



Ministry
of Justice

Probate, financial remedy, OCMC and SSCS data update

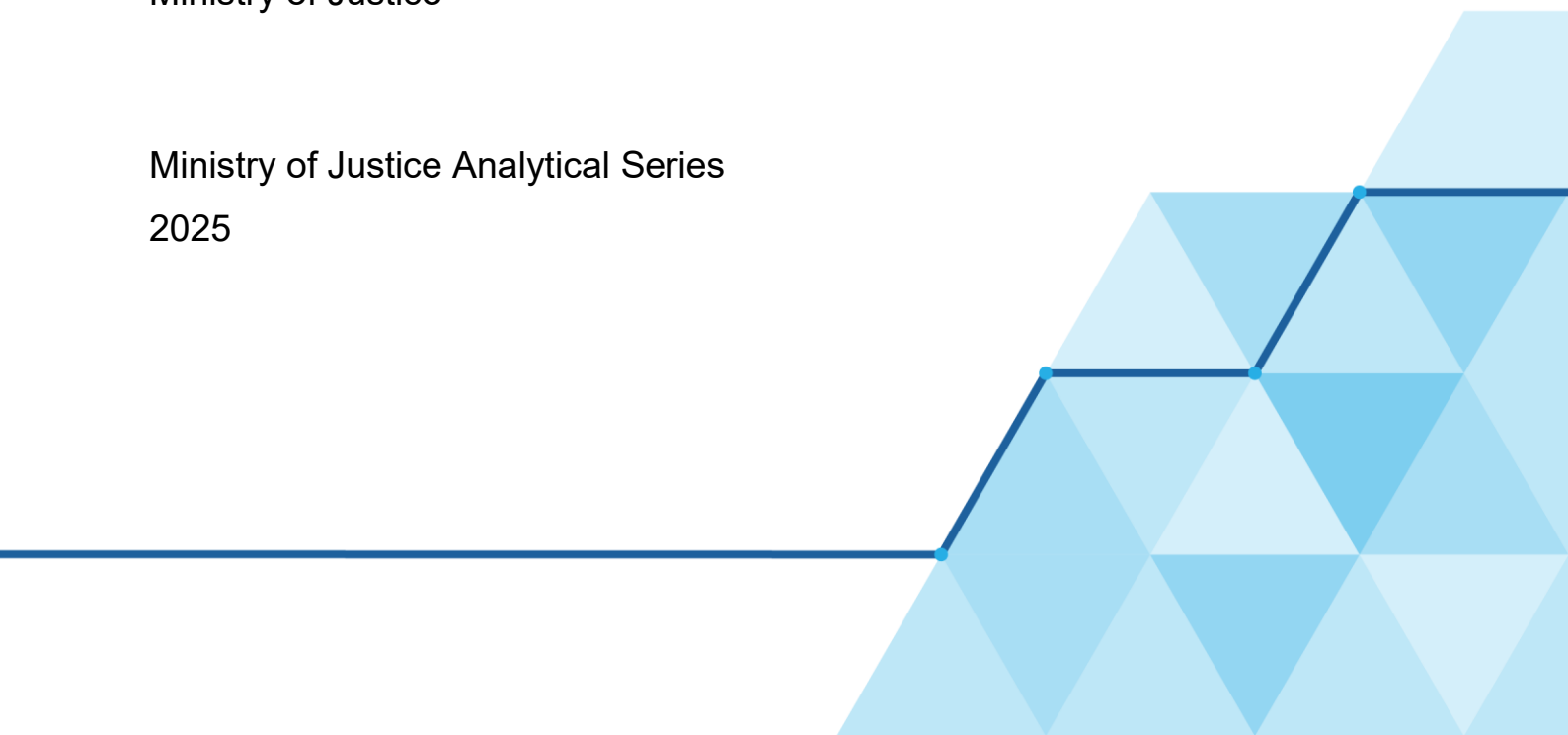
Annex to the HMCTS Reform digital services evaluation

Selina Keeton, Liz Lovering, Kath Jones, and Dan Hepner

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Justice Analytical Series

2025



Analysis exists to improve policy making, decision taking and practice by the Ministry of Justice. It does this by providing robust, timely and relevant data and advice drawn from research and analysis undertaken by the department's analysts and by the wider research community.

Disclaimer

The views expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily shared by the Ministry of Justice (nor do they represent Government policy).

First published 2025



© Crown copyright 2025

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

Evidence_partnerships@justice.gov.uk

This publication is available for download at

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/research-and-analysis/moj>

ISBN 978 1 911691 80 8

Contents

1.	Introduction	4
2.	The probate service	5
2.1	Digital service uptake	5
2.2	Case management outcomes	6
2.3	User and administrative errors	8
3.	The financial remedy (FR) service	11
3.1	Digital service uptake	11
3.2	Case management outcomes	12
4.	The Online Civil Money Claims (OCMC) service	14
4.1	Digital service volumes	14
4.2	Case management outcomes	14
5.	The Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) service	19
5.1	Digital service uptake	19
5.2	Case management outcomes	21
6.	Service specific data limitations	26

List of figures

Figure 1	Public users, quarterly probate case volumes by channel: Q2 2019 to Q2 2024	5
Figure 2	Probate professionals, quarterly probate case volumes by channel: Q2 2019 to Q2 2024	5
Figure 3	Public users, monthly average (mean) probate case duration: March 2019 to June 2024	7
Figure 4	Probate professionals, monthly probate case average (mean) duration: October 2019 to June May 2024	8
Figure 5	Public users, proportion of probate cases with at least one stoppage: April 2019 to June 2024	9
Figure 6	Public users, proportion of probate cases withdrawn: April 2019 to June 2022	9
Figure 7	Probate professionals, proportion of probate cases with at least one stoppage: October 2019 to June 2024	10
Figure 8	Probate professionals, proportion of probate cases withdrawn: October 2019 to June 2024	10
Figure 9	Quarterly case volumes by channel, represented consented financial remedy cases: Q3 2017 to Q2 2024	11
Figure 11	Disposed and non-disposed cases, represented consented financial remedy cases: Q3 2017 to Q2 2024	13
Figure 12	Quarterly OCMC case volumes: Q4 2019 to Q2 2024	14
Figure 13	Monthly average (mean) duration of OCMC cases ending in a default judgment (days): Nov 2019 to June 2024	15
Figure 14	Monthly average (mean) duration of OCMC cases that settled pre-judgment (days): Nov 2019 to June 2024	16
Figure 15	Monthly average (mean) duration between OCMC case issue to first full hearing (days): Nov 2019 to May 2024	16
Figure 16	Quarterly share of mediation referrals by OCMC case outcome: Q4 2019 to Q2 2024	17
Figure 17	Proportion of total mediation referrals by ethnicity	18
Figure 21	PIP (left) and UC (right) cases, proportion of cases disposed at hearing and cases that lapsed without a hearing: Q1 2017 to Q2 2024	25

1. Introduction

This document updates some of the Management Information (MI) data from the digital services evaluation. As set out in the overarching evaluation report¹ (section 3 on timelines and scope), the evaluation was conducted in two phases due to the differences in rollout dates across different services. The first phase of research took place in September 2022-April 2023. It included the impact evaluation for probate, financial remedy (FR), Online Civil Money Claims (OCMC) and Social Security and Child Support (SSCS). Findings for these individual services are published in supplementary reports alongside the overarching report.

The MI data included in these original analyses covered the period up to September 2022 for each service. This annex presents updated trends to June 2024. This is not a substantive update to the independent analysis conducted by Frontier Economics reported in the main publications.

Since the original analysis, there have been some changes in database structures and processing of some data fields within case management systems. As such there may be some discrepancies in the MI figures in this document and those included in the analysis conducted by Frontier Economics and IFF Research. Where these arise, they are outlined in brief at the end of this annex. These discrepancies have minimal impact on the overall trends observed in the data, but differences in individual datapoints should be interpreted with caution.

¹ [HM Courts & Tribunals Service Reform: Digital Services Evaluation - GOV.UK](#)

2. The probate service

2.1 Digital service uptake

Figures 1 and 2 show digital service uptake amongst public users and probate professionals. The data suggests increased uptake across both groups has steadily continued after Q3 2022 (the end date of the Probate MI analysis in overarching and supplementary reports).

