



Adoption Propensity in England

October 2026

1 Foreword

The latest analysis of the trends in the recruitment of adopters shows that the number of families available to adopt a child is substantially below the number needed for the children for whom an adoptive family has not yet been found.

This is in stark contrast to public attitudes to adoption and the propensity to consider adopting.

According to the new YouGov poll commissioned by Coram to mark the centenary of adoption this year, 90% of adults agree or strongly agree that adoption is a good option for children who need it.

Furthermore, 1.8% of respondents to the poll said they were very likely to or definitely would adopt within the next three years.

There is a cyclical pattern of recruitment followed by falls in approvals which has long been familiar, and this is not the first time that the number of children waiting has outstripped the supply of adopters and subsequently been addressed.

This occasional paper therefore provides a brief overview of the current position and explores what the new propensity findings mean for children waiting for adoption.

- Have attitudes in the general population to adoption changed?
- Is there a change in the number or profile of children which is affecting matching?
- Has the population or the propensity to consider adoption changed?
- For whom and where is that propensity highest?

At the heart of this analysis is a single driving question — what do we need to do in the current context to close the gap and ensure children waiting have the loving, permanent home that they need?

Three recommendations:

- broaden the range of people encouraged to apply; *and*
- give more independent help to interested people to take an informed next step; *and*
- review and improve how effectively we draw on all available families and across agency and regional boundaries.



2 Comparative position

On 1 November 2011, *The Times* published a major supplement on the state of adoption written by Sir Martin Narey. It was motivated by the same question that we are facing in the adoption sector today: why are so many children waiting and why do we not have enough adopters?

Then and now, that report concluded that – despite pockets of good practice – the process for prospective adopters was seen as slow and off-putting and that more could and should be done to close the gap and reduce the time children were waiting for the adoptive family they need.

This was not to suggest that all children waiting would always be able to be matched within their timescale since age is a key factor in children's chances of adoption.

All the more reason, therefore, that – whenever the court concludes that adoption is in the best interests of the child – every child has their best possible chance of securing the earliest possible permanent, loving home they need.

As part of the adoption reform programme of 2011-2016, DfE commissioned a report on the *Propensity to Adopt and to Foster* to examine if/how it might be possible to fill the gap in care sufficiency.

The report found that 4.6m people in England said they were fairly/very likely or certain to consider adopting at some point in the future.

It further identified certain segments of the population with a higher 'propensity'¹ to adopt when compared to the average population, including:

- Those who are involved in altruistic activities (such as volunteering, working for charity, etc)
- Those with previous experience of fostering or adoption
- People aged between 25 to 44 years old
- Those who are married or single (e.g. not in a civil partnership etc)
- Those who are heterosexual
- Those actively practising a religion
- Those working in higher managerial, intermediate managerial or skilled manual work.

The report further highlighted the importance of understanding perceptual and actual barriers to adoption (and fostering) including timely process, customer service, dependable and responsive services. These included:

- Anxieties or fears surrounding the process of becoming an adopter or foster carer
- Anxiety about the experience of adopting/fostering and their ability to do it successfully
- The impact that an adopted/fostered child would have on their own life, and their potential future family.



¹ Inclination

Approach taken

The creation of the National Gateway for Adoption sought to address the perceptions and catalyse national recruitment coinciding with a range of new policy measures including a two-stage approval process, pupil premium and adoption leave entitlements. Over five years, there were more than one million unique users across website, telephone, social media with a conversion rate of 10% to agency search.

The result was a significant increase in placements secured for children in the system, where 5,210 children were adopted in FY2013/4 (see Fig. 1).

The number of children waiting to be placed (see Fig. 2) decreased from FY2018/19, before the pandemic featured delays in process, and started to rise again after FY2021/22 following a process of structural reform to create larger regional adoption agencies (RAAs).

In the same period, the number of adopter families followed an opposite trend, increasing from FY2018/19 to FY2021/22 and then dropping, despite continuing annual adoption campaigns.²

Thirteen years on, however, the number of children placed with adoptive families has fallen back to just under half the level it was in FY2013/14.

Looking at the published Adoption and Special Guardianship (ASG) data on single children with a Placement Order (PO) waiting to be placed, and adopter families waiting to be matched, we found that as of 31 March 2026, there were approximately 1,610 more single children waiting than approved adopter families waiting to be matched (Coram, 2026).

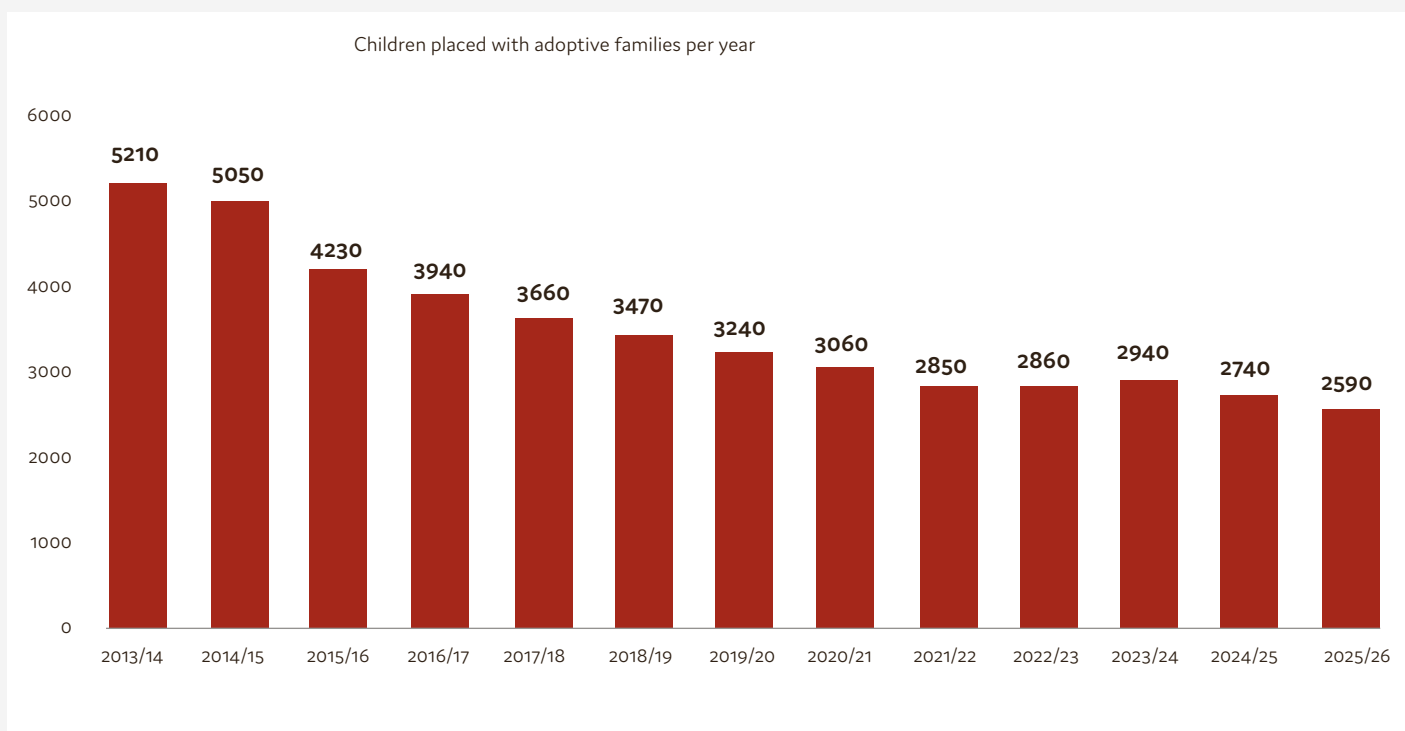
This comparison indicates pressure on the available adopter pool; it is not a direct measure of the number of additional families required, since a family may adopt siblings and matching depends on children's individual needs.

