



## Criminal court statistics quarterly, England and Wales, October to December 2016

*Including statistics on the use of language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals, England and Wales, July to September 2016*

### Main points

**Outstanding cases in magistrates courts have risen slightly**



Receipts were higher than disposals in Q4 2016, which resulted in a small increase in outstanding cases from 283,400 in Q3 2016 to 291,300 in Q4 2016, although they were still lower than at Q4 2015 (327,200).

**Outstanding cases in the Crown Court have fallen**



Outstanding cases in the Crown Court have been gradually decreasing since Q4 2014. Between Q3 2016 and Q4 2016 they declined by 2% to 41,500 cases, the lowest number of outstanding cases since Q1 2013.

**Despite decreasing, violence against the person still had the highest number of outstanding cases**



In Q4 2016, violence against the person offences had the highest volume of receipts, disposals and outstanding cases, although outstanding cases had decreased from 9,400 in Q4 2015 to 7,600 in Q4 2016.

**The average number of days from first listing to completion in the Crown Court has increased**



For cases completing in the Crown Court, the average number of days from first listing to completion in the Crown Court rose by 25 days from 193 days in Q3 2016 to 218 days in Q4 2016.

**Interpreters: The success rate of completed service requests remained stable**



The success rate for completed language interpreter and translation service requests was 96% in Q3 2016, similar to Q2 2016.

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

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-criminal-court-statistics](http://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-quarterly-january-to-march-2016](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-january-to-march-2016)

**We are changing how our quarterly bulletins look, and would welcome any feedback to [commentary.champions@justice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:commentary.champions@justice.gsi.gov.uk)**

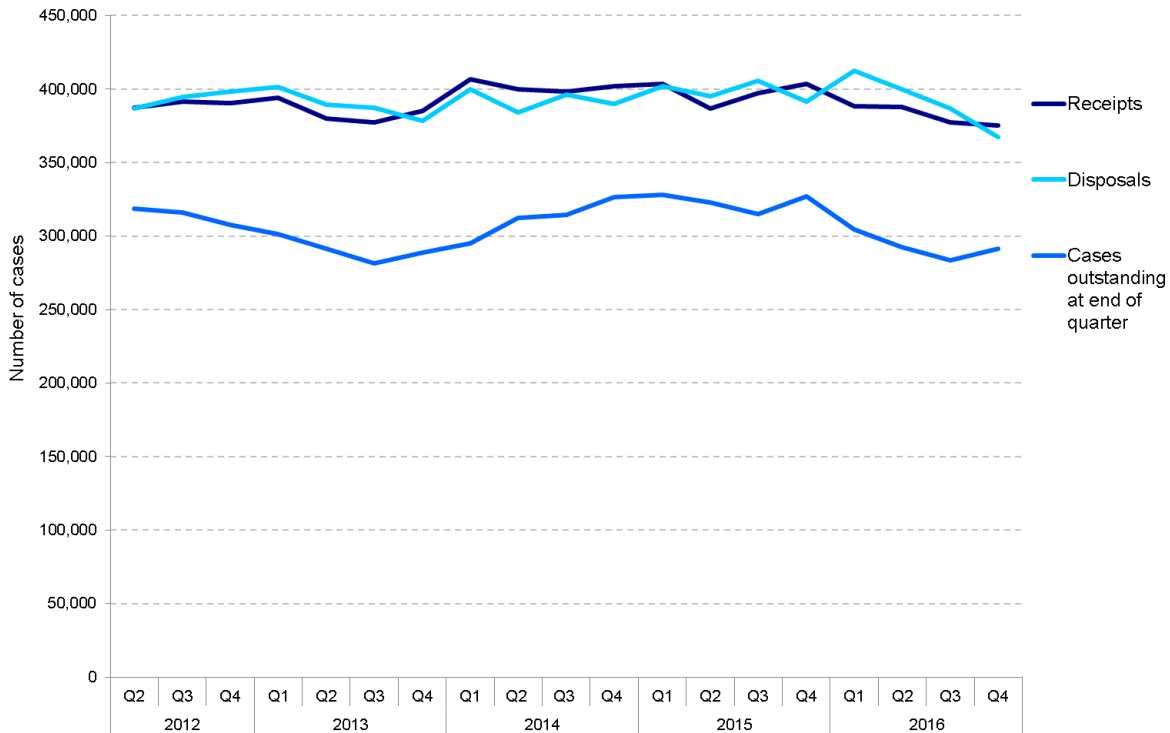
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# 1. Criminal cases in the magistrates' courts

## Outstanding cases in magistrates courts have risen slightly

Receipts were higher than disposals in Q4 2016, which resulted in a small increase in outstanding cases from 283,400 in Q3 2016 to 291,300 in Q4 2016, although they were still lower than at Q4 2015 (327,200).

