



Department
for Education

Adoption Leadership Board headline measures and business intelligence

Quarter 4 2015 to 2016 update

January 2017

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Note: The Department's annual figures on adoptions and timeliness for children who have been adopted are published in the [Looked After Children statistical first release](#). This is the most robust source of information on adoption.

Summary

Adoption Leadership Board (ALB) Headline Measures

2,110 children waiting at 31 March 2016 This is a 31% decrease from 31 March 2015 when there were 3,060 children waiting with a placement order not yet placed with an adoptive family.

30% of children waiting at 31 March 2016 had been waiting 18 months or more, a decrease from 53% as at 31 March 2015.

Child timeliness has remained the same The time taken between a child entering care and being placed with a family for children who have been adopted (Adoption Scorecard indicator A1) has decreased by 4 months since 2012-13, from 22 months to 18 months in 2015-16, this is unchanged since 2014-15.

At 8 months, the average number of days between placement order and match for children who have been adopted (Adoption Scorecard indicator A2) in 2015-16 has remained the same as in 2014-15.

Adopter timeliness is declining The latest quarterly data suggests adopter timeliness has been declining. In quarter 2 2013-14, 50% of approvals made by local authorities were made within 6 months of registration, while in quarter 4 2015-16 this had decreased to 30% of registrations. However this was an improvement on 26% in the previous quarter.

The timeliness of matches has declined. In quarter 4 2013-14, 80% of matches were made within 6 months of approval, compared to 46% in quarter 4 2015-16.

Other Key Headlines

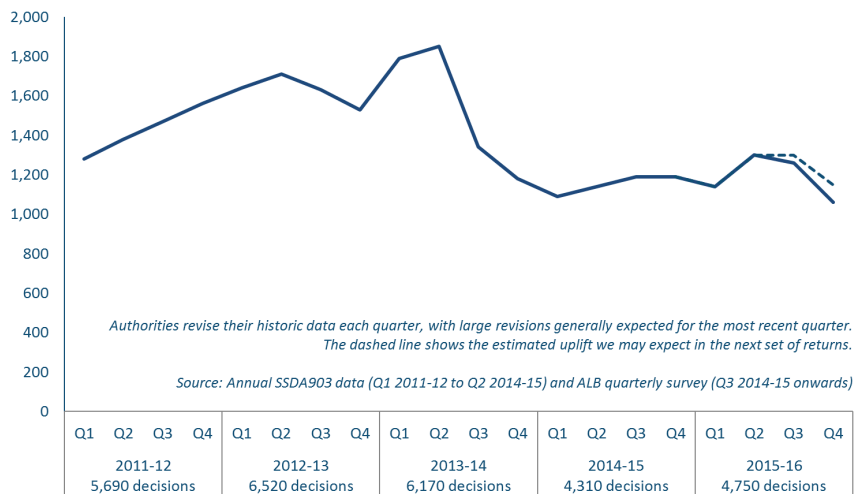
New ADM decisions and placement orders granted have fallen

Quarterly data suggests that the number of new decisions has continued to fall from 1,850 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 1,060 in quarter 4 2015-16, a decrease of 43%. However the number of new decisions increased from 4,310 in 2014-15 to 4,750 in 2015-16.

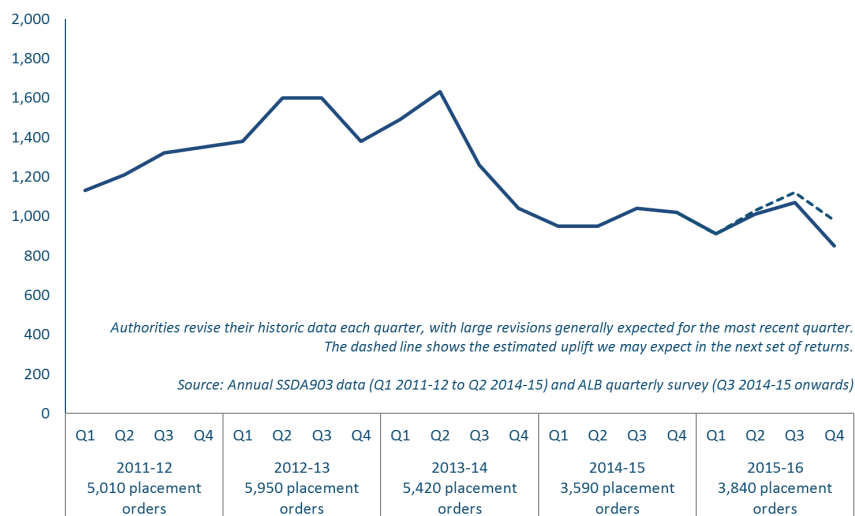
The number of new placement orders have also continued to fall from 1,630 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 850 in quarter 4 2015-16, a decrease of 48%. However the number of new placement orders increased between 2014-15 and 2015-16, from 3,590 to 3,840.