Overall trends

Fig. 3 shows the difference between the number of approved adopter families waiting to be matched and children waiting for placement from FY2013/14 to FY2025/26. For the past thirteen years the shortfall/surplus in adopter families has fluctuated every three years but we are currently witnessing the longest running shortfall in adopter families.

Despite the reduction in the number of adopters, ASG data shows that, in the last 6 month period, only 25% of adopters are approved within the defined 24 week time period for the two stage process. Their waiting times for matching has also increased, potentially reflecting extended court proceedings and delays in considering the widest range of children with whom they may be appropriately matched. According to ASG data, adopters who are single continue to wait longer than those in partnerships.

Figure 1: Number of children who were placed with an adoptive family by the end of reporting year, 31 March 2026



² Note: A comparison commonly used in this section of the report looks at the number of children with a Placement Order (PO) waiting to be placed in an adoptive family/household and compares that to the number of approved adopter families/households that are waiting for a match with a child. This comparison should be used in the ASG Headline Measures as a broad indicator of system pressure – it compares one adopter family against one child; it does not take into account factors such as sibling group placements into one adopter family household, children that may have been matched or linked with an adopter family (just not yet placed), nor those children or approved adopter families that have had their journey put 'on hold' due to a legal challenge or a change in circumstance, but are still part of the aforementioned 'waiting' child/adopter groups.

Figure 2: Variation in numbers of children waiting to be placed compared with adopter families waiting to be matched

