



Ministry
of Justice

Adjudications: England and Wales, 2011 - 2018

July 2019

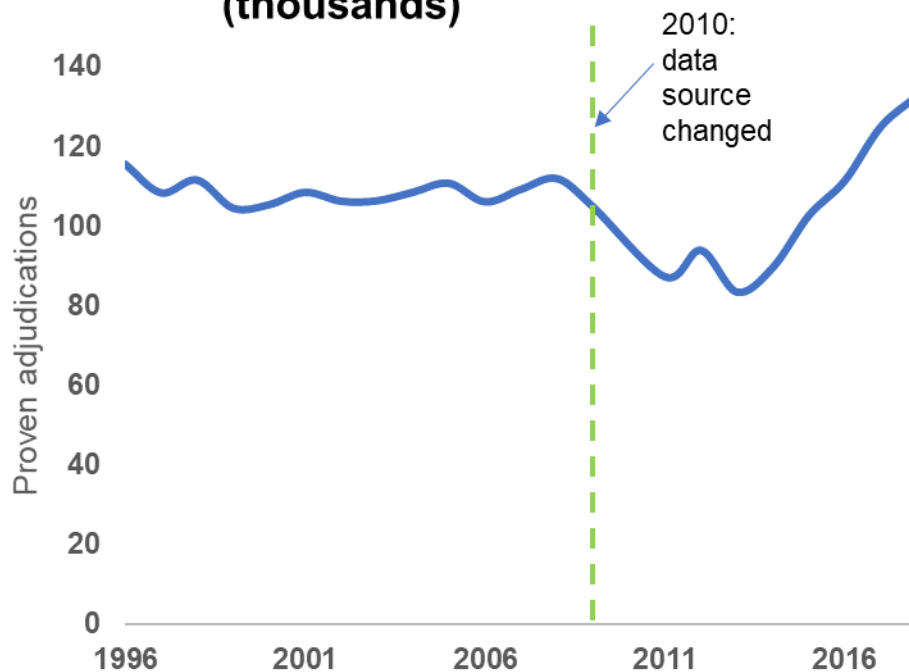
Protecting and advancing the principles of justice

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Proven Adjudications: 1996 - 2018

Proven Adjudications : 1996 - 2018
(thousands)



↔ **Prior to 2011**, the number of proven adjudications in England and Wales remained fairly stable.

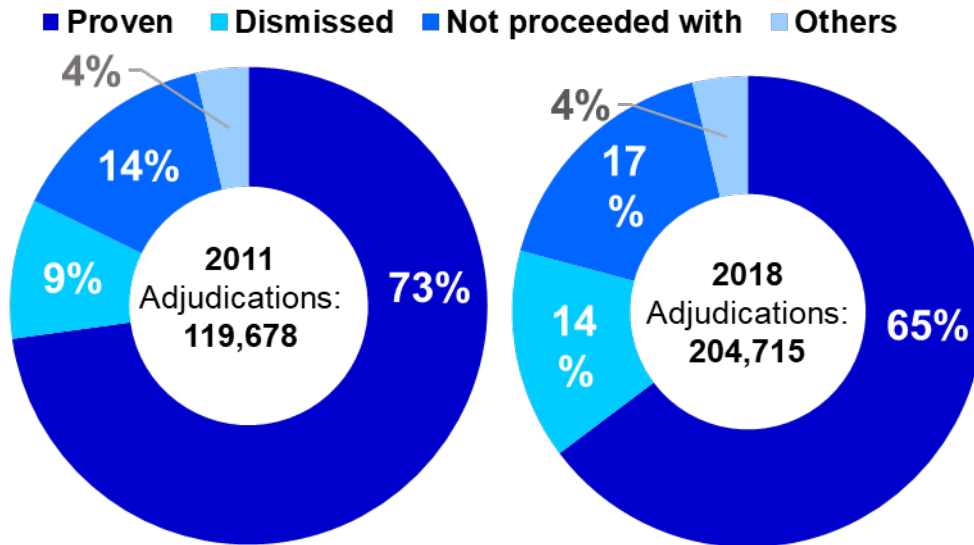
↑ **After 2011**, this trend changed with an average yearly growth rate of **10%** from 2014 – 2018.

↑ **All adjudications continue to rise** despite the prison population remaining relatively constant in recent years. Proven adjudications reached a record high in 2018 at **132,538**.

Note on data sources:

The data sources used to collect this information changed in 2015. The 2010 to 2014 figures were revised using this new source. The data for 2010 is not included in this graph due to its unreliability. Data before 2010 is presented here to show a comprehensive history of proven adjudications however it must be noted that this data may not be directly comparable with the post 2011 data.

Outcomes: 2011 - 2018



Adjudications can end in various outcomes. The 3 most common outcomes are:

- Proven
- Dismissed
- Not proceeded with

Other outcomes include prosecution, a case being quashed or not completed.

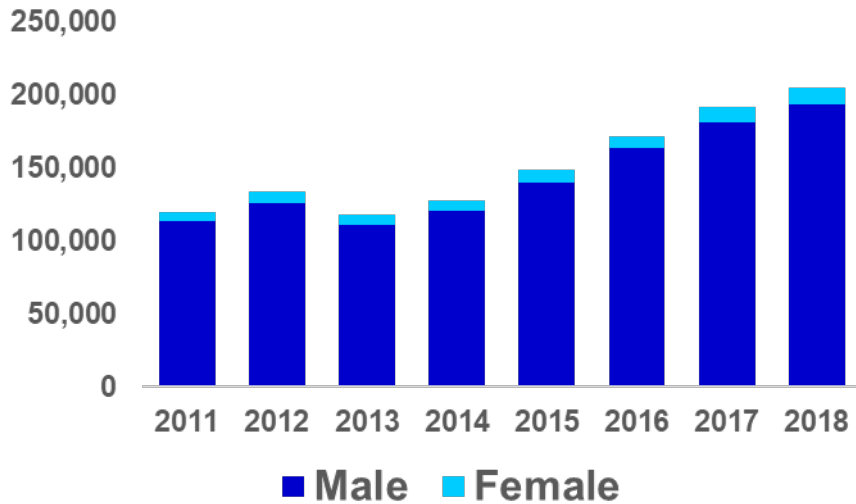
The total volume of adjudications increased by 71% from 119,678 to 204,715 between 2011 and 2018. However, those with different outcomes have grown at different paces...

