



Department  
for Education

# Adoption Leadership Board headline measures and business intelligence

Quarter 3 2016 to 2017 update

May 2018

Note: The Department's annual figures for 2016-17 on adoptions and timeliness for children who have been adopted are published in the [Looked After Children statistical first release](#). This is the most robust source of information on adoption.

# Summary

## Adoption Leadership Board (ALB) Headline Measures

### **2,160 children waiting at 31 December 2016**

This is a 3% decrease from 30 September 2016 when there were 2,230 children waiting with a placement order not yet placed with an adoptive family.

29% of children waiting at 31 December 2016 had been waiting 18 months or more since entering care.

### **Child timeliness has improved**

The time taken between a child entering care and being placed with a family, for children who have been adopted (Adoption Scorecard indicator A1), decreased from 22 months in 2012-13 to 18 months in 2015-16. The latest quarterly data suggests that there has been an improvement to 16 months during the first three quarters of 2016-17.

The average time between placement order and match for children who have been adopted (Adoption Scorecard indicator A2) in 2015-16 was 8 months. This was the same in 2014-15. The latest quarterly data suggests that this has decreased to 7 months during the first three quarters of 2016-17.

### **Adopter timeliness is stabilising**

The latest quarterly data suggests adopter timeliness for local authorities has been stabilising. In the first three quarters of 2016-17, 30% of approvals made by local authorities were made within 6 months of registration, this compares to 29% during the same time period the previous year.

The timeliness of matches has seen a small decrease. 25% of matches were made within 3 months of approval in the first three quarters of 2016-17, compared to 28% during the same time period the previous year.

Note: Adopter timeliness figures exclude information not available.

## Other Key Headlines

**New ADM decisions and placement orders granted are stabilising** Quarterly data suggests that there were 1,200 new ADM (Agency Decision Maker) decisions for adoption in quarter 3 2016-17, compared to 1,260 in quarter 3 2015-16, a decrease of 5%.  
910 placement orders were made in quarter 3 2016-17, compared to 1,070 placement orders reported in the quarterly data in quarter 3 2015-16, a decrease of 15%.

**Children adopted from care has decreased** Quarterly data suggests that there were 3,110 children adopted in the first three quarters of 2016-17. This is a decrease from 3,270 children adopted during the first three quarters of 2015-16, as reported in the quarterly data.

The Department's annual figures for 2016-17 on adoptions are published in the [Looked After Children statistical first release](#).

**Adoptive family approvals have increased slightly and registrations have decreased** Registrations to become an adopter have decreased by 15% from 800 in quarter 2 2016-17 to 680 in quarter 3 2016-17. The number of adopter families approved for adoption has increased from 700 in quarter 2 2016-17 to 740 in quarter 3 2016-17.

## 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 third quarter of 2016-17 (October to December 2016).

**SSDA903 data** Annual figures up to 2015-16 have been taken from this dataset. 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 2017.

**ALB quarterly survey** In quarter 3 2016-17 the response rate from local authorities was 89% for both the child and adopter level sections of the return. 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 2015-16 (from the SSDA903 data). The response rate for the adopter level section from Voluntary Adoption Agencies was 82%.

**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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