



*NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)*

WHO-OBSQID PROJECT, MALTA

*Fourth Quarterly Report: October to December 2001*

*DR LINA JANULOVA MD, MSc.*  
*Add: DHI, 95 G'Mangia hill, G'Mangia, MSD08*  
*e-mail: [lina.janulova@magnet.mt](mailto:lina.janulova@magnet.mt)*  
*Tel. No.: 21237067, 21242454*

## ANALYSIS

This report analyses, the ***national deliveries and births*** that occurred in the fourth quarter of 2001 and compares it to the same period in 2000, where possible (published summary report 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2000).

The data in this report relates to the birth for all maternities (Maltese and non-Maltese) registered into the system.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2001, there were a total of 996 deliveries registered in the Maltese islands, which resulted in a total of 1008 births.

When comparing these figures to the same period last year one can see that the number of deliveries and consequently the births decreased by 138 and 145 respectively (deliveries: 1134, births: 1153-4<sup>th</sup> quart. '00).

### ***MATERNAL AGE, MARITAL STATUS, NATIONALITY and PARITY***

The maternities have been grouped according to the standard age groupings and the frequency distribution of deliveries according to maternal age at delivery has been analysed. In the fourth quarter of 2001, the greatest number of deliveries (40%), occurred in the age group 25 to 29 years while the lowest number of deliveries (<1%) occurred in the less than 15 years age group. The minimum age of the mothers was 14 years while the maximum age was 44 years. The most frequent age at delivery was 29 years.

The grouped frequency distribution of deliveries according to maternal age are given in the table below

	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2001</i>	
<i>Age grp.(yrs)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<15	1	<1
15-19	61	69
20-24	176	18
25-29	398	40
30-34	230	23
35-39	97	10
40-44	28	3
45+	-	-
Unspecified	5	<1

For the fourth quarter of 2001, there were 13% (133) of all deliveries that occurred to mothers who were never married (single) while 86% (860) of deliveries occurred to mothers who were married once (married, widowed, separated). The remaining 3 (<1%) deliveries had no marital status specified.

According to the data registered in NOIS, of the 13% (133) mothers who have never been married, 99% (132) received 'Support at home to raise the infant' while 1% (1) did not have 'support at home'.

In the fourth quarter 2001, 95% (948) of all deliveries occurred to women of Maltese nationality while 4% (44) were Non-Maltese. In the remaining 4 deliveries the nationality was not specified.

There were 48% (482) of mothers who were primiparas while 52% (514) were multiparas in the fourth quarter of 2001. For the same period last year the primipara and multipara rate were 46%(521) and 54% (613) respectively.

### **MATERNAL LIFESTYLES**

There were 9% (85) of mothers who smoked either 1 to 3 cigarettes or more during pregnancy in the fourth quarter of 2001. When comparing these figures to the same quarter of 2000, it can be seen that the smoking habits of mothers remained the same (9% (101)-4<sup>th</sup> quart. '00).

The table below gives the smoking, alcohol and drug habits of mothers for the fourth quarters of 2001 and 2000.

4 <sup>th</sup> Quarters	2001	2000
	No.	No.
<b>Cigarette smoking during pregnancy:</b>		
➤ 1 to 3/day	20	13
➤ >than 3/day	65	88
➤ Do not smoke	908	1025
➤ Unspecified	3	8
<b>Alcohol consumption during pregnancy:</b>		
➤ Up to 1unit/day	-	-
➤ >than 1unit/day	-	-
➤ None	994	1132
➤ Unspecified	2	2
<b>Drug Abuse during pregnancy</b>		
➤ Yes	3	3
➤ No	991	1129
Unspecified	2	2

### **PATHOLOGY DURING PREGANANCY**

The table below gives the number of mothers for the fourth quarters of 2001 and 2000, recorded with a specific obstetric pathology during pregnancy. There were 7% of mothers who had gestational hypertention in the fourth quarter of 2001 while for the same period last year this rate was at 5%.

Pathology recorded during pregnancy	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2001			4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter 2000		
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Unspec.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Unspec.</i>
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
Antepartum Haemorrhage:	14	982	-	20	1113	1
Gestational hypertention:	70	926	-	54	1078	2
Pre-eclampsia:	12	984	-	4	1129	1
Placenta praevia:	10	986	-	4	1129	1
Abruption of plcenta:	4	992	-	3	1129	2
Assisted fertilisation (ART):	5	991	-	9	1123	2
Cardiovascular disease:	4	992	-	3	1120	11

### **Diabetes in pregnancy**

*Diabetes in pregnancy is recorded into the standard NOIS sheet according to the data recorded in the 'Booking Sheet', 'The Baby Book' and the entry note by the doctor in the personal file of the mother.*

In the fourth quarter of 2001, there were no mothers who were registered as being Insulin Dependent Diabetic before this pregnancy while there were 2 mother recorded

with Non-Insulin Dependent diabetes. In addition, there were a total of 19 mothers registered with gestational diabetes who were controlled without the use of insulin.