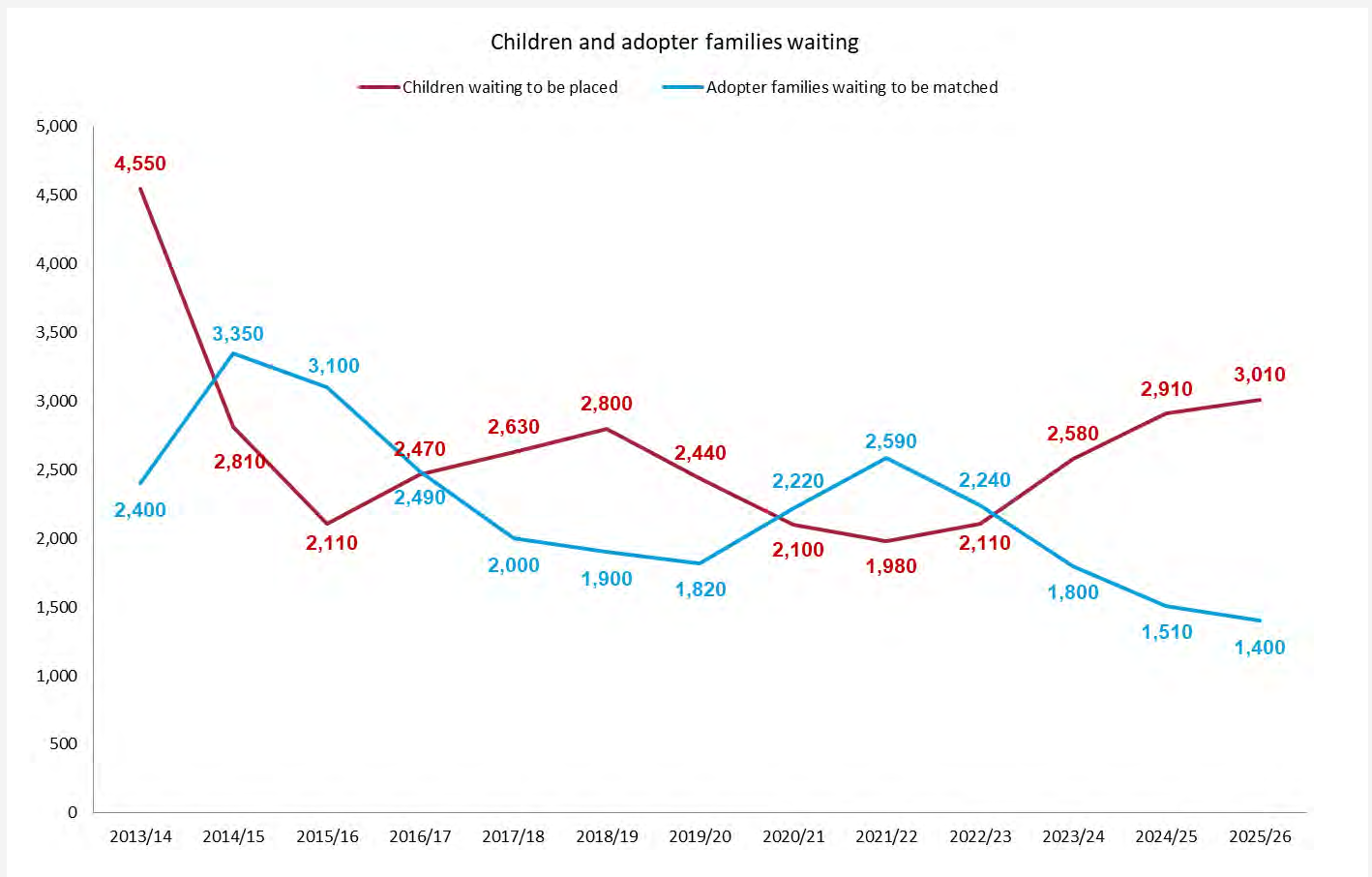
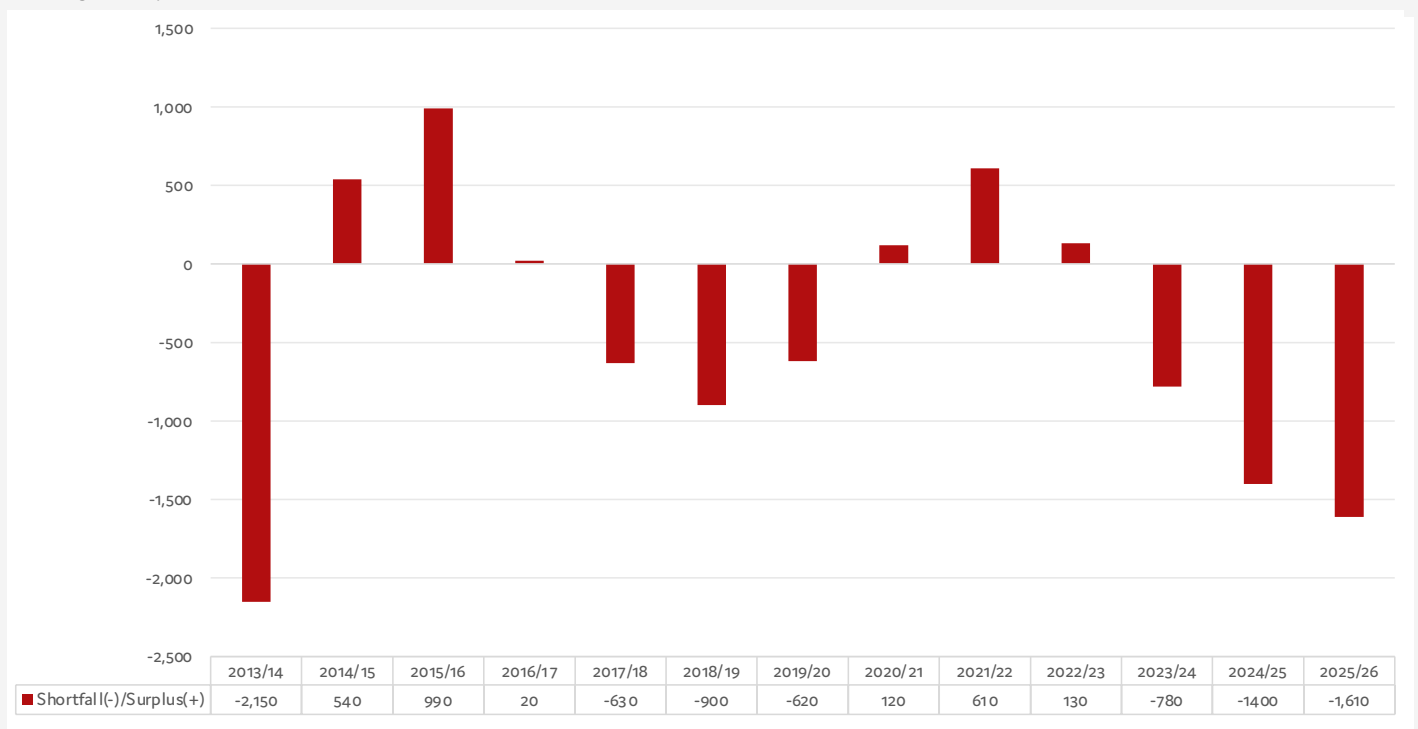


Figure 3: The shortfall /surplus of approved adopter families waiting to be matched when compared to children with a PO waiting to be placed³



³ Note: this comparison should be used as a broad indicator of system pressure – it compares one adopter family against one child; it does not take into account factors such as sibling group placements in one adopter family household, those children that may have been matched or linked with an adopter family (just not yet placed), nor those children or approved adopter families that have had their journey put 'on hold' due to a legal challenge or a change in circumstance.

Profile of children waiting

The landmark *Children Who Wait* report originally published in 1973 showed that children in sibling groups, children with disabilities, children aged over five, and children from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds face particular barriers to finding adoptive families. This continues to be the case more than 50 years later.

Whereas the number of children aged over 5 with placement orders has decreased by 58% since FY2013/14, the number of Black and Minority Ethnic children waiting over 18 months has only decreased by 10%. Nonetheless, the number of children in both these groups, who are waiting over 18 months, has increased steadily since FY2022/23, and, for the first time in FY2025/26, the number of Black and Minority Ethnic children with a Placement Order waiting for placement was higher than the number of children aged over five. The number of children with disabilities waiting to be placed showed the least fluctuation.

It is of concern that children who do not share these characteristics and have traditionally been matched in a shorter time period, are now waiting longer for adoption.

Since the Children and Families Act of 2014, there has been focus on developing the use of early permanence placements, which are evidenced to reduce the waiting time of children and their number of moves prior to adoption. Whilst the percentage of children has increased, the overall number in early permanence arrangements has not.

