



Criminal court statistics quarterly, England and Wales, January to March 2021

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

Main points

COVID-19 and associated actions impacted on most criminal court measures

The recovery at the criminal courts continued following the initial impacts of the COVID-19 response. The latest figures represent a reflection of the initial pandemic response, restrictions over the period and recovery rather than a continuation of trends.

Magistrates' court: continued increase in receipts and outstanding cases



Receipts continued to rise, while disposals fell – both remain well below pre-COVID levels. Outstanding cases increased by 3% on the previous quarter and are 21% higher than the previous year.

Crown Court: continued increase in outstanding cases



Receipts and disposals have returned to pre-COVID levels, but receipts remain above disposals. Outstanding cases continued to rise, up 45% compared with the previous year and 4% on the previous quarter.

Crown Court: increase in average age of outstanding cases



The median age of an outstanding case in Q4 2020 was 147 days - this has increased by 43% on the previous year. Around a fifth (21%) of cases have been outstanding for a year or more, up from 7% in the previous year.

Crown Court: increase in the volume of trial listings



In Q1 2021 there were 4,189 trials listed at the Crown Court. This represents a 22% increase on the previous quarter but remains below pre-COVID levels (5,099 trials in Q1 2020).

Timeliness increased at both the magistrates' court and Crown Court



The time from offence to completion at the magistrates' court increased by 14% on the previous year. While time from receipt to completion at the Crown Court increased by 23%.

End-to-end timeliness: increase in time from offence to completion



'Experimental statistics' providing updated end-to-end timeliness to Q1 2021 show that the time from offence to completion at the Crown Court has increased – with median estimates of 'pre-court' time up 51% and 'at-court' time up 46% on the previous year.

The technical guide to 'Criminal court statistics' and 'Language interpreter and translation services in courts and tribunals' can be found at the links below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-criminal-court-statistics>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/guide-to-language-interpreter-and-translation-services-statistics>

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Statistician's comment

This report covers the period to the end of March 2021 and shows the continued impact of COVID-19 on criminal courts.

Following the limited operation of the criminal courts, particularly during Spring 2020,¹ and the gradual reintroduction of jury trials² during the report period, the figures published today show the continued recovery in the system.

The volume of listed trials at both magistrates' courts and the Crown Court continued to increase, but remain below pre-COVID levels. Receipts and disposals at the Crown Court are close to levels seen prior to a year ago, though receipts remain above disposals meaning figures covered by this report continued to show rising outstanding caseload.

The continued impacts of the COVID response and ongoing restrictions are also evident in the increase in timeliness estimates.

Signs of recovery at both the magistrates' courts and the Crown Court continue beyond the National Statistics series into more recent management information published by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) which are highlighted in this document.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmcts-weekly-operational-summary-on-courts-and-tribunals-during-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

² <https://www.judiciary.uk/announcements/jury-trial-sites-4/>

1. Changes to note

Common Platform and reform to criminal court data³

The 'Common Platform' is a new digital case management system for the magistrates' and Crown Courts. The system seeks to streamline data collection, data accessibility and improve the way criminal cases are processed across the Criminal Justice System. It will eventually replace the existing 'legacy' criminal court systems Libra (magistrates') and XHIBIT (Crown), with a single, streamlined system.

Early adopter courts across England and Wales will test the system before the subsequent rollout to all criminal courts. Derbyshire magistrates' and Crown Court began this process in September 2020 and the roll out has continued across England and Wales⁴.

- Data for the magistrates' court caseload *does* include both 'legacy' and Common Platform data as new cases enter the new system.
- Crown Court measures and all timeliness data *do not yet* include any Common Platform data. The omitted data represents a reasonably small number of cases and is unlikely to have a material impact on published trends in the current release.

We are currently developing data processing on the new system in collaboration with HMCTS and partner agencies to better understand the implications this change has for the published National Statistics series and their underlying methodologies. It is not yet known how significant the impact will be, but as a minimum **we expect some series to be disrupted, and we may also decide to withhold or delay some publications of quarterly data.**

We are committed to ensuring that published statistics remain accurate, robust and coherent for users during the operational transition of data systems at the criminal courts.

Data developments

- **Outstanding caseload at the Crown Court**
To address interest in the outstanding case estimates at the Crown Court this release includes 'experimental statistics' providing estimates of the average length of time that a case has been outstanding (days) broken down by case type and remand status. We have worked with partners in HMCTS analytical, operational and policy teams to develop additional measures to provide more insight into the outstanding caseload.

Further breakdowns of the outstanding caseload age are being made available for the first time in supporting data tools which includes breakdowns and cross tabulation by case type, region, remand status (in 'for trial' cases) and offence group (in 'for trial' cases).

The series will continue to be published as 'experimental statistics' as we continue to develop the measures.

- **Representation status estimates at the Crown Court**
This release includes reinstated estimates of the representation status of defendants dealt with at the Crown Court for the first time since Q1 2020. Minor changes to the underlying methodology have been necessitated following changes to the

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/common-platform-system-tested-in-criminal-courts>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/hmcts-common-platform-participating-criminal-courts>

administrative reporting systems – however there is no substantial impact on the published figures.

- **Timeliness estimates updated to March 2021**

New experimental statistics using a new data linking methodology has been developed using the Ministry of Justices open-source statistical '[Splink](#)' package to provide updated end-to-end timeliness estimates for the first time since December 2019.

Currently the new data provides national level estimates of timeliness from offence to completion for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court (Table T4). We will continue to develop the new linked end-to-end timeliness methodology and expand the available data to bring it back in line with the previous published series (e.g. by court, offence group and publication of all court estimates of timeliness).

Alongside the gradual development of the experimental statistics we will continue to try to best meet user demands via more granular data on separate ('unlinked') timeliness estimates for magistrates' courts and Crown Court.

- *Magistrates' court timeliness estimates (T1 – T3)* – providing estimates of the time from offence to completion for defendants dealt with at the magistrates' courts only.
- *Crown Court timeliness estimates (E1 – E2)* – providing estimates of the time from case receipt to completion for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court only.