Figure 1 Public users, quarterly probate case volumes by channel: Q2 2019 to Q2 2024

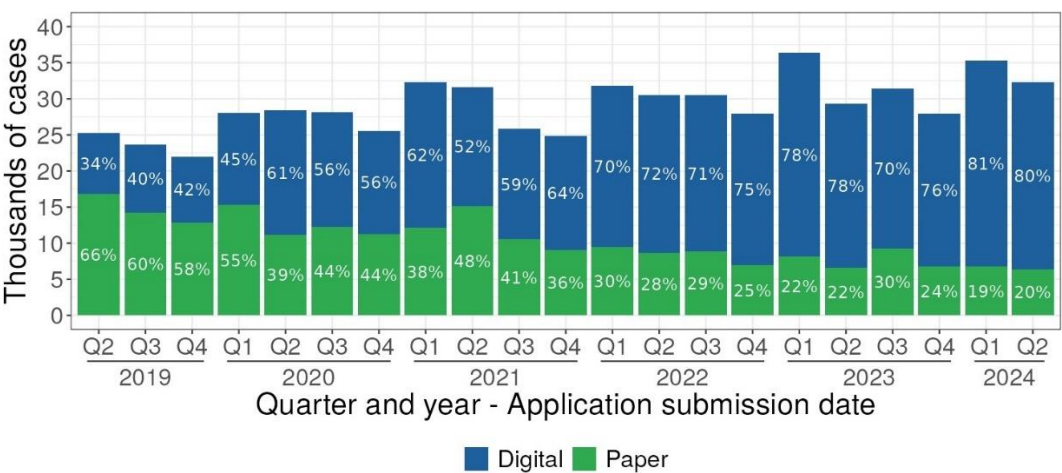
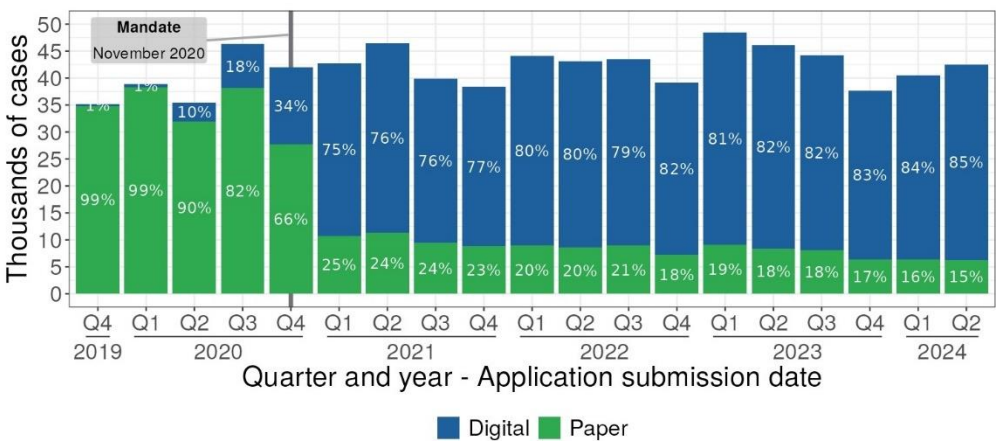


Figure 2 Probate professionals, quarterly probate case volumes by channel: Q2 2019 to Q2 2024



2.2 Case management outcomes

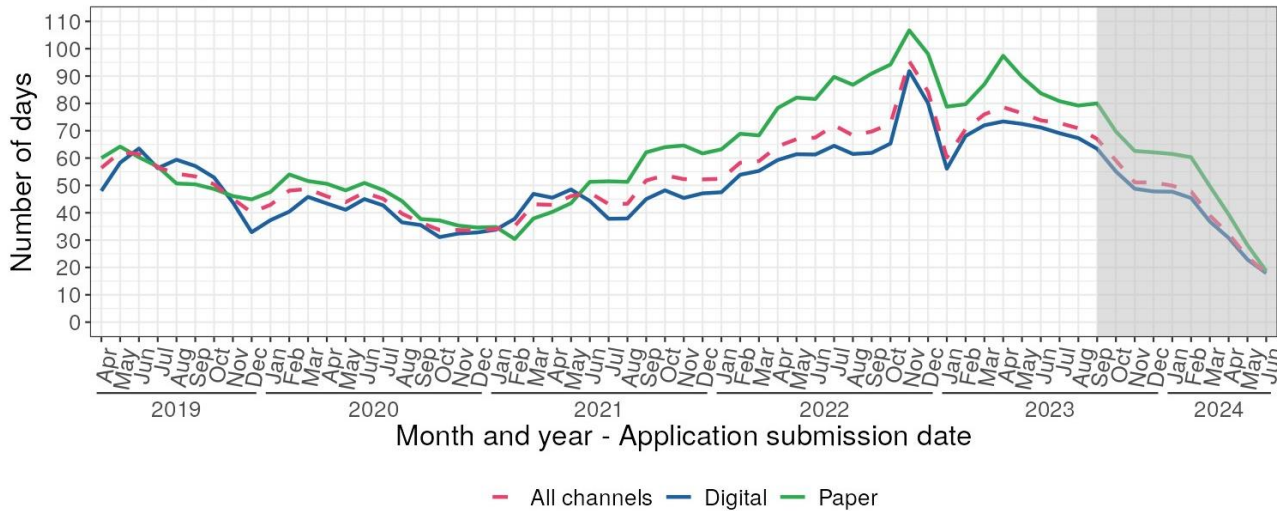
For both public and probate professional users, average case duration for digital cases has been shorter than for paper cases (Figures 3 and 4). There has however been an increase in average case duration post reform, for both public and probate professional users.² Amongst public users there was a substantial increase in case duration during 2022, which began to fall in 2023. However, amongst probate professionals, average digital case duration remained stable immediately after reform but rose in 2023.

Duration lengths for more recent probate cases (shaded in grey in the figures) will be biased towards shorter case lengths, having had less time to reach an outcome. Many cases submitted during this period had not completed at the time the data were extracted.

Figure 3 shows that the average case duration for public users using the digital channel has remained shorter than for the paper channel since May 2021. Average case duration for public users in both digital and paper channels increased from mid-2021 to the end of 2022. After this point, case durations across both channels have fallen on average.

² In July 2023 HMCTS implemented a Probate Recovery plan to address the increase in caseload and case duration.

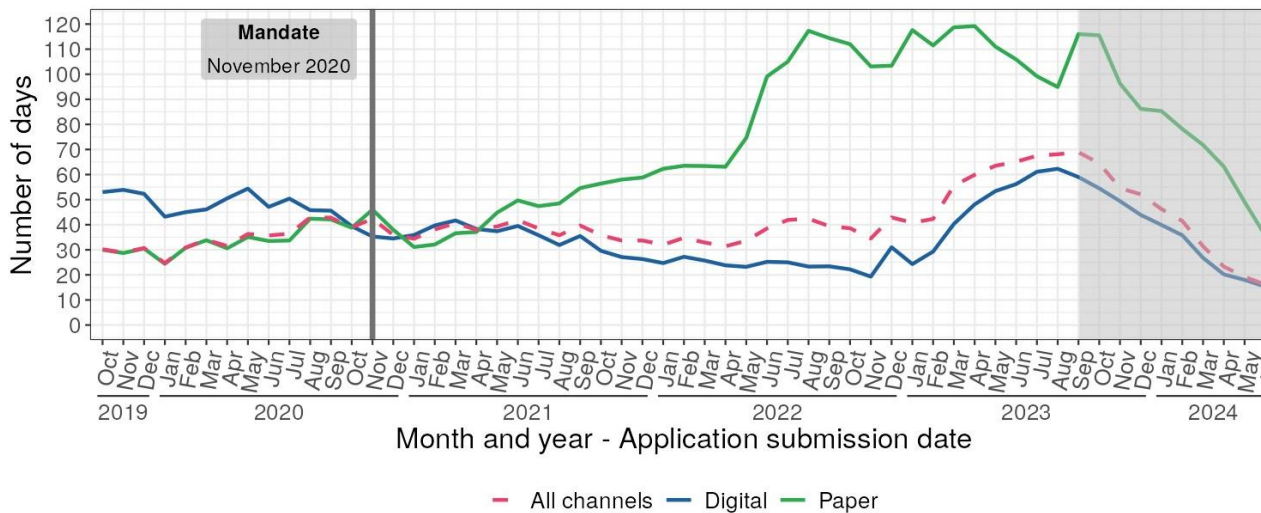
Figure 3 Public users, monthly average (mean) probate case duration: March 2019 to June 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from September 2023) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to a high proportion of outstanding cases

Figure 4 shows that for probate professionals there has been a growing difference in monthly average case durations between the digital and paper channels since April 2021, with duration of digital cases being substantially shorter. Paper cases include the most complex cases not eligible for the digital channel which are likely to have longer case durations. This will increase the average paper case duration overall as an increasing number of simple, shorter probate cases are dealt with via the digital channel. From December 2022 onwards there has been an increase in digital case duration. The average case duration has been higher since early 2023 than it was before reform for probate professionals.

Figure 4 Probate professionals, monthly probate case average (mean) duration: October 2019 to June May 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from September 2023 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases.

2.3 User and administrative errors

Figures 5-8 set out data on whether the probate case was stopped at least once ('stopped cases') or withdrawn, for public users and for probate professionals. Case stoppages and withdrawals for public users (digital and paper) remained mostly stable pre- and post-reform. For probate professionals, the proportion of stoppages and withdrawals for cases in the digital service was lower than for paper cases and remained low and stable in the digital service from mid-2022 onwards.