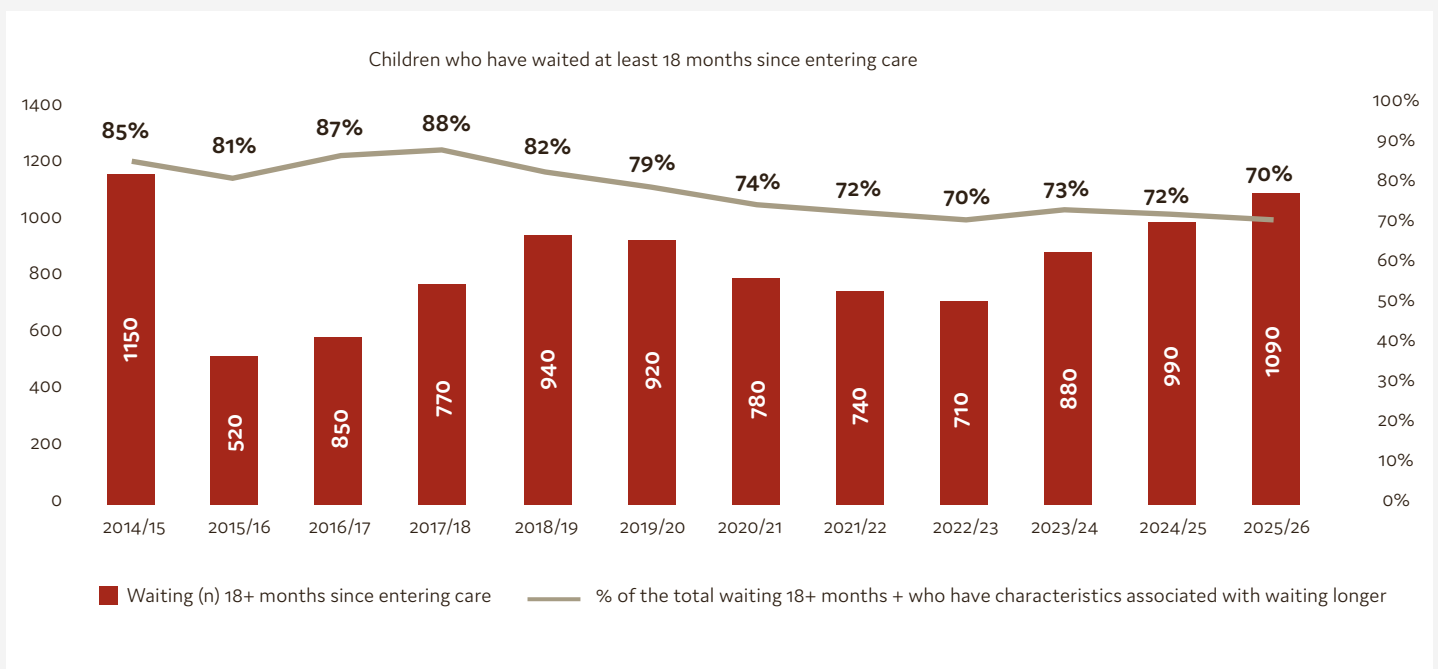
The National Adoption Register for England was suspended in 2019 despite having found matches for 3,200 children over the previous 14 years. Although Activity Days for adoption continue, there is now no proactive child-led independent matching service across agency boundaries.

It is therefore a priority to ensure that:

- There is a key focus on the timescale of the child in all process and decisions; *and*
- We ensure that adopters who are waiting longer are matched earlier; *and*
- Early permanence planning is utilised to the full.

In FY2014/15, 85% of children who had been waiting for at least 18 months had characteristics traditionally associated with longer waits⁴. By FY2025/26, this had fallen to 70% (Fig. 5). This suggests that longer waits are affecting a wider range of children than those who have characteristics traditionally associated with longer waits.

Figure 5: Children with a PO who have characteristics traditionally associated with longer waits and were still waiting at reporting year end. The percentage line shows their proportion of all children with a PO still waiting to be placed.



⁴ These characteristics are: being aged five years or over, having a disability, being in a sibling group, or being from a Black and Minority Ethnic group.

Regional variation in sufficiency

The population of England is not evenly distributed and the volume and characteristics will inevitably mean that propensity for adoption and the needs of children waiting are also uneven. If we look at regional variation across England, Fig. 6 highlights that - even with regional rather than local approaches being taken since 2019 - there is a mismatch between where children are waiting to be placed and the number of potentially suitable adopters available in that region.

The North West has the highest proportion of children waiting to be placed with an adoptive family (16%), while the North East has the lowest (7%). By contrast, the South East has the highest proportion of available adopters (16%), while Greater London, the North East and the East Midlands have the lowest proportions (8%, 7% and 7%, respectively).

These distributions suggest a possible mismatch between where children are waiting and where RAA adopter families are available who could potentially be a suitable match.

However, the region-level adopter data excludes voluntary adoption agencies (VAAs), which are a vital part of the sufficiency equation, though the proportion of children placed via these specialist agencies has fallen from 19% in FY2021/22 to 13% in FY2025/26. This provides a starting point for reviewing opportunities to search across agency and regional boundaries, guided by each child's needs.

As at 31 March 2026, there were 270 VAA adopter families waiting to be matched nationally.

The continuing shortage indicates that current recruitment and matching approaches are not sufficient and we will require new approaches throughout enquiry, approval, and matching if we are again to reverse the current trends.

It is to explore where efforts could help children find permanent, stable, loving homes that the Coram Institute for Children has conducted a new YouGov survey and examined ASG data on children waiting and approved adopters.

