



Criminal court statistics quarterly, England and Wales, July to September 2018

Including statistics on the use of language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals

Main points

Outstanding cases in magistrates' courts have decreased



Despite a 3% decrease in magistrates' disposals in Q3 2018, they remained higher than receipts for a third consecutive quarter. This resulted in the number of outstanding cases decreasing by 2% in Q3 2018.

Outstanding cases in the Crown Court have fallen



Crown Court disposals remained higher than receipts in the quarter, continuing to drive the decrease in outstanding cases to 33,400 in Q3 2018.

Violence against the person had the highest volume of outstanding cases at the Crown Court



In Q3 2018 the number of outstanding violence against the person cases decreased to 6,700, whilst continuing to have the highest volume of receipts, disposals and outstanding cases.

The average number of days from first listing to completion in the Crown Court decreased



For cases completing in the Crown Court, there was a small average quarterly decrease of 3 days from first listing in the magistrates' court to completion between Q2 and Q3 2018 but the overall trend since 2017 remained stable.

Enforcement: Total value of financial impositions issue has decreased



Total value of financial impositions issued have decreased by 6% in Q3 2018, mostly driven by a decrease of nearly £7.4m in fines.

Interpreters: The overall success rate has remained the same



The success rate for completed interpreter service requests remained stable at 97%.

The technical guide to Criminal court statistics can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-criminal-court-statistics

For full and detailed commentary please refer to the annual publication:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-annual-january-to-march-2018

We have changed how our quarterly bulletins look, and would welcome any feedback to commentary.champions@justice.gsi.gov.uk

For other feedback related to the content of this publication, please let us know at CJS_Statistics@justice.gsi.gov.uk

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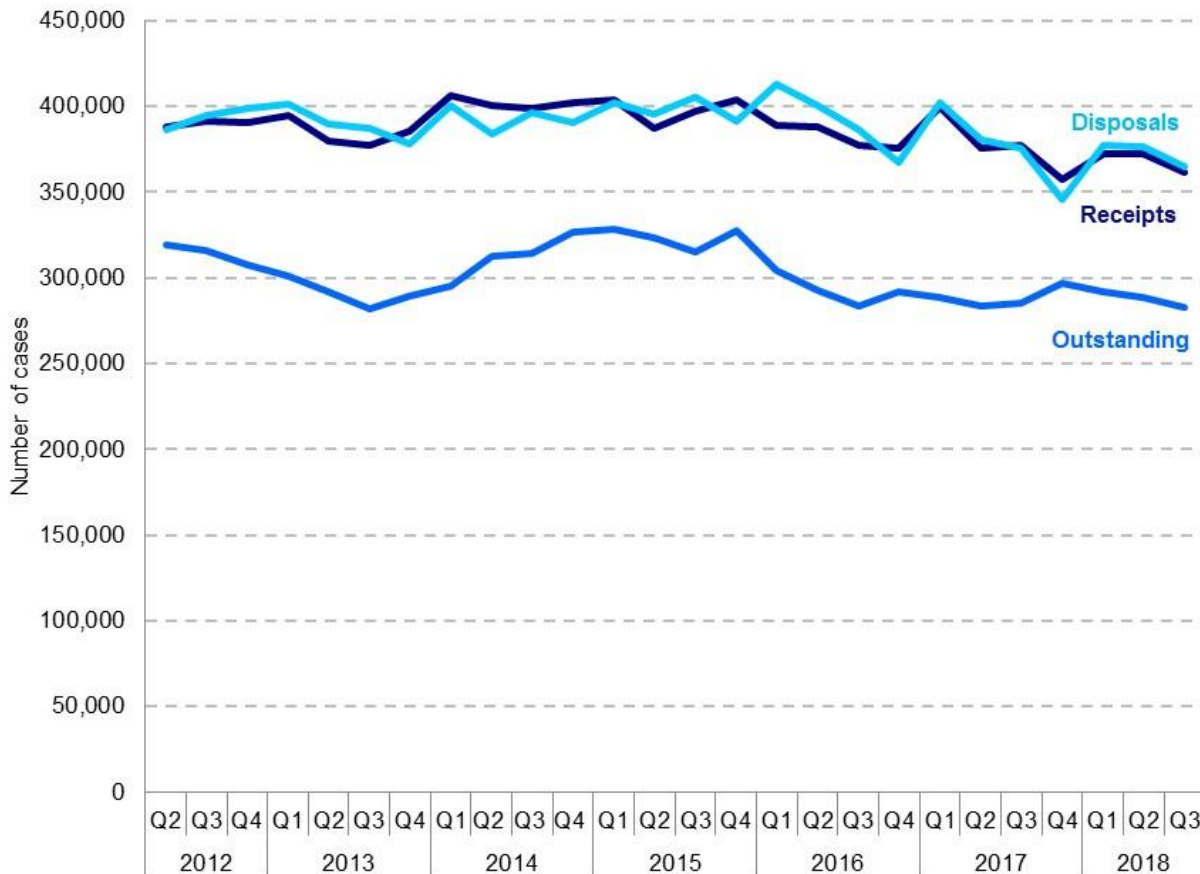
This quarter, the annual Crown Court timeliness by offence table (AT1) has been included (as table T7) to include the improvements in the data matching methodology for timeliness records. All quarterly timeliness tables were revised in the 2018 Q2 publication in September 2018. In the future, this table will only be included in annual bulletins.