Between 2011 and 2018, dismissed adjudications and those not proceeded with have **more than doubled**, while proven adjudications have increased by **52%**.

There has been a fall in the proportion of adjudications that are proven from **73%** of all adjudications in 2011 to **65%** in 2018. This may reflect a change in the types of offences adjudicated against.

Adjudications and gender

All adjudications by gender

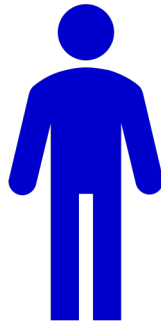


The volumes of adjudications against females is proportional to the number of women in the prison population.

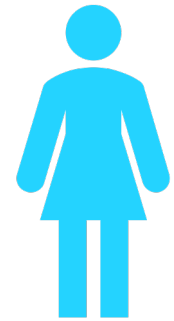
- Women have consistently represented around 5% of the total prison population between 2011 and 2018.
- The volume of adjudications against women represents 5 - 6% of all adjudications over the same period.

Between 2011 and 2018...

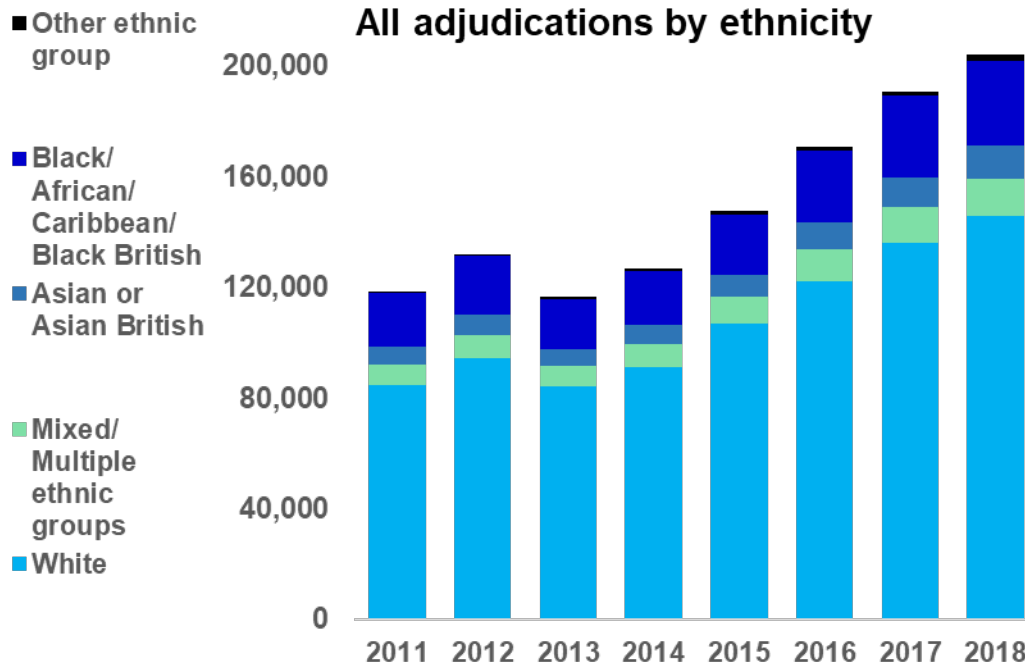
The volume of adjudications against men rose by **70%**, with an average yearly growth rate of **8%**.



The volume of adjudications against women rose by **92%**, with an average yearly growth rate of **11%**.



Adjudications and ethnicity



Between 2011 and 2018...

- Adjudications against the BAME population increased by the same proportion as whites (72%).
- Those against Black African/Caribbean/Black British prisoners saw the smallest percentage increase at 59%.

The proportion of adjudications against each ethnic group has remained fairly stable.

- Since 2011, **71%- 72%** have been against the white prison population.
- **27% - 29%** were against the BAME prison population.
- BAME individuals are over-represented in the prison population in comparison to the population estimates for BAME groups in the general population of England and Wales. They represented **25% - 27%** of all prisoners* over the period.