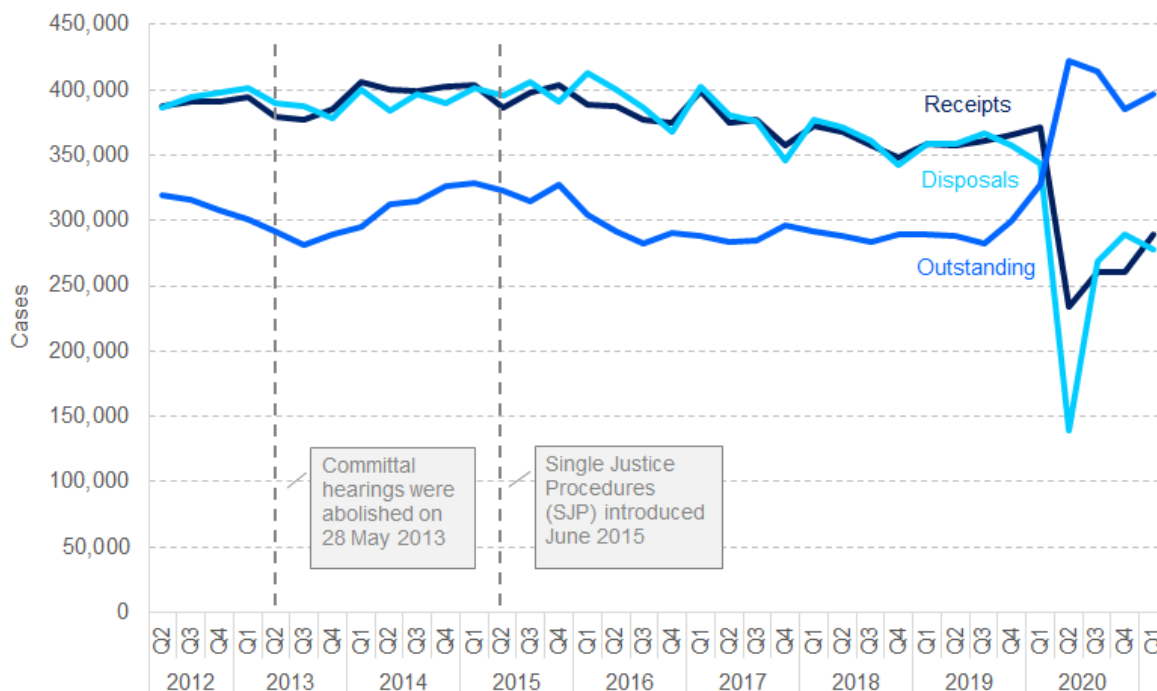
For further information regarding the extent and impacts of the data developments detailed here please see the [Guide to criminal court statistics](#).

2. Criminal cases in the magistrates' courts

Criminal case receipts at the magistrates' courts continued to rise while disposals fell – both remain well below pre-COVID levels. Outstanding cases remained at higher levels seen since Q2 2020.

Receipts increased by 11% on the previous quarter, while disposals fell by 4%. Outstanding cases increased by 3% on the previous quarter and levels remain 21% higher than the previous year.

Figure 1: Magistrates' courts caseload, Q2 2012 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table M1)



Magistrates' court caseload

Receipts and disposals have tended to rise from series lows in Q2 2020 after the phased reopening of courts⁵. However, levels remain well below that seen in the previous year following the review of court arrangements on the 23rd March 2020⁶ and the return of restrictions in January 2021⁷.

- Receipts in the magistrates' courts increased by 11% on the previous quarter but remain 22% lower than the previous year. The rise in the latest period can be seen mostly in summary non-motoring (up 34%) and summary motoring cases (up 12%), whereas 'for trial' case receipts fell by 5%.
- The volume of cases disposed of fell, down 4% on the previous quarter. This is largely due to a 9% decrease in the volume of both 'for trial' and summary non-motoring cases being disposed of in the latest quarter. Overall disposals remain well below levels seen in the previous year (down 19%), this is most clearly seen for summary non-motoring disposals (down 40%).

There were 396,419 outstanding cases at the magistrates' court at the end of Q1 2021, this represents a 3% increase on the previous quarter (384,801) and a 6% fall on the series peak in Q2 2020 (421,956). The quarterly increase was seen for summary offences only, 'for trial' outstanding cases fell by 6%.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-face-to-face-hearings-as-courts-reopen>

⁶ <https://www.judiciary.uk/announcements/review-of-court-arrangements-due-to-covid-19-message-from-the-lord-chief-justice/>

⁷ <https://www.judiciary.uk/announcements/message-from-the-lord-chief-justice-latest-covid-19-restrictions/>

The levels of outstanding cases in Q1 2021 represent an increase of 21% compared to the previous year (327,976 in Q1 2020).

The latest published [HMCTS management information](#) provides weekly volumes of receipts, disposals and outstanding cases for all cases types at the magistrates' courts (e.g. including civil and enforcement in addition to criminal cases).

Data beyond March 2021 shows that following a relative 'slowing' of recovery seen in early 2021, disposals have increased to levels seen in December 2020. Disposals have tended to be above receipts since the middle of March 2021. As such outstanding case volumes have continued to fall from a peak of 525,059 at the end of July to 453,482 at the week ending 23rd May 2021.

Trial efficiency

The total number of listed trials in magistrates' courts has continued to increase following historical lows in Q2 2020.

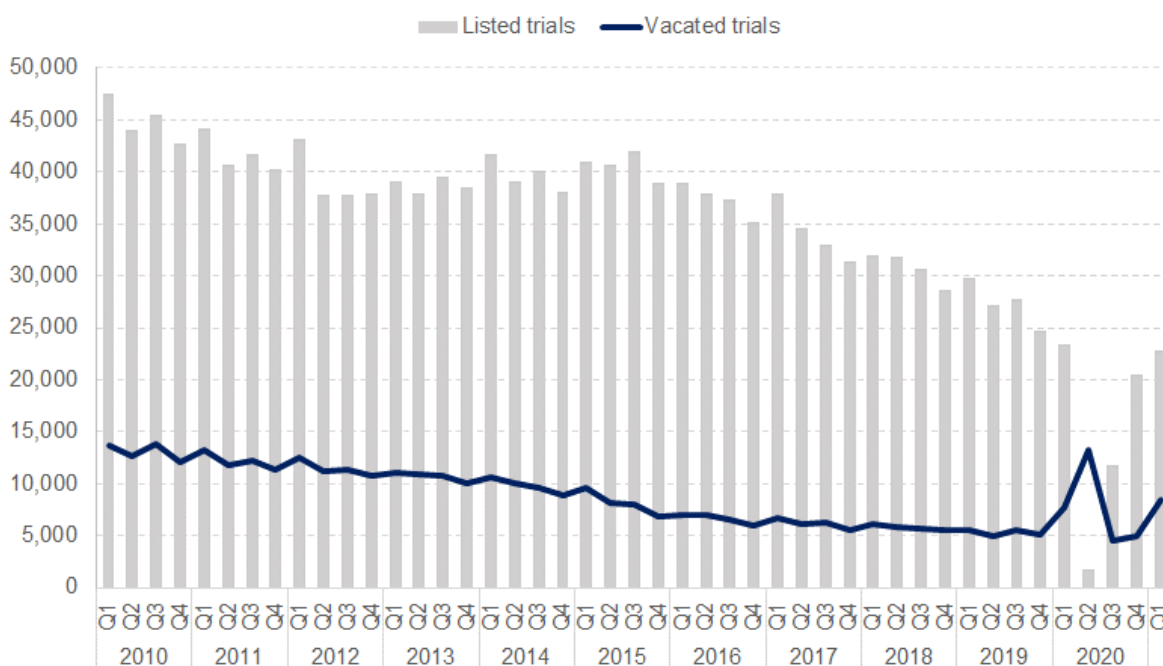
There were 22,779 trials listed for Q1 2021, an 11% increase on the previous quarter (20,486). Despite the continued increase, the trial listed volumes remain slightly below levels seen in the previous year, down 3% on Q1 2020 (23,455).

