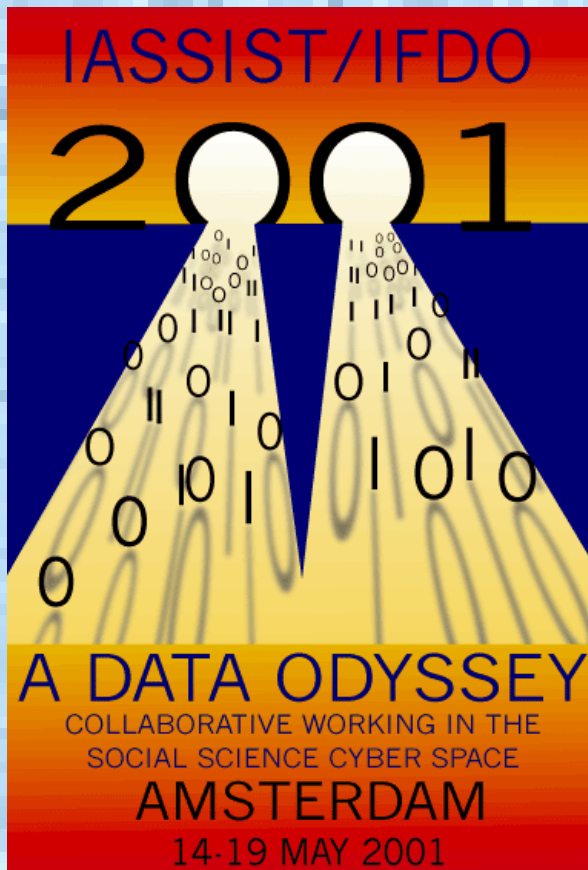


IASSIST / IFDO 2001



Data Support for
Learning & Teaching:
the Final Frontier?

Robin Rice - Edinburgh
University Data
Library

Using Numeric Data in Learning & Teaching Project, 2000-2001



MIMAS

EDINA

Joint Information
Systems Committee

Introduction

- UK is rich in numeric datasets.
- Social Sciences tradition of secondary analysis ensures use of datasets such as GHS, BHPS, Census, etc. are used in research.
- What are the barriers to the use of numeric data in learning & teaching?

Project Highlights

Task Force

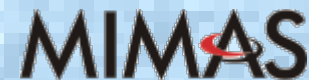
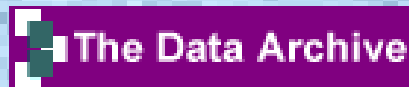
Teachers' Survey

Case Studies

Open Forum

Website:

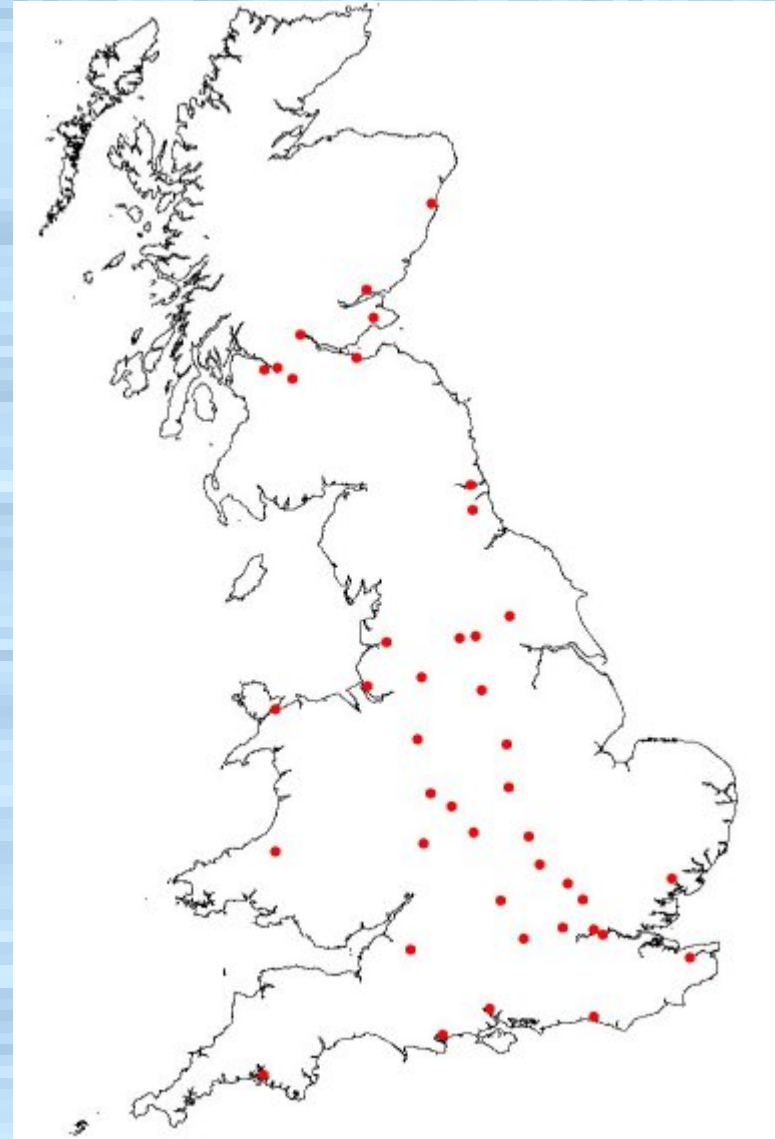
<http://datalib.ed.ac.uk/projects/datateach.html>