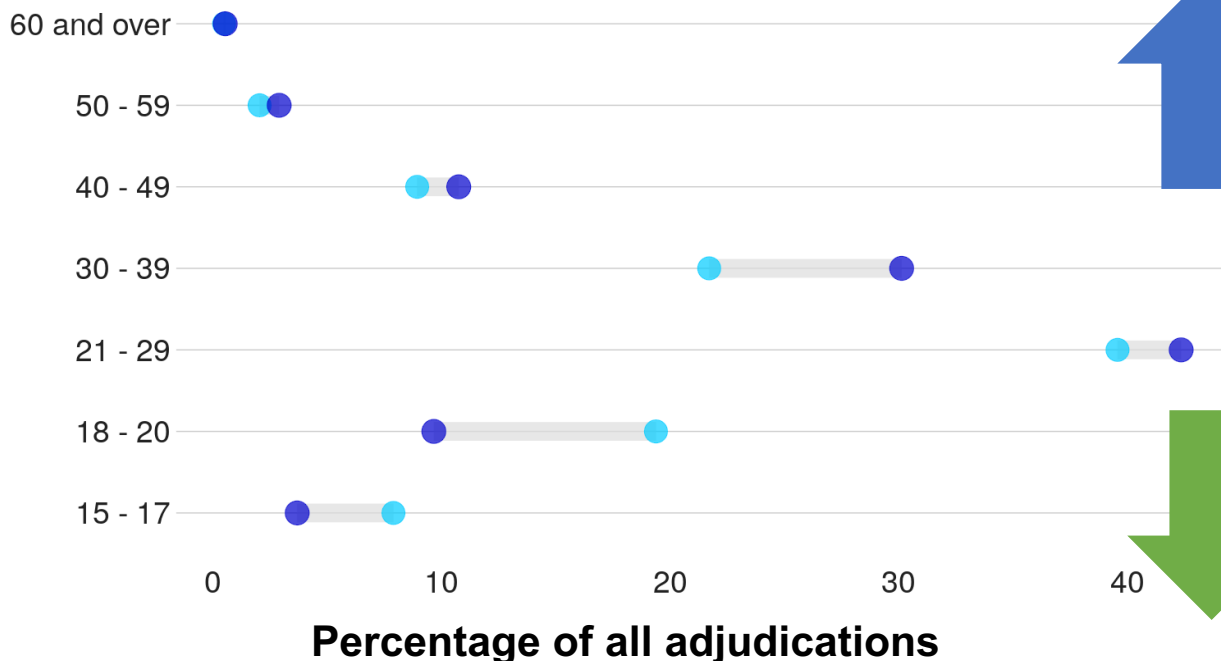
***Note on population figures:** Based on June population snapshots published <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/offender-management-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2018>

Adjudications and the ageing prison population

Despite an ageing prison population, throughout 2011 and 2018 the 21 - 29 age group continued to dominate, representing 42% of all adjudications in 2018

Adjudications in an ageing prison population:

Biggest increase in the 30 - 39 agegroup, **2011 - 2018**



Older age groups all saw an **increase** in the volumes of adjudications against them. The numbers for 30 – 39 and both 50 – 59 year olds more than **doubled**. However, 50 – 59 year olds still accounted for just **3%** of adjudications in 2018.

21 – 29 year olds saw a **83%** increase, despite the proportion of the prison population represented by this demographic **falling** from 35% to 29%.

The number of adjudications against 15 – 17 and 18 – 20 year olds **decreased** by 20% and 15% respectively between 2011 and 2018.

Adjudications against younger prisoners

While the number of offences against each individual has increased for all age brackets between 2011 – 2018, **the largest increases were for the youngest offenders.**

In comparison with 2011, in 2018 there were..

1.96

more adjudications per individual amongst 21 – 29 year olds

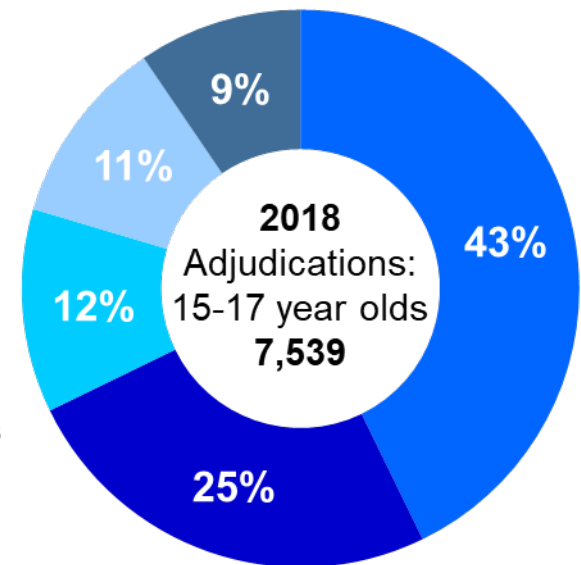
5.77

more adjudications per individual amongst 15 – 17 year olds

More generally, the **high numbers of adjudications amongst young people** are consistent with higher re-offending rates reported for younger offenders in England and Wales¹.

15-17 year olds also tended to have more adjudications for violence (43% vs 18% when considering all age groups) - but less for unauthorised transactions at 11%.

- Violence
- Disobedience/Disrespect
- Wilful damage
- Unauthorised transactions
- Other offences*

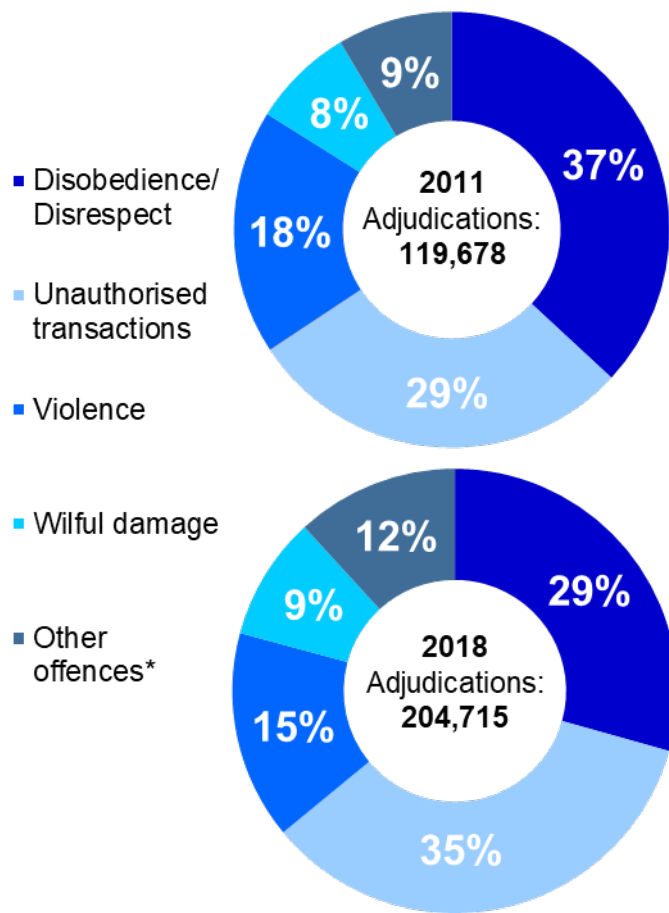


*Excludes escapes/absconds. The number of escapes/abscond offences continue to make up less than 0.01% of all offences, therefore this category is counted in the totals but not visible in the graph above.