Figure 1: Magistrates' courts caseload, Q2 2012 to Q4 2016 (Source: Table M1)



### Magistrates' court caseload (Figure 1)

After a period of fluctuation, receipts have been falling since the start of 2016, decreasing by 7% from Q4 2015 to 375,200 in Q4 2016. Following a peak in the number of disposals in Q1 2016 they have continued to fall in Q4 2016 and are at the lowest level recorded in the quarterly time series at 367,300, a 5% decrease since Q3 2016.

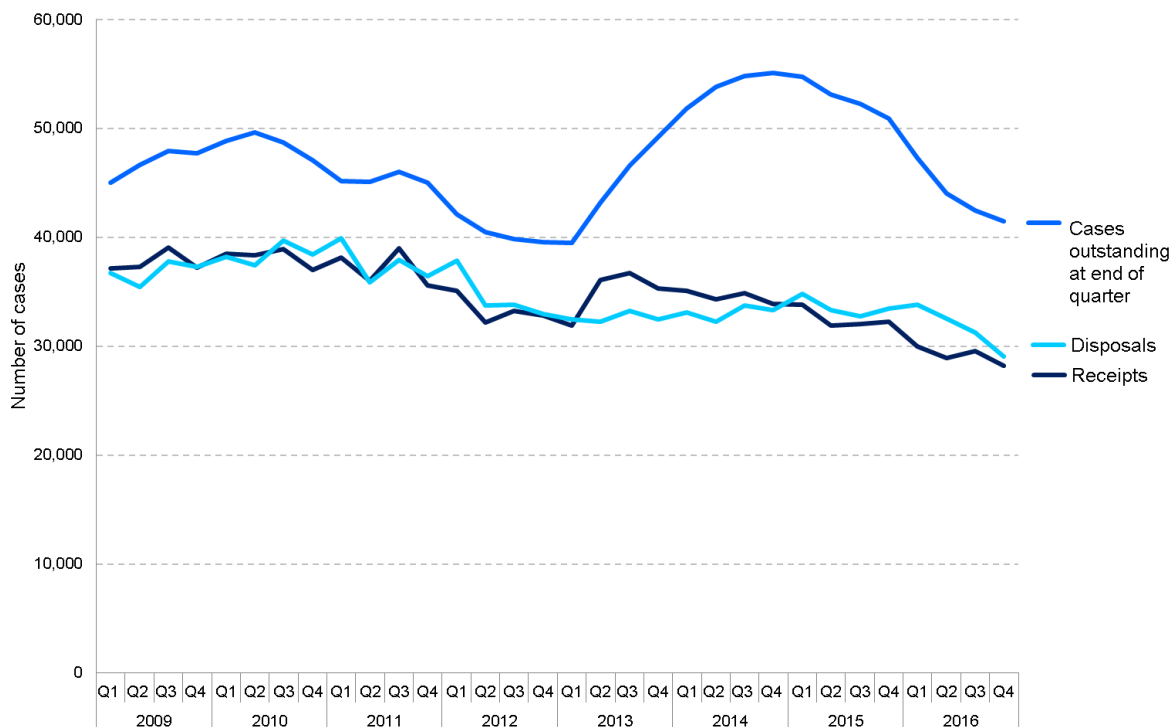
With disposals lower than receipts in Q4 2016, the number of outstanding cases increased by 3% between Q3 2016 and Q4 2016 to 291,300. Despite this small increase, outstanding cases were still 11% lower than in Q4 2015 (327,200).

## 2. Criminal cases in the Crown Court

### Outstanding cases in Crown Court have fallen to 41,500

Both receipts and disposals fell between Q3 2016 and Q4 2016, by 5% and 7% respectively. Disposals remained higher than receipts in the quarter, continuing to drive the decrease in outstanding cases, which have been declining since Q4 2014.

