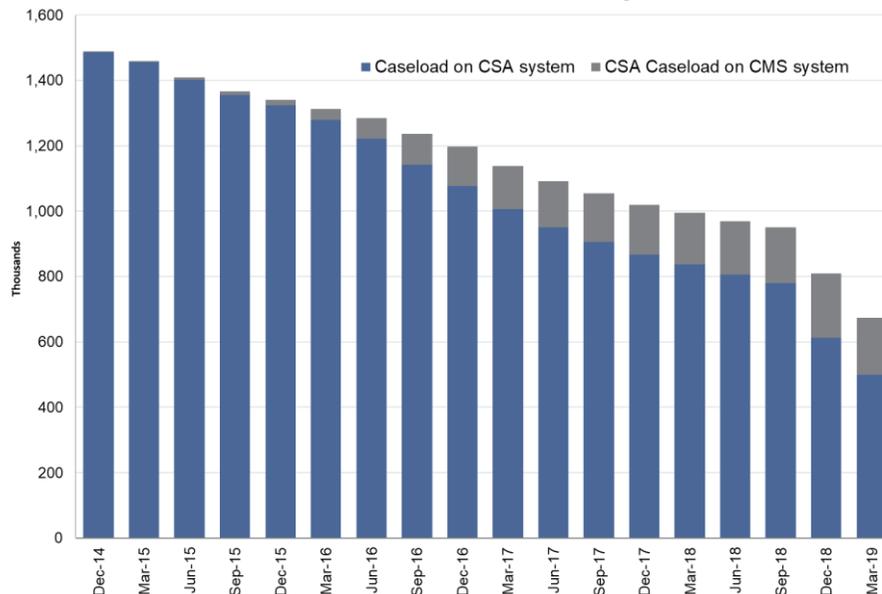


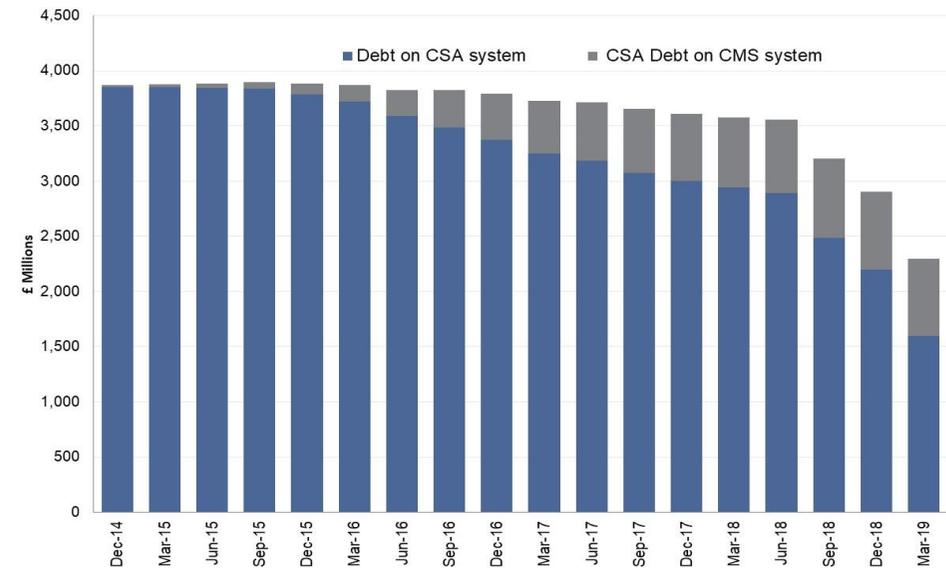
The Child Support Agency (CSA) was set up in 1993 and in 2012 the Child Maintenance Service (CMS) was created to replace the CSA. The closure of the CSA is progressing and all on-going liabilities have ended. Parents have been given the opportunity to consider afresh their child maintenance arrangement and whether they wished to apply to the CMS. A number of cases remain which have historic debt built up under the CSA schemes. This debt will be addressed by offering a final chance at collection where this is possible at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer, as outlined in the Child Maintenance Compliance and Arrears Strategy.