- Of trials listed for Q1 2021, the proportion that were ineffective maintained the series high seen in the previous quarter (24%), up 6 percentage points on the previous year. A corresponding annual decrease can be seen in the effective and cracked trial rates.

Vacated trials are trials which have been removed from the listing before the date of the trial, they are counted in the period the vacation happened rather than the date when they were due to be listed (as for effective, cracked and ineffective estimates).

There were 8,498 trial vacations in Q1 2021, this represents a sharp increase on the previous quarter (up 72%) and an increase on the previous year (up 11%).

Figure 2: Magistrates' courts listed trials and vacated trials, Q1 2010 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table M2)

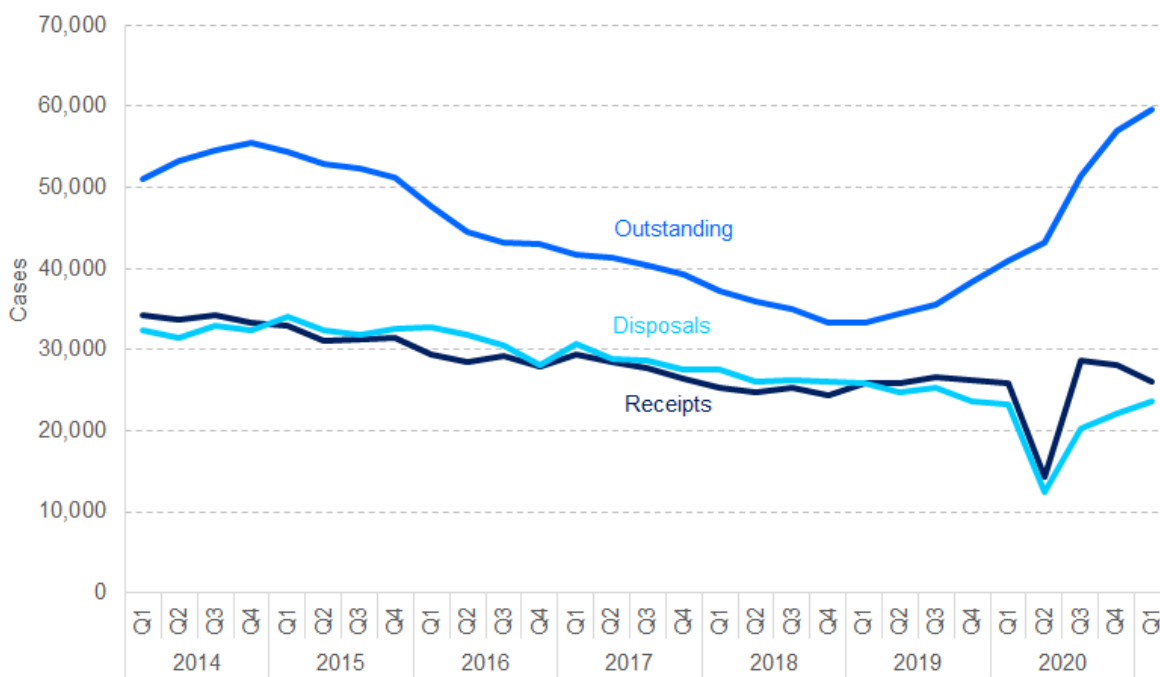


3. Criminal cases in the Crown Court

The volume of outstanding cases at the Crown Court continued to rise

In Q1 2021 receipts and disposals at the Crown Court have returned to pre-COVID levels, however receipts remain above disposals. As a result, the volume of outstanding cases increased by 45% compared to the previous year and 4% on the previous quarter.

Figure 3: Crown Court caseload, Q1 2014 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table C1)



Crown Court caseload

The increased throughput from the magistrates' courts following the ongoing recovery from COVID-19 response impacts has resulted in higher volumes of receipts at the Crown Court. Similarly, the phased reintroduction of jury trials⁸ mean disposals at the Crown Court have risen.

- There were 26,092 case receipts into the Crown Court in Q1 2021. This represents a fall on the previous quarter (7%), but volumes were similar to the previous year. 'For trial'⁹ case receipts are above pre-COVID levels (up 7% on the previous year), while both sentence and appeal case receipts fell (down 8% and 17% respectively).
- There were 23,555 case disposals at the Crown Court in Q1 2021. Case disposals continued to increase from a series low in Q2 2020, up 6% on the previous quarter and returning to levels from the previous year. Disposals in 'for trial' cases increased in the latest period, up 7% on the previous quarter and 7% on the previous year.

At the end of Q1 2021 there were 59,532 outstanding cases at the Crown Court, an increase of 45% on Q1 2020 (41,015 cases) and 4% on the previous quarter (57,047). This is the highest level of outstanding cases seen since the series began (since 2014) and continues increases seen since Q1 2019.

⁸ <https://www.judiciary.uk/announcements/jury-trial-sites-4/>

⁹ 'For trial' cases relate to the case type at the point of receipt into the Crown Court - we know that most of these cases will result in the entry of a guilty plea and that only a small proportion will require a trial.

- The increase in outstanding caseload can be seen for all case types to varying degrees: 'for trial' cases (up 53%), sentenced cases (up 23%) and appeals (up 3%).
- The increase in 'for trial' outstanding cases compared with the previous year can be seen across all offence groups to varying degrees. The largest proportional increases on the previous year were seen for drug offences (up 75%) and sexual offences (67%).

The latest published [HMCTS management information](#) provides weekly volumes of receipts, disposals and outstanding cases for all cases types at the Crown Court.