**Figure 2: Crown Court caseload, Q1 2009 to Q4 2016 (Source: Table C1)**



### Receipts (Figure 2)

Receipts in Q4 2016 were the lowest in the quarterly time series and were 5% lower than in Q3 2016, and 13% lower than Q4 2015. The main driver for this decline was triable-either-way cases which have seen a reduction of 5% since Q3 2016, and 20% since Q4 2015. Receipts for indictable only cases were smaller in volume and have only decreased by 10% since Q4 2015.

### Disposals (Figure 2)

As with receipts, disposals have also fallen to the lowest level in the quarterly time series, falling in the latest quarter by 7% to 29,000, and by 13% since Q4 2015. Despite this, disposals have remained higher than receipts for the last 8 quarters, driving the falling trend in the number of outstanding cases. In the latest quarter, triable-either-way disposals and indictable disposals fell by 8% and 3% respectively.

### Outstanding (Figure 2)

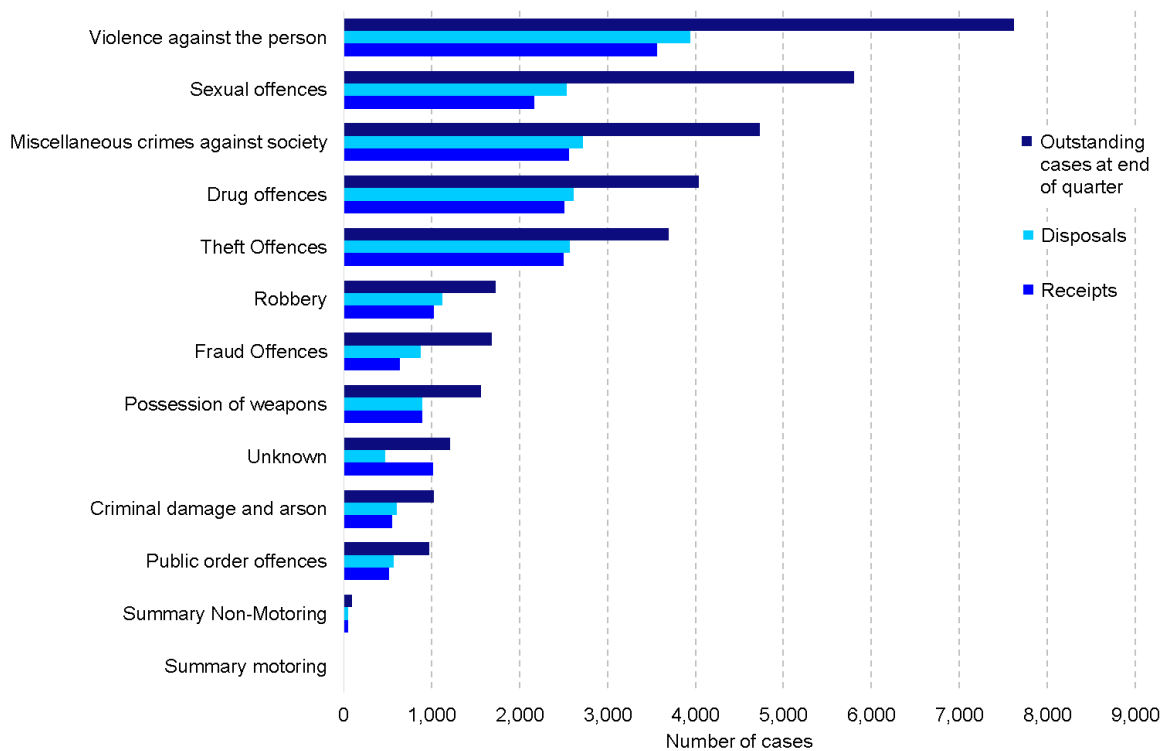
Outstanding cases in the Crown Court have been gradually decreasing since Q4 2014. Between Q3 2016 and Q4 2016 outstanding cases declined by 2% to 41,500 cases, the lowest number since Q1 2013. The driver of this declining trend has been triable-either-way cases, which have fallen by 3% in the latest quarter and 25% since Q4 2015. Indictable only cases followed a similar pattern but to a lesser magnitude, decreasing by 2% in the latest quarter and by 14% between Q4 2015 and Q4 2016.