Figure 5 shows that the probate digital service had a consistently lower stoppage rate than the paper service for public users from early 2022 onwards. This contrasts with the early phases of rollout where digital cases had a higher stoppage rate than paper cases.

Figure 5 Public users, proportion of probate cases with at least one stoppage: April 2019 to June 2024

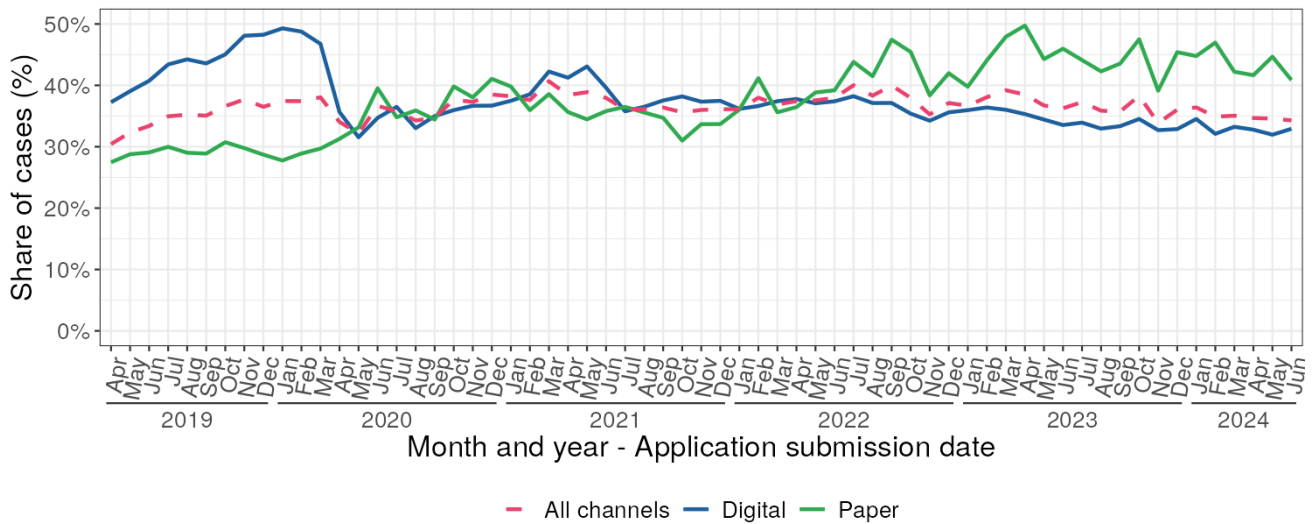


Figure 6 shows that the share of public user digital cases that were withdrawn has been consistently lower than paper case withdrawals.

Figure 6 Public users, proportion of probate cases withdrawn: April 2019 to June 2022

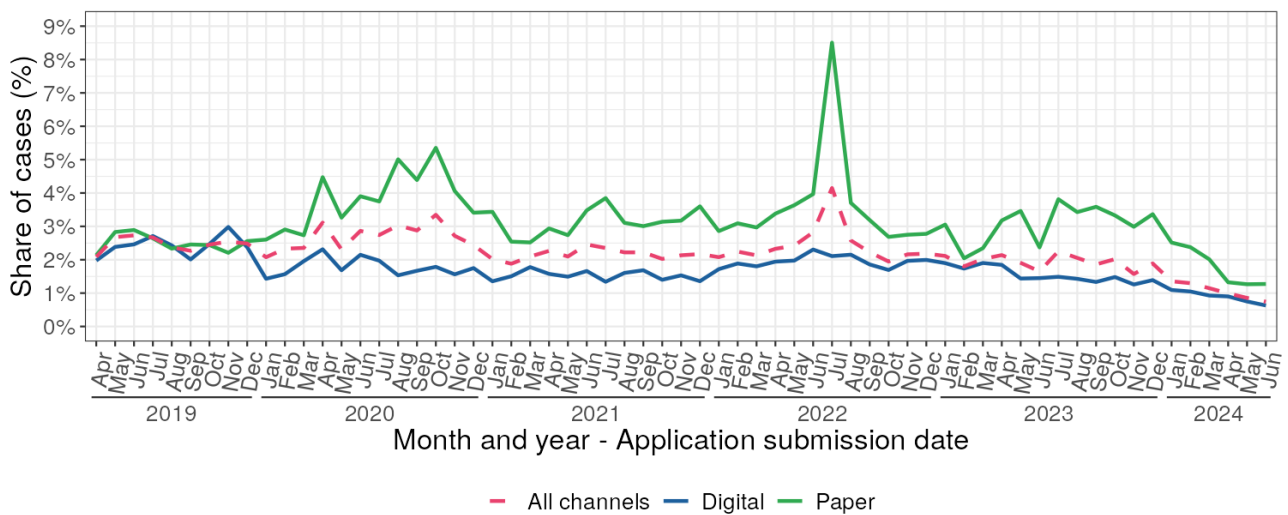
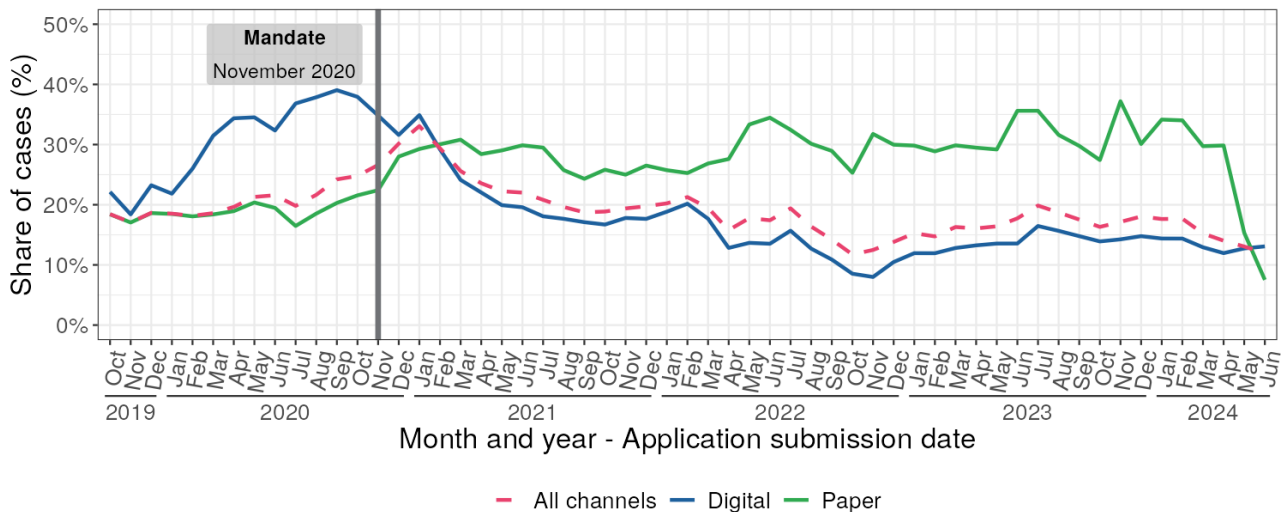


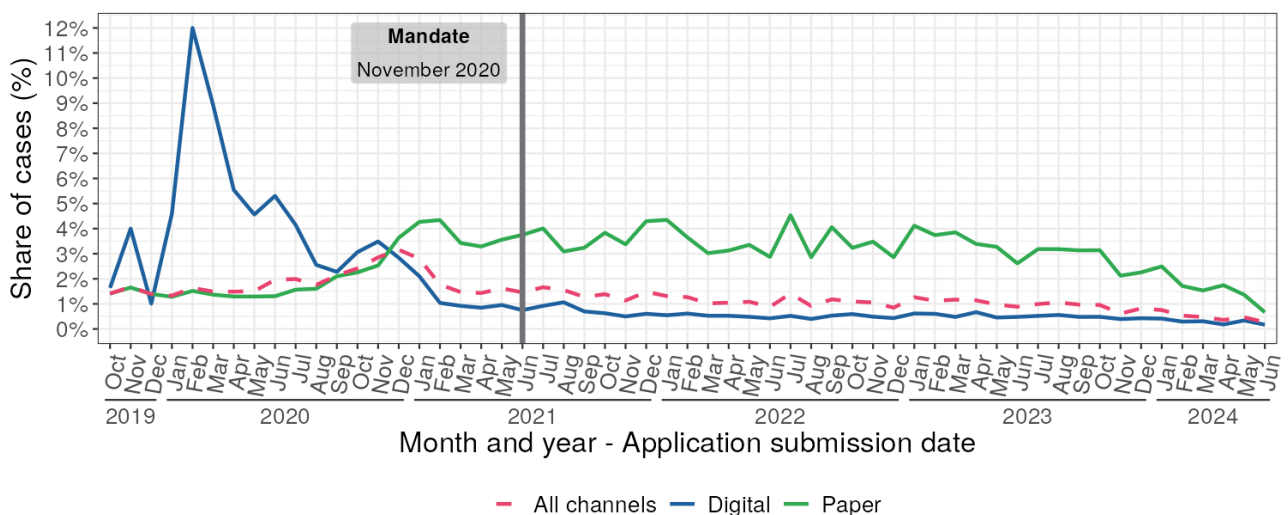
Figure 7 shows that digital case stoppage rates for probate professionals remained lower than paper case stoppage rates and were mostly steady from mid-2022 to June 2024.