Data sources:

1. [Proven reoffending statistics \(Ministry of Justice\)](#)

Offences: 2011 - 2018



In 2017, unauthorised transactions became the most common offence for the first time ever, making up 35% of adjudications offences. This trend continued in 2018.

Unauthorised transactions refer to a set of offences that deal with the purchase, sale, possession, consumption, transportation, or other of unauthorised or illegal articles.

- In **2011**, disobedience and disrespect accounted for the largest percentage of total adjudications, with 37% of all adjudications falling into this category.
- By **2018** the proportion of adjudications falling into the unauthorised transactions category rose to 35% from 29% in 2011, **overtaking** Disobedience and Disrespect whose share fell.
- While the volume of adjudications for violent offences has risen since 2011, the proportion of such offences has **fallen**, remaining between 15% - 16% since 2015. Adjudications for violence are higher amongst younger prisoners as previously stated...

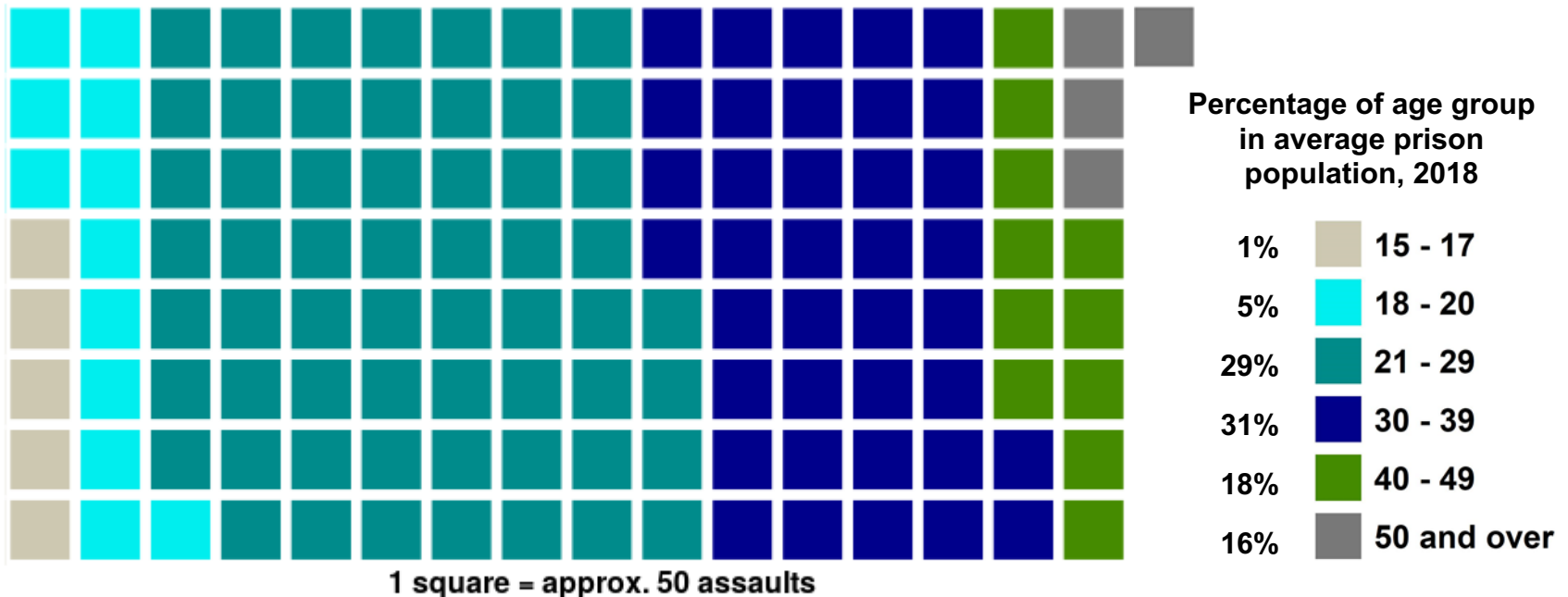
*Excludes escapes/absconds. The number of escapes/abscond offences continue to make up less than 0.01% of all offences and therefore this category is counted in the totals but not visible in the graphs above.