1. Criminal cases in the magistrates' courts

Outstanding cases in magistrates' courts have decreased

With disposals remaining higher than receipts in Q3 2018, the total number of outstanding cases has decreased by 2%, continuing the decrease in the number of outstanding cases seen since Q1 2018.

Figure 1: Magistrates' courts caseload, Q2 2012 to Q3 2018 (Source: Table M1)



Magistrates' court caseload (Figure 1)

In Q3 2018, there has been a continued decline in cases received, disposed and outstanding in the magistrates' court, which have all decreased consistently over the past two quarters. In the latest quarter, both receipts and disposals have dropped by around 3% (to 361,600 and 365,000 cases respectively). As cases disposed of remained higher than those received, the number of outstanding cases continued to fall in Q3 2018 (down 2% to 283,100).

Overall, magistrates' court caseload have tended to decrease over the past three years - this is broadly in line with decreases reported in police charged/summonsed¹ volumes and proceedings at magistrates' court².

¹ www.gov.uk/government/statistics/police-recorded-crime-open-data-tables

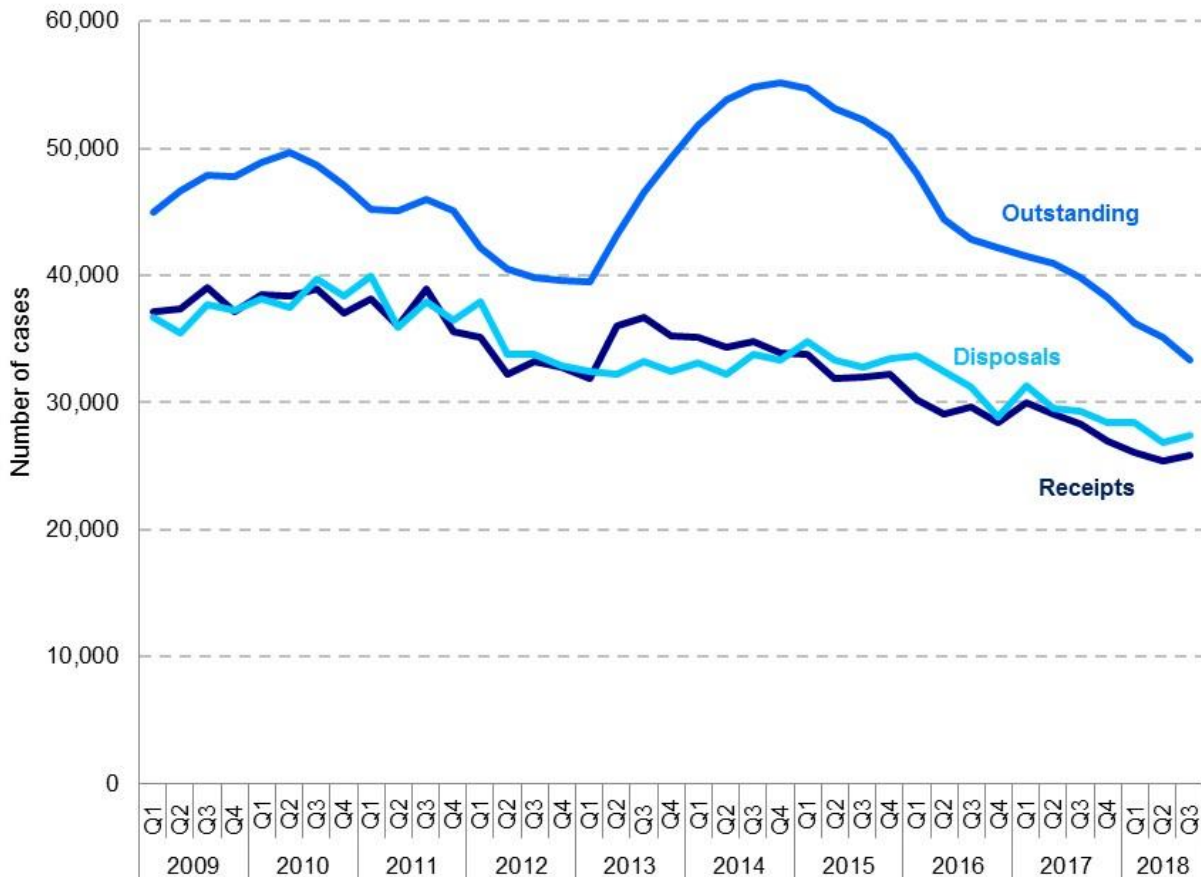
² www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-june-2018