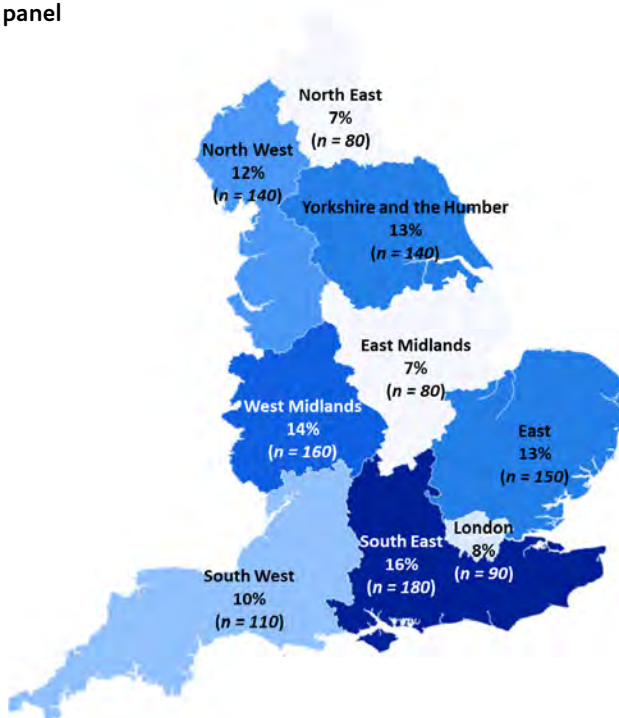
Although the different questions limit direct comparisons over time, comparisons with Kindred (2013) as well as national demographic data and further studies provide context and lines of enquiry to inform improvement in recruitment effectiveness especially when considered in conjunction with learning from past and current recruitment approaches and the changing patterns of consumer behaviour.

To examine the findings further at regional level and join the workshop on consumer trends and implications for recruitment, register for the Adoption Recruitment Forum at coram.org.uk/adoptionrecruitment

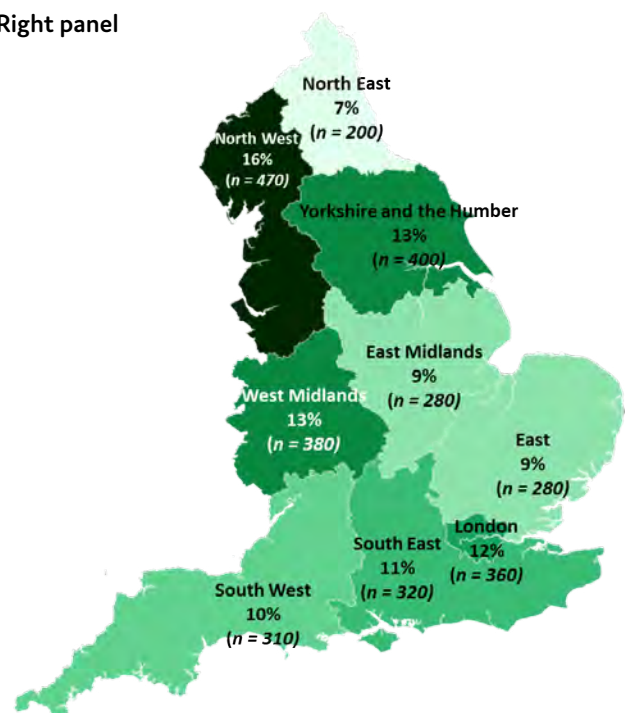
Figure 6: Regional distribution of approved adopters and children.

Left panel shows percentage and count (n) of approved adopters waiting to be matched (using RAA data; VAA data not included); right panel shows percentage and count (n) of children with a PO waiting to be placed. Figures represent data snapshots at the end of the reporting year, 31 March 2026.

Left panel



Right panel



3 Adoption propensity in the general population⁵

According to ONS data, the UK population is ageing and is changing. The median age of the population for England and Wales was 39.8 in 2013, and this has risen to 40.6 in England and 43.2 in Wales by 2025. There has also been a small increase in single people⁶ in the same period of time (ONS, 2013; 2014; 2026). This indicates that recruitment will need to consider older applicants as well as more people living alone if more adopters are to be recruited.

In addition, the birth rate is falling (ONS, 2026) in line with this trend and in the face of high childcare and housing costs as part of cost of living increases (Francis-Devine and Booth, 2026) and the increase in the number of in vitro fertilisation births (HFEA, 2026).

The population has also become more diverse and less religious (ONS, 2022). These changes reinforce the importance of

reviewing who recruitment reaches and how agencies respond to prospective adopters' different circumstances.

In order to explore how the shortfall of adopters can be addressed, the Coram Institute for Children commissioned YouGov to run an additional poll with a representative sample of the current population (N=3,573 adults).

This poll explored willingness in the general population to consider adoption, and how different segments compare with the current pool of approved adopters. It can identify opportunities to test recruitment approaches but does not establish suitability or what helps people progress to adoption.

Whereas the Kindred (2013) report focused on those who were 'fairly likely' up to 'certain' to adopt, we have focused on those who were 'very likely' to or 'definitely would' adopt. We also asked whether they were likely to adopt in the next three years and found that 1.8% selected these responses. This is an illustration of stated interest, not an estimate of available or suitable adopter households. The different response categories and timeframes mean these estimates should not be treated as a direct measure of change since 2013.



⁵ Note: The propensity indices reported below describe individuals' stated likelihood of applying to adopt and are calculated from the YouGov survey. ASG individual-adopter data provide a separate demographic comparison with adults in approved families waiting to be matched. These findings do not directly estimate the number of prospective adopter families or their capacity to meet children's needs. The difference of approximately 1,610 between children not yet placed and approved families not yet matched should therefore not be interpreted as a measured requirement for additional families or used to calculate how many times potential recruitment exceeds need. Propensity was measured by converting responses across different indicators into a score indexed against the national average (1). To take an example, a score of 1.20 for an indicator would indicate that its demographic profile is associated with an adoption propensity that is 1.2 times higher than the national average.

⁶ Defined as single person and two or more unrelated adult households.

If reflected across England's adult population, this finding would equate to around 650,000 individual people⁷ expressing strong interest in adopting within the next three years.

To explore this further, we examined key regional and demographic data from our YouGov poll data and where possible, drew parallels with the Adoption and Special Guardianship (ASG) collection hosted by Coram for DfE and general population data. The comparisons below identify opportunities for further investigation and testing. Subgroup estimates require caution where sample sizes are small; differences should not be assumed to be statistically significant.

3.1. Regional propensity

Greater London had the highest adoption propensity in the poll, while the South East had the lowest. These findings suggest opportunities to explore regional recruitment approaches, rather than definitive rankings of untapped potential.

London, the South East and the North West account for large proportions of the population. Regional recruitment planning also needs to consider the needs of children waiting and the full available adopter pool, including VAAs.