## Main Stories

- The CSA caseload continues to reduce. The number of CSA cases held on CSA or CMS IT systems decreased from **809,000** in December 2018 to **674,000** in March 2019. The reduction in caseload is mainly due to the closure of cases with Government only debt and debt owed to parents of less than £1000.
- The CSA has written to **125,200** parents with care to ask if they want a last attempt to be made to try to collect the debt owed to them.
- Up to the end of March 2019 **217,500** cases on the CSA IT system with non-paying historical debt have had the debt adjusted or written off. **42,400** cases had system records showing debt owed to government only, **157,700** had system records showing debt owed to parents and were not subject to representation, **17,500** of these cases were eligible for representation. Only a small number of cases which are eligible for representation have completed the process.
- The CSA historic debt balance continues to reduce. The amount of CSA debt held on CSA or CMS IT systems has decreased from **£2,907 million** in December 2018 to **£2,294 million** in March 2019. Debt owed to government and debt which has no reasonable chance of being collected is being written off.



**CSA caseload has declined to 674,000 from 809,000 in December 2018**



**Outstanding debt balance has reduced to £2,294 million from £2,907 million in December 2018**

## At a glance

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## What you need to know

**Child maintenance** is financial support between separated parents to help with the everyday costs of looking after children.

The **parent with care (PWC)** is the parent with the main day to day care of the children.

The **non-resident parent (NRP)** is the parent who does not have day to day care of the children.

Some CSA historic debt balances are **adjusted** because evidence has been received to show that the debt has already been paid or is no longer due.

Some CSA historic debt is **written off**, either because the parent with care has told us they don't want this debt, it would cost more to collect the debt than it is worth or it has been deemed uncollectable.

This publication contains the most up-to-date statistics on the **CSA child maintenance cases**, it does not cover Child Maintenance Service cases.

## Compliance and Arrears Strategy

The [child maintenance compliance and arrears strategy](#) sets out how government will address non-paying historic debt that built up on the CSA schemes. The CSA will write to the PWC to ask if they want a last attempt to be made to try to collect their debt in cases where:

- It has built up on CSA systems and there has been no recent payment made
- The case started before 1<sup>st</sup> November 2008 and the debt is over £1000 or
- The case started on or after 1<sup>st</sup> November 2008 and the debt is over £500

If the PWC responds stating that they still want their debt, the CSA or CMS (depending on where the case is held) will determine whether there is a reasonable chance of collection and proceed appropriately.

Debt less than £500 (or debt less than £1000 for older cases) will be written off. We will not ask parents in these cases if they want their debt collected, as collection activity would cost more than the debt is worth, but a notification letter will be issued to both parents explaining what has happened with their case. In cases with debt below £65, the debt will be written off and notification letters will not be issued.

All debt owed to government accrued in the CSA will be written off as collecting this debt will not benefit families and it would cost more to collect than the debt is worth. Debt owed to government built up under a CSA policy that has now ended. This policy required the NRP to repay the government for some of the benefits paid to support their children.

## Parent with care representation process

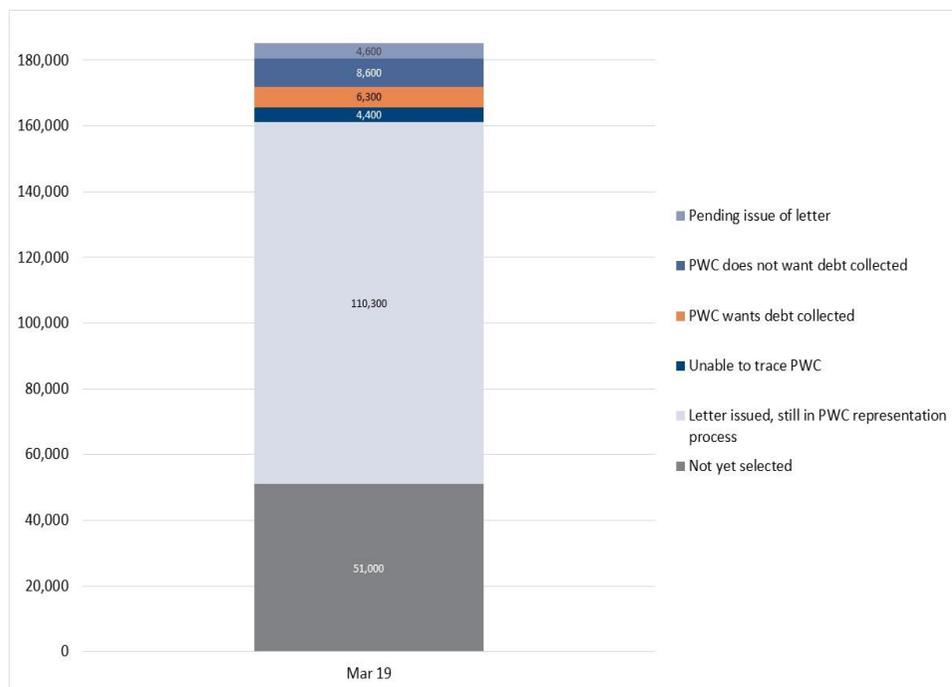
In cases where we offer the PWC the chance to ask for collection of the debt owed to them, the CSA, or CMS if the case has been moved onto the CMS IT system, will write to the PWC advising them to respond (via a formal representation) if they still want the debt owed to them to be pursued. If the PWC responds asking for the debt to be collected the CSA will perform a number of checks to establish whether there is a realistic chance of collection. If there is, the CSA will decide what activity is reasonable. Where either the PWC does not want us to collect the debt, does not respond to the letters within 60 days of the first letter, or the case is deemed as having little chance of successful collection the debt will be written off. The representation statistics do not currently include cases which have been transferred to the CMS system because activity on these cases has not started yet and the data we need to report on them is not available.