2. Criminal cases in the Crown Court

Outstanding cases in Crown Court have decreased

Disposals remained higher than receipts in Q3 2018, continuing to drive the decrease in outstanding cases to 33,400 in Q3 2018, the lowest number observed in the series.

Figure 2: Crown Court caseload, Q1 2009 to Q3 2018 (Source: Table C1)



Crown Court caseload (Figure 2)

In Q3 2018, cases received and disposed in the Crown Court both rose slightly (1% and 2% respectively), however disposals remained higher than receipts and as such outstanding cases continued to fall.

The increase in receipts was driven by increases across both triable-either-way (2%) and cases committed for sentencing (2%). Whereas the trend in disposals was primarily driven by a 7% increase in cases committed for sentencing at the Crown Court.

The overall downward trend in cases received, disposed and outstanding in the Crown Court over the past three years is in line with a decrease seen in indictable only (i.e. those which need to be dealt with in the Crown Court) cases dealt with in the magistrates' court and a decrease in the number of defendants prosecuted in the magistrates' court for indictable only offences³.

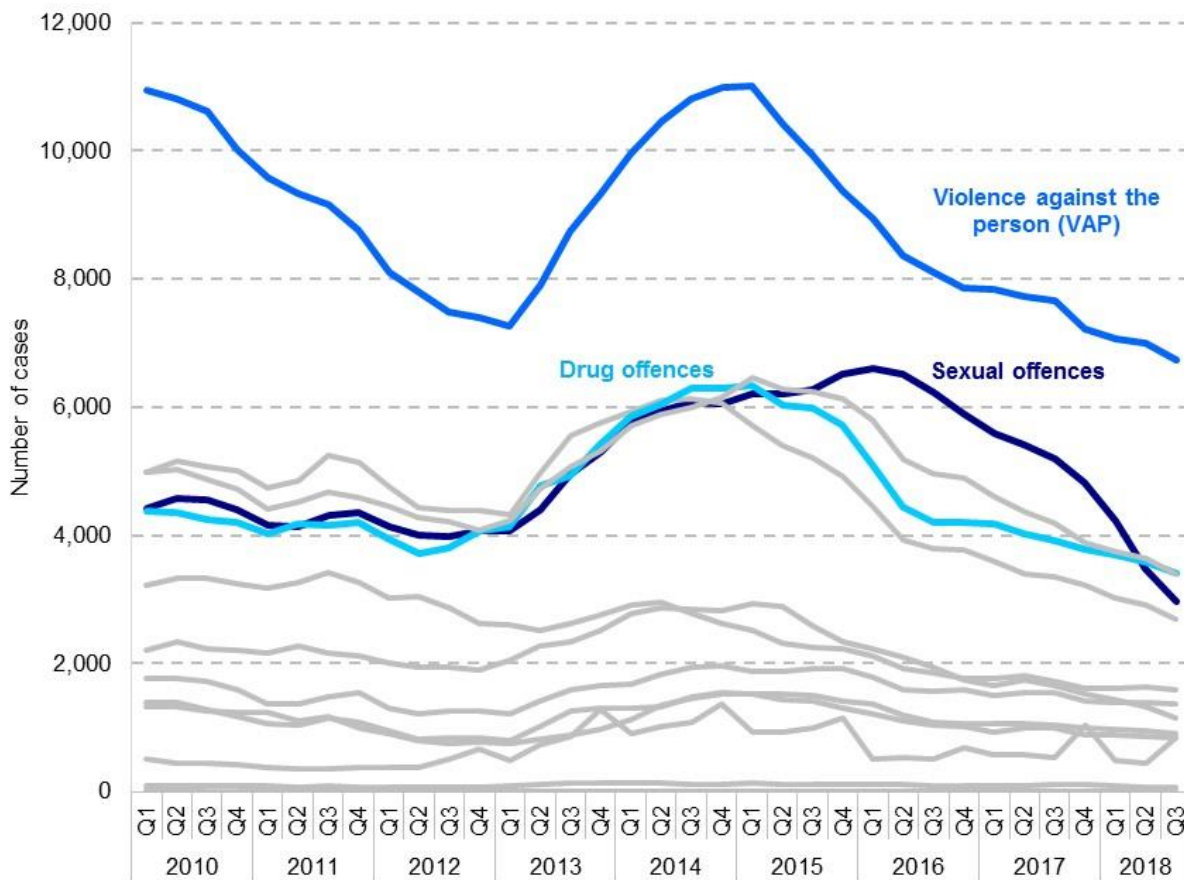
³ www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-justice-system-statistics-quarterly-june-2018