Teachers' Survey

- Sample survey of teaching departments, within Social Sciences plus other empirical subjects.
- ~250 department heads targeted (1 in 6 sample).
Asked to respond & pass to relevant teaching staff.
- Vigorous follow-up by phone & email to improve response rate, make results more representative.
- 206 responses from 110 departments in 80 institutions. (Response Rate=44%).

Responding Institutions



Department Types

‘Inside’ Social Sciences:

Anthropology
Business & Management Studies
Communications
Economics
Education
Environmental Sciences
International Relations
Political Science
Psychology
**Social Studies (including Social
Work & Social Policy)**
Sociology

n=126

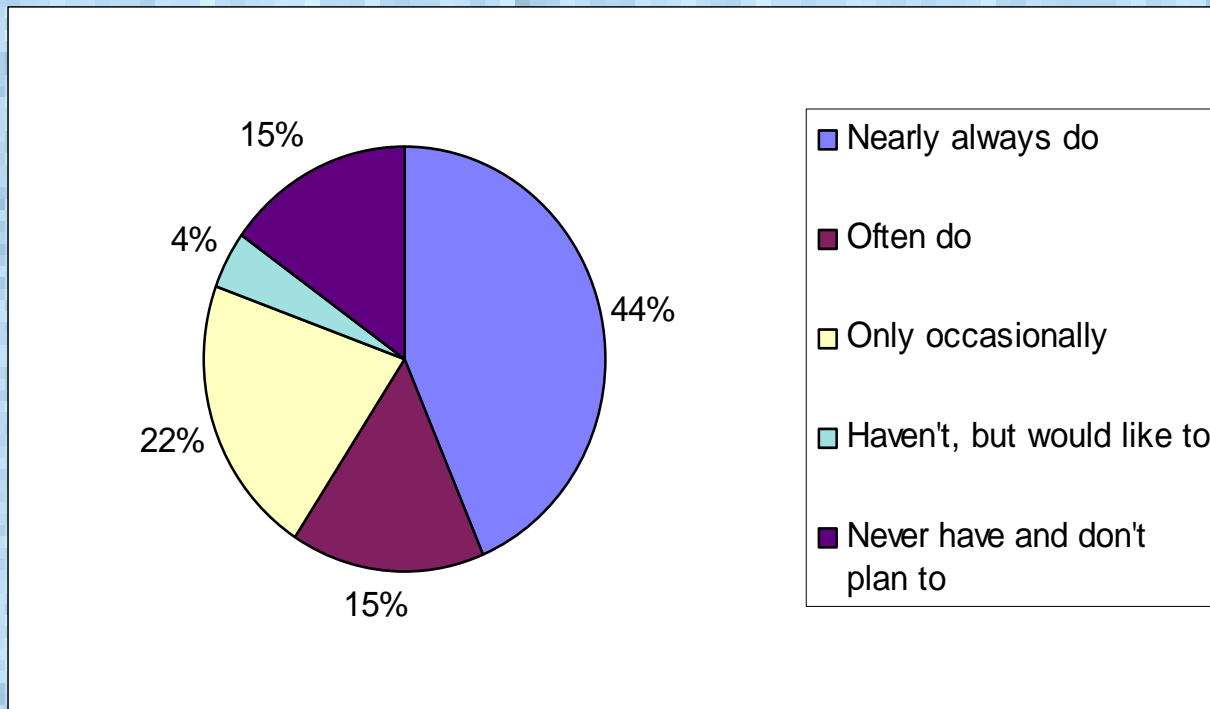
‘Outside’ Social Sciences:

Agriculture
Archaeology
Epidemiology
Geography
History
Nursing & Ancillary Services
Public Health
Statistics
Town Planning

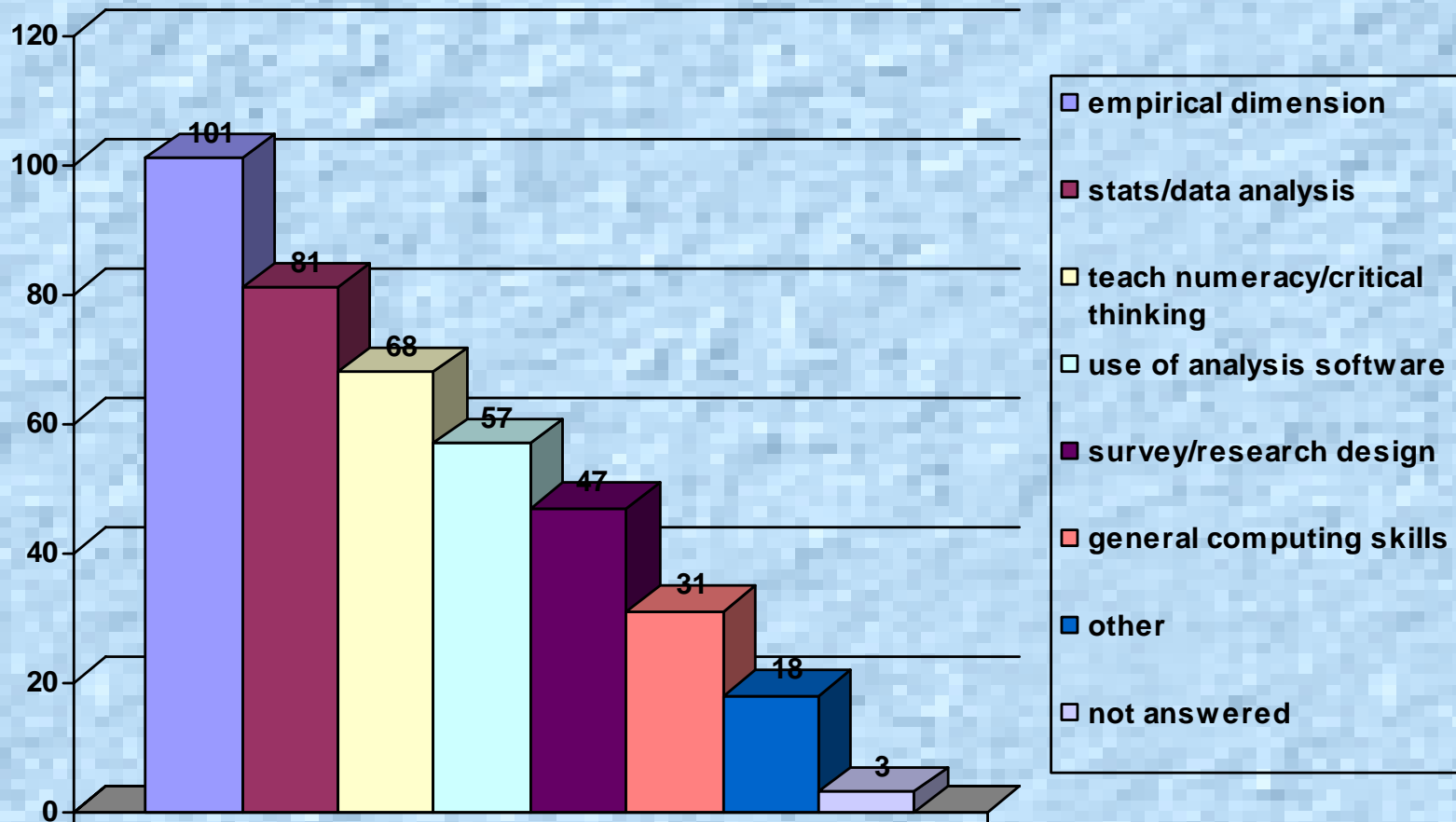
n=80

Selected Survey Findings