By contrast, if we look at the variation of the population across different regions based on their propensity to adopt, we can see a different pattern to the current population regional distribution of registered, approved and waiting adopters (see Figs 7-9 below).

If we focus on the variation in adoption propensity across England (Fig. 9) based on our YouGov poll, we found that respondents living in Greater London have double the adoption propensity (2.21) to adopt compared to the national average, whereas the North West's adoption propensity (0.76) was under the national average.

This suggests that, especially in Greater London, there may be untapped potential for recruiting adopters, especially when Greater London has the lowest proportion of available adopters.

Tailored engagement could test whether this interest can be developed into applications and suitable families for children waiting. Regional propensity and the distribution of approved adopters do not, by themselves, establish the effectiveness of current matching arrangements.

However, adoption propensity highlights an inclination to adopt, not suitability or the ability to proceed. Understanding why interest does or does not translate into adoption requires further evidence about people's circumstances and their experience of enquiry, assessment and matching.

Figure 7: Percentage of people in the YouGov poll who said they were very likely to or definitely would adopt

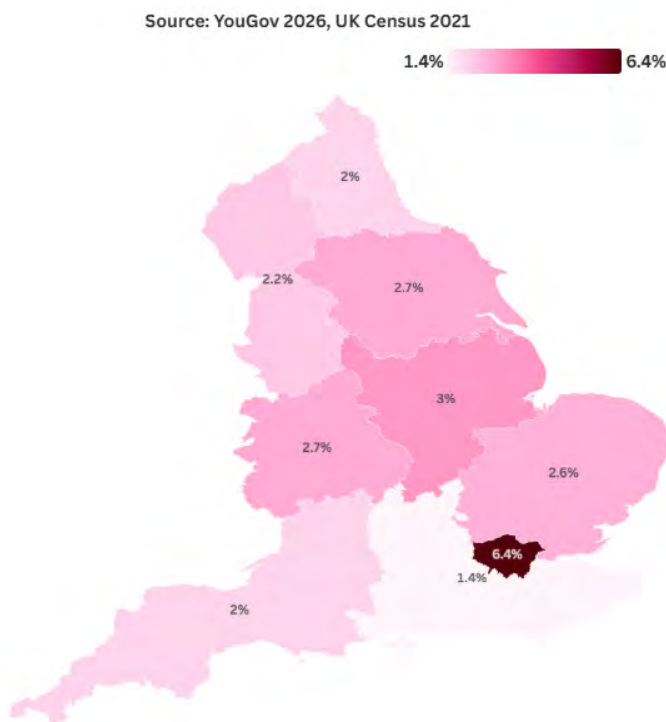
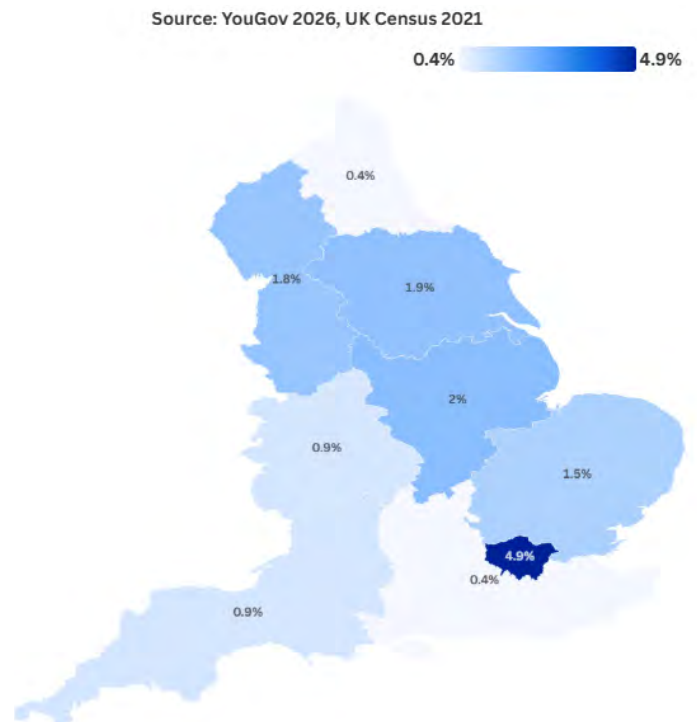


Figure 8: Percentage of people in the YouGov poll who said they were very likely to or definitely would adopt in the next 3 years



⁷ Estimated using ONS (2025) population data on adults aged 18-65 in England.

3.2. Demographic propensity

When we looked at gender, males had a higher adoption propensity (1.05) than females (0.92). However, if we look at the gender of existing approved adopters, there is an even split which is a similar split to the national population.

Age matters

Similar to the Kindred (2013) report, our poll showed that 18–44-year-olds have a higher adoption propensity than the average population, and this propensity decreases with age. Whereas 18–24-year-olds had an adoption propensity almost three times (2.76) the national average, this drops to double for 25–34-year-olds (2.07), and just over a third more than the national average for 35–44-year-olds (1.38).

Whereas adoption propensity decreased with age, the highest proportion of approved adopters (FY2025/26) are aged 35–44. These different profiles suggest opportunities to engage younger adults and sustain their interest until they are ready to proceed.

In contrast to our adoption propensity findings, the proportion of approved adopters increases with age up to 44 years old. This is consistent with people being more inclined to consider adoption earlier in adulthood but applying later; the poll does not establish when individual respondents will be ready to proceed.

Further research is needed to test these findings and understand what helps people at different stages of life offer a family to a child. Recruitment should provide opportunities to stay engaged, alongside clear information about suitability, practical requirements and support.

Black and Minority Ethnic respondents had higher than average adoption propensity

Black and Minority Ethnic children are currently characterised as one of the four groups traditionally defined as waiting longer to be matched. According to our poll, respondents from Black, Asian and mixed-ethnicity backgrounds had higher adoption propensity than White respondents.

The highest index was among Black respondents (5.52), followed by Asian respondents (2.41) and respondents from mixed-ethnic backgrounds (1.72), while White respondents had lower-than-average adoption propensity (0.69). These findings should be interpreted with caution because the sample sizes for Black and Minority Ethnic respondents were small and are leads for testing engagement with different communities rather than firm estimates of recruitment potential.