3. Receipts, disposals and outstanding cases in the Crown Court by offence group

Violence against the person still had the highest number of outstanding cases

In Q3 2018 the number of outstanding violence against the person cases decreased to 6,700, whilst continuing to have the highest volume of receipts, disposals and outstanding cases. The number of outstanding cases for violence against the person has been continually decreasing since Q1 2015 when they reached a peak of 11,000.

Figure 3: Outstanding cases by offence group, for trial cases, Q1 2010 – Q3 2018
(Source: Pivot table 1)



Crown Court receipts, disposals and outstanding cases by offence group (Figure 3)

Disposals for violence against the person cases (3,700) continued to be higher than receipts (3,400) in Q3 2018 driving the 4% decline in outstanding cases in the latest quarter.

Outstanding cases for violence against the person have declined by 15% since Q1 2017 (7,900), and are at their lowest level in the quarterly time series, now standing at 6,700 in Q3 2018.

Drug Offences had the second highest level of receipts, disposals and outstanding cases in Q3 2018, with 2,100, 2,300 and 3,400 respectively. The number of outstanding cases has fallen by 46% since Q1 2015 when it reached its peak of 6,300.

The number of outstanding cases for sexual offences in Q3 2018 decreased by 15% to 3,000, continuing the downward trend displayed since Q2 2016. This can be attributed to having a higher number of disposals than receipts at 1,700 and 1,200 respectively.