Figure 7 Probate professionals, proportion of probate cases with at least one stoppage: October 2019 to June 2024



The trend in case withdrawal rates (Figure 8) was similar to the trend in case stoppage rates for probate professionals. The proportion of withdrawn digital cases was lower than paper case withdrawals and has remained below 1% of cases since September 2021.

Figure 8 Probate professionals, proportion of probate cases withdrawn: October 2019 to June 2024

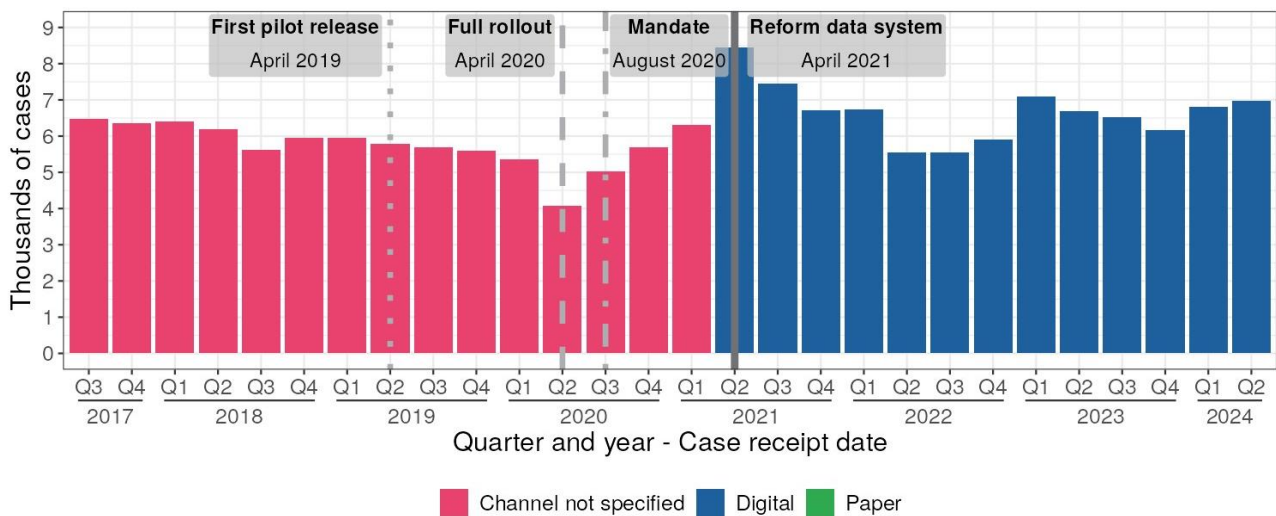


3. The financial remedy (FR) service

3.1 Digital service uptake

Figure 9 shows digital service uptake for represented consented financial remedy cases, broken down by the channel (digital or paper) used. Between April 2021 (when data on the channel used became available) and Q4 2022, less than 0.1% of the represented consented cases were submitted on paper (this is too small to be visible in the chart). This trend has continued since Q4 2022, with almost all cases submitted digitally.

Figure 9 Quarterly case volumes by channel, represented consented financial remedy cases: Q3 2017 to Q2 2024

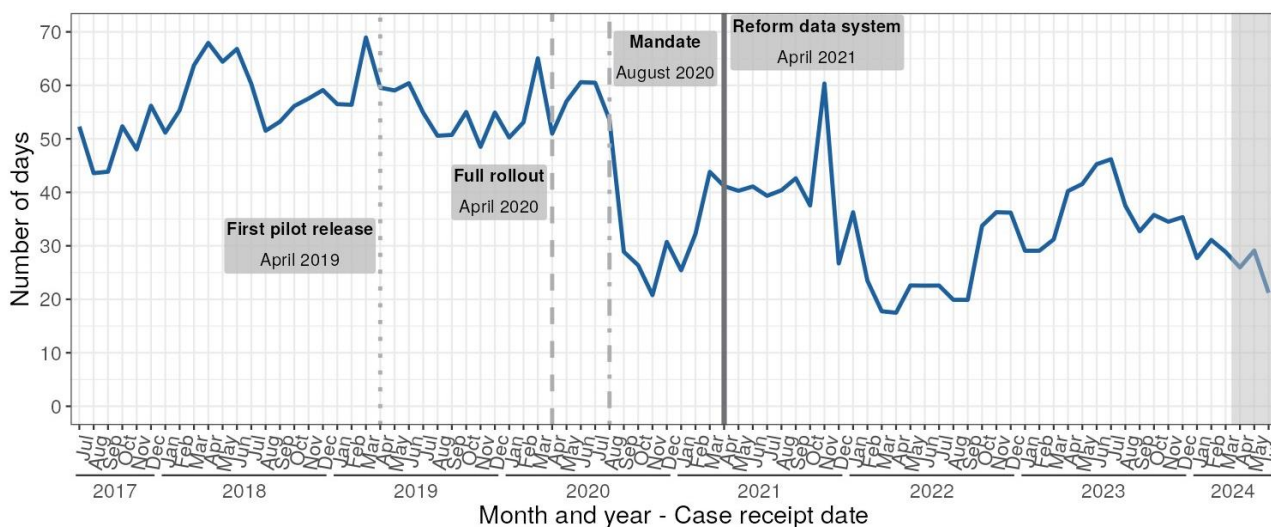


3.2 Case management outcomes

Figure 10 shows the average duration of disposed consented financial remedy cases (with legal representation). A decrease in the average duration of consented cases from August 2020 coincided with the introduction of the mandate for legal professionals to use the digital FR service. Following a slight increase in average case duration in August 2022, this trend has been somewhat volatile.

Duration lengths for more recent FR cases (shaded in grey in the figures) will be biased towards shorter case lengths, having had less time to reach an outcome. Many cases submitted during this period had not completed at the time the data was extracted.

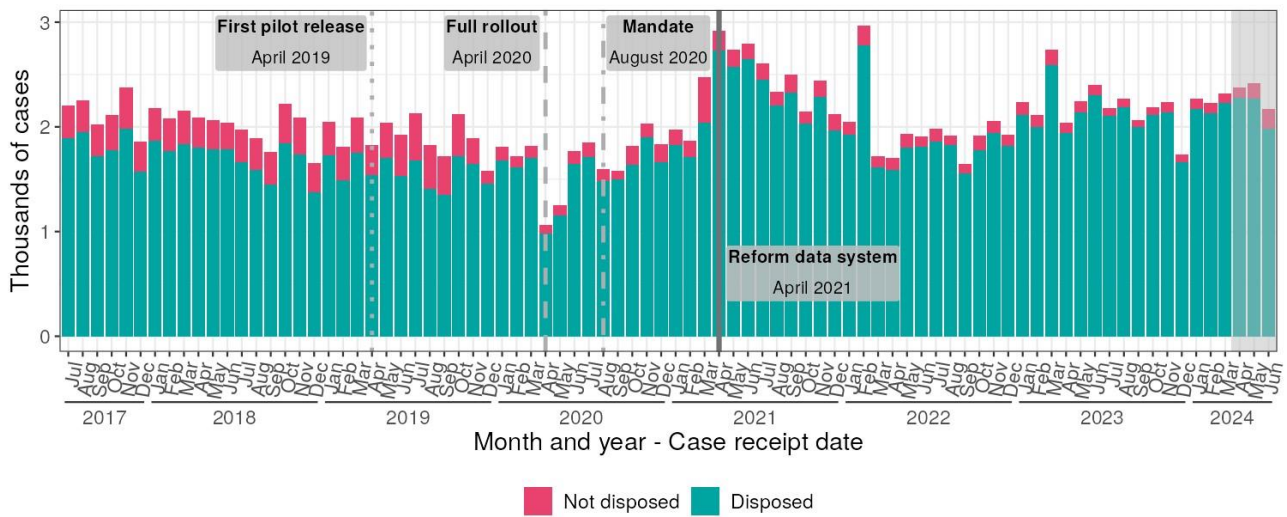
Figure 10 Average (mean) duration of disposed, represented consented financial remedy cases: Q3 2017 to Q2 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from March 2024 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases.

Figure 11 shows that the proportion of FR consented cases that have been disposed has increased over the analysis period and remained consistently above previous levels from 2021.