Assaults on staff: 2018

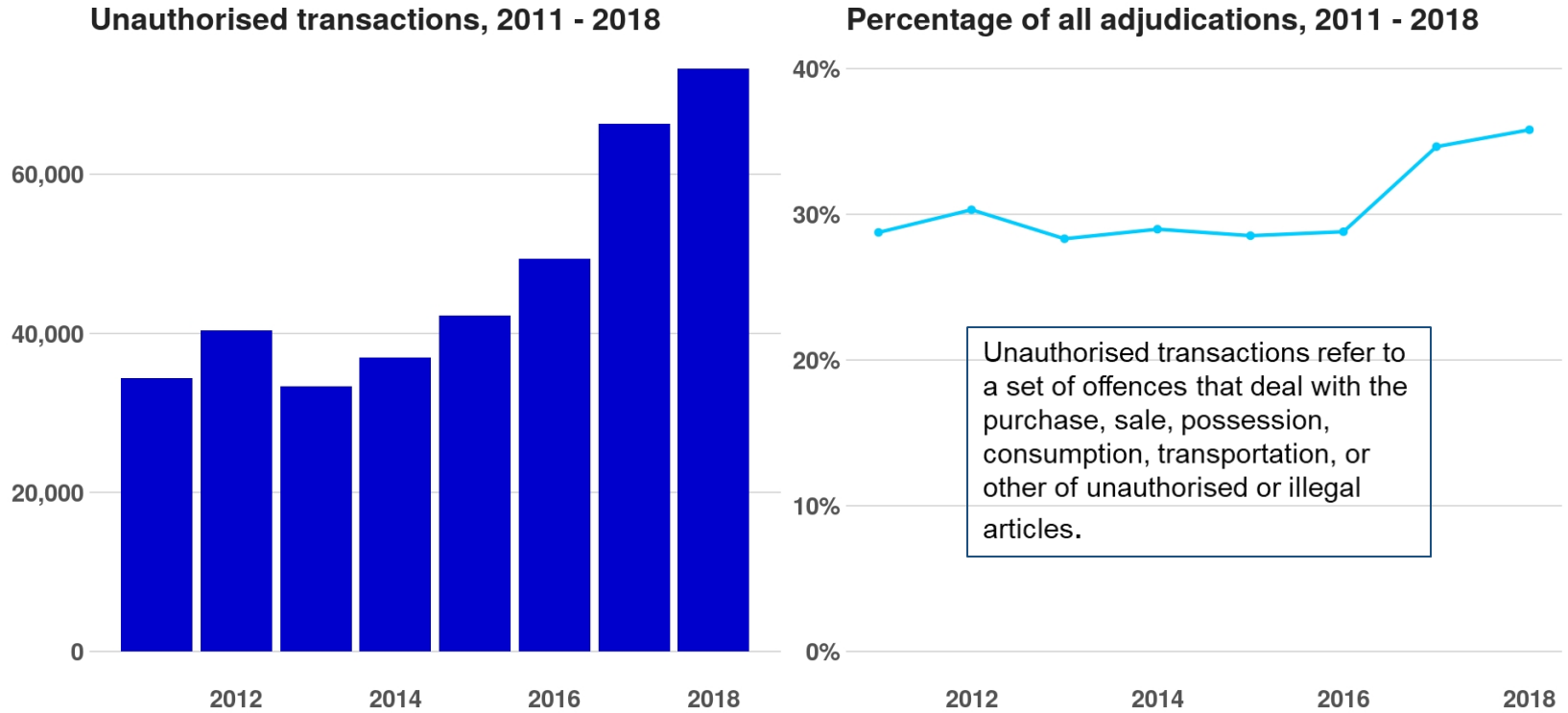
In 2018 there were 6,449 adjudications for assaults on staff and 361 attempts of assaults on staff.

21 – 29 year olds had the most adjudications for assaults on staff, with **2,965**, representing **46%** of the total for all age groups, in part as they constituted 29% of the population. However, 15 – 17 and 18 – 20 year olds represented a much larger share of adjudications relative to their population. Assaults on staff accounted for **20%** of all violent adjudications, **32%** of which were against BAME prisoners.

Assault on staff by age group, 2018



Unauthorised transactions: 2011 - 2018



Adjudications for unauthorised transactions are increasing.

Between 2011 and 2018, the volume of adjudications for unauthorised transactions more than **doubled** from **34,416** to **73,289**. The rate of growth increased by 24% between 2016 - 2018. In 2017, **unauthorised transactions became the most common adjudication offence for the first time.**

Drug offences: 2018

In 2018 there was 18,981 adjudications for drug related offences.

- 71% of drug related offences were against those who are either in the **21 – 29 year old** or **31 – 39 year old** age brackets, with each group accounting for around 36% of the offences
- Women represented 5% of drug offences, consistently mirroring the **same proportion** of females in the prison population.
- The BAME group accounted for **23%** of drug offences in 2018, despite making up **28%** of the prison population.

Drug related offences accounted for:



of all unauthorised transactions

and



of all adjudications

The most commonly used punishment in 2018 for proven drug related adjudications was additional days added to time in custody.