4. Timeliness

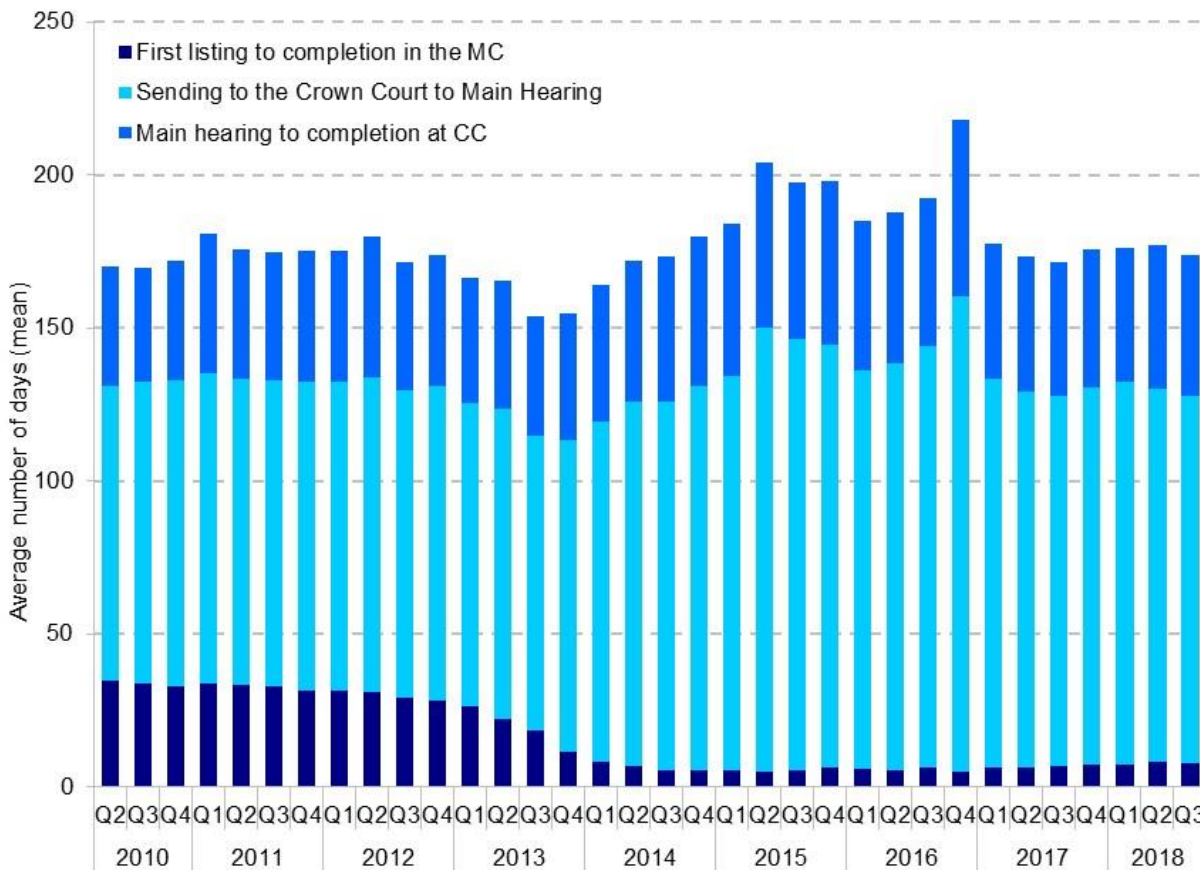
The average number of days (mean) from first listing to completion in the Crown Court has remained fairly stable since the start of 2017

There was a small average decrease of 3 days from first listing in the magistrates' court to completion in the Crown Court between Q2 2018 (177 days) and Q3 2018 (174 days), but the overall trend since 2017 remained stable.

Average hearing times for not guilty plea trials was 15.6 hours in Q3 2018⁴

Average hearing times for not guilty plea trials in the Crown Court increased by 0.6 hours, this was driven by an increase for indictable only trials with not guilty pleas (up by 2 hours in Q3 2018 to 23.8 hours).

Figure 4: Average number of days (mean) from first listing in the magistrates' courts to completion in the Crown Court, for Crown Court criminal cases, Q2 2010 to Q3 2018 (Source: Table T4)



Crown Court criminal cases - First listing in the magistrates' courts to completion in the Crown Court (Figure 4)

Since Q1 2017 the average duration of all cases completing at the Crown Court has remained stable. Fraud and sexual offences continue to take the longest duration to complete in the Crown Court. Compared to Q3 2017, the average amount of days from first listing to completion for fraud offences has increased by 46 days (19%) to 287 days, whilst for sexual offences the completion time increased by 15 days (6%) to 256 days.