### 3. Receipts, disposals and outstanding cases by offence group

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

In Q4 2016, violence against the person offences had the highest volume of receipts, disposals and outstanding cases. The number of violence against the person outstanding cases have continued to decline, by 5% since Q3 2016 to 7,600 cases.

**Figure 3: Receipts, disposals and outstanding cases by offence group, for trial cases, Q4 2016 (Source: Tables C1a, C1b, C1c)**



#### Receipts, disposals and outstanding cases by offence group (Figure 3)

In Q4 2016, violence against the person had the highest number of receipts, despite a 7% decrease since Q3 2016, followed by miscellaneous crimes against society.

Violence against the person also had the highest number of disposals in the quarter, despite decreasing by 5% since Q3 2016, and the highest number of outstanding cases.

The offence groups with the next largest number of outstanding cases were sexual offences and miscellaneous crimes against society. At Q4 2016, disposals were higher than receipts for all but one offence groups, resulting in outstanding cases decreasing across each of the offence groups between Q3 and Q4 2016.

## 4. Timeliness

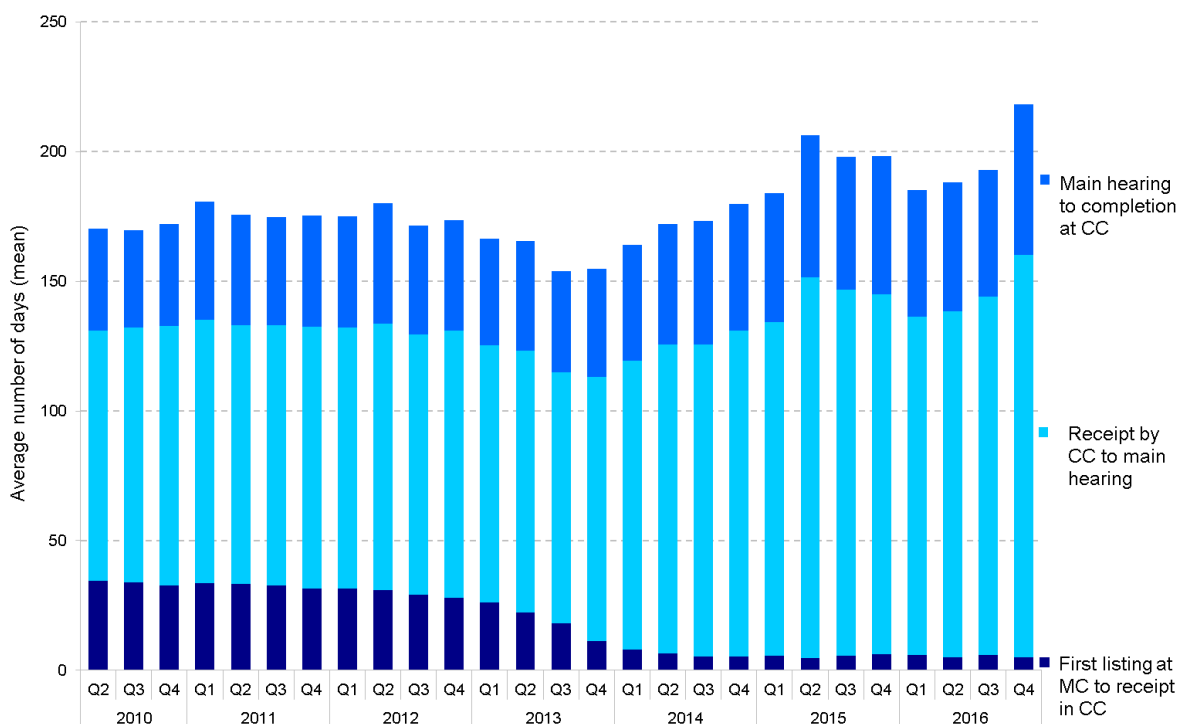
### The average number of days from first listing to completion in the Crown Court has increased

For cases completing in the Crown Court the average number of days from first listing to completion in the Crown Court rose by 25 days from 193 days in Q3 2016 to 218 days in Q4 2016.

