



*NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)*

MALTA

*Second Quarterly Report: April to June 2002*

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### INTRODUCTION

This is this second quarterly report 2002, for the National Obstetric Information System (NOIS). The Director General, National Statistics Authority has requested that aggregated NOIS data be consulted for future NSO publications on projection studies on births. This endeavour confirms the reliability and exclusive availability of national clinical obstetric data within the health authority. The partnership that is being set up within and outside the health department is only possible due to the proactive and committed approach of the private and public hospital maternity staff.

### ANALYSIS

*This report analyses, the **national deliveries and births** that occurred in the second quarter of this year and compares it to the same period of last year, where possible (published summary report 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2001).*

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

There were a total of 933 deliveries registered in the Maltese islands for the second quarter of this year, which resulted in a total of 946 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 33 and 25 respectively (deliveries: 966, births: 971-2<sup>nd</sup> quart. '01).

### 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 second quarter of this year, the greatest number of deliveries (42%), occurred in the age group 25 to 29 years while the lowest number of deliveries (<1%) occurred in the age group less than 15 years and 45 plus years. The minimum age of the mothers was 14 years while the maximum age was 47 years. The most frequent age at delivery was 26 years.

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

Age grp.(yrs)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2002	
	Frequency	%
<15	1	<1
15-19	56	6
20-24	175	19
25-29	390	42
30-34	198	21
35-39	87	9
40-44	21	2
45+	1	<1
Unspecified	4	<1

For the second quarter of this year, there were 15% (136) of all deliveries that occurred to mothers who were never married (single) while 84% (785) of deliveries occurred to mothers who were married once (married, widowed, separated). The remaining 1% (12) of delivery had no marital status specified. When comparing these

figures to the same quarter, 2001 one can see that deliveries to women who were never married increased by 3%, this quarter (2001-deliveries to women never married (12%), deliveries to women who were married once (88%).

In the second quarter 2002, according to the data registered in NOIS, of the 15% (136) mothers who have never been married, 93% (127) received 'Support at home to raise the infant' while 5% (7) did not have 'support at home'. In the remaining 2% (2) this data was not specified.

94% (879) of all deliveries this quarter, occurred to women of Maltese nationality while 5% (48) were Non-Maltese. In the remaining 1% (6) nationality was not specified.

There were 51% (479) of mothers who were primiparas while 49% (454) were multiparas in the second quarter of this year. For the same period last year the primipara and multipara rate were 50%(483) and 50% (483) respectively.

#### MISCARRIAGES IN PAST OBSTETRIC HISTORY

Of the total primiparas (479) this quarter, 9% (45) recorded a past history of miscarriage while 91% (434) had no history of miscarriage registered. With regards to total multipara (454) this quarter, 21% (95) of deliveries reported a miscarriage in the past obstetric history (see table below).

No. of Miscarriages	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2002		
	Primipara <i>No. (%)</i>	Multipara <i>No. (%)</i>	Total <i>No. (%)</i>
0	434(91)	359(79)	793(85)
1	38(8)	73(16)	111(12)
2	6(1)	15(3)	21(2)
=/>3	1(<1)	7(2)	8(1)
Total	479	454	933

#### MATERNAL LIFESTYLES

There were 5% (47) of mothers who smoked either 1 to 3 cigarettes or more during pregnancy in the second quarter of this year. When comparing these figures to the same quarter of 2001, it can be seen that the smoking habits of mothers decreased by 4% in this year's quarter (9% (85)-2<sup>nd</sup> quart. '01).

The table below gives the smoking, alcohol and drug habits of mothers for the first quarters of 2002 and 2001.

2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarters	2002	2001
	No.	No.
<b>Cigarette smoking during pregnancy:</b>		
➤ 1 to 3/day	11	23
➤ >than 3/day	36	62
➤ Do not smoke	883	879
➤ Unspecified	3	2
<b>Alcohol consumption during pregnancy:</b>		
➤ Up to 1unit/day	2	1
➤ >than 1unit/day	-	-
➤ None	928	963
➤ Unspecified	3	2
<b>Drug Abuse during pregnancy</b>		
➤ Yes	3	-
➤ No	927	964
Unspecified	3	2

### ***PATHOLOGY DURING PREGANANCY***

The table below gives the number of mothers for the second quarters of this year and 2001, recorded with a specific obstetric pathology during pregnancy. There were 6% of mothers who had gestational hypertention this quarter while for the same period last year this rate was at 4%.