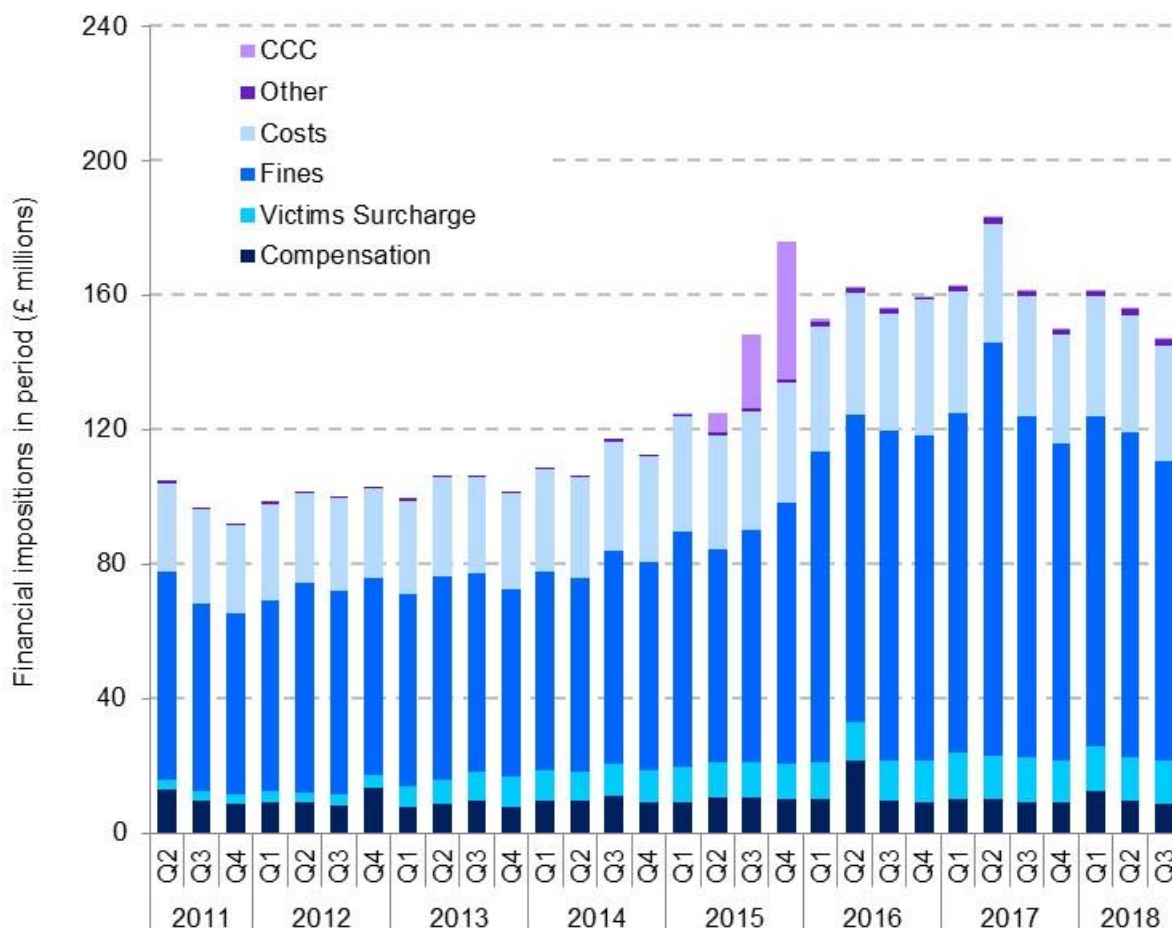
⁴ The average hearing time for not guilty pleas tends to be downwardly revised in the next quarter.

5. Enforcement of financial impositions

Total financial impositions have decreased in the latest quarter

Total financial impositions have decreased by 6% in Q3 2018, mostly driven by a £7.4m decrease in fines. Total outstanding financial impositions have continued to rise, reaching £1,080m in Q3 2018, an increase of 3% from Q2 2018.

Figure 5: HMCTS management information: Financial impositions by imposition type, England and Wales, Q2 2011 – Q3 2018 (Source: Table A2)



Financial impositions and amounts paid by imposition type (Figure 5, table A2)

Between Q2 2018 and Q3 2018 total financial impositions decreased by 6% to £147m. This decline was mostly driven by a decrease in fines of nearly £7.4m. Compared to the same period in the last year, total financial impositions decreased by 9% from £161m in Q3 2017.

In Q3 2018, 8% (£12m) of all criminal court financial impositions were paid within the imposition month, a similar proportion to in Q2 2018.

Outstanding financial impositions (Table A4)

In Q3 2018, the total value of financial impositions outstanding in England and Wales was £1,080m. The amount of outstanding financial impositions has been increasing since Q1 2014, and showed an increase of £145m (15%) between Q3 2017 and Q3 2018. The growth of total value of financial impositions outstanding between quarters has slowed slightly to 3% in Q3 2018, compared to about 4% for the previous four quarters.