### Average hearing times for not guilty plea trials was 15.6 hours

Hearing times for not guilty plea trials in the Crown Court increased from 13.6 hours in Q3 2016 to 15.6 hours in Q4 2016, the highest level in the quarterly time series. Hearing times for guilty plea trials increased from 1.7 hours to 1.8 hours in the latest quarter (table C10).

**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 Q4 2016 (Source: Table T4)**



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

The overall time from first listing to completion in the Crown Court has increased in the latest quarter, driven by a greater volume of longer cases completing, in turn reducing the number of outstanding cases

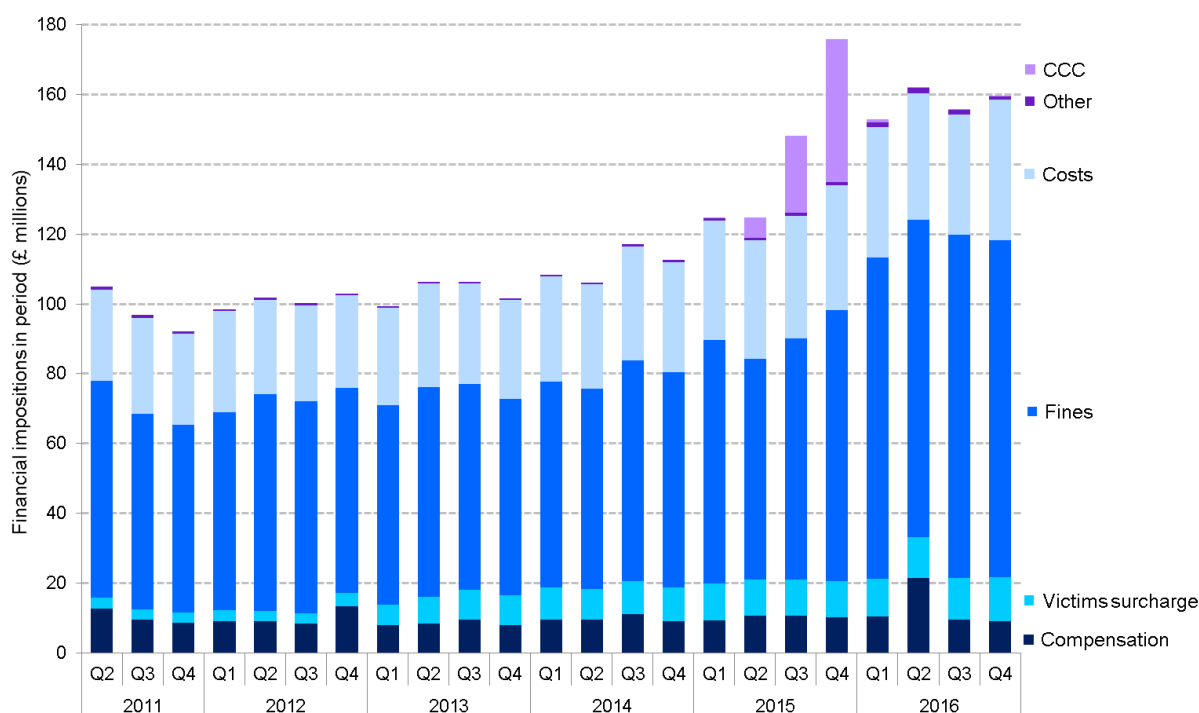
The average time from first listing at the magistrates' court to receipt by the Crown Court has remained at around 5 days whilst time from main hearing to completion has increased by 9 days from 49 days at Q3 2016 to 58 days at Q4 2016. The increase in time from receipt by Crown Court to main hearing has driven the overall increase in first listing to completion in the Crown Court, rising by 17 days from 138 days in Q3 2016 to 155 days in Q4 2016.

## Annex A: Enforcement of financial impositions

### Total financial impositions have increased in the latest quarter

Total financial impositions have increased in the latest quarter due to increased costs imposed in the quarter. Despite this, total impositions were still lower than Q4 2015, the final quarter in which the criminal courts charge was imposed.