Figure 11 Disposed and non-disposed cases, represented consented financial remedy cases: Q3 2017 to Q2 2024



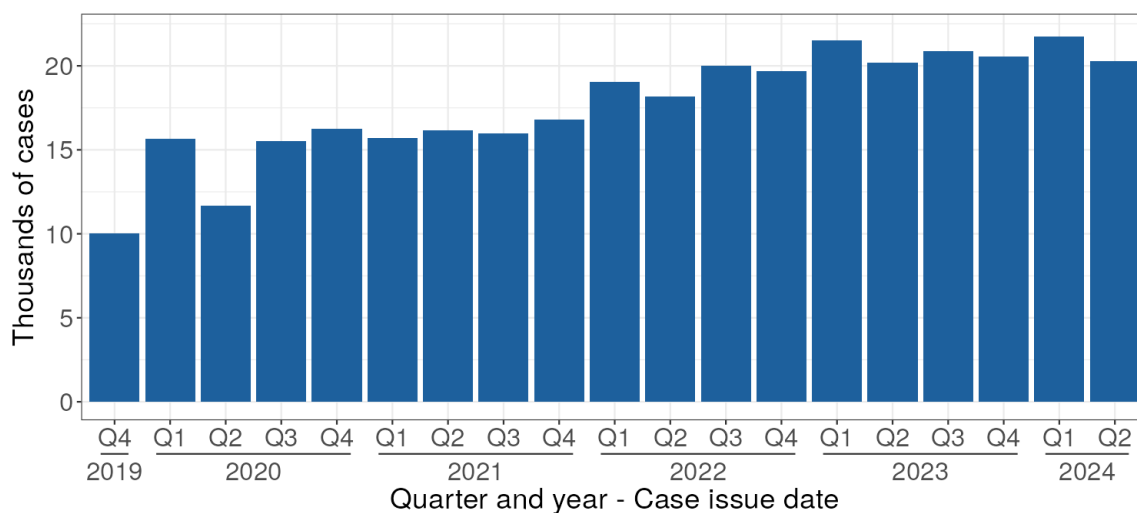
Note: Grey-shaded areas (from March 2024 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases.

4. The Online Civil Money Claims (OCMC) service

4.1 Digital service volumes

Figure 12 shows a modestly increasing trend in digital uptake in the OCMC service. Case volumes remained stable from 2022 onwards.³

Figure 12 Quarterly OCMC case volumes: Q4 2019 to Q2 2024



4.2 Case management outcomes

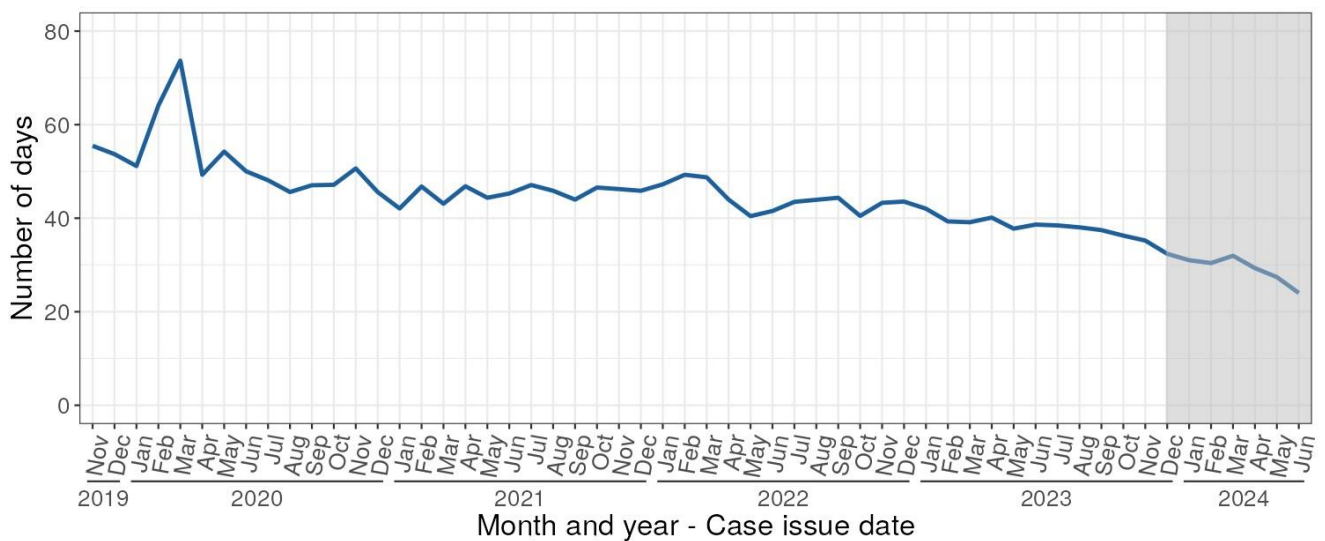
OCMC cases can have several case outcomes (detailed in the OCMC digital service evaluation report).⁴ For default judgments, Figure 13 shows that timeliness improved following reform and has continued to modestly improve from 2022 onwards.

³ The data shown for OCMC in this annex includes represented and non-represented cases submitted to the OCMC service both online, and on paper and subsequently bulk-scanned into the system. See the OCMC supplementary report for more information, available here: [HM Courts & Tribunals Service Reform: Digital Services Evaluation - GOV.UK](#)

⁴ Available at: [HM Courts & Tribunals Service Reform: Digital Services Evaluation - GOV.UK](#)

Duration lengths for more recent cases (shaded in grey in the figures) will be biased towards shorter case lengths, having had less time to reach an outcome. Many cases submitted during this period had not completed at the time the data were extracted.

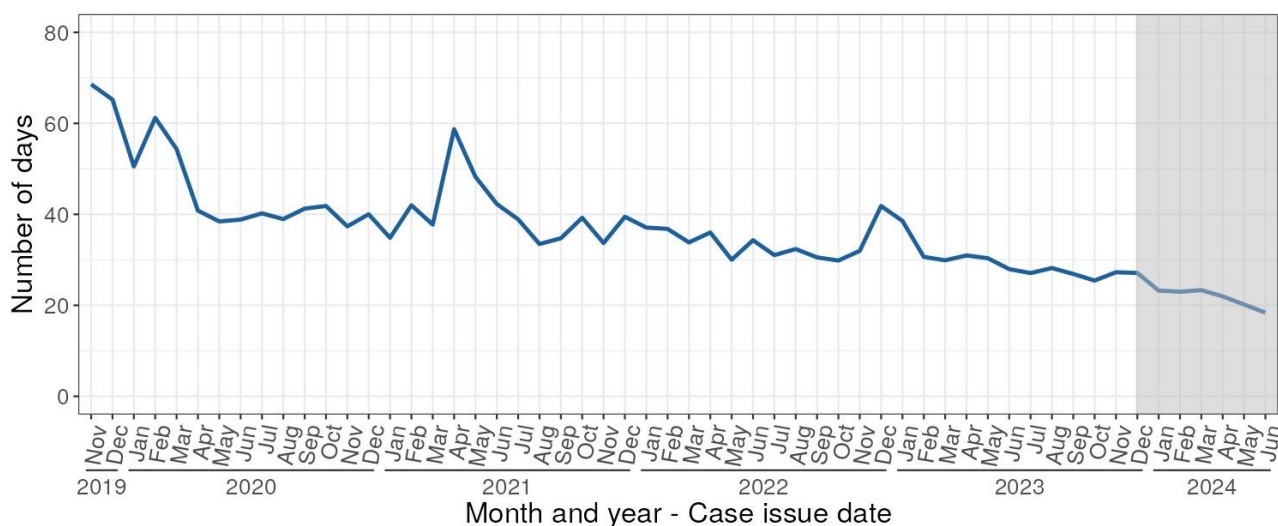
Figure 13 Monthly average (mean) duration of OCMC cases ending in a default judgment (days): Nov 2019 to June 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from March 2024 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases.

For cases reaching a settlement pre-judgment, the average case duration has decreased overall post-reform and continued to fall modestly in 2023. Case duration increased in April 2021 and December 2022 but consistently reduced after these months.

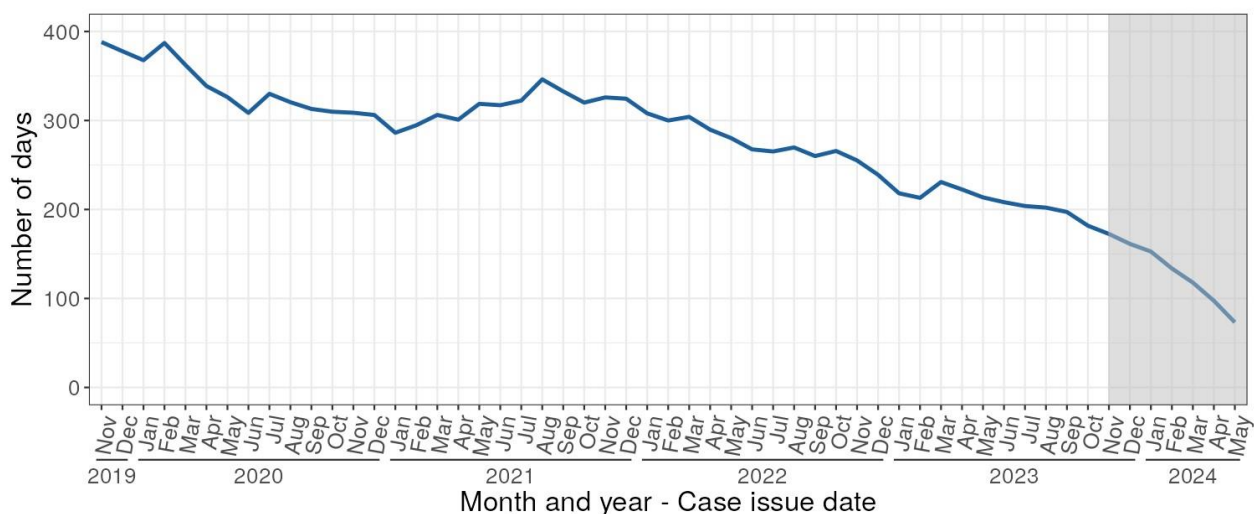
Figure 14 Monthly average (mean) duration of OCMC cases that settled pre-judgment (days): Nov 2019 to June 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from December 2023 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases

Figure 15 shows the average duration from an OCMC case being issued to the first full hearing (for court cases only). The average time from the case being issued to the first full hearing has continued to decrease since mid-2021.