Use of numeric data in this class by percent (n=181).



Purpose of use of data in this class (n=181).

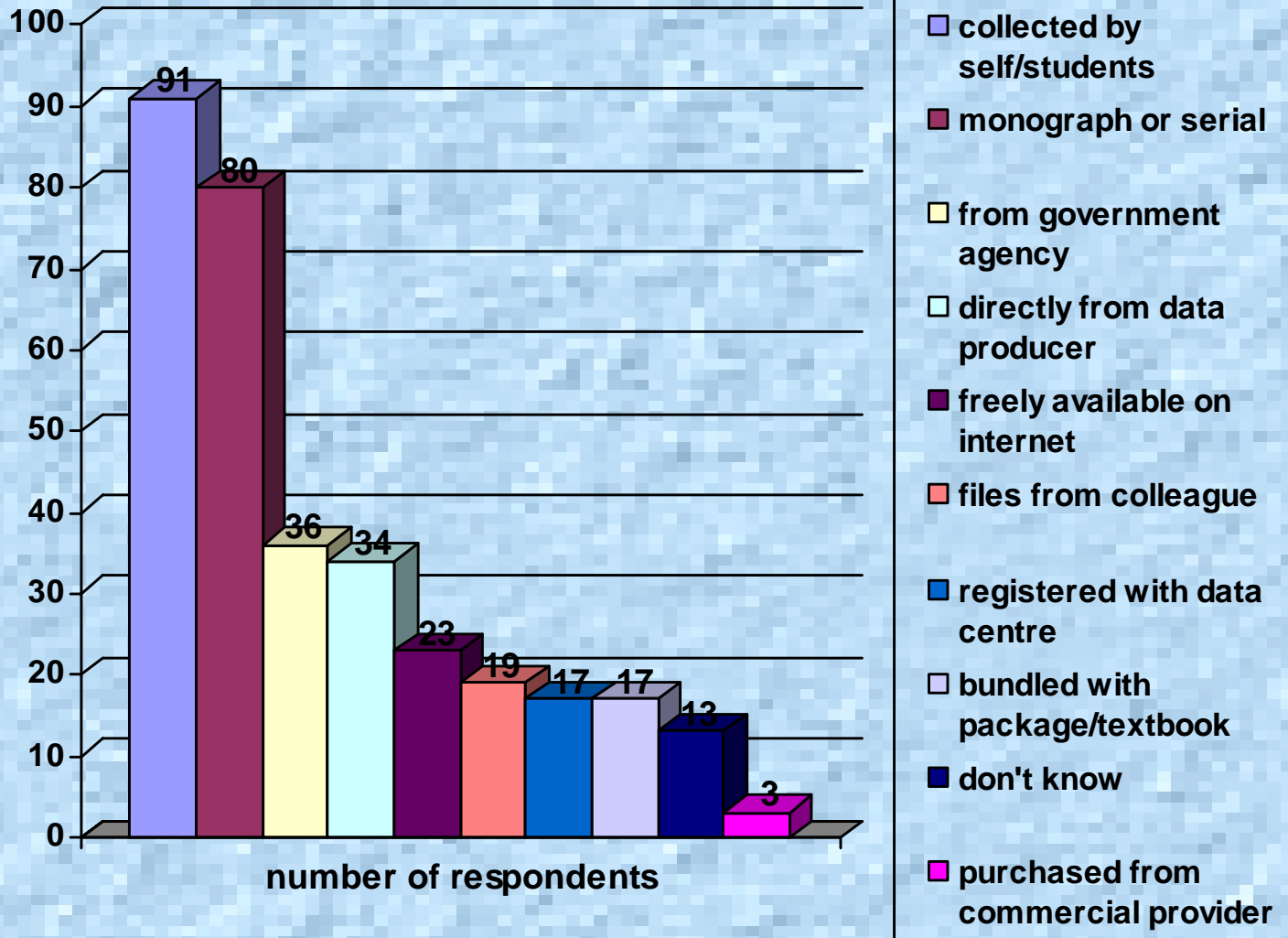


Are students expected to work with the data on a computer ('hands-on') as part of their coursework?