**Figure 5: HMCTS management information: Financial impositions by imposition type, England and Wales, Q2 2011 – Q4 2016 (Source: Table A2)**



Note: The Criminal Court Charge (CCC) ceased to exist on 24 December 2015 but impositions still appear due to when the data are entered onto the system.

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

Total financial impositions have decreased overall by 9% between Q4 2015 and Q4 2016, due to the criminal courts charge being ceased. They have, however, increased in the latest quarter, driven by the 17% increase in costs impositions between Q3 2016 and Q4 2016.

In Q4 2016, 11% (£16.8 million) of all criminal court financial impositions were paid within the imposition month.

### Outstanding financial impositions (Table A4)

In Q4 2016, the total value of financial impositions outstanding in England and Wales was £776 million. The amount of outstanding financial impositions has been increasing since Q1 2014, and showed an increase of 15% between Q4 2015 and Q4 2016. The increase since Q2 2015 is partially due to owed criminal court charge payments.

## Annex B: The use of language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals<sup>1</sup>

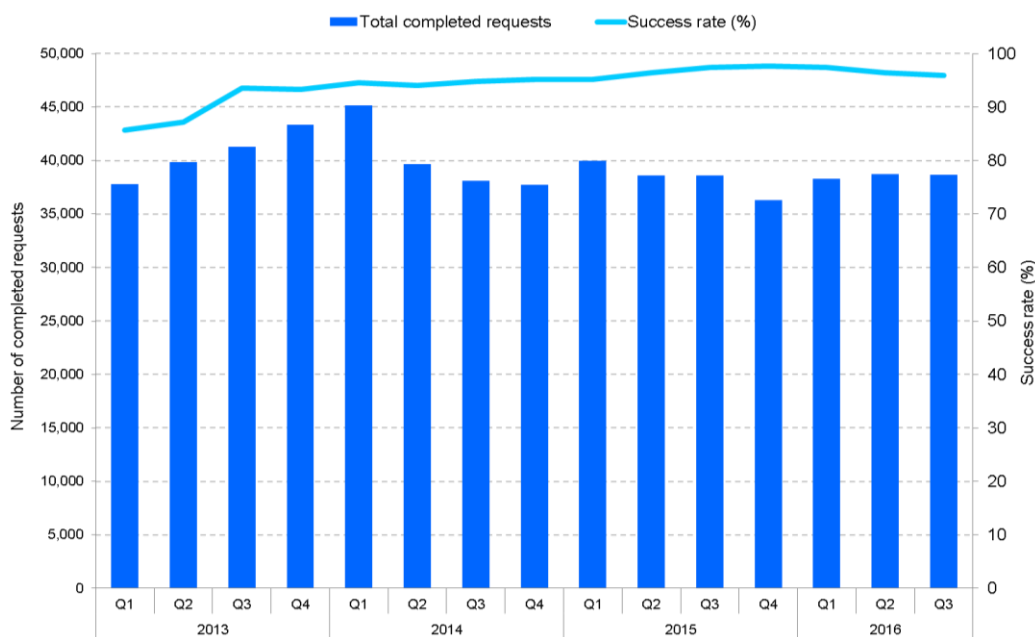
### The total number of completed service requests was little changed in Q3 2016

A total of 38,700 completed service requests for language interpreter and translation services were made in Q3 2016, 60 fewer than in Q2 2016

### The success rate of completed service requests remained stable in Q3 2016

The success rate for completed service requests was 96% in Q3 2016, similar to Q2 2016.

**Figure 6: Number of completed language service requests and overall success rate, Q1 2013 to Q3 2016 (Source: Table L1)**



### Completed service requests (Table L1)

In Q3 2016, criminal courts made the greatest use of face-to-face language interpreter and translation services; 49% of completed service requests were for criminal cases (including Crown Court and magistrates courts completed cases), 35% were for tribunal cases, and 16% were for civil and family court cases.

### Success rate (Figure 6)

Since the first quarter of 2014, the success rate has increased from 94% to a peak of 98% in Q4 2015, and has then fallen to 96% in Q2 and Q3 2016. Success rates varied across different service types. In Q3 2016, standard language requests had a success rate of 97%, whilst for rare languages it was 90% and for special services it was 86%.