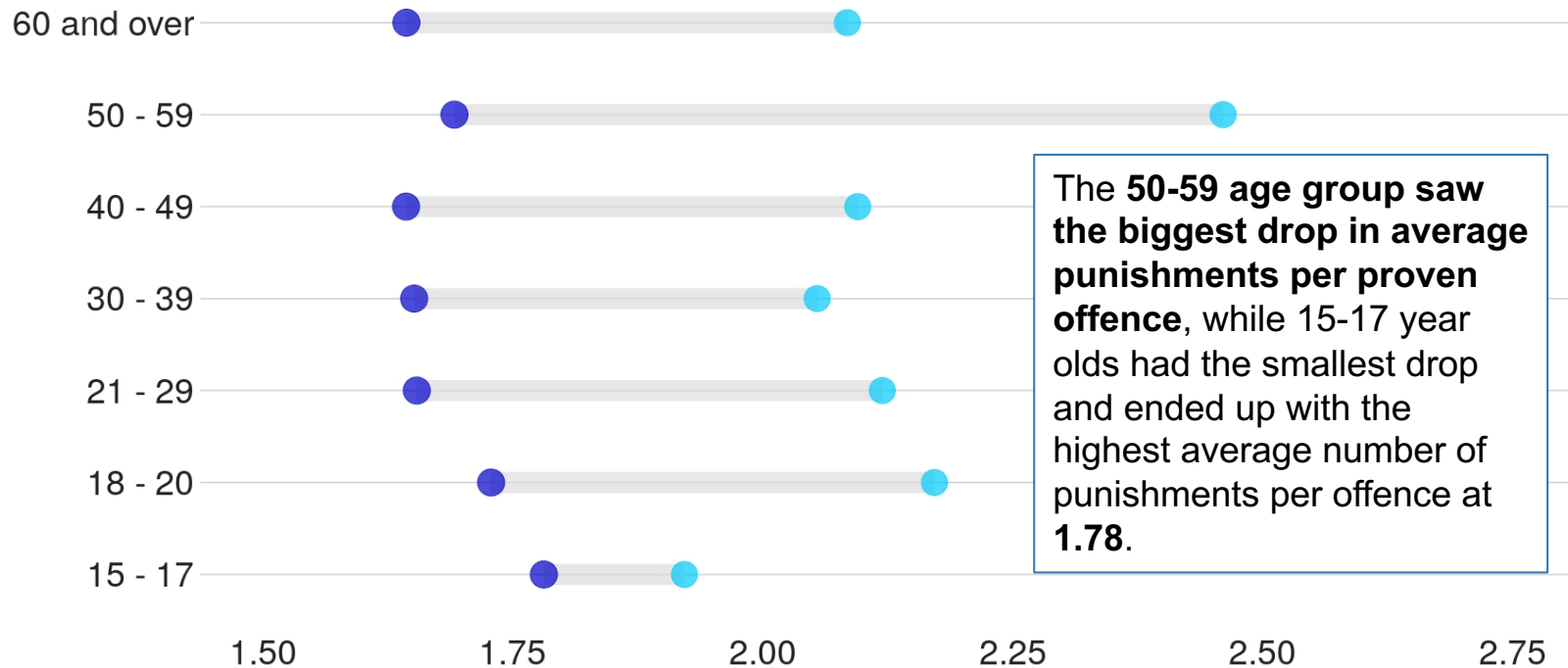
Punishments: 2011 – 2018

From 2011 to 2018...



The number of punishments increased by 16% from **183,249** to **220,924**. Punishments increased by 3% a year on average. However...

The number of punishments per offence is falling:
the biggest fall is in the 50-59 age group, **2011 - 2018**



The **50-59** age group saw the biggest drop in average punishments per proven offence, while 15-17 year olds had the smallest drop and ended up with the highest average number of punishments per offence at **1.78**.

Average number of punishments per offence by age

The average number of punishments per proven offence fell from **2.10** to **1.67**. The 2018 figure was identical for BAME prisoners. This fall may reflect the fact that more serious punishments are being awarded...



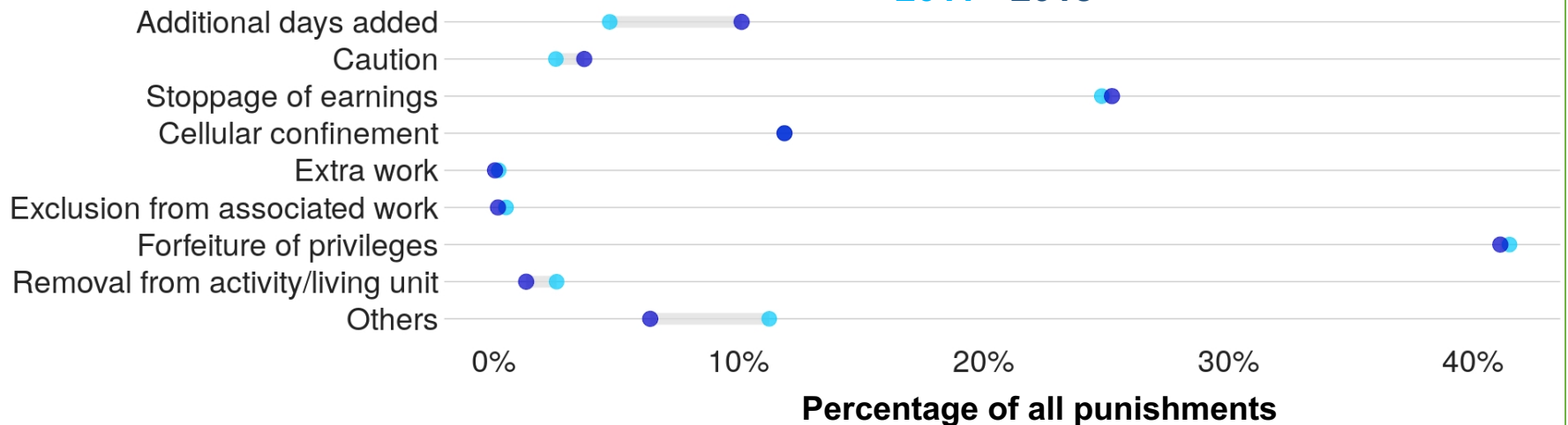
Punishments: 2011 – 2018

Forfeiture of privileges remained the most commonly awarded punishment between 2011 and 2018.

- **41%** of punishments were forfeiture of privileges in both 2011 and 2018.
- All punishments increased in line with the greater volume of adjudications, however the proportion of times that days were added to time in custody **doubled** within the same period.
- Extra work was consistently the most infrequently awarded punishment over this time period.