<i>Pathology recorded during pregnancy</i>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2002			2nd Quarter 2001		
	<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:	9	922	2	8	958	-
Gestational hypertention:	60	870	3	42	921	3
Pre-eclampsia:	7	922	4	3	963	-
Placenta praevia:	12	917	4	-	966	-
Abruption of plcenta:	2	925	6	3	961	2
Assisted fertilisation (ART):	5	924	4	3	963	-
Cardiovascular disease:	3	930	-	2	963	1

### ***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 second quarter of this year, there were no mothers that were registered as being Insulin Dependent Diabetic before this pregnancy while there was 4 mother recorded with Non-Insulin Dependent diabetes. In addition, there were a total of 21 mothers registered with gestational diabetes, of these 2 was treated with insulin while the other 19 were controlled without the use of insulin.

### ***ULTRASONOGRAPHY***

According to NOIS for the second quarter of this year, there were 31% of mothers who had two ultrasounds carried out during pregnancy while 7% (63) had more than five scans. The table below gives the number and rate of ultrasound scan carried out during pregnancy.

2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2002		
<i>No of Scans</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
1	178	19
2	294	31
3	223	24
4	119	13
=/>5	63	7
Unspecified	56	6

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

For the second quarter of this year, there were a total of 921 (99%) singleton and 1% (11) twin deliveries. In addition there was 1 triplet delivery. When comparing these figures to last year's quarter for the same period one can see that the singleton deliveries decreased slightly (0.5%) this quarter while the twin delivery rate increased by half (0.5%) (see table below).

	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarters</i>	
	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>
<i>Category</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Singleton	921	961
Twin	11	5
Triplet	1	-
Quadruplet	-	-

### **METHOD OF BIRTH**

In the second quarter of this year, there were 69% (656) of births that were delivered by vertex delivery, 26% (249) by emergency or elective Caesarean section and 4% (30) by assisted vaginal delivery (includes forceps, ventouse and breech).

When comparing the method of birth to last year's second quarter, it can be seen that the vertex deliveries decreased by 5% while the Caesarean section births increased by 3% this year (*2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2001: vertex: 720(74%), C section: 222(23%), assisted vaginal delivery: 29(3%)*).

	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Quarters</i>	
	<i>2002</i>	<i>2001</i>
<i>Method of Birth*</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Infants delivered by vertex delivery	656	720
Infants delivered by elective CS before labour	112	120
Infants delivered by emergency CS before labour	21	17
Infants delivered by elective CS during labour	6	7
Infants delivered by emergency CS during labour	110	78
Infants delivered by forceps	6	-
Infants delivered by ventouse	34	26
Breech deliveries	1	3

*Note: Data analysed according to total birth*

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

In the second quarter of 2002, there were 93% (882) of the total births (946) that occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4999g. While 5% (51) of the total births were in the low birth weight range of 1500g to 2499g. 1% (11) of births were of very low birth weight (500g to 1499g). In addition there was 1 (<1%) in the birth weight range of 5000 grams or more. The remaining birth had no birth weight specified.

When comparing these birthweights to the same period last year, it can be seen that the birth weight range of 2500 to 4999g remained the same, this quarter while the low birth weight range (1500g to 2499g) decreased by 1%. With regards to the very low birthweights (500-1499g) one can see that the rate increased by 1%, this quarter (see table below).

Birthweight(g)	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2002	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2001
<500g	-	-
500-1499g	11	8
1500-2499g	51	54
2500-4999g	882	904
5000+	1	-
Unspecified	1	5
Average Birthweight	3241	3244

The male and female distribution of births in the second quarter of 2002 was 504 and 442 respectively (2<sup>nd</sup> quart.-2001 Males-494, females 477).

#### **OUTCOME OF BIRTH**

The number of live births for the second quarters of this year and last year were 941 and 965 respectively which accounted for 99% of the total birth rate at a national level. The remaining 1 % accounted for the stillbirths (see table below).

Outcome of Birth	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2002	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2001
Babies alive after 28 days	941	965
Stillbirths	5	4
Early Neonatal deaths	3	2
Late Neonatal deaths)	3	-

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

In the second quarter of this year there were 32% of infants that were breast fed 'within 30 minutes of birth' while 68% were not breast fed during the same time period. When comparing these figures to last years second quarter, one can see that there was a 14% decrease in the number of infants who were breast fed 'within 30 minutes of birth' in this years second quarter (2<sup>nd</sup> quart. 2001: 46% breast fed, 53% not breast fed, 1% unspecified.)

Breast feeding within 30mins. of delivery	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2002	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2001
	No.	No.
Infants breast fed	303	445
Infants not breast fed	642	514
Unspecified	1	12

#### **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	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2002	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter 2001
	No.	No.
Breast only	470	494
Bottle only	352	355
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	103	101
Other	2	8
Unspecified	19	13