Figure 15 Monthly average (mean) duration between OCMC case issue to first full hearing (days): Nov 2019 to May 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from November 2023 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases

Figure 16 shows that the share of OCMC cases that are referred to mediation remained similar from Q3 2021 to Q2 2022, followed by a small decrease. The percentage of cases settled through mediation has stayed consistently between 4% and 6% since Q2 2020.

Figure 16 Quarterly share of mediation referrals by OCMC case outcome: Q4 2019 to Q2 2024

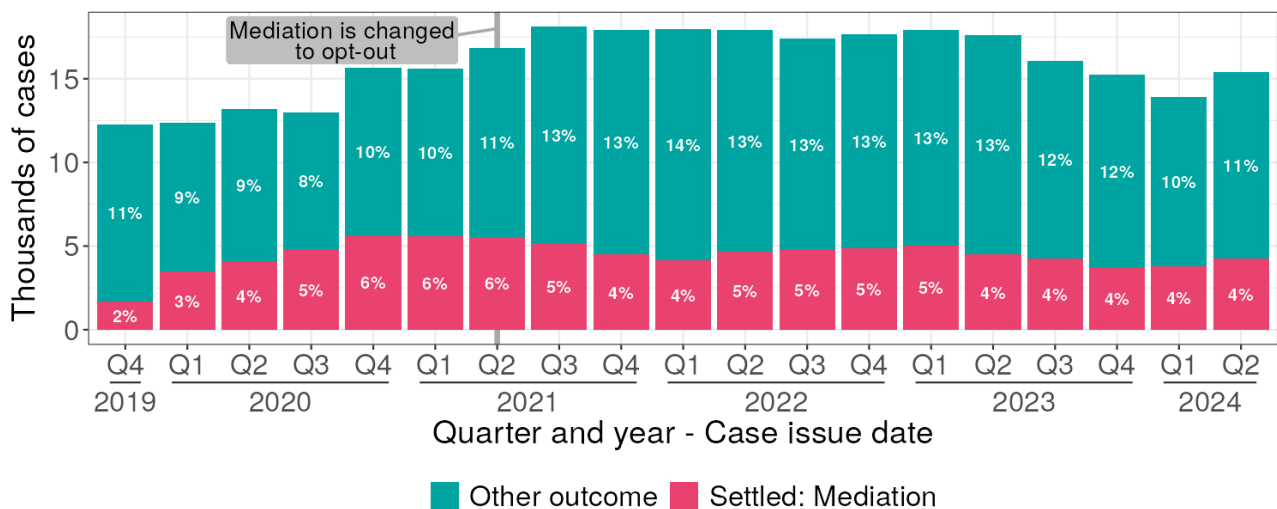
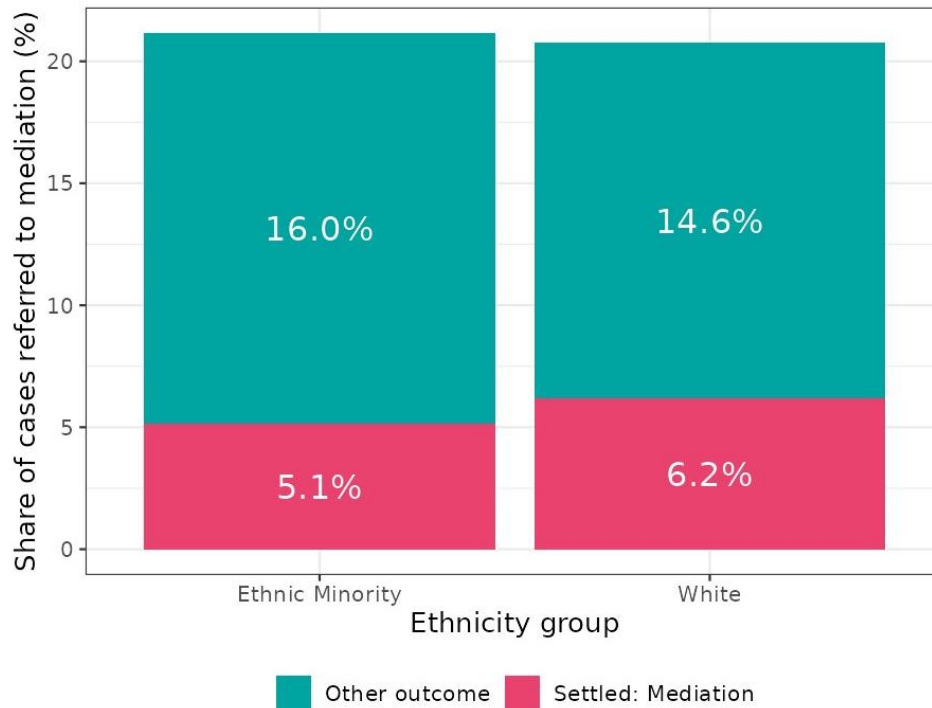


Figure 17 shows that OCMC users from ethnic minority backgrounds up to June 2024 were referred to mediation at a similar or slightly higher rate than white claimants (21.1% compared to 20.8%). However, they were marginally less likely than white claimants to experience a successful mediation (5.1% of all cases compared to 6.2%). This is consistent with the findings for the period for July 2020 to October 2022 presented in the OCMC supplementary report.⁵

⁵ Available at: [HM Courts & Tribunals Service Reform: Digital Services Evaluation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/research-and-evaluation/digital-services-evaluation/hm-courts-and-tribunals-service-reform-digital-services-evaluation)

Figure 17 Proportion of total mediation referrals by ethnicity



Note: Data from Protected Characteristics Questionnaires (PCQs). Low response rates to PCQs mean that findings should be interpreted with caution, and reflective only of those who complete them. Further information on PCQ data and its limitations can be found in the overarching and supplementary reports published alongside this annex.⁶

⁶ Available at: [HM Courts & Tribunals Service Reform: Digital Services Evaluation - GOV.UK](#)

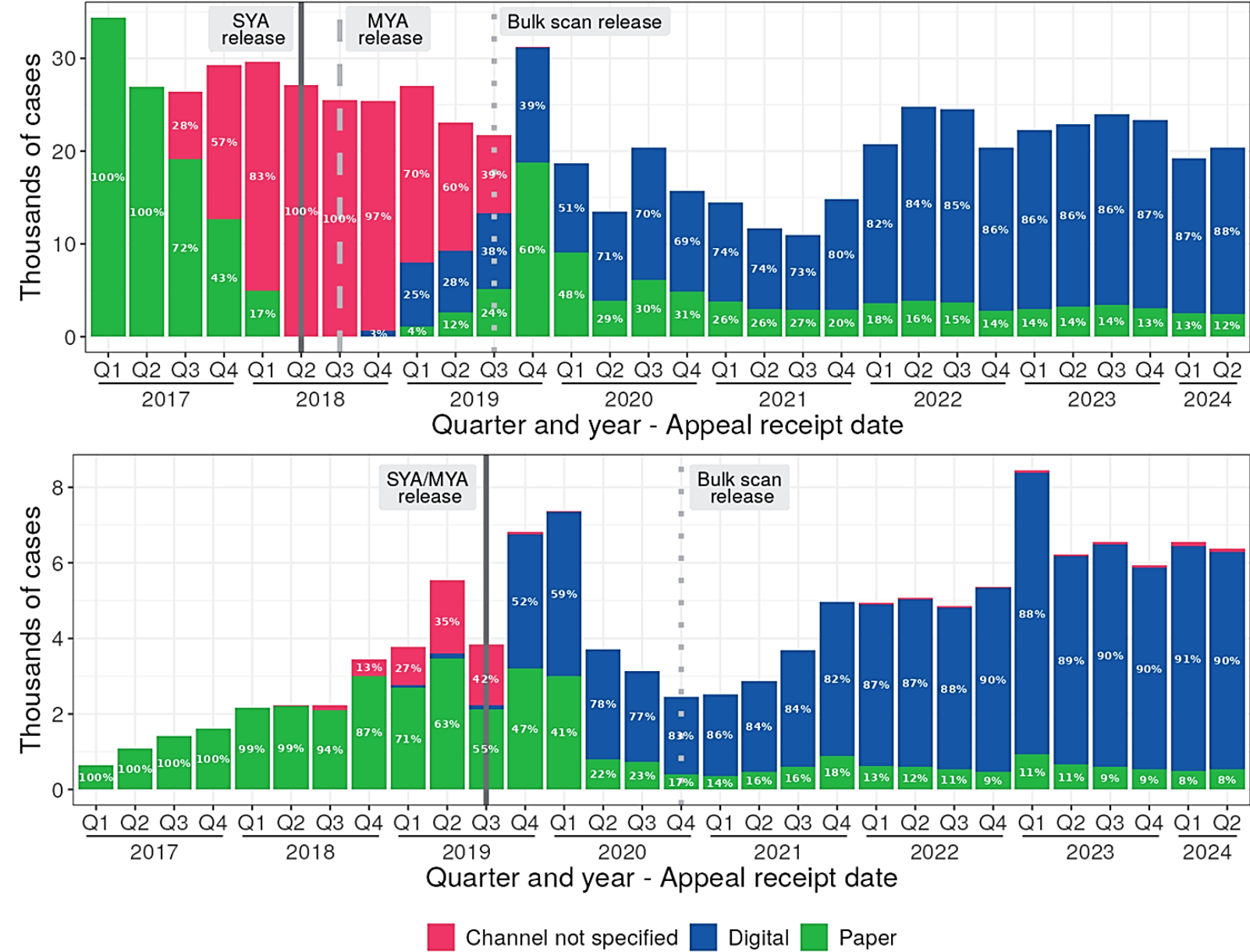
5. The Social Security and Child Support (SSCS) service