The charts below show the number of ADM decisions and placement orders over time. The estimated figures on the charts are based on the uplift seen in previous quarters when local authorities revise their figures the following quarter.

Number of new ADM decisions in each quarter since 2011-12



Number of new placement orders granted in each quarter since 2011-12



Children adopted from care has decreased

In 2015-16, there were 4,690 adoptions, an increase of 35% from 2011-12, however, this was a decrease of 12% from 2014-15.

The Department's annual figures on adoptions are published in the [Looked After Children statistical first release](#).

Adoptive family approvals and registrations have decreased

There have been 3,540 registrations to become an adoptive family in 2015-16. This represents a fall of 38% compared to 2014-15 (decreases of 42% for LAs and 24% for VAAs).

There have been 3,610 adoptive families approved for adoption in 2015-16. This represents a fall of 31% compared to 2014-15 (decreases of 34% for LAs and 17% for VAAs).

Our most recent estimate for the "adopter gap" suggests that the gap has closed, and we now have more adoptive families than children waiting. However, there are still 1,840 children with a placement order not yet matched and the relevance of this measure assumes that matching is working effectively.

Reversal of decision

Of the children reported to have had their decision reversed during 2015-16, 31% were due to the court not making a placement order, a further increase on 2014-15. However, this year, the proportional increase has been driven by a fall in the number of prospective adopters not being found.

Regional adoptive family timeliness

The average number of days between registration and approval in 2015-16 was 252 days, this compares to 237 days in 2014-15. The average number of days between approval and match in 2015-16 was 207 days, this compares to 153 days in 2014-15.

All approvals and matches in 2015-16			
	Average number of days between registration and approval for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days between approval and match for <u>new matches</u>	Average number of days between registration and match for <u>new matches</u>
North East	233	221	433
North West	234	192	418
Y & the Humber	242	183	420
East Midlands	220	192	408
West Midlands	229	194	433
East of England	237	195	429
London	258	248	504
South East	285	199	472
South West	287	238	506
LAs in ENGLAND	248	203	445
VAAs in ENGLAND	268	227	478
ENGLAND	252	207	450

2 Stage Process in 2015-16			
Average number of days between enquiry and the start of Stage 1 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days for Stage 1 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days between the end of Stage 1 and the start of Stage 2 for <u>new approvals</u>	Average number of days for Stage 2 for <u>new approvals</u>
59	87	21	125
116	86	21	133
104	92	32	134
89	77	29	132
94	83	23	140
103	78	45	133
89	95	38	145
72	118	39	146
108	115	28	144
94	93	31	137
116	119	24	135
98	98	30	137

Data Sources

New data This document has been updated with new data from the ALB quarterly survey providing information on children and adopters in the fourth quarter of 2015-16 (January to March 2016).

SSDA903 data Local authorities provide data on their looked after children using the SSDA903 collection. Data are collected from all local authorities. The information is collected at child level and includes information about the child's characteristics and their dates for each stage of the care process, including adoption. The data goes through thorough quality assurance and local authorities are able to update their historic data annually. We therefore view this as the most robust source of information on adoption. It is used to produce the [Looked After Children statistical first release](#) (SFR) and the [Adoption Scorecards](#). The most recent data covers the year ending 31 March 2016.

ALB quarterly survey In quarter 4 2015-16 the response rate for the child level section of the return was 94%, and the response rate for the adopter level section of the return from local authorities was 92%. Therefore national and regional figures on adoptions and adopters include estimates made for non-responses. Estimates are made by scaling to the regional level based on the number of adoptions in each LA during 2014-15 (from the SSDA903 data). The response rate for the adopter level section from Voluntary Adoption Agencies was 79%.

Ofsted data Ofsted have previously published annual data on the recruitment of adopters and the children placed with them. From quarter 4 2014-15 the Ofsted data collection became part of the quarterly survey.



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