There + Other Tenses:
There has been & There had been: Perfect Tenses

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

1. There ___ an accident on the motorway. The traffic is still very slow.
    a) was
    b) had been
    c) has been
    d) were

2. By the time the firefighters arrived, there ___ a fire in the building for over an hour.
    a) has been
    b) was
    c) had been
    d) were

3. There ___ three robberies in our neighbourhood since January.
    a) have been
    b) were
    c) had been
    d) was

4. There ___ a lot of rain last month.
    a) was
    b) had been
    c) has been
    d) have been

5. There ___ several complaints about the noise recently.
    a) had been
    b) were
    c) have been
    d) was

6. When we arrived at the cinema, we discovered there ___ a mistake with our booking.
    a) had been
    b) has been
    c) was
    d) have been

7. ___ there been any improvement in his health?
    a) Has
    b) Had
    c) Was
    d) Were

8. Before last summer's festival, there ___ never been so many tourists in this town.
    a) have
    b) has
    c) were
    d) had

9. There ___ a big change in the company's policy. Everyone is talking about it.
    a) was
    b) has been
    c) had been
    d) were

10. She told me there ___ a power cut while I was away.
    a) has been
    b) have been
    c) had been
    d) was

11. There ___ much progress on the project so far.
    a) wasn't
    b) hadn't been
    c) hasn't been
    d) weren't

12. There ___ any problems before the new manager started, but everything changed after that.
a) hasn't been   b) hadn't been
c) weren't   d) haven't been

13. There ___ several earthquakes in that region this year.
a) have been   b) had been
c) was   d) were

14. I didn't know there ___ a meeting earlier that morning.
a) has been   b) was
c) have been   d) had been

15. There ___ a sharp rise in house prices over the last five years.
a) was   b) has been
c) had been   d) were

16. There ___ two major wars in Europe in the twentieth century.
a) have been   b) had been
c) has been   d) were

17. Have there ___ any updates on the missing plane?
a) being   b) been
c) be   d) was

18. Before the bridge was built, there ___ no easy way to cross the river.
a) has been   b) was
c) have been   d) had been

19. There ___ a lot of discussion about this issue lately.
a) had been   b) has been
c) was   d) were

20. The teacher said that there ___ a mistake in the exam, so they gave everyone extra marks.
a) has been   b) have been
c) was   d) had been

Answers

1. c) has been
2. c) had been
3. a) have been
4. a) was
5. c) have been
6. a) had been
7. a) Has
8. d) had
9. b) has been
10. c) had been
11. c) hasn't been
12. b) hadn't been
13. a) have been
14. d) had been
15. b) has been
16. d) were
17. b) been
18. d) had been
19. b) has been
20. d) had been

Explanations

1. "has been" (c)

The traffic is still slow now, so the accident has a connection to the present. We use present perfect 'has been'. There has been an accident on the motorway.

2. "had been" (c)

The fire started before the firefighters arrived — it's the 'past before the past'. We use past perfect 'had been'.

3. "have been" (a)

'Since January' signals a period from the past to now, so we use present perfect. 'Three robberies' is plural → 'have been'.

4. "was" (a)

'Last month' is a finished past time. We use past simple 'was', not present perfect. There was a lot of rain last month.

5. "have been" (c)

'Recently' connects the past to the present. 'Several complaints' is plural → present perfect 'have been'.

6. "had been" (a)

The mistake happened before we arrived and discovered it. We use past perfect 'had been' for the earlier event.

7. "Has" (a)

This asks about a change from the past up to now. We use present perfect question form: 'Has there been...?'

8. "had" (d)

'Before last summer's festival' refers to a time before a past event. We need past perfect: 'There had never been so many tourists before that.' Only 'had' completes the past perfect form 'had ... been'.

9. "has been" (b)

'Everyone is talking about it' shows the change is still relevant now. Present perfect 'has been' links the past event to the present.

10. "had been" (c)

The power cut happened before she told me. In reported speech about a past event, we use past perfect 'had been'.

11. "hasn't been" (c)

'So far' means 'up to now', which requires present perfect. 'Progress' is uncountable (singular) → 'hasn't been'.

12. "hadn't been" (b)

The problems (or lack of them) existed in a period before the new manager started — past before past. We use past perfect 'hadn't been'.

13. "have been" (a)

'This year' is a period that includes the present, so we use present perfect. 'Several earthquakes' is plural → 'have been'.

14. "had been" (d)

The meeting took place before the speaker found out (I didn't know). This is past before past → past perfect 'had been'.

15. "has been" (b)

'Over the last five years' is a time period up to now. 'A sharp rise' is singular → present perfect 'has been'.

16. "were" (d)

'In the twentieth century' is a completed past period. We use past simple 'were', not present perfect.

17. "been" (b)

In the present perfect question 'Have there been...?', the main verb is the past participle 'been'.

18. "had been" (d)

'Before the bridge was built' sets a time before another past event. We use past perfect 'had been'.

19. "has been" (b)

'Lately' means 'recently, up to now'. 'Discussion' is uncountable (singular) → present perfect 'has been'.

20. "had been" (d)

The mistake existed before the teacher announced it. In reported speech about a past discovery, we use past perfect 'had been'. 'They gave' confirms the past context.