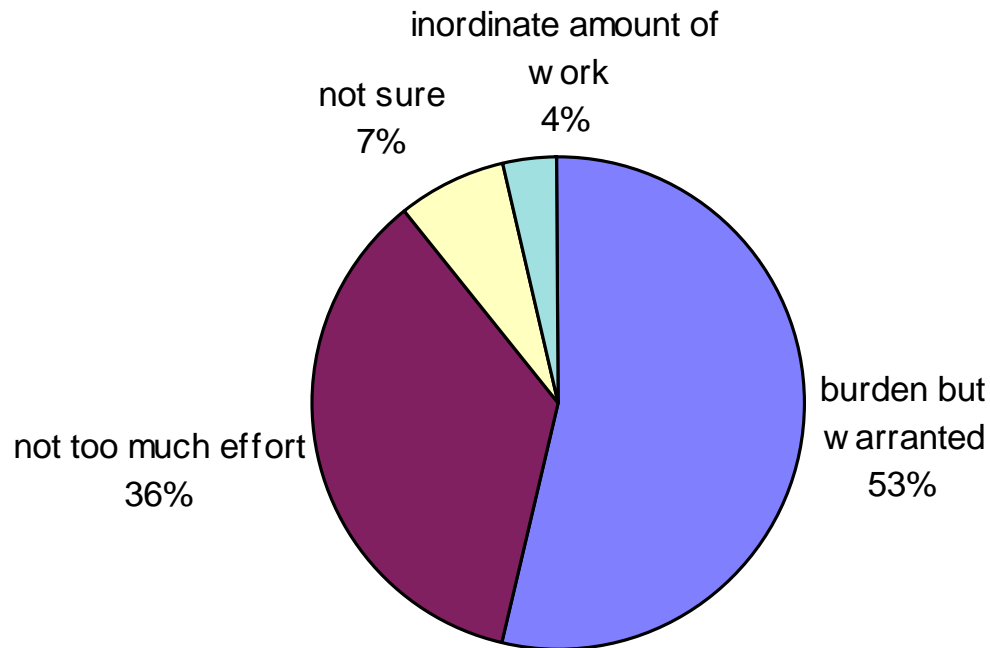
Whether course is 'hands-on', by course type

<i>column %</i>	methods	subject	All
hands-on	85	54	64
not hands-on	15	46	36
n =	46	100	146

Source of data used in class (counts, n=181).

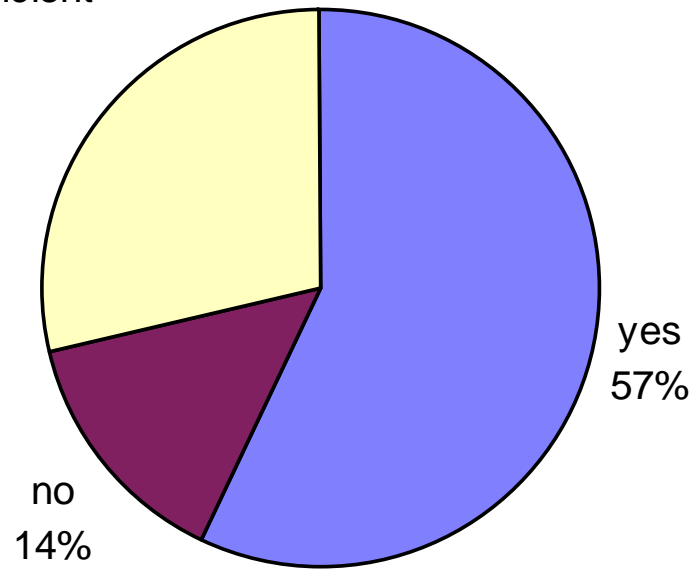


To what extent do you regard preparation of data for teaching a burden?