### 134,100 cases held on CSA systems and eligible for representation have started the parent with care representation process in the quarter to March 2019.

The CSA started to write to PWCs about their historic debt on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018. At this date there were **185,100** cases on CSA systems with historic debt over £500, or over £1,000 depending on the age of the case. These cases are included in the representation process.

See **Tables 5 and 6** for full data.

#### 185,100 Cases on CSA systems are eligible for the PWC representation process



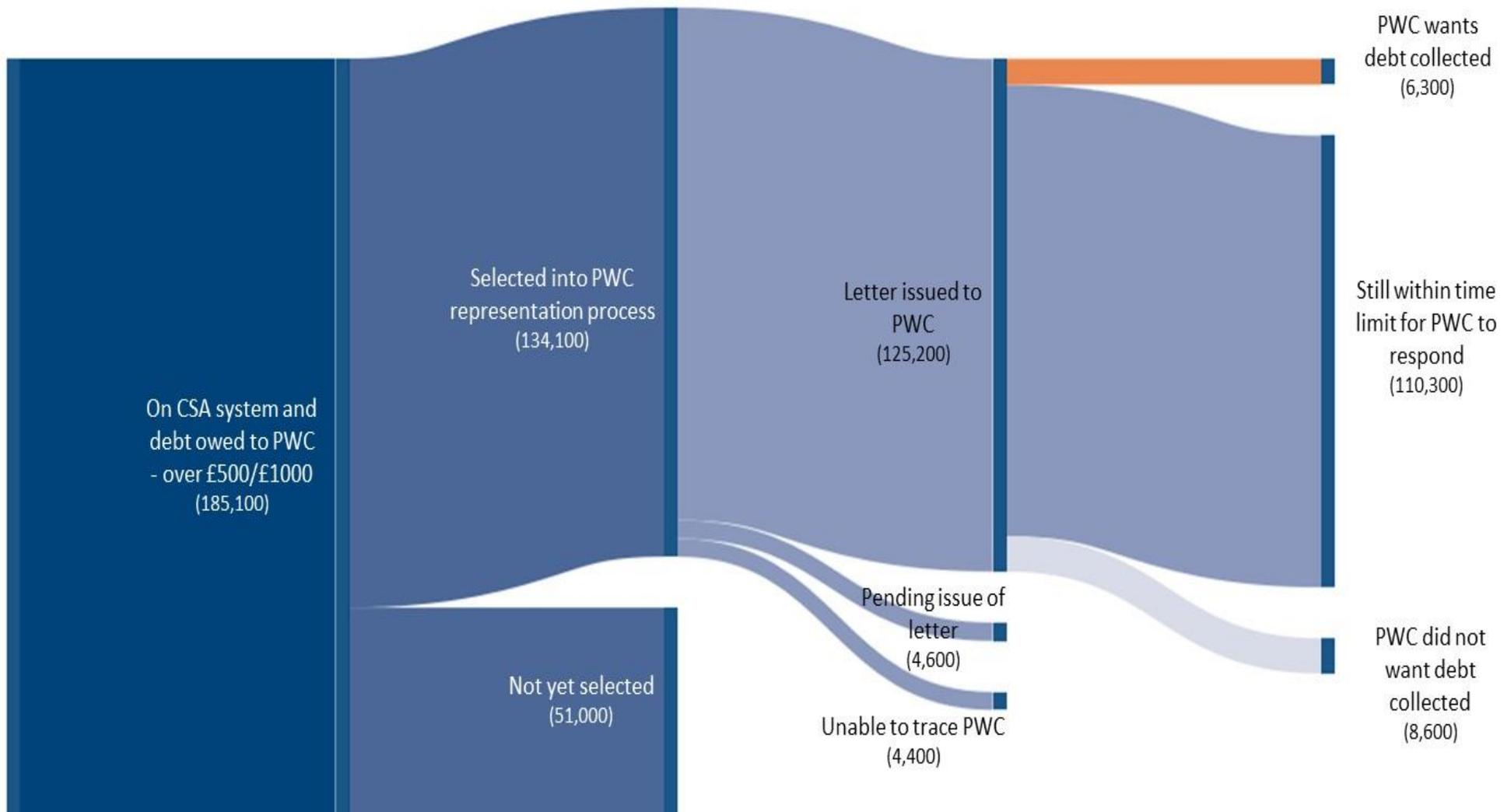
As at March 2019:

**134,100** cases have started the parent with care representation process. This is **72%** of eligible cases on the CSA systems. **51,000** cases on the CSA system have not yet been selected and no cases held on CMS systems which may be eligible have been selected.

Of the **134,100** cases that have started the process:

- In **4,400 (3%)** cases we were unable to trace the PWC.
- In **4,600 (3%)** cases issue of the letter is on hold while we attempt to trace a reliable address for the PWC.
- In **125,200 (93%)** cases we have written to the PWC and of these cases:
  - In **6,300 (5%)** cases parents have asked us to attempt collection of the debt owed. We expect this proportion to rise as more cases progress through the process and reach the time limit to respond.
  - In **8,600 (7%)** cases parents have either told us that they do not want us to collect the debt, or have not responded to the letter within 60 days of the first letter being issued.
  - **110,300 (88%)** cases are still within the time limit for the PWC to respond.

## Parent with care representation process



# CSA debt written off or adjusted

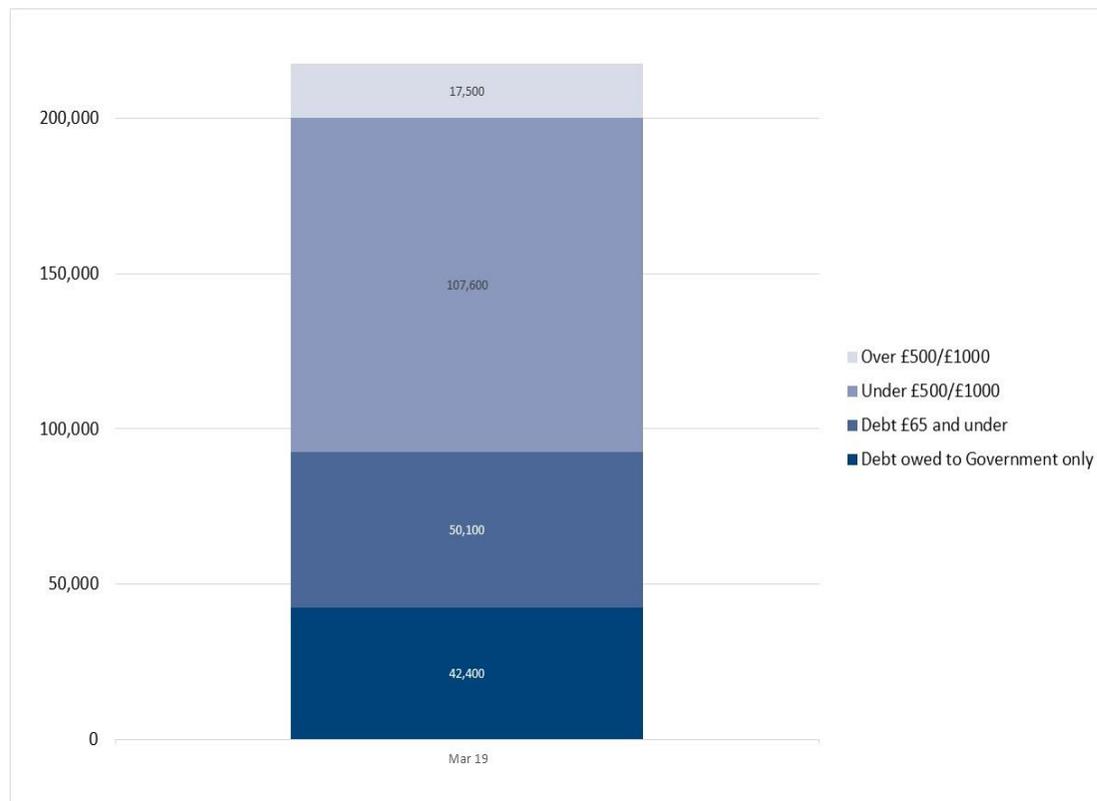
## The Child Support Agency has adjusted or written off historical debt on 217,500 cases held on CSA systems.