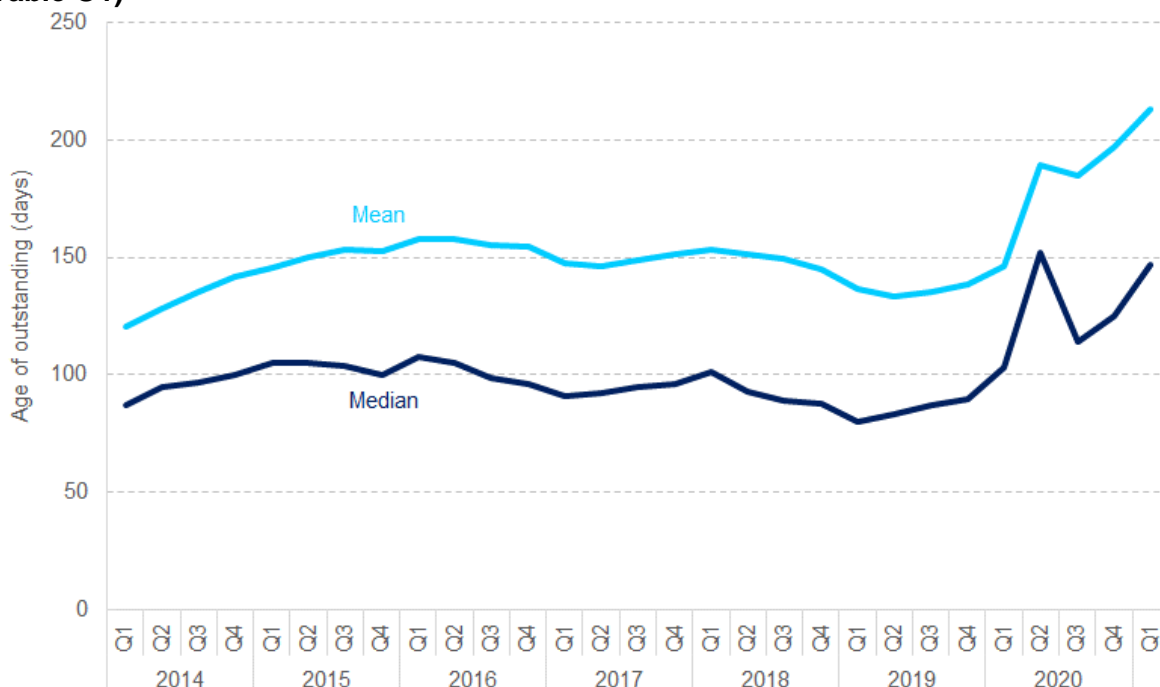
The data to the week ending 23rd May 2021 broadly shows that weekly receipts and disposals settled back to around pre-COVID levels. Receipts have tended to fall in 2021, whereas disposals have maintained their levels. This has caused the outstanding caseload to stabilise, however the latest weekly estimate is 46% higher than the pre-COVID baseline.

Analysis of the outstanding caseload at the Crown Court – experimental statistics

To address additional interest in the outstanding case estimates at the Crown Court this release includes 'experimental statistics' providing estimates of the average length of time (days) that a case has been outstanding. This is broken down by case type and remand status.

Further breakdowns of the experimental outstanding caseloads are being made available for the first time in supporting data tools which includes breakdown and cross tabulation by case type, region, remand status (in 'for trial' cases) and offence group (in 'for trial' cases).

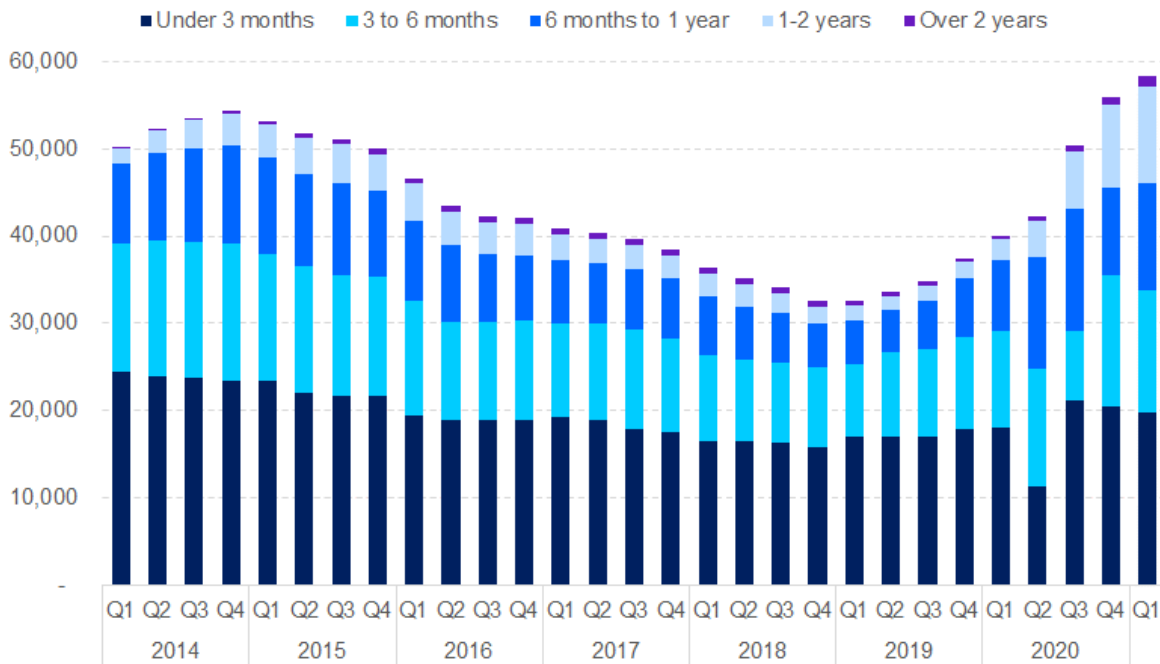
Figure 4: Age of outstanding cases at the Crown Court, Q1 2014 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table O1)



The age of an outstanding case is calculated from the point of receipt into the Crown Court and the latest outstanding date, e.g. as at the end of March 2021. The average age of an outstanding case has increased sharply across the COVID-19 pandemic period. In Q1 2021 the median (147 days) and mean (213 days) estimates for all cases increased on the previous year, up 43% and 46% respectively.

- In Q1 2021, the majority (70%) of ‘for trial’¹⁰ outstanding cases were remanded on bail, while around a third (29%) were remanded in custody. These proportions have remained broadly similar across the series since 2014.
- Cases involving fraud (198 days) and sexual offences (181 days) have the highest median age of outstanding in Q1 2021. The offence group with the largest proportionate increase compared to the previous year was robbery (up 64% from 106 days to 174 days)

Figure 5: Volume of outstanding cases at the Crown Court by grouped age, Q1 2014 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table O3)



The proportion of cases which have been outstanding for a year or more has increased sharply – from 7% in Q1 2020 to 21% in Q1 2021.

- The increase in cases which have been open for a year or more is true across all case types. This is highest in ‘for trial’ cases where around a fifth of cases (22%) have been open for a year or more, up 15 percentage points on the previous year.

Trial efficiency

The volume of trials at the Crown Court was falling prior to COVID-19 and has tended to fall since 2015, from around 39,000 trials listed to 24,000 in 2019.