Annex A: The use of language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals⁵

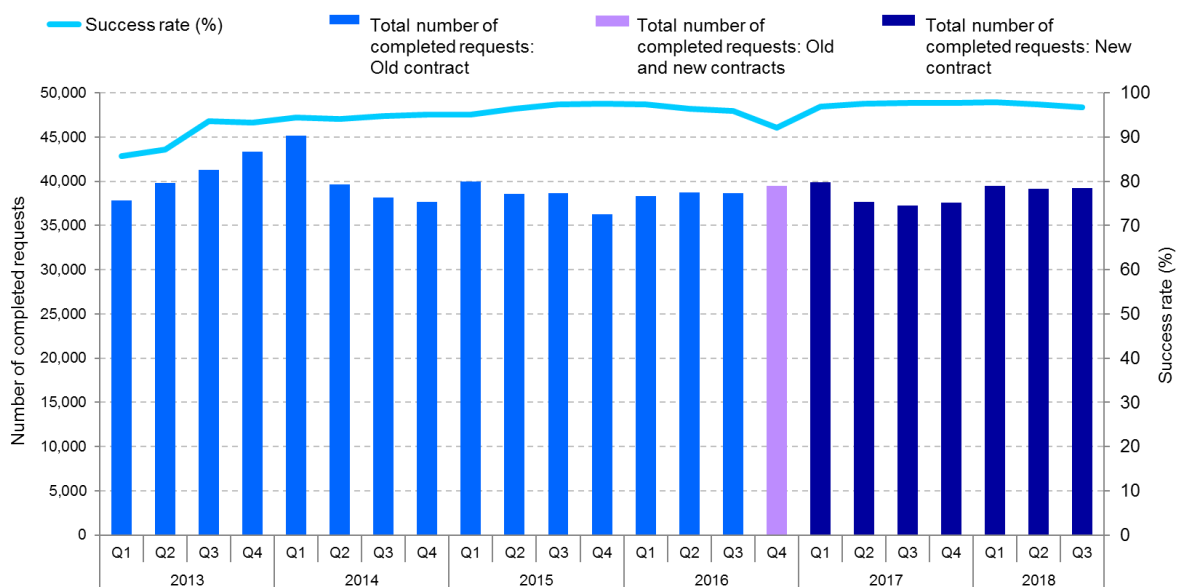
The total number of completed service requests increased slightly in Q3 2018

A total of 39,250 completed service requests for language interpreter and translation services were made in Q3 2018, a 0.3% increase compared to Q2 2018.

The success rate of completed service requests remained stable in Q3 2018

The overall success rate for completed service requests remain at around 97%.

Figure 6: Number of completed language service requests and overall success rate, Q1 2013 to Q3 2018 (Source: Table L1)



Completed service requests (Table L1)

The figures comprise data from two separate suppliers, thebigword Group Ltd for face to face interpretation, and Clarion UK Ltd for non-spoken languages (special services). In Q3 2018, criminal courts made the greatest use of face-to-face language interpreter and translation services at 41%, whilst 32% were for tribunal cases, 17% were for civil and family court cases, and 10% of requests were for other cases.

Success rate (Figure 6)

Despite the success rate for both standard languages and languages without DPSI⁶ dropping by about 1 percentage point each since Q2 2018, the rate for special services increased by 2 percentage points to 96%. For all service types combined, the success rate remained at about 97%.

⁵ The statistics on the use of language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals are Official Statistics, except the statistics under the new contracts which are 'Provisional Statistics'.

⁶ Languages categorised under 'languages without DPSI' were described in previous publications as 'rare' languages; use of the new description of 'languages permitted exceptional qualification requirements' is considered to more accurately reflect the current position on the availability and use of different qualification requirements for these languages.