Do you feel the need to update / refresh / revise the data used on a regular basis?

yes, but insufficient
time
29%



Use of Data in Independent Learning (student's research)

- Nearly always do - 35%
 - Often do - 33%
 - Only occasionally - 21%
 - Never have and don't plan to - 6%
 - Haven't yet but would like to - 2%
- “Statements made need to be backed up with evidence – often of an empirical nature.”
 - “Depends on topic, but statistical sources can contextualise a topic.”
 - “Many students are more inclined to qualitative research.”
 - “Not always appropriate & insufficiently briefed on numeric data available.”

Survey Findings: National Services

All respondents were asked if they have ever used or considered using national data services (i.e. The Data Archive, EDINA, MIMAS) to access numeric data for learning and teaching purposes.

An overwhelming three quarters had not; only 25% said yes. There was no significant difference found based on the experience of the teacher (number of years teaching course), or whether they used data in hands-on teaching. However, methods teachers were somewhat more likely to have used national data services than subject teachers.

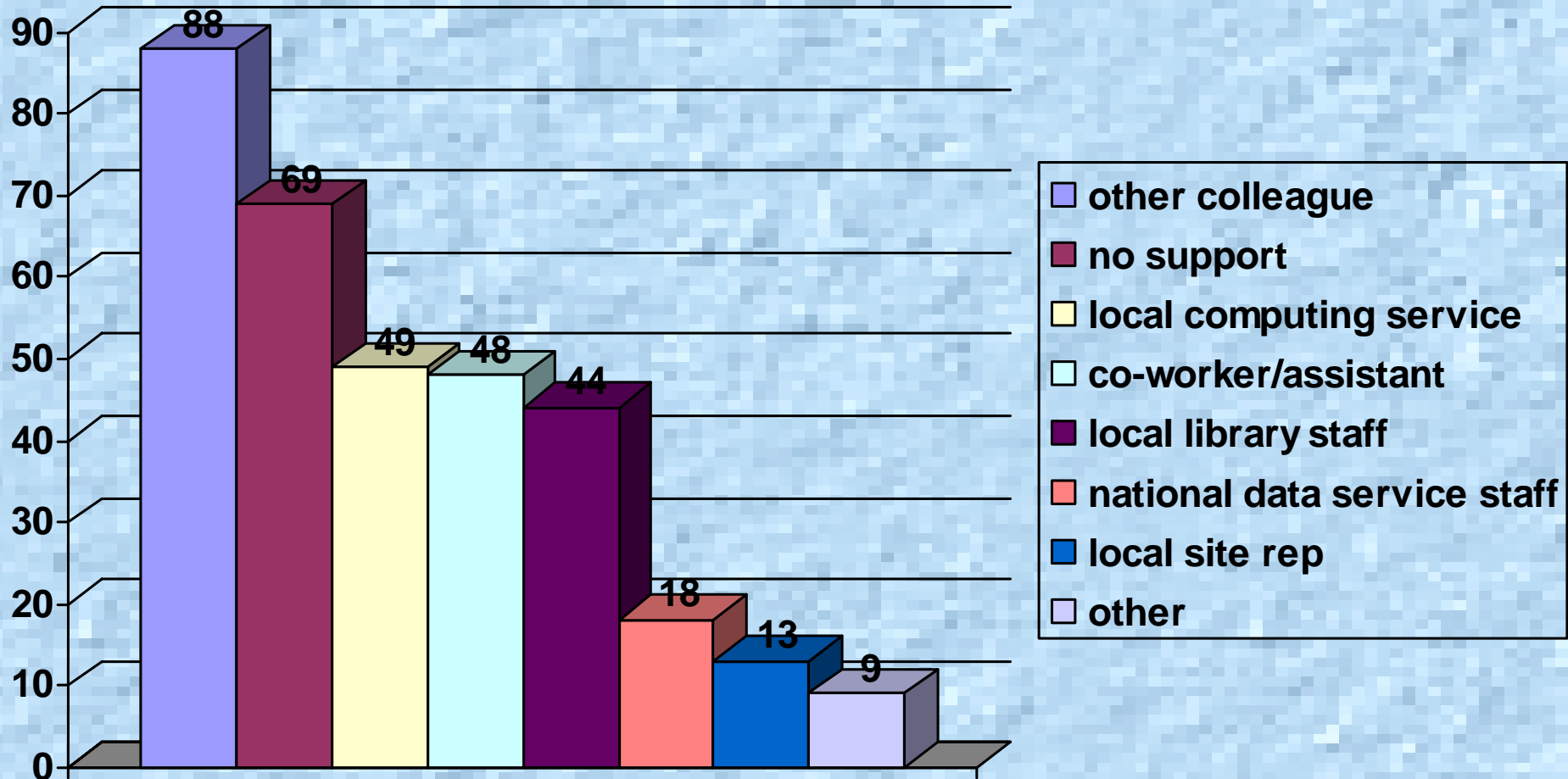
Ranked barriers to using national data services according to users (n=47).