Recruitment should explore opportunities to engage these communities while keeping each child's individual needs central to matching. The propensity findings do not establish which respondents could meet the needs of particular children waiting.

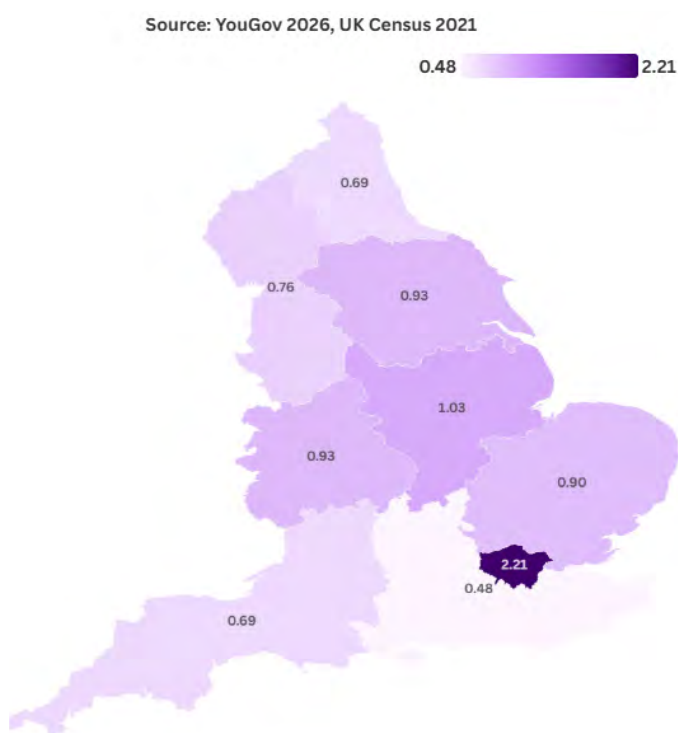
People from non-Christian faith groups had twice the adoption propensity of the population average

Our poll found that people who have a faith have a higher propensity to adopt, particularly those of non-Christian faiths, who have twice the propensity of the population average. There is also a disproportionately high representation of faith groups among approved adopters (FY2025/26). These findings suggest opportunities to test engagement through faith communities, while continuing to reach people without a religious affiliation.

LGB+ people have a higher adoption propensity than average

In contrast to the pattern reported by Kindred (2013), adoption propensity was higher among lesbian and gay respondents (1.87), bisexual respondents (1.24) and respondents reporting other sexualities (2.81) (LGB+) compared to heterosexual respondents in our YouGov poll. There are also more LGB+ people in the population (ONS, 2025), and disproportionately higher LGB+ approved adopters in FY2025/26. These findings suggest opportunities to test tailored engagement with LGB+ communities. Differences in the surveys mean they should not be treated as proof of a change in propensity over time.

Figure 9: Adoption Propensity Index based on responses to the YouGov poll



Single people have the highest adoption propensity but the lowest representation among current adopters

Similar to the Kindred (2013) study, single respondents had a higher adoption propensity in our poll compared to the national average, and people in civil partnerships (0.98) were lower, but married respondents (0.81) had a lower propensity which differs to the Kindred (2013) study. By contrast, the proportion of approved single adopters in FY2025/26 is disproportionately lower when compared to the national population, suggesting potential for testing recruitment and support approaches for single people. This comparison does not establish why they are less represented among approved adopters.

Other characteristics

Although ASG does not collect data on adopters involved in altruistic activities (such as volunteering or working for charity), the YouGov poll did capture information on charitable giving and volunteering.

We found that although adoption propensity for people who donate to charities is about the same as average overall, people who donate to certain causes, such as poverty and homelessness, had higher than average adoption propensity rates. Rates are also higher than average for people who volunteer.

These findings are broadly consistent with the Kindred (2013) study and suggest opportunities to test engagement through volunteering and charitable networks.

The YouGov poll did not ask what managerial/skill level people worked at. However, it did ask about the sector/industry people worked in, as well as income, and the findings indicate that some different recruitment approaches may be appropriate.

Income levels

People earning up to £39,999 had a higher propensity to adopt, especially those earning below £20,000. Income is not the same as managerial or occupational status, which this poll did not measure.

Work industry

Regarding work industry, people working in IT and telecoms had the highest adoption propensity (three times the average), but those working in construction, retail and financial services also had a higher adoption propensity. The survey also asked whether respondents had already applied to or already did adopt, and those working in IT and telecoms were more than twice as likely (2.83%) to have done so than the national average (1.38%). This suggests that IT and telecoms, construction, retail, and financial services are work industries that could be an important source for recruitment.

Sector differences

When we compare sectors, the private sector was the only sector that had a higher adoption propensity than the national average. This suggests an opportunity to test engagement through employers, subject to checking subgroup sample sizes and the significance of differences.

Anne's story

Black Caribbean heritage children often wait longer for an adoptive family. Agency outreach and community connections are important in encouraging more African and Caribbean families to come forward to adopt, so that more children can be adopted into families who can share and understand their cultural heritage and identity.

Anne is a single woman of Black Caribbean heritage who adopted a little girl Rachel, and later Rachel's sister Emily, through Coram.

As a former primary school teacher, Anne's background and experience had reinforced her desire to adopt, as she recalls: "I remember just always having a heart for those children who kind of didn't fit into the mainstream in different ways. Being around children who were maybe looked-after, or they were known to social care, it really made me think this was something I wanted to do. And adopting children who are birth siblings I think is really important for their life story and having that connection."

"Honestly I wouldn't change anything. I'm blessed."



4 Overcoming barriers to adoption

Personal circumstance including access to IVF and financial resources could be key considerations in a decision to adopt.

Kindred research highlighted other barriers to adoption:

- Anxieties or fears surrounding the process of becoming an adopter or foster carer
- Anxiety about the experience of adopting/fostering and their ability to do it successfully
- The impact that an adopted/fostered child would have on their own life, and their potential future family

More recently, Kantar Public UK (2022), also identified concerns of potential adopters not feeling confidence in managing children's complex needs. Such concerns were less prevalent among people with previous knowledge of fostering or adoption, either personally or through people close to them. This suggests the value of opportunities to hear from adoptive families directly.