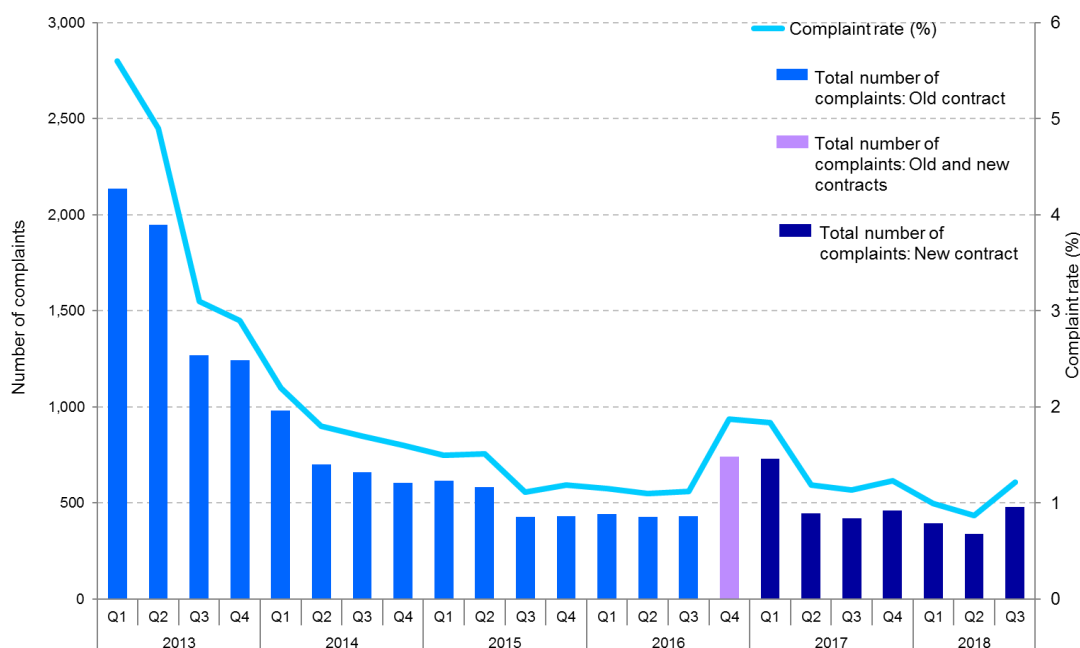
The total number of complaints for completed service requests increased in Q3 2018

The number of complaints increased from 340 in Q2 2018 to 479 in Q3 2018, the complaint rate has remained about the same around 1% in Q3 2018.

The total number of 'off contract' service requests increased in Q3 2018

The number of 'off contract' service requests increased by 50% in Q3 2018 from 378 requests in Q2 2018 to 568 in Q3 2018.

Figure 7: Number of complaints and complaint rate, Q1 2013 to Q3 2018 (Source: Table L2)



Number of complaints and complaint rate (Figure 7)

The complaint rate for each requestor type remained stable between Q2 2018 and Q3 2018. In Q3 2018 the complaint rate was highest in 'other' cases at 3%, whilst criminal courts and civil & family courts had complaint rates of less than 1% and tribunals had a complaint rate of just below 2%.

The most common cause of complaint was 'no interpreter available' which accounted for 34% (164) of all complaints made in Q3 2018. This was an increase of 8 percentage points compared to the last quarter. In the previous quarter the most frequent complaint had been 'interpreter did not attend,' which decrease by 2 percentage points in Q3 2018.

'Off contract' requests (Table L3)

'Off contract' requests increased by about 50% in Q3 2018, this was mostly driven by an increase in requests for immigration tribunals, which increased by 114 requests (55%). Between Q2 and Q3 2018, 'off-contract' requests for all tribunals increased from 216 to 383 whilst criminal courts increased from 134 to 140 and from 28 to 45 requests for civil and family courts.

Tribunals accounted for 67% (383) of all completed 'off contract' service requests, criminal courts accounted for 25% (140), while civil & family courts accounted for 8% (45).

Further information on criminal courts data

The data presented in this publication are provisional. Final data for each calendar year is published in June each year in our Criminal Courts Statistics annual bulletin, following further data cleaning and the incorporation of additional cases not available in our original extracts of administrative data.

Accompanying files

As well as this bulletin, the following products are published as part of this release:

- Two technical guides providing background information on ‘Criminal Court Statistics’ and ‘Statistics on the use of languages and interpreters in courts and tribunals’, including data collection and processing, as well as relevant revisions policies and legislation.
- A set of overview tables, covering each section of this bulletin.
- A set of pivot tables containing Crown Court data broken down by offence group.
- 3 CSV files which feature court level breakdowns of published data:
 - Criminal Courts listings transparency.
 - Criminal Courts timeliness.
 - Crown Court receipts, disposals and outstanding cases by offence group.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the Authority’s regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.



It is the Ministry of Justice’s responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected for National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

Contact

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URL: www.gov.uk/government/collections/criminal-court-statistics

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