note 13 GVA per hour worked data is obtained from the [ONS' Sub-regional productivity](#) tables, and East Sussex data is published on [ESiF](#). When assessing regional economic performance, it is recommended that the best measure of productivity is this data, rather than GVA per head or per job. This is particularly important when there are large net commuting flows into or out of an area, as is the case in East Sussex.

Note 14 GVA per head relates the value added by production activity in an area to the resident population of that area, and thus is subject to distortion due to effects of commuting and variations in the age distribution of the population. Small areas, such as local authorities, can be subject to very large distortions and this should be borne in mind when interpreting the statistics as an indicator of relative economic prosperity. GVA per head is thus not the best measure of productivity. GVA per job is also not the best measure of productivity because we have to consider the impact of a higher proportion of part-time jobs.

For further information about GVA, sub-regional productivity, Business Demography and UK BASL data, visit the [ONS website](#).

Businesses

Note 15 The Office for National Statistics (ONS) provide data on active businesses, start-ups and closures in the annual '[Business Demography](#)' series. These national statistics are compatible with EU wide business demography data. 1-5 year survival rates are also included with this data. All new

business registration rates are calculated by the Research and Information Team using the latest available mid-year estimate population data from the ONS, and are published on [ESiF](#).

Note 16 The [UK Business: Activity, Size and Location](#) (UK BASL) dataset from the ONS uses data from the Inter-departmental Business Register (IDBR) to report the total number of businesses. This is the most up-to-date source for data about business activity at local authority level and gives details of both the number of business enterprises and the number of local units. Data is available by industrial sector, business size (in terms of number of employees), annual turnover and age of business (years of trading). Some of the data is also published as 'UK business counts' in the Nomis website. Data for East Sussex and districts has been published in [ESiF](#).

Business Demography counts differ from those given in UK BASL because the Business Demography methodology takes into account businesses that were active at any time during the reference calendar year, whereas UK BASL numbers are based on a snapshot taken from the IDBR on a specific date at the end of March of the relevant year. As a result, numbers in the Business demography dataset are higher than those given in UK BASL.

There are a number of other sources of business data available. For more information about business data sources and how the data can be used, see our [data note](#).

Workforce projections

Note 17 The dwelling-led demographic projections are produced by the East Sussex County Council (ESCC) Research and Information Team, at county and district levels, using the POPGROUP model and local housing plans supplied by each district. The latest 2020-based ESCC projections are based on the mid-2020 population estimates released by ONS in June 2021 and future house building trajectories provided by each district in Spring 2022. Projections are also produced for the number of households and the number of people in the workforce (that is, economically active people aged 16-74), and this data is published in [ESiF](#). Note that the projections do not currently take into account the latest population data from the 2021 Census. Revised population projections and workforce projections will be produced once rebased population mid-year estimates for 2011-2020 are released by the ONS but these are not due for release until at least November 2023.

Contact details

The Research and Intelligence Team, Governance Services provides demographic and socio-economic data, intelligence and insight to support East Sussex County Council and other East Sussex Partners. The Team also manages East Sussex in Figures (ESiF), the Local Information System for East Sussex.

For further information about labour market and economic data please contact Lenna Santamaría by email mariahelena.santamaria@eastsussex.gov.uk, or Emma Corby on emma.corby@eastsussex.gov.uk.

ESiF is a web-based information system that contains detailed, up-to-date and reliable information on a very wide range of topics. It is free and very easy to use and puts individual users in control. ESiF lets you specify exactly what data you want to see (for the places and time periods you are interested in) and how you want to view it (as a table, chart or map).

Visit www.eastsussexinfigures.org.uk or e-mail esif@eastsussex.gov.uk for more information.