Similar to the Kindred (2013) report, Kantar (2022) also found preconceptions about the care and assessment systems led to anxieties around adoption. Respondents were reluctant to ask questions because they perceived an enquiry as the first stage of an application and feared 'asking the wrong questions' (Kantar Public UK, 2022, p. 8). This suggests the importance of giving people accessible information and space to explore adoption without committing to an application.

Some may see adoption and fostering as a continuum and may be interested in adopting after fostering. The motivation in adoption for family formation continues to be strong. Both areas of propensity work suggest there is value in looking beyond awareness and enquiries to what helps people overcome these anxieties and progress; their different motivations and practical requirements mean the messages and support needed will differ.

Agencies and decision makers should review whether prospective adopters with different circumstances receive clear information, fair consideration and appropriate support, guided by their own circumstances and by children's needs. The new poll does not establish which barriers account for differences between expressed interest and approved adopters.

Since the pandemic, housing and childcare costs have been major factors in household budgets which could be leading to the longest shortfall in adopters since 2013. These, alongside changes in working patterns, may affect people's readiness to adopt and the practical support they need. Their effect on progression should be explored rather than assumed.

More research is needed to understand what enables or prevents interested people from progressing. Agencies can use enquiry and application data, alongside prospective adopters' experiences, to test improvements in information, engagement and support.



Consumer perspectives

Analysis from multiple sources indicate the expectations that services will need to address in order to welcome, engage and maximise applications.

1. Convenience as standard – rapid response and frictionless access to services with the ability to "buy directly"
2. Technology reliance – AI, social media and influencers shaping discovery and decision-making
3. Experience economy – valuing personalisation, memorable and personal interaction
4. Wellness revolution – looking for ways to live well and reduce risk
5. Generational difference – across expectations of community, sustainability, and brand authenticity

To explore the implications of consumer trends for adoption, register for the national recruitment forum at coramadoption.org.uk.

5 Implications for adoption

Our poll found positive public attitudes towards adoption alongside substantial stated interest in adopting. These findings suggest opportunities to widen the pool of prospective adopters and help more people turn their interest into a decision to adopt.

The adoption process and agency approaches should support people to make informed decisions and, where suitable, progress from interest to applications, approvals and matches by addressing personal, perceived and systemic barriers.

The YouGov poll used a representative sample of the English population, but estimates are subject to uncertainty, especially for small subgroups. Stated interest does not necessarily translate into applications, approvals or matches but the wider ASG analysis raises questions for this review, including how longer waits may be affecting a wider range of children.

Higher adoption propensity was evident among younger adults, particularly those aged 18–44, single people, people with an active faith, those involved in volunteering and LGB+ respondents. These are audiences for testing engagement, not a substitute for assessing suitability to meet children's needs. Recruitment approaches should reflect regional and community circumstances, including opportunities to support single adopters. Agencies should also review how national and pan-regional approaches, including VAAs, can help find the right family for each child without avoidable delay.

The poll also found higher propensity among lower-income respondents, private-sector workers and people in industries such as IT and telecommunications, construction, retail and financial services. These suggest additional routes for engagement to test rather than demonstrating change in occupational propensity since 2013 and indicate the need for a more inclusive approach to recruitment, tailored to different groups and evaluated by suitable families progressing to adoption and children securing timely, well-supported matches.

Alongside recruitment, agencies should review whether family finding makes the widest appropriate search early enough. Farmer and Dance (2016), in reviewing the case files of children who wait, found that widening searches early could help avoid delays and maximise the pool of adopters.

Expressed interest is a starting point to build on to application and preparation and it is recommended that agencies take a dynamic approach as follows.

Reach more people who could offer children the families they need by testing approaches to engaging groups expressing higher interest, including single people and LGB+ communities and using findings from smaller samples as opportunities to explore.

Address what helps or prevents people progressing from interest to application, approval and matching depending on the economic and personal circumstances and remove avoidable barriers in process including by enabling choice of agency and timescale.

Enable potential adopters to address their own areas of concern and to explore children's lives and needs with other adopters and without feeling that questions are part of assessment.

Review how family finding draws on prospective adopters across agency and regional boundaries early enough, guided by each child's needs and the importance of avoiding delay.

Previous adopter shortage has been addressed by co-ordinated approach and the report indicates this can be achieved again to ensure that more children find the loving, permanent families they need in their timescale.



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Appendix

Adoption Propensity Methods

Coram commissioned YouGov to conduct an online survey of 3,573 adults aged 18 and over in England. The survey was designed to examine adoption propensity: respondents' likelihood of considering adoption at any point in the future and within the next three years, alongside factors that may encourage or discourage them from progressing towards adoption. The survey figures were weighted to be representative of the adult population of England.

For this report, the principal propensity measure focused on respondents who said that they were 'very likely to' or 'definitely would' adopt. This more tightly defined measure was used because these respondents were considered more likely to progress from a general inclination towards registration. Responses about likelihood within the next three years were analysed separately to provide a nearer-term indication of potential adopter interest.

Construction of the adoption propensity index

Survey responses were analysed across the demographic and geographic characteristics collected by YouGov. For each category, the proportion of respondents reporting that they were 'very likely to' or 'definitely would' adopt was compared with the equivalent proportion for the England sample as a

whole. Each resulting score was indexed against the national average, set at 1. A score above 1 therefore indicates higher-than average adoption propensity, while a score below 1 indicates lower-than-average propensity.

The analysis considered characteristics including region, sex, age, marital or relationship status, religion, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, employment status, household income, industry, sector and participation in altruistic activities such as volunteering or charitable giving. Where appropriate, survey categories were grouped to support meaningful comparison and to align as closely as possible with categories in the Adoption and Special Guardianship data and relevant population statistics.

The propensity index describes relative inclination to adopt; it does not measure eligibility, readiness to adopt or the likelihood of completing registration and approval. Results for demographic groups with small sample sizes should therefore be interpreted cautiously. Comparisons with approved adopters and with the 2013 Kindred study are descriptive and are intended to identify possible recruitment opportunities rather than to establish causal relationships or statistically model future adopter supply.





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