Barrier:	raw score	total responses	mean score
lack of awareness of materials	298	46	6.5
lack of time for preparation	301	47	6.4
registration procedures	253	45	5.6
interface	182	36	5
format of datasets	187	39	4.8
documentation	178	38	4.6
lack of teaching subsets	186	42	4.4

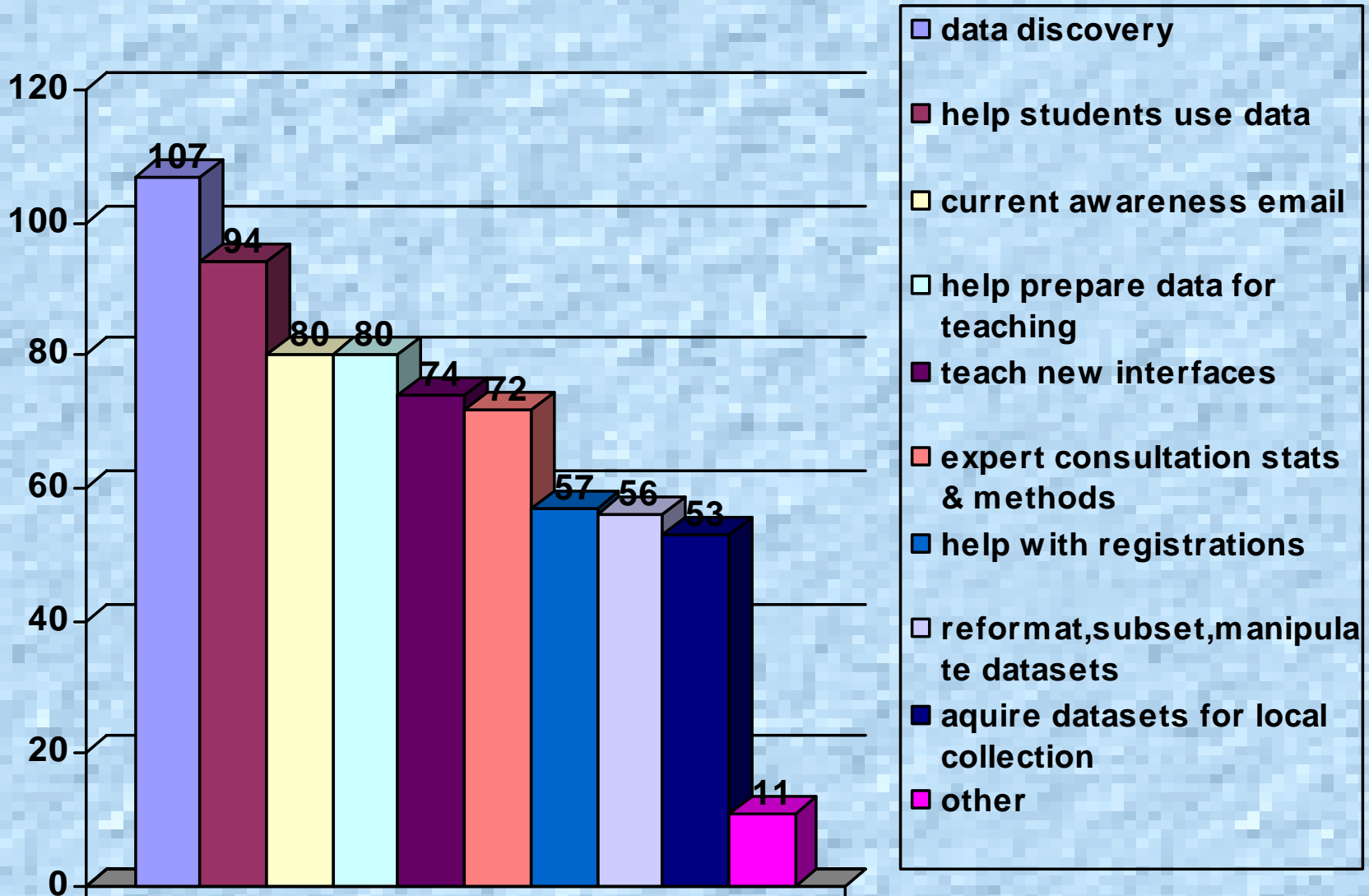
**There were 3 responses that ranked 'Other'.*