Increased use of additional days

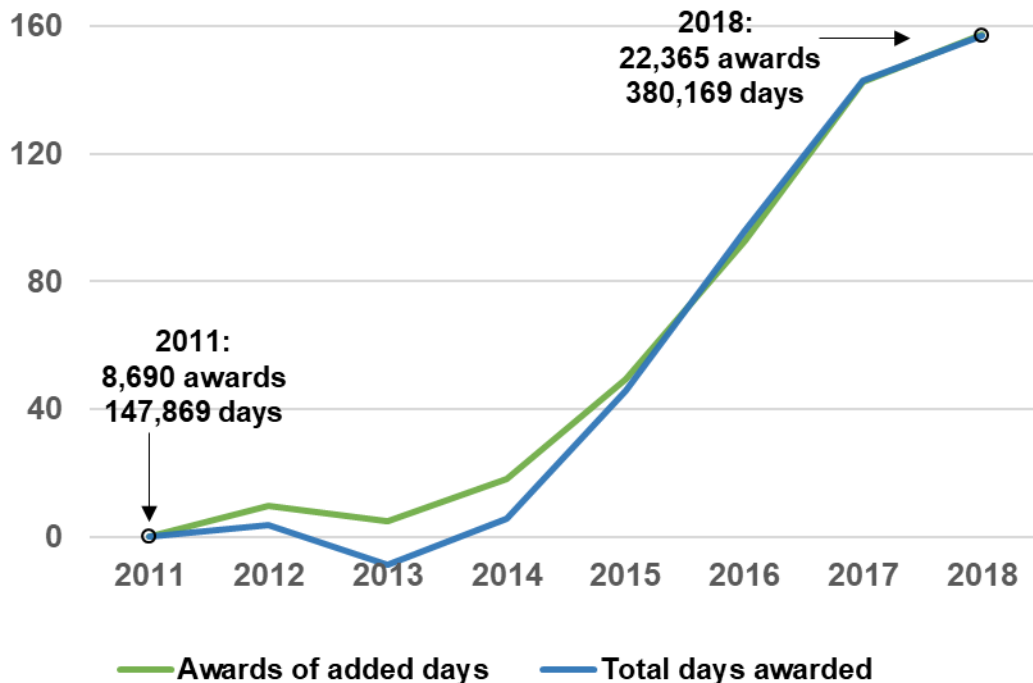
Biggest rise in punishment type, **2011 - 2018**



Additional days added

Additional days are becoming a more frequently used punishment. In 2011, **5%** of all punishments were awards of additional days. In 2018, this percentage increased to **10%**. Since 2015 this was mirrored by an **equivalent increase in the actual days added to time in custody**, except in 2013 when the actual number of days fell briefly.

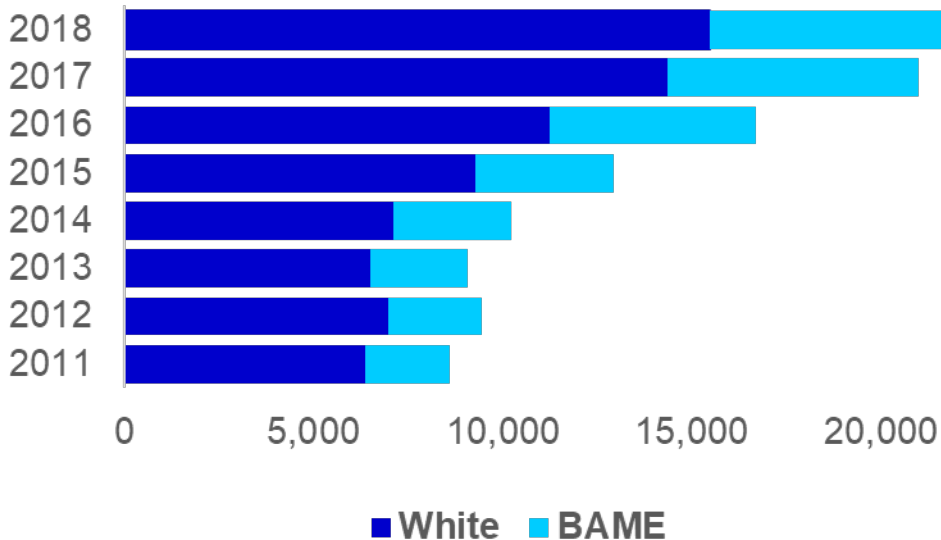
Awards of added days, and total number of days added to custody: change in % since 2011



- In 2018, awards of additional days reached a record high of **22,365**. This is **over 2.5 times greater** than the 2011 figure. There was an average yearly increase of 17%.
- Additional days are most frequently used as a punishment for **unauthorised transactions**.
- An average of **29%** of unauthorised transactions resulted in additional days added over the period 2011 – 2018.

Additional days and ethnicity, 2011 - 2018

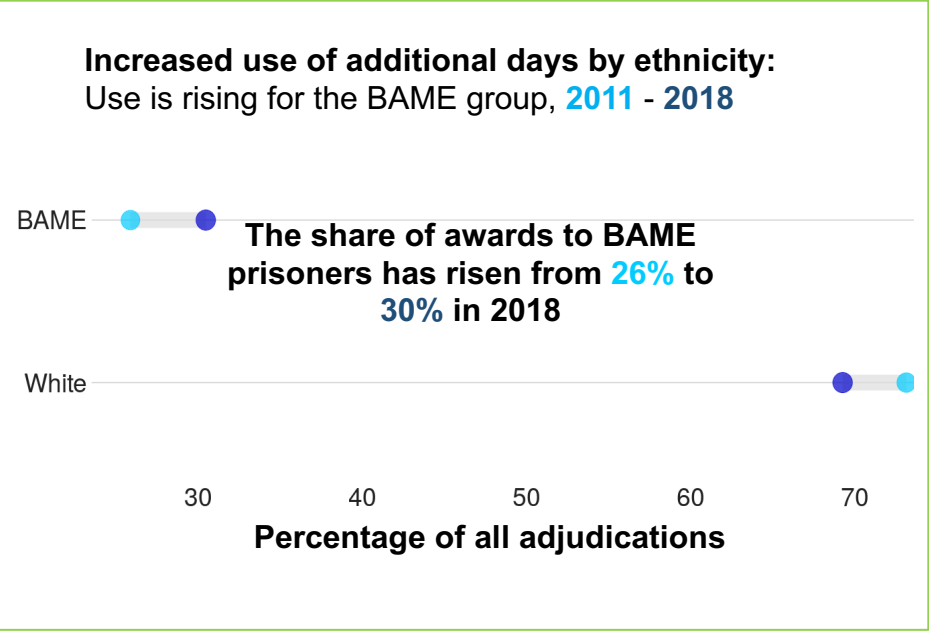
Awards of additional days, 2011 - 2018



Awards of additional days have increased for all ethnicities, though the share of awards to BAME prisoners has risen.