<sup>1</sup> Criminal Court statistics covers up to December 2016, while interpreter statistics covers up to September 2016 to cover the last months under the old Capita TI contract. The language statistics has been brought into the Criminal Court Statistics Quarterly (CCSQ) for the first time to improve efficiency of the publication processes.

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### The number of complaints remained stable in Q3 2016

The number of complaints for completed service requests, as well as complaint rate, has remained fairly stable since Q3 2015. In Q3 2016 there were 430 complaints and a complaint rate of around 1%.

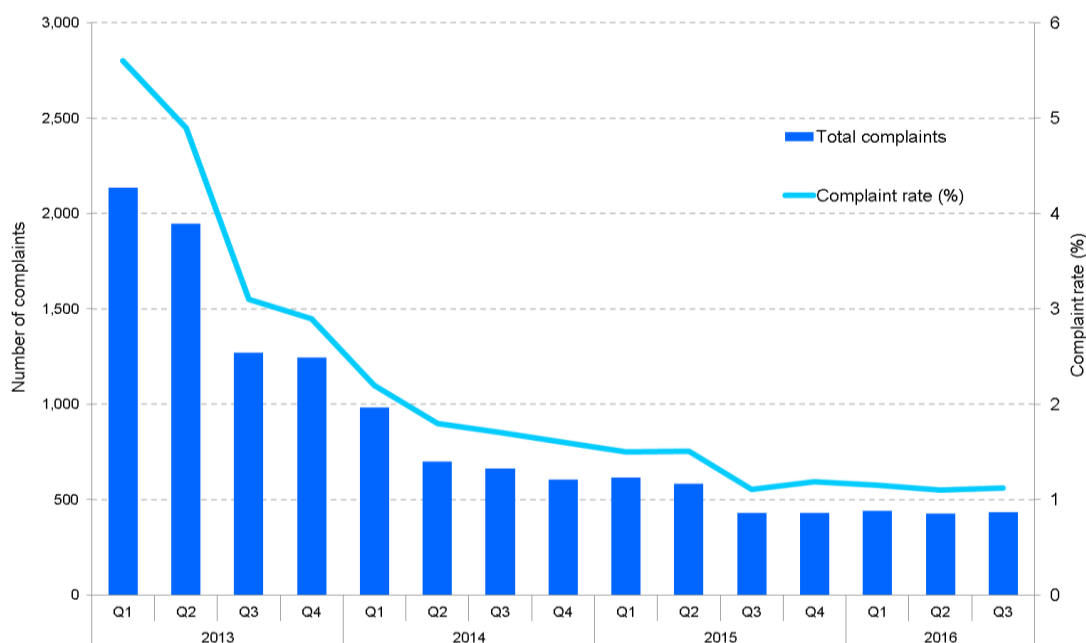
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### The total number of 'off contract' service requests increased in Q3 2016

The number of 'off contract' service requests increased by 45% to 440 requests in Q3 2016 from 300 in Q2 2016, driven by requests at tribunals.

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**Figure 7: Number of complaints and complaint rate, Q1 2013 to Q3 2016 (Source: Table L2)**



### Number of complaints and complaint rate (Figure 7)

The most common cause of complaint was 'no interpreter available' which accounted for 35% (150) of all complaints made in Q3 2016, an 8 percentage point increase from Q2 2016 (27%).

The complaint rate was highest in tribunals at 2%, similar to Q2 2016, and the most common complaint at tribunals was 'no interpreter available' (110). The complaint rate at criminal courts was less than 1% in Q3 2016 similar to Q2 2016. This is consistent with the proportion of ineffective trials from the criminal courts section for which interpreter availability is recorded as the reason for the trial being ineffective. In Q3 2016, interpreter availability accounted for 2% (130) of the total number of ineffective trials in the Crown Court and magistrates' courts combined.

### Off contract requests (Table L3)

In Q3 2016, 'off contract' requests at tribunals increased from 180 in Q2 2016 to 260 in Q3 2016 and accounted for 59% of all completed off contract service requests for language interpreter and translation services. Criminal courts accounted for 35% (150), while civil & family courts accounted for 6% (30).



## Annex C: 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.
- 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<sup>2</sup>

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 Official 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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**Next update:** 29 June 2017

**URL:** [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2016](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/criminal-court-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2016)

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<sup>2</sup> Statistics on the use of language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals are Official Statistics.