### **ULTRASONOGRAPHY**

According to NOIS for the fourth quarter of 2001, there were 31% (304) of mothers who had two ultrasounds carried out during pregnancy while 6% (63) had more than five scans. The table below gives the number and rate of ultrasound scan carried out during pregnancy.

<i>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2001</i>		
<i>No of Scans</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
1	192	20
2	304	31
3	240	24
4	104	10
>5	63	6
Unspecified	93	9

### **CATEGORY OF MATERNITY ACCORDING TO DELIVERY**

For the fourth quarter 2001, there were a total of 985 (99%) singleton, 10 (1%) twin deliveries and 1 triplet (<1%) delivery. When comparing these figures to the fourth quarter of 2000, one can see that the singleton deliveries increased by 1% in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2001 quarter while the twin delivery rate decreased by 1% (see table below).

	<i>3rd Quarters</i>	
	<i>2001</i>	<i>2000</i>
<i>Category</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Singleton	985	1115
Twin	10	19
Triplet	1	-
Quadruplet	-	-

### **METHOD OF BIRTH**

In the fourth quarter of 2001, there were 69% (697) of births that were delivered by vertex delivery, 27% (276) by emergency or elective Caesarean section and 4% (35) by assisted vaginal delivery (includes forceps, ventouse and breech).

When comparing the method of birth to the same quarter 2000, it can be seen that the rates for vertex deliveries decreased by 2% and the Caesarean section rate increased by 3% in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2001 (4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2000: vertex: 824(71%), C section: 277(24%), assisted vaginal delivery: 52(5%).

	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Quarters</i>	
	<i>2001</i>	<i>2000</i>
<i>Method of Birth*</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Infants delivered by vertex delivery	697	824
Infants delivered by elective CS before labour	131	116
Infants delivered by emergency CS before labour	22	15
Infants delivered by elective CS during labour	9	9
Infants delivered by emergency CS during labour	114	137
Infants delivered by forceps	7	8
Infants delivered by ventouse	28	42
Breech deliveries	-	2

*Note: Data analysed according to total birth*

### ***BIRTHWEIGHTS AND GENDER OF BIRTHS***

In the fourth quarter of 2001, of the total births (1008), 92% (929) occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4999g, 7% (69) in the low birth weight range of 1500g to 2499g and 1% (9) in the very low birth weight range of 500g to 1499g. In addition there was 1 birth that had no birthweight recorded, see table below.

Birthweight(g)	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2001	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter 2000
<500g	-	3
500-1499g	9	11
1500-2499g	69	74
2500-4999g	929	1064
5000+	-	-
Unspecified	1	1
Average Birthweight	3245	3241

The male and female distribution of births in the fourth quarter of 2001 was 532 and 476 respectively.

### ***OUTCOME OF BIRTH***

The number of live births for the fourth quarters of 2001 and 2000 were 1003 and 1149 respectively which accounted for 99.5% of the total birth rate at a national level. The remaining 0.5 % accounted for the stillbirths (see table below).

Outcome of Birth	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2001	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2000
Babies alive after 28 days	998	1138
Early Neonatal deaths	4	9
Late Neonatal deaths	1	2
Stillbirths	5	4

### ***BREAST FEEDING WITHIN 30 MINUTES OF DELIVERY***

In the fourth quarter 2001, there were 25% of infants that were breast fed 'within 30 minutes of birth' while 75% were not breast fed during the same time period. When comparing these figures to same quarter of 2000, one can see that there was a 27% decrease in the number of infants who were breast fed 'within 30 minutes of birth' in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2001 (4<sup>th</sup> quart. 2000: 52% breast fed, 48% not breast fed).

Breast feeding within 30mins. of delivery	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2001	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2000
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Infants breast fed	254	605
Infants not breast fed	754	548
Unspecified	-	-

### ***INFANT FEEDING METHODS AT DISCHARGE***

Infant feeding habits are recorded by hospital staff at the time of discharge, little can be said on the actual infant feeding habits from the numbers given below as these may change soon after discharge from the birthing facilities.

Infant feeding methods at time of discharge	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2001	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter 2000
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Breast only	414	574
Bottle only	401	418
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	179	143
Other	11	7
Unspecified	3	11