The number of awards of additional days given to white prisoners in 2018 was almost **2.5 times greater** than in 2011. For BAME prisoners, awards of additional days **more than tripled** over the same period.

- In 2018, **16%** of adjudications against white prisoners ended in awards of additional days vs. the **19%** of awards against BAME prisoners.
- Asian or Asian British prisoners consistently saw the highest proportion of adjudications against them ending in awards of additional days. This proportion was **22%** in 2018.



Additional days, gender and age: 2011 - 2018

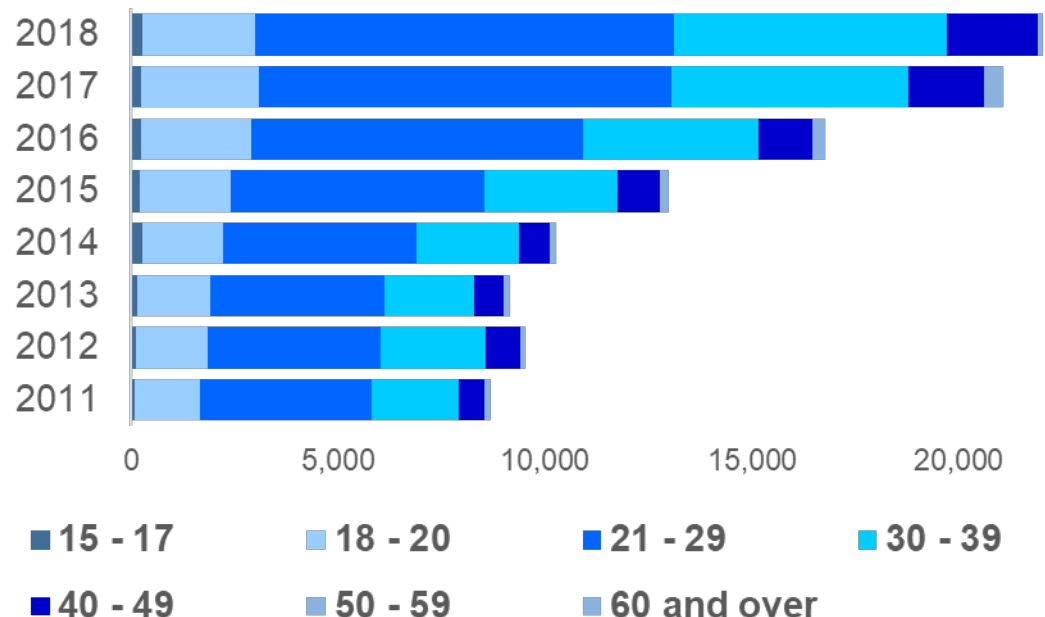
While awards of additional days have increased for women, the proportion of total punishments that were additional days has remained relatively stable. They accounted for 4% and 6% of total punishments in 2011 and 2018 respectively.

Between 2011 – 2018...

- Awards of additional days grew at a slightly faster rate amongst males (up 143% vs. 127% for females).
- The age group that has seen the highest growth in awards of additional days was **40 – 49** year olds. The **2,198** additional day awards in 2018 for this group was **3.5 times** the awards in 2011.

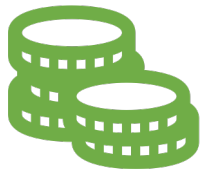
The age group with the highest number of awards of additional days has consistently been **21 – 29 year olds over the period.**

Awards of additional days by age, 2011 - 2018



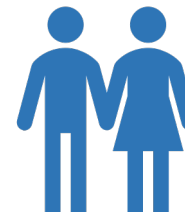
Numbers of days added: 2018

In 2018, **380,169 days** were added to prisoner's time in custody. The average number of additional days awarded per incident was **17**.



Offences for **unauthorised transactions** resulted in the largest number of added days at **233,987** days in total. On average **18** days were awarded per offence for unauthorised transactions. The highest number of days awarded per offence was for escapes, at an average of **25** days.

Women received **12,894** additional days with an average of **15** days per award, **2 days less per award** than men.



A total of 177,967 additional days were given to 21 – 29 year olds, the highest of any other age group. 21-29 year olds also had the highest average number of days awarded at **18**, while 15 – 17 year olds had the smallest with **13**.



When comparing the median average* days awarded per offence by ethnicity...

Asian or Asian British, Black African/Caribbean/Black British and Other ethnic groups were awarded **2 days more** than Whites. However, days awarded to the Mixed Ethnic group were not significantly different.

*Median averages were used to mitigate for extreme values, and differences by ethnic group were tested for statistical significance. Method based on the Wilcoxon rank sum test at the 5% level. Many other factors such as offence, age and sex also influence results.

Further information and contact details

Related Publications

- The Ministry of Justice publish statistics covering a wide-range of themes. The full list of topics (with links) covered by MoJ statistics can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/statistics>
- Particularly relevant to this publication are the 'Prison and Probation' statistics. Here you can find the [Offender management statistics quarterly](#) releases.
- [Safety in custody statistics](#) publications include more information about assaults in custody.
- Offender Equalities Annual Report <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hm-prison-and-probation-service-offender-equalities-annual-report-2017-to-2018>

Contact

- Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice Press Office. Relevant contact details can be found here:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/media-enquiries>
- Other enquiries about the statistics in this publication should be directed to ESD@justice.gov.uk
- Further information about the UK Statistical System can be found here:
<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

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