



NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)

MALTA

Third Quarterly Report: July to September 2002

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ANALYSIS

This report analyses, the ***national deliveries and births*** that occurred in the third quarter of this year and compares it to the same period of last year, where possible (published summary report 3rd 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 993 deliveries registered in the Maltese islands for the third quarter of this year, which resulted in a total of 1007 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 14 and 5 respectively (deliveries: 1007, births: 1012-3rd 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 third quarter of this year, the greatest number of deliveries (39%), occurred in the age group 25 to 29 years while there no deliveries that occurred in the age group range of less than 15 years and 45+ years. The minimum age of the mothers was 15 years while the maximum age was 44 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

<i>Age grp.(yrs)</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2002</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<15	-	-
15-19	48	5
20-24	212	21
25-29	387	39
30-34	224	23
35-39	93	9
40-44	23	2
45+	-	-
Unspecified	6	1

For the third quarter of this year, there were 13% (130) of all deliveries that occurred to mothers who were never married (single) while 85% (842) of deliveries occurred to mothers who were married once (married, widowed, separated). The remaining 2% (21) 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 remained the same (13%) (2001-deliveries to women never married (13%), deliveries to women who were married once (87%).

In the third quarter 2002, according to the data registered in NOIS, of the 13% (130) mothers who have never been married, 98% (127) received 'Support at home to raise the infant' while <1% (1) did not have 'support at home'. In the remaining 2% (2) this data was not specified.

95% (943) of all deliveries this quarter, occurred to women of Maltese nationality while 4% (37) were Non-Maltese. In the remaining 1% (13) the nationality was not specified.

There were 52% (521) of mothers who were primiparas while 48% (472) were multiparas in the third quarter of this year. For the same period last year the primipara and multipara rate were equal at 50% (506) and 50% (501) respectively.

MISCARRIAGES IN PAST OBSTETRIC HISTORY

Of the total primiparas (521) this quarter, 11% (56) recorded a past history of miscarriage while 89% (465) had no history of miscarriage registered. With regards to total multipara (472) this quarter, 22% (102) of deliveries reported a miscarriage in the past obstetric history (see table below).

No. of Miscarriages	3 rd Quarter 2002		
	Primipara <i>No.-%</i>	Multipara <i>No.- %</i>	Total <i>No.-%</i>
0	465-89%	369-78%	834-84%
1	43-8%	73-16%	116-12%
2	10-2%	22-5%	32-3%
=/>3	3-1%	7-1%	10-1%
Unspecified	-	1-<1%	1-<1%
Total	521	472	993

MATERNAL LIFESTYLES

There were 1% (14) of mothers who smoked either 1 to 3 cigarettes or more during pregnancy in the third 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 7% in this year's quarter (8% (76)-3rd quart. '01). However, this data must be interpreted with caution as the data recorded may not reflect the real picture.

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

3 rd Quarters	2002	2001
	No.	No.
Cigarette smoking during pregnancy:		
➤ 1 to 3/day	1	27
➤ >than 3/day	13	49
➤ Do not smoke	951	928
➤ Unspecified	28	3
Alcohol consumption during pregnancy:		
➤ Up to 1unit/day	0	1
➤ >than 1unit/day	0	2
➤ None	965	1003
➤ Unspecified	28	1
Drug Abuse during pregnancy		
➤ Yes	3	2
➤ No	962	1004
Unspecified	28	1

PATHOLOGY DURING PREGANANCY

The table below gives the number of mothers for the third 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>	3 rd Quarter 2002			3 rd 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:	8	984	1	15	992	-
Gestational hypertention:	60	930	3	52	955	-
Pre-eclampsia:	5	984	4	3	1004	-
Placenta praevia:	4	986	3	7	1000	-
Abruption of plcenta:	2	987	4	4	1003	-
Assisted fertilisation (ART):	3	986	4	11	996	-
Cardiovascular disease:	1	990	2	-	1007	-

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 third quarter of this year, there were 2 mothers that were registered as being Insulin Dependent Diabetic (IDDM) before this pregnancy while there was 1 mother recorded with Non-Insulin Dependent diabetes (NIDDM). In addition, there were a total of 11 mothers registered with gestational diabetes, of these all 11 were treated without the use of insulin.