5.1 Digital service uptake

Figure 18 shows that the digital uptake for Personal Independence Payments appeals (PIP, top chart) increased slowly following the phased rollout of MYA and SYA starting in mid-2018. From Q4 2019 uptake increased considerably and has stabilised between 86-88% from Q4 2022 onwards. Universal Credit appeals (UC, bottom chart) increased more rapidly after the rollout of Manage Your Appeal (MYA) and Submit Your Appeal (SYA) in Q3 2019. Since this time, there has been a continued increase in uptake which has remained at 88% and higher from Q4 2022 onwards.⁷

⁷ Data includes unrepresented cases only. The SSCS service had not at the time of analysis been made available to legal representatives.

Figure 18 PIP (top) and UC (bottom), quarterly case volumes by channel: Q1 2017 to Q2 2024



5.2 Case management outcomes

From the start of 2021, paper cases have consistently had average longer case durations than digital cases for both PIP and UC.

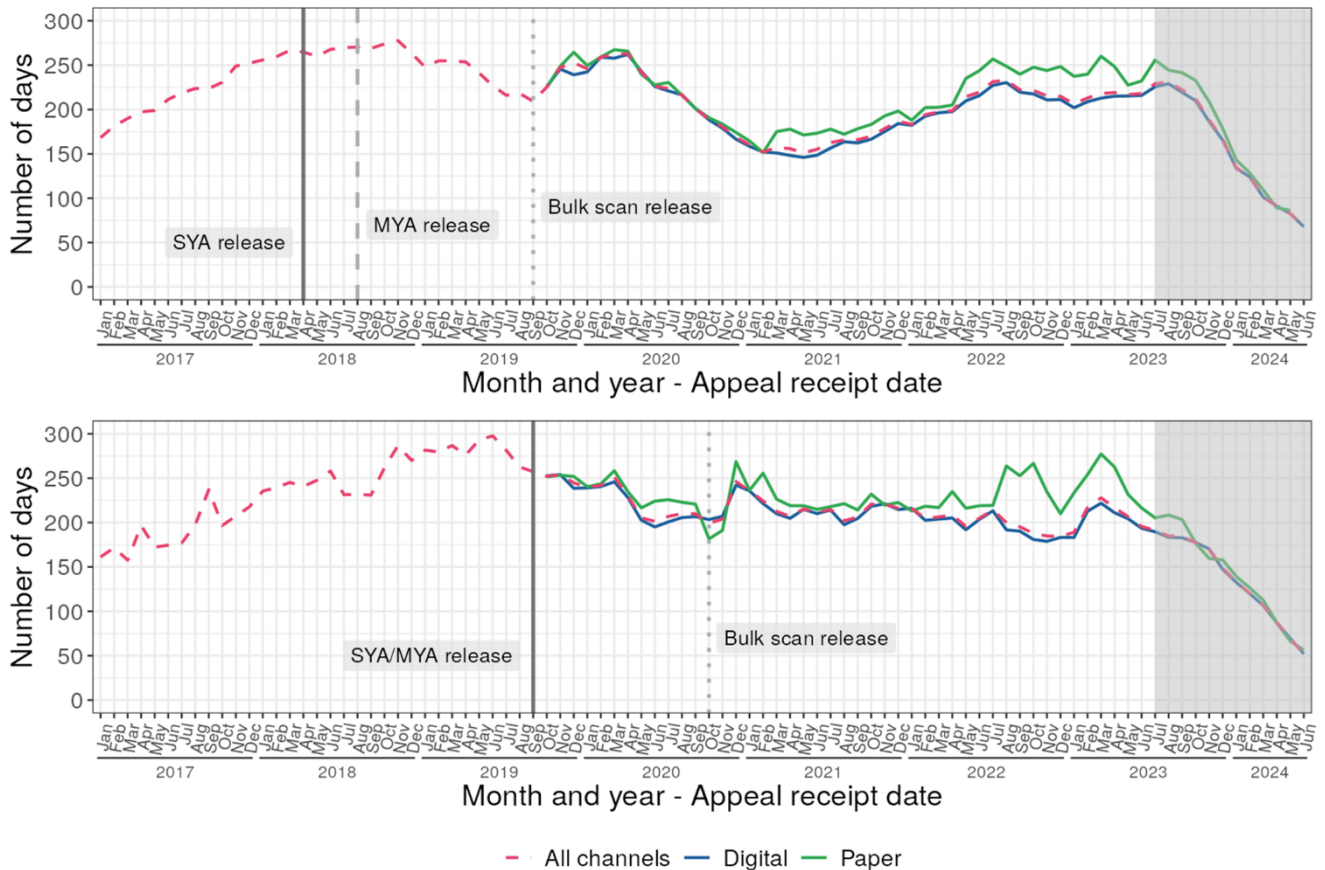
Figure 19 shows that the average duration⁸ (for both paper and digital cases combined) for PIP cases (top chart) decreased from the end of 2018 following the MYA release, with a slight increase following the introduction of bulk scanning before decreasing again from April 2020. From mid-2021 there was a steady increase with case duration then remaining consistent from mid-2022 onwards.

For UC (bottom chart), case duration decreased slightly later (from June 2019) and has remained at a broadly similar level from October 2021 onwards, with an increase of around 50 days in early 2023. Overall, UC paper cases have had longer average case durations compared to digital cases from early 2021.

Duration lengths for more recent cases (shaded in grey in the figures) will be biased towards shorter case lengths, having had less time to reach an outcome. Many cases submitted during this period had not completed at the time the data were extracted.

⁸ From start to first hearing (for cases involving a hearing).

Figure 19 PIP (top) and UC (bottom) cases, average (mean) time from appeal to first hearing: Jan 2017 to June 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from July 2023 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases

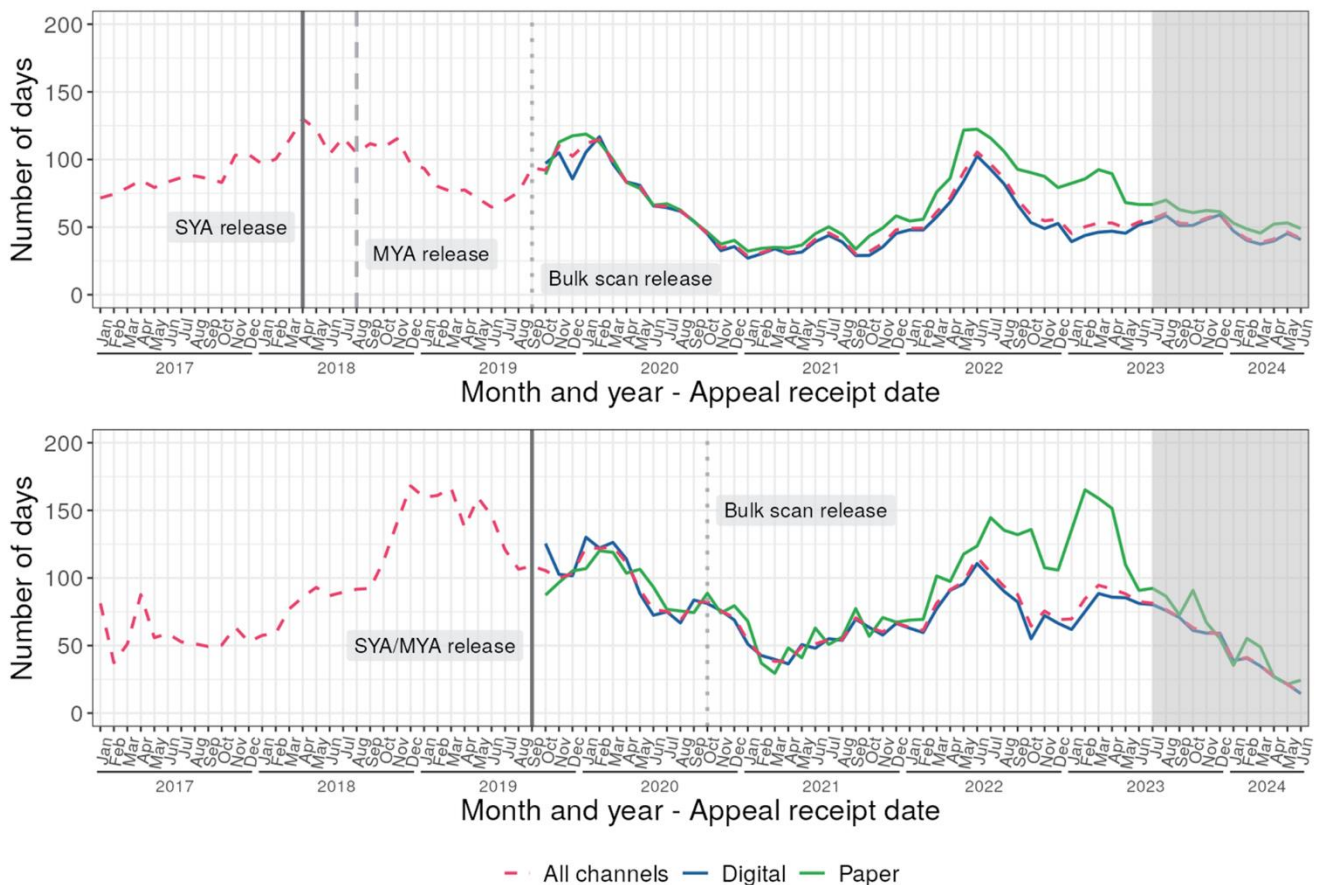
Figure 20 shows that the average duration of PIP cases without a hearing decreased from January 2020, followed by an increase between September 2021 and May 2022, which was more pronounced for paper cases. Case durations then decreased between June and December 2022, particularly for digital cases, and have remained relatively stable since then.

For UC cases, trends have been more volatile across the whole analysis period, but there was a general decrease in case duration between February 2020 and February 2021. Since then, volatility has increased, with a small increasing trend in case duration for digital cases. This trend increased by around 50 days in June 2022 before returning to January 2022 levels by September 2022. From February 2021 the increase in paper case durations was more pronounced and more volatile than for digital cases. Case durations

would however be expected to be more volatile for paper due to the low volumes of these cases during this period.

These trends diverge from those reported in the accompanying SSCS supplementary report⁹ (with robust data up to the end of 2021). As discussed in that analysis, the decrease in case duration in 2021 could be explained by the DWP response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The changes shown here may therefore reflect the end of that response and subsequent recovery activity.

Figure 20 PIP (top) and UC (bottom) cases, average (mean) case duration of cases that lapsed without a hearing: Jan 2017 to June 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from July 2023 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases.

Figure 21 below shows the proportion of cases with a hearing and that were lapsed. The supplementary report states that reducing the proportion of cases with a hearing and

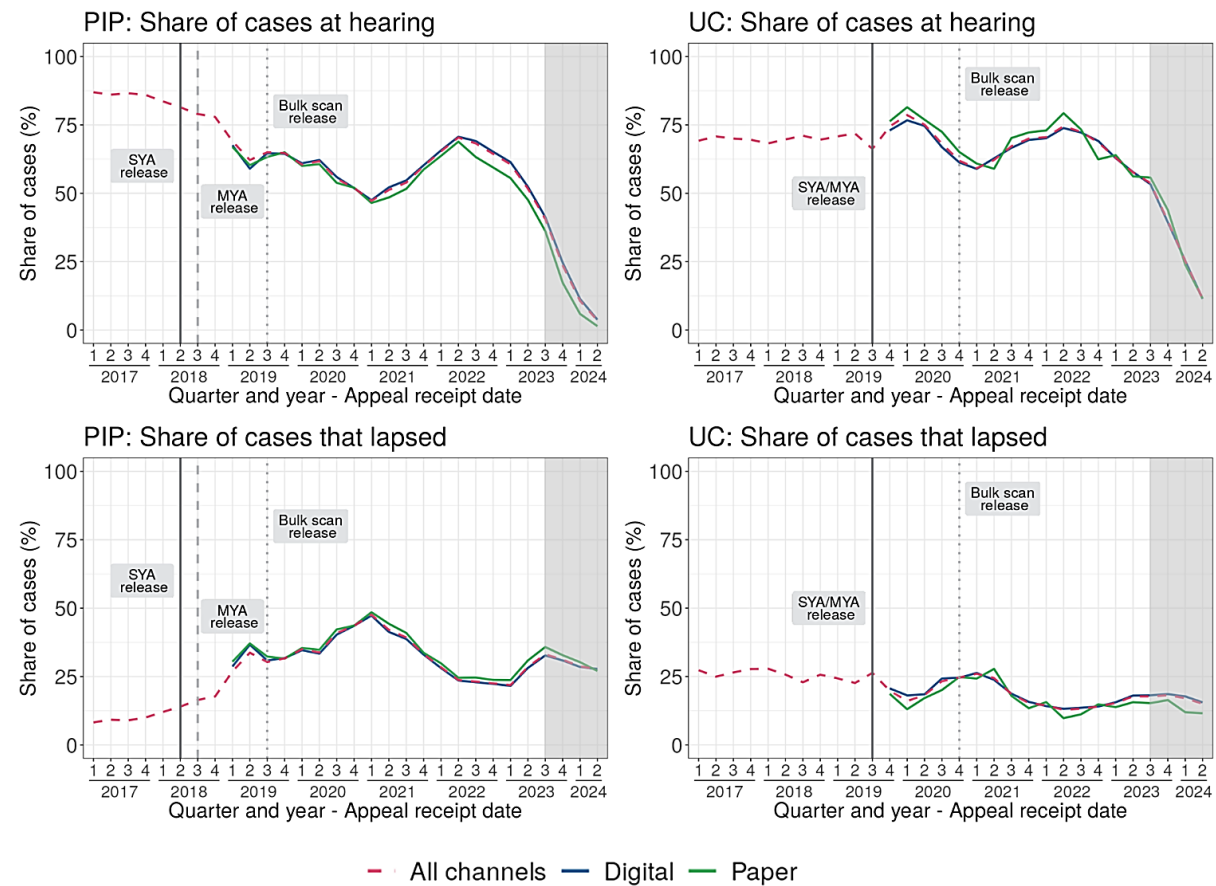
⁹ Available at: [HM Courts & Tribunals Service Reform: Digital Services Evaluation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/research-and-evaluation/digital-services-evaluation)

increasing the proportion of cases that were lapsed suggests a more efficient and quicker overall process for users. On the left, the figure shows the proportion of PIP cases that had at least one tribunal hearing (top) and that lapsed (ended) without a hearing (bottom). On the right, it presents the equivalent for UC cases.

The proportion of PIP cases with hearings generally decreased up to Q1 2021, then increased to Q2 2022, after which the proportion of cases with hearings fell. From Q2 2022 the proportion of cases lapsing without a hearing remained stable until a slight rise from Q1 2023.

The proportion of UC cases with hearings was stable from Q1 2021, but fell from Q2 2022 onwards, similar to the trend in PIP. The proportion of UC cases that lapsed without a hearing was stable from Q1 2021 and has remained stable from 2022 onwards. Trends were similar for digital and paper cases across both PIP and UC.

Figure 21 PIP (left) and UC (right) cases, proportion of cases disposed at hearing and cases that lapsed without a hearing: Q1 2017 to Q2 2024



Note: Grey-shaded areas (from Q3 2023 onwards) correspond to times when analysis is limited due to the low volume of digital cases and a high proportion of outstanding cases

6. Service specific data limitations

The probate service:

- In the original analysis timeliness was calculated using working days. Subsequent data changes during re-extraction of the data presented here instead use calendar days. As such, while timeliness appears longer in this annex compared to the Probate report, there is no actual difference in trend.
- Both this and the original analysis excluded stoppages for inheritance tax reasons, due to the inability to confidently attribute those stoppages to user errors. As a result, the number of stoppages presented in this analysis is less than the actual number of stoppages.

The Online Civil Money Claims service (OCMC):

- Figure 15 only presents data up to May 24 and not June 24 because no cases which started in June will have been ready to list for hearing when data were extracted.