Survey Findings: Support Needs

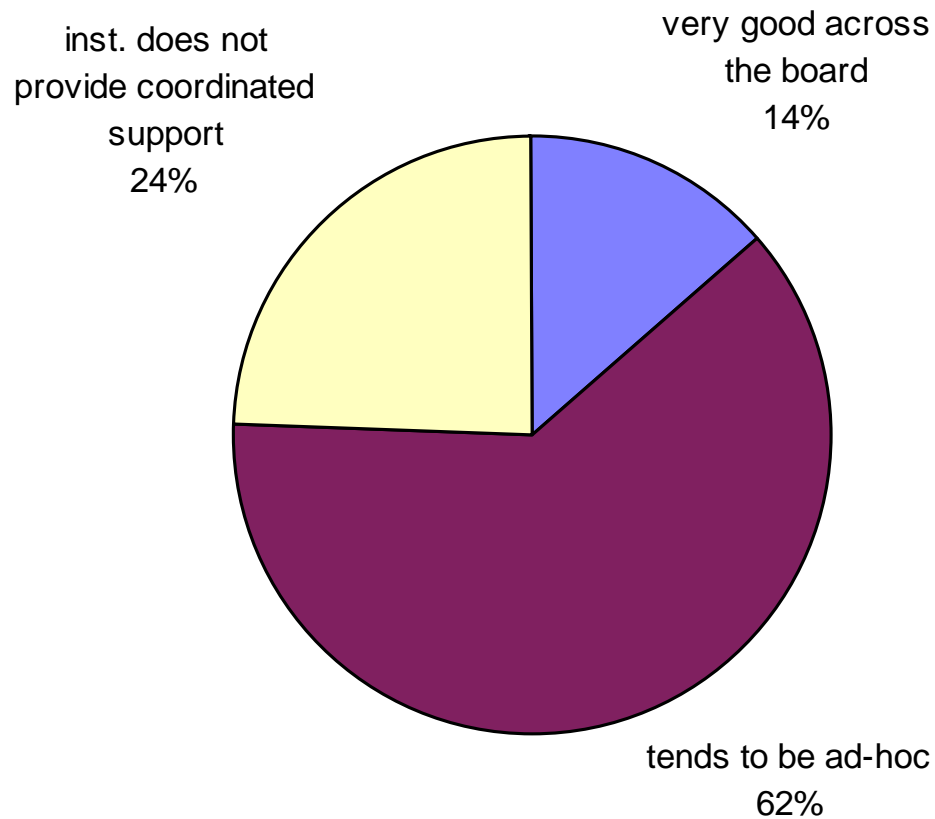
From whom have respondents ever had support in obtaining or using data, *whether for teaching or research?* (n=188)



Forms of local support needed (counts, total respondents=162).



How would you categorise the level of support from your institution? (n=176)



Final Stage: Recommendations

So, based on our results, what are some sensible recommendations...

- For the UK HE funding councils and JISC?
- For the national data centres?
- For universities?
- For libraries and computing services?
- For academic departments and teachers?