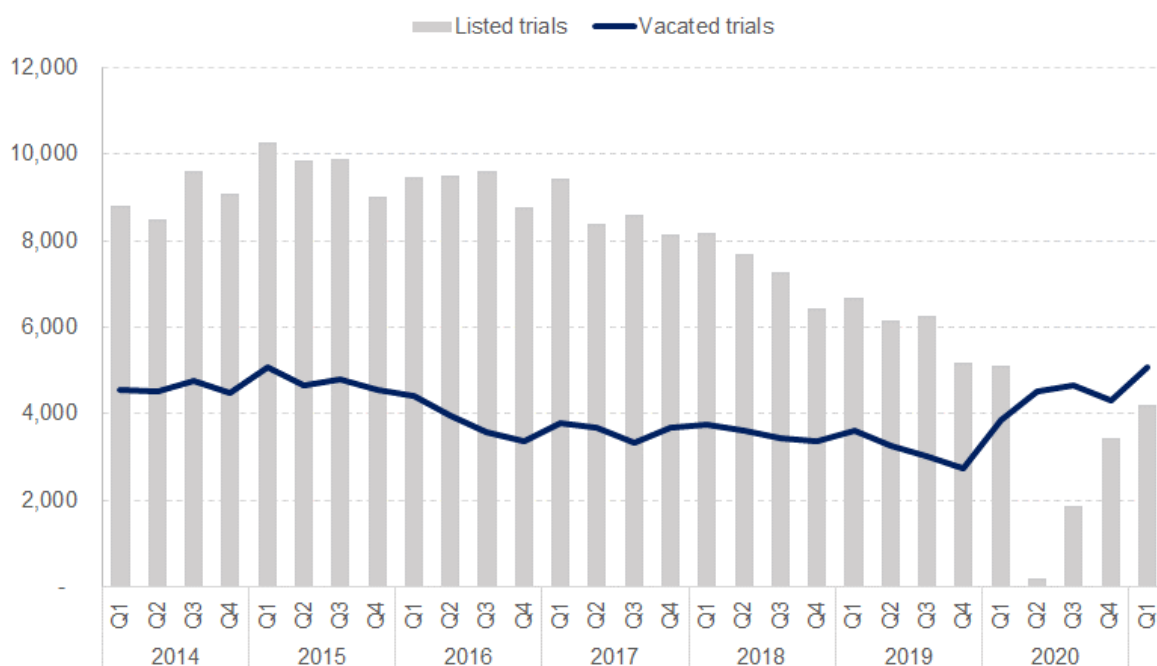
There were 4,189 trials listed for Q1 2021, a 22% increase on the previous quarter. However, the volume of trials listed remains 18% below levels seen a year ago (5,099 trials in Q1 2020).

The effective trial rate is above pre-COVID levels (from 46% in Q1 2020 to 51% in Q2 2021) while a corresponding fall in the proportion of cracked trials can be seen (from 32% to 28%).

Vacated trials are trials which have been removed from the listing before the date of the trial. They are counted in the period the vacation happened rather than the date when they were due to be listed (e.g. as for effective, cracked and ineffective estimates). There were 5,078 vacated trials in Q1 2020, up 18% on the previous quarter and 31% on the previous year.

¹⁰ 'For trial' cases relate to the case type at the point of receipt into the Crown Court - we know that most of these cases will result in the entry of a guilty plea and that only a small proportion will require a trial.

Figure 6: Crown Court listed trials and vacated trials, Q1 2014 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table C2)



Guilty plea rate

For defendants dealt with in ‘for trial’ cases at the Crown Court in Q1 2021, just under three-quarters (73%) entered a guilty plea¹¹. This remains higher than pre-COVID but represents a slight fall back from a series peak across Q2 and Q3 2020 (79%). The increase in the guilty plea rate reflects the restricted ability of courts to progress jury trials (i.e. cases where a not guilty plea is entered).

In Q1 2021, only 13% of all defendants dealt with at the Crown Court entered a not guilty plea. This represents a fall on Q1 2020 (17%) and is well below the series average (around 20%), with a higher proportion of defendants dealt with following the entry of a guilty plea.

Average waiting time at the Crown Court

The median waiting time¹² for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court was 7.9 weeks in Q1 2021. This represents an increase from 5.4 weeks in Q1 2020 and reverses the falls seen since Q2 2020 (7.3 weeks).

Median waiting times in ‘for trial’ cases where a not guilty plea was entered has stabilised at higher levels following sharp increases in the previous quarter (34.1 weeks in Q1 2021). The proportion of defendants dealt with following a not guilty plea remains below pre-COVID levels.

Average hearing time at the Crown Court

The median hearing time¹³ of ‘for trial’ cases where a not guilty plea was entered, was 12.4 hours, this has settled at a slightly higher level than pre-COVID (ranging from 10.4 to 12.1 hours). This is down on the series peak seen in Q2 2020 (15.0 hours), but volumes of not guilty plea cases being dealt with remain well below pre-COVID levels, down 20% from 2,271 in Q1 2020 to 1,825 in Q1 2021.

¹¹ Guilty plea rate is the number of defendants pleading guilty to all counts as a proportion of those with a plea.

¹² The waiting time is the duration between a case being sent to the Crown Court and the first main hearing.

¹³ The hearing time is the time a case spends being heard in the Crown Court, including preliminary hearings, main hearings, and hearings where a sentence is given to a defendant.

4. Timeliness

Timeliness at the magistrates' courts and Crown Court increased

The time from offence to completion at the magistrates' court increased by 14%, from 175 days in Q1 2020 to 200 days in Q1 2021. At the Crown Court, the time from receipt to completion for all cases increased by 23%, up from 96 days in Q1 2020 to 118 days in Q1 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused MoJ to have to change its data gathering, access and release practices, focusing efforts on priority analysis and statistics. [Our statement](#) explains this further. Of particular note, we temporarily paused access to the Police National Computer earlier this year, to minimise non-essential travel by our analysts.

New experimental statistics using a new data linking methodology have been developed using the Ministry of Justice's open-source statistical '[Splink](#)' package to provide updated end-to-end timeliness estimates for the first time since December 2019. Currently the data provides only national level estimates of timeliness from offence to completion for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court (Table T4). We will continue to develop the new linked end-to-end timeliness methodology and expand the available data to bring it back in line with the previous published series (e.g. by court, offence group and publication of all court estimates of timeliness).

Alongside the gradual development of the experimental statistics we will continue to try to best meet user demands via more granular data on separate ('unlinked') timeliness estimates for magistrates' courts and Crown Court.

- *Magistrates' court timeliness estimates (T1 – T3)* – providing estimates of the time from offence to completion for defendants dealt with at the magistrates' courts only.
- *Crown Court timeliness estimates (E1 – E2)* – providing estimates of the time from case receipt to completion for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court only.

Magistrates' courts timeliness

Timeliness at the magistrates' courts measures the time from an offence being committed through key stages of the criminal justice system including charge, first listing at the magistrates' court and subsequent completion at court.

The median duration from offence to completion of defendants dealt with at the magistrates' courts (excluding those sent to Crown Court) has increased by 14%, from 175 days in Q1 2020 to 200 days in Q1 2021.