As of March 2019, there were **217,500** Child Support Agency cases held on CSA systems which have had their historical arrears adjusted or written off since the start of the Compliance and Arrears programme activity on 13th December 2018. Of these:

- **42,400 (19%)** cases had system records showing debt which was owed to government only.
- **50,100 (23%)** cases had system records showing debt owed to parents of £65 or under.
- **107,600 (49%)** cases had system records showing debt owed to parents of £500/£1,000 or less (depending on the start date of the case).
- **17,500 (8%)** cases had system records showing debt owed to parents which was more than £500/£1,000 (depending on the start date of the case). In these cases, either we were unable to trace the PWC, the PWC did not want the debt to be collected, the debt has been adjusted off due to corrections or production of evidence that payment has been made, or the debt has been deemed uncollectable. Most cases which are eligible for representation have not yet completed the process (see page 3 and 4 for more detail about representation).

See **Table 7** for full data

### 217,500 cases on CSA systems have had their historical debt adjusted or written off between 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019



These statistics include a proportion of cases which have had their debt adjusted off as a result of corrections to system records. The debt on adjusted cases has not been written off.

Internal MI suggests that the proportion of cases in the adjusted category is around 12%. It is not currently possible to tell which category the adjusted cases are in and the categories shown in this table are based on debt balances before any corrections to system records have been made. Adjusted cases will be shown in a separate category in the next release of this publication.

A number of cases had their debt adjusted prior to 13th December 2018 as part of the case closure programme. These adjustments were reported in the Child Support Agency case closure statistics.

The arrears write off statistics do not currently include any cases which have been transferred to the CMS system because activity on these cases started later than on the CSA system and the data we need to report on them is not available yet. Some cases on the CMS system, with debt below representation thresholds, will have had their debt adjusted or written off. End of March figures will be updated in the next release to include cases managed on the CMS system.

## About these statistics

Caseload figures contained within this publication are rounded to the nearest hundred or percent. Percentages are calculated prior to rounding. Amounts are rounded to the nearest hundred thousand. These statistics have been developed using guidelines set out by the UK Statistics Authority.

The statistics have been produced using new data and a new methodology which is still subject to on-going development and testing and they may therefore be revised in future publications. For this reason, they are badged as experimental statistics.

In a change to the published strategy, this release does not include statistics on:

- Values because quality assurance of the data being used to produce the values is not yet complete.
- NRP representation progress because not enough cases have reached this stage due to the length of time we are allowing parents to respond to our letters.
- Collections cases transferred to CMS because not enough cases have reached this stage.
- Complaints because data on complaints is not currently available in a form that is suitable for publication.

We will continue work to develop these additional statistics and will aim to include them in the June 2019 release, which is due to be published in either September or October 2019.

The arrears write off statistics do not currently include CSA cases which have been transferred to the CMS system because activity on these cases started later than on the CSA system and the data we need to report on them is not available yet. We aim to report on CSA arrears only cases on the CMS system in the June 2019 release, which is due to be published in either September or October 2019.

## Where to find out more

This document and summary tables can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-support-agency-quarterly-summary-of-statistics-march-2019>

Previous versions of the Child Support Agency Quarterly Summary of Statistics can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/child-support-agency-quarterly-summary-statistics--2#latest-quarterly-summary-statistics>

The Child Support Agency case closure statistics can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/child-support-agency-case-closure-statistics-june-2014-to-december-2018>

For more information on the Compliance and Arrears Strategy please see the information published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/child-maintenance-strategy> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/child-maintenance-a-new-compliance-and-arrears-strategy>

Some statistics on debt that has been transferred from the CSA to the Child Maintenance Service are sourced from the Client Funds Accounts. CSA Client Funds Accounts are published in full here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-maintenance-client-funds-account-2014-to-2015>

For statistics on the performance of the Child Maintenance Service please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-on-the-2012-statutory-child-maintenance-scheme>

For details on child maintenance arrangements made after speaking to the Child Maintenance Options service, including family based arrangements please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/family-based-child-maintenance-arrangements-statistics#latest-release>