In addition there were 7 mothers that were recorded with 'Glycosuria' (ICD 10-O26.9/R81) with no mention of IDDM/NIDDM before pregnancy or gestational diabetes during pregnancy.

ULTRASONOGRAPHY

According to NOIS for the third quarter of this year, there were 30% of mothers who had two ultrasounds carried out during pregnancy while 4% had more than five scans. The table below gives the number and rate of ultrasound scan carried out during pregnancy.

3 rd Quarter 2002		
<i>No of Scans</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
1	213	21
2	300	30
3	210	21
4	120	12
=/>5	84	9
Unspecified	66	7

CATEGORY OF MATERNITY ACCORDING TO DELIVERY

For the third quarter of this year, there were a total of 979 (99%) singleton and 14 (1%) twin deliveries. 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).

	3 rd Quarters	
	2002	2001
Category	No.	No.
Singleton	979	1002
Twin	14	5
Triplet	-	-
Quadruplet	-	-

METHOD OF BIRTH

In the third quarter of this year, there were 71% (717) of births that were delivered by vertex delivery, 25% (253) by emergency or elective Caesarean section and 4% (37) by assisted vaginal delivery (includes forceps, ventouse and breech).

When comparing the method of birth to last year's third quarter, it can be seen that the vertex deliveries decreased by 3% while the Caesarean section births increased by 3% this year (3rd quarter 2001: vertex: 749(74%), C section:225(22%), assisted vaginal delivery: 38(4%).

	3 rd Quarters	
	2002	2001
Method of Birth*	No.	No.
Infants delivered by vertex delivery	717	749
Infants delivered by elective CS before labour	127	109
Infants delivered by emergency CS before labour	20	21
Infants delivered by elective CS during labour	4	8
Infants delivered by emergency CS during labour	102	87
Infants delivered by forceps	3	5
Infants delivered by ventouse	33	32
Breech deliveries	1	1

Note:. Data analysed according to total birth*

BIRTHWEIGHTS AND GENDER OF BIRTHS

In the third quarter of 2002, there were 94% (945) of the total births (1007) that occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4999g. While 5% (50) of the total births was in the low birth weight range of 1500g to 2499g. 1% (9) of births were of very low birth weight (500g to 1499g). In addition there were 3 (<1%) births in the birth weight range of 5000 grams or more.

When comparing these birthweights to the same period last year, it can be seen that the birth weight ranges:2500 to 4999g and 1500 to 2499g, decreased by 1% respectively, this quarter while the very low birthweights (500-1499g) remained the same (see table below).

Birthweight(g)	3 rd quarter 2002	3 rd quarter 2001
<500g	1	-
500-1499g	8	10
1500-2499g	50	39
2500-4999g	945	962
5000+	3	1
Unspecified	-	-
Average Birthweight	3250	3275

The male and female distribution of births in the third quarter of 2002 was 544 and 463 respectively (3rd quart.-2001 Males-530, females 482).

OUTCOME OF BIRTH

The number of live births for the third quarters of this year and last year were 1000 and 1005 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*	3 rd quarter 2002	3 rd quarter 2001
Babies alive after 28 days	1000	1005
Stillbirths	7	7
<i>Early Neonatal deaths in live births</i>	2	1
<i>Late Neonatal deaths in live births</i>	-	3

Note:. In the 2nd quarter 2002 (published report): The Early Neonatal Deaths should read 4 and not 3.*

BREAST FEEDING WITHIN 30 MINUTES OF DELIVERY

In the third quarter of this year there were 39% of infants that were breast fed 'within 30 minutes of birth' while 61% were not breast fed during the same time period. When comparing these figures to last years third quarter, one can see that there was a 7% increase in the number of infants who were breast fed 'within 30 minutes of birth' in this years third quarter (3rd quart. 2001: 32% breast fed, 68% not breast fed).

Breast feeding within 30mins. of delivery	3 rd quarter 2002	3 rd quarter 2001
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Infants breast fed	389	269
Infants not breast fed	618	743
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	3 rd quarter 2002	3 rd quarter 2001
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
Breast only	506	475
Bottle only	380	374
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	104	144
Other	4	8
Unspecified	13	11