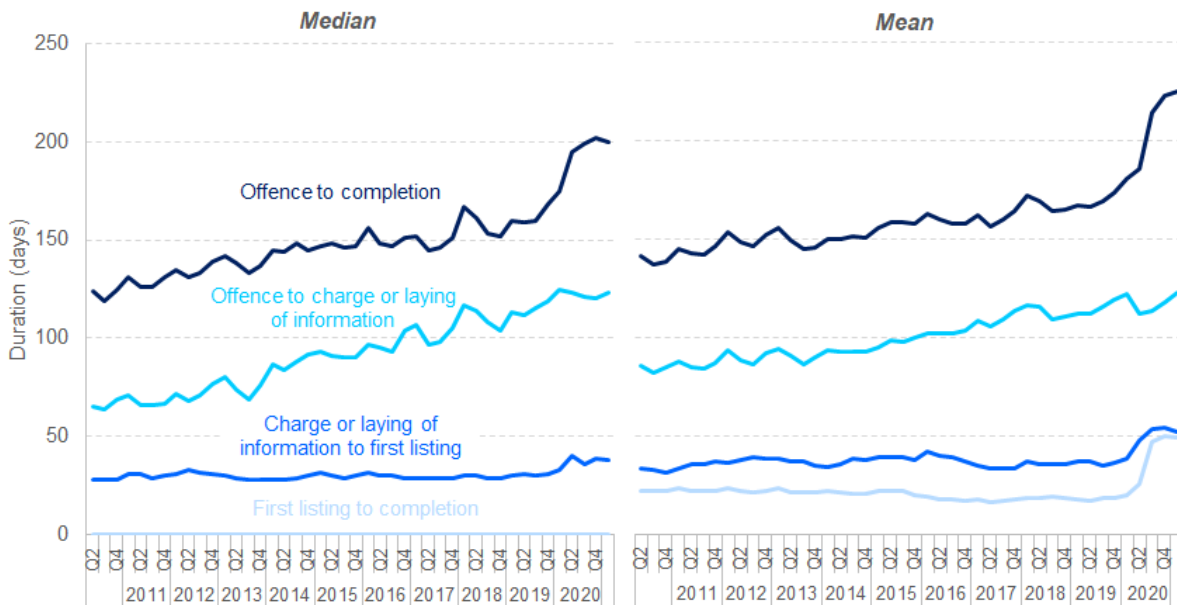
Increases in overall median timeliness can be seen across all case types to varying degrees, with marked increases seen for defendants in indictable (53%) and triable-either-way cases (104%).

The increases can be seen across all timeliness stages both 'pre-court' and 'at court'.

- 'Pre-court' time continued to increase. The duration from 'offence to charge' remained stable after increases broadly seen since 2010. The median time from 'charge to first listing' increased, up 15% on the previous year (from 33 to 38 days).
- 'At court' median duration remained stable at 0 days, where the first listing and completion occur on the same day. However, the mean duration for all cases has more than doubled (149%) from 20 days in Q1 2020 to 49 days in Q1 2021.
- Similarly, defendants completing at the magistrates' courts required more hearings on average to reach an outcome compared to the previous year, up from 1.5 in Q1 2020 to 2.0 in Q1 2021.

- The percentage of defendants who completed at first listing fell sharply on the previous year, down 13 percentage points to 61%, although this represents a 5-percentage point increase on the previous quarter (56%).

Figure 7: Average number of days from offence to completion for defendants dealt with at the magistrates' courts by stage, Q2 2010 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table T3)



Crown Court timeliness - experimental statistics

Timeliness at the Crown Court is measured from the point of a case entering a Crown Court, reaching a main hearing and then completion at court. This data series remains in development and as such it is considered 'experimental statistics'. Data presented here is not produced on the same basis as linked end-to-end timeliness data (see Tables T4).

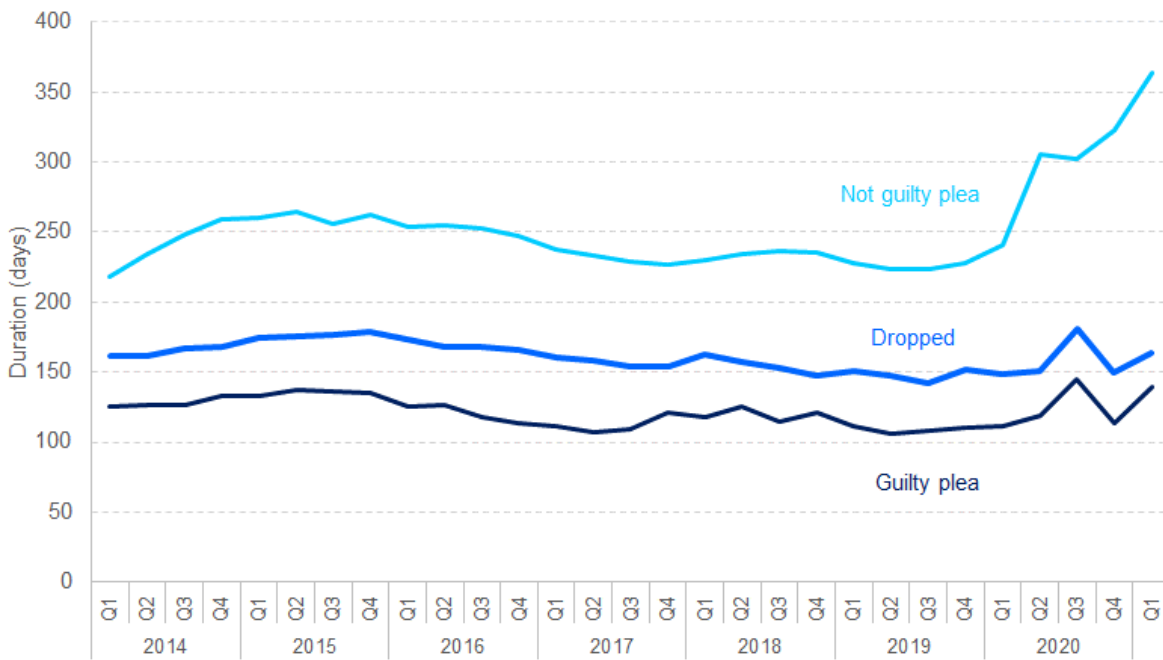
The median duration from case entry to completion for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court increased 23% on the previous year, up from 96 days in Q1 2020 to 118 days in Q1 2021.

Increases can be seen across both 'receipt to main hearing' (up 33% from 42 days in Q1 2020 to 56 days in Q1 2021) and 'main hearing to completion' (up 75% from 8 days in Q1 2020 to 14 days in Q1 2021).

The annual increase in overall median timeliness at the Crown Court can be seen across 'for trial' and sentence cases – up 9% and 40% respectively.

