



Department
for Education

Adoption Leadership Board headline measures and business intelligence

Quarter 2 2015 to 2016 update

March 2016

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Summary

Adoption Leadership Board (ALB) Headline Measures

2,060 children waiting at 30 September 2015

This is a 33% decrease from 31 March 2015 when there were 3,060 children waiting with a placement order not yet placed with an adoptive family.

38% of children waiting at 30 September 2015 had been waiting 18 months or more, a decrease from 53% as at 31 March 2015.

Child timeliness has improved

The time taken between a child entering care and being placed with a family (Adoption Scorecard indicator A1) has decreased by 4 months since 2012-13, from 22 months to 18 months in 2014-15. The latest quarterly data suggests there has been a further improvement to 17 months during the first half of 2015-16. These improvements have been driven by an increase in the proportion of children placed within a year, from 19% in 2012-13 to 39% in the first half of 2015-16.

At 8 months, the average number of days between placement order and match (Adoption Scorecard indicator A2) in 2014-15 has increased from 7 months in 2013-14 but is similar to 2012-13. The latest quarterly data suggests that this has stayed the same at 8 months during the first half of 2015-16.

Adopter timeliness is beginning to improve

The latest quarterly data suggests adopter timeliness is beginning to improve following a period of decline. In quarter 2 2015-16, 33% of approvals to become an adoptive family made by local authorities were made within 6 months of registration, an improvement on the low of 25% in quarter 4 2014-15. However this is still below the peak of 50% of registrations in quarter 2 2013-14.

The timeliness of matches has declined. In quarter 4 2013-14, 80% of matches were made within 6 months of approval, compared to 53% in quarter 2 2015-16.

Other Key Headlines

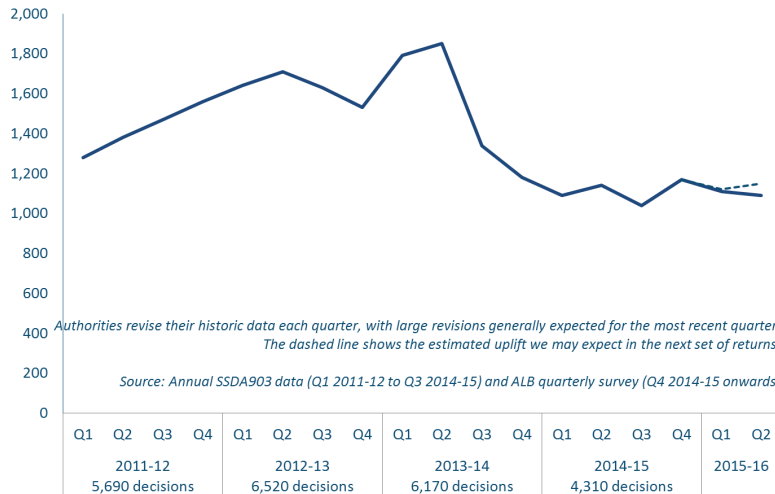
New ADM decisions and placement orders granted have fallen

Quarterly data suggests that the number of new decisions has continued to fall from 1,850 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 1,090 in quarter 2 2015-16, a decrease of 41%.

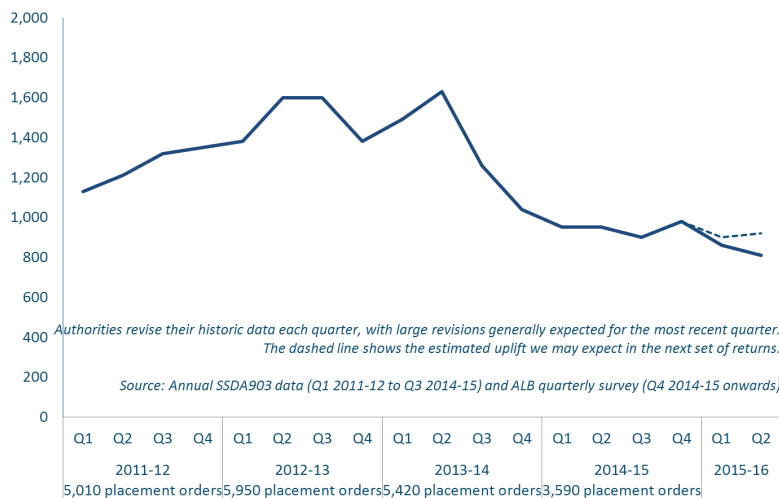
The number of new placement orders have also continued to fall from 1,630 in quarter 2 2013-14 to 810 in quarter 2 2015-16, a decrease of 50%.

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. When we apply this uplift our estimates suggest that the number of new decisions and new placement orders granted may have plateaued.

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 increased

2014-15 saw the highest number of adoptions from care since the current data collection began in 1992, with 5,330 children adopted from care. Quarterly data suggests that the number of children adopted has been falling since quarter 2 2014-15 (from 1,370 to 960).

Adoptive family approvals and registrations have decreased

There have been 1,810 registrations to become an adoptive family in the first half of 2015-16. This equates to an annualised figure of 3,620 which if it manifests, would represent a fall of 37% compared to 2014-15 (decreases of 39% for LAs and 26% for VAAs).

There have been 1,960 adoptive families approved for adoption in the first half of 2015-16. This equates to an annualised figure of 3,920 which if it manifests, would represent a fall of 26% compared to 2014-15 (decreases of 27% for LAs and 19% 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 1,820 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, 29% 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 the first half of 2015-16 was 248 days, this compares to 237 days in 2014-15. The average number of days between approval and match in the first half of 2015-16 was 198 days, this compares to 153 days in 2014-15.

| All approvals and matches in Q1 and Q2 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 | 238 | 201 | 424 |
| North West | 231 | 177 | 385 |
| Y & the Humber | 233 | 175 | 405 |
| East Midlands | 206 | 176 | 374 |
| West Midlands | 240 | 188 | 426 |
| East of England | 240 | 193 | 412 |
| London | 268 | 240 | 494 |
| South East | 271 | 189 | 464 |
| South West | 270 | 257 | 497 |
| | | | |
| LAs in ENGLAND | 245 | 195 | 429 |
| VAs in ENGLAND | 265 | 215 | 447 |
| | | | |
| ENGLAND | 248 | 198 | 432 |

| 2 Stage Process in Q1 and Q2 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> |
| 60 | 83 | 24 | 129 |
| 125 | 88 | 19 | 132 |
| 114 | 89 | 28 | 133 |
| 134 | 71 | 26 | 134 |
| 65 | 79 | 23 | 144 |
| 120 | 83 | 42 | 127 |
| 80 | 99 | 41 | 147 |
| 69 | 115 | 34 | 148 |
| 112 | 104 | 30 | 138 |
| | | | |
| 98 | 91 | 29 | 137 |
| | | | |
| 120 | 118 | 21 | 133 |
| | | | |
| 101 | 96 | 28 | 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 second quarter of 2015-16 (July to September 2015).

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 2015. The SFR can be found [here](#).

ALB quarterly survey In quarter 2 2015-16 the response rate for the child level section of the return was 97%, and the response rate for the adopter level section of the return was 98%. 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). Four Voluntary Adoption Agencies did not provide a return in quarter 2 2015-16.

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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