- In 'for trial' cases where a guilty plea was entered, the median duration from receipt to completion at the Crown Court increased by 25% from 111 days in Q1 2020 to 139 days in Q1 2021. Increases can be seen in the time from both receipt to main hearing (up 51%) and from main hearing to completion (up 29%).
- In 'for trial' cases where a not guilty plea was entered, the median duration from receipt to completion at the Crown Court increased by 51% from 241 days in Q1 2020 to 364 days in Q1 2021. This is due to a 39% increase in the time from receipt to main hearing, whereas the time from main hearing to completion fell by 14%.

Figure 8 – Median duration from receipt to completion in ‘for trial’ cases by plea at the Crown Court, Q1 2014 – Q1 2021 (Source: E2)

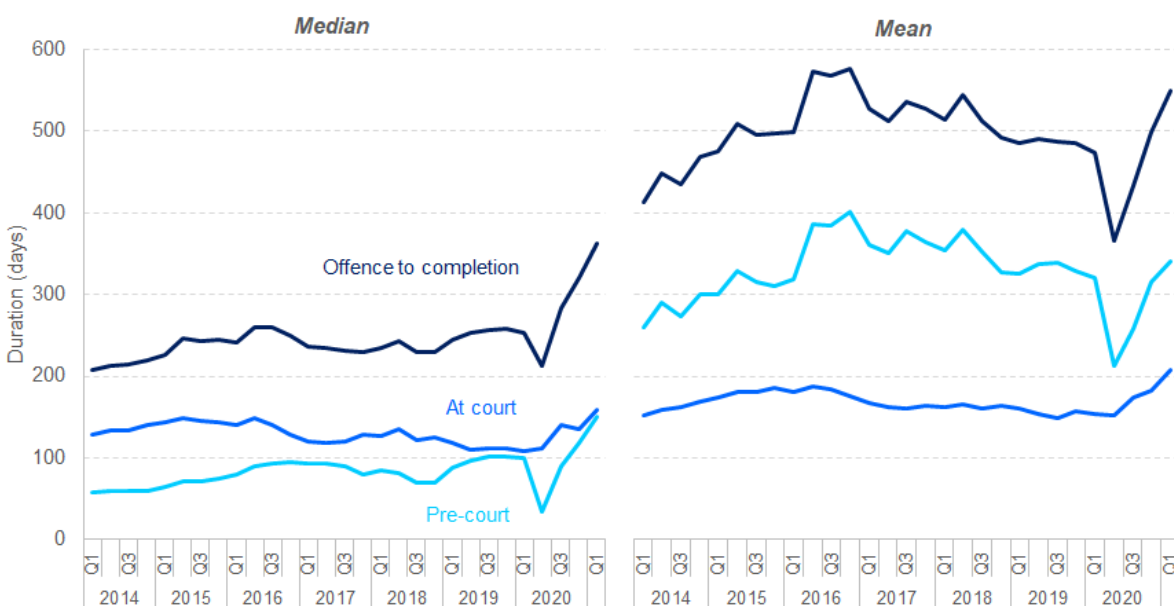


Linked end-to-end timeliness - experimental statistics

New experimental statistics using a new data linking methodology have been developed using the Ministry of Justices open-source statistical ‘Slink’ package to provide updated end-to-end timeliness estimates for the first time since December 2019.

The full series has been revised back as far as possible and replaces the previous rules based approach to data linking.

Figure 9 – Average number of days from offence to completion for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court, Q1 2014 – Q1 2021 (Source: T4)



In Q1 2021, it took 363 days from offence to completion for defendants dealt with at the Crown Court – this is the highest duration seen across the series (Q1 2014 - Q1 2021). The

latest median estimate represents an increase of 43% on the previous year (253 days in Q1 2020) and 13% on the previous quarter (321 days in Q4 2020).

Increases can be seen across both median and mean estimates in time spent 'pre-court' (e.g. from offence to first listing) and 'at court' (e.g. from first listing at the magistrates' courts to completion at the Crown Court)

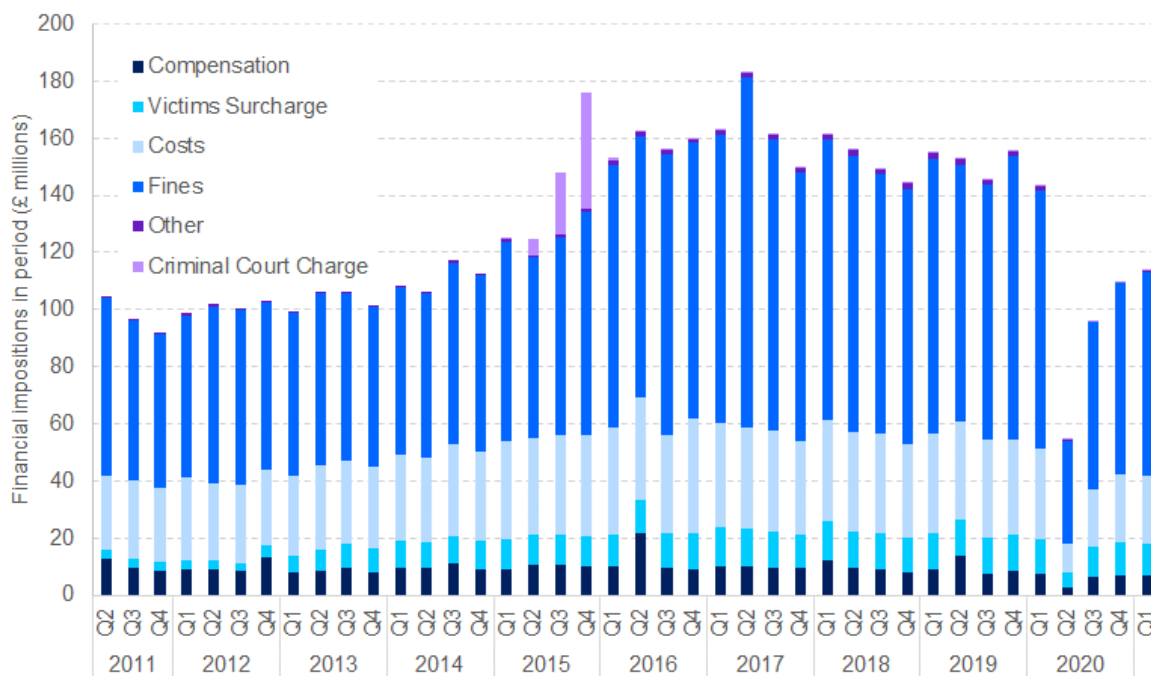
- Median 'pre-court' time increased by 51% from 100 days in Q1 2020 to 151 days in Q1 2021. While median 'at court' time increased by 46% over the same period, from 109 days to 159 days.

5. Enforcement of financial impositions

Total financial impositions continued to increase from series lows in Q2 2020, but remain well below pre-COVID levels.

Total financial impositions in Q1 2021 rose to £114m from £54m in Q2 2020 but remain 30% lower than Q1 2020. The total value of outstanding financial impositions remained at around £1.21 billion in Q1 2021 – stable over the last year.

Figure 10: HMCTS management information: Financial impositions by imposition type, England and Wales, Q2 2011 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table A2)



Financial impositions and amounts paid by imposition type

Following the continued impacts of the COVID-19 response the overall value of impositions remains below pre-COVID levels. In Q1 2021 the value of impositions rose by 4% on the previous quarter and more than double the series low seen in Q2 2020. The majority of this is largely due to increases in fines, where the value of fines imposed has doubled (from £35.9m in Q2 2020 to £71.4m in Q1 2021).

Outstanding financial impositions

In Q1 2021, the total value of financial impositions outstanding in England and Wales was £1.21 billion, maintaining levels seen since Q4 2019.

The amount of outstanding financial impositions has doubled since the start of 2015 (£571m). A change in policy regarding the collection of financial impositions is partially behind this cumulative increase – unpaid accounts are no longer routinely closed and therefore, more outstanding impositions are carried over from previous periods.

6. Experimental Statistics - language interpreter and translation services

The number of completed language service requests increased on the previous quarter and the success rate remained stable.

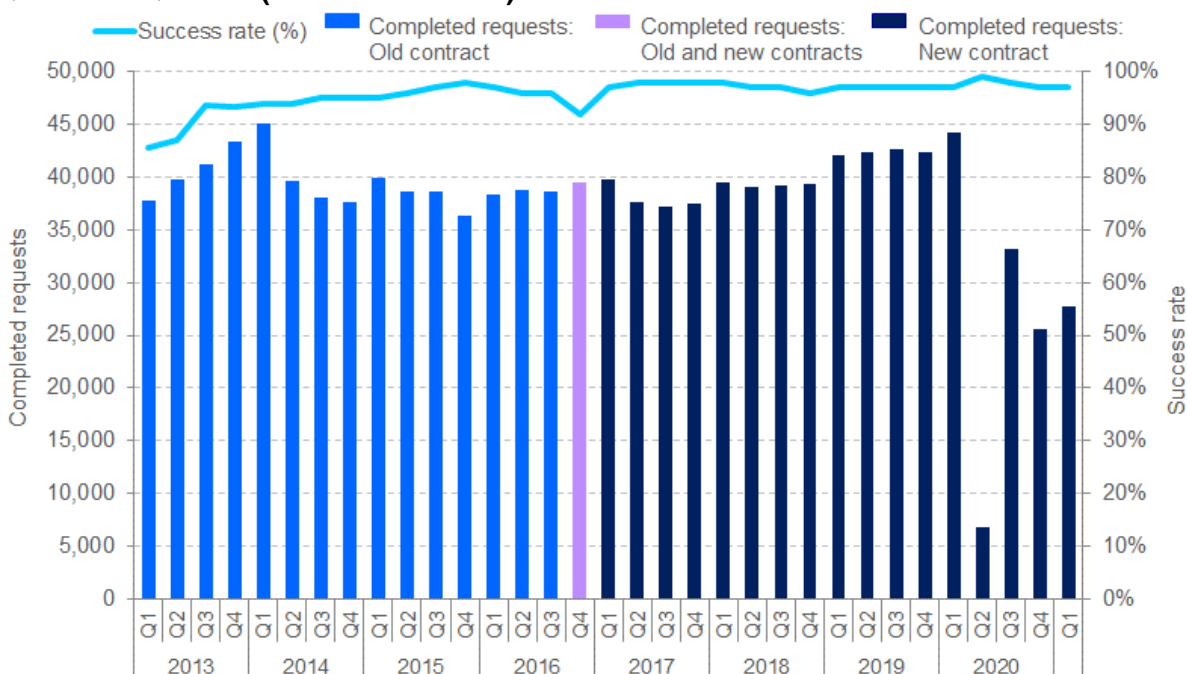
There were 27,782 completed requests in Q1 2021, up 9% on the previous quarter. The success rate for requests was 97%, stable with the previous year.

The reduction in overall volumes of language service requests and complaints, as a consequence of the restrictions on court activity imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic response make it difficult to draw any firm conclusions regarding the observed trends.

Completed service requests

There were 27,782 completed requests in Q1 2021, up 9% on the previous quarter (25,580) and remaining below volumes from the previous year (44,184).

Figure 11: Number of completed language service requests and overall success rate, Q1 2013 – Q1 2021 (Source: Table L1)



Success rate

The overall success rate of requests was 97% in Q1 2021, this is similar to rates seen since 2017. The increases in cancellations seen in Q2 2020 (34%) have fallen back closer to pre-COVID proportions (20% in Q1 2021).

Complaints and complaint rate

Unlike completed service requests, the number of complaints has remained very low since Q2 2020, with only 49 complaints made in Q1 2021. This represents a 89% decrease on volumes of complaints seen in Q1 2020 (436) and the overall complaint rate has remained well below 1%.

'Off-contract' requests

The number of 'off-contract' requests in Q1 2021 fell back on levels seen since a series low in Q2 2020. There 252 requests, 63% down on Q1 2020 and 48% on Q4 2020.

7. Further information on criminal courts data

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

Accompanying files

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

- Two technical guides providing background information and standalone quality guide.
- A set of overview tables, covering each section of this bulletin.
- Pivot tools and underlying data which feature further breakdowns of published data.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value. This bulletin recently underwent a compliance check with the Office for Statistics Regulation and retained its National Statistics status in January 2019.¹⁴ 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 which 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.

Experimental Statistics status

Experimental statistics are produced under the remit of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are also produced impartially and are free from political influence¹⁵.



Future publications

Our statisticians regularly review the content of publications. Development of new and improved statistical outputs is usually dependent on reallocating existing resources. As part of our continual review and prioritisation, we welcome user feedback on existing outputs including content, breadth, frequency and methodology. Please send any comments you have on this publication including suggestions for further developments or reductions in content to the contacts listed below.

Contact

Press enquiries should be directed to the Ministry of Justice press office:

Tel: 020 3334 3536 Email: newsdesk@justice.gov.uk

Other enquiries and feedback about these statistics should be directed to the Justice Statistics Analytical Services division of the Ministry of Justice:

Damon Wingfield, Head of Criminal Justice System Statistics, Ministry of Justice, 10 South Colonnade, London, E14 4PU Email: statistics.enquiries@justice.gov.uk

Next update: 30th September 2021

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

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Alternative formats are available on request from statistics.enquiries@justice.gov.uk

¹⁴ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/correspondence/compliance-check-on-court-statistics/>

¹⁵ <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/monitoring-and-assessment/code-of-practice/>