



NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)

MALTA

Second Quarterly Report: April to June 2004

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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 (2nd quarter 2003).*

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

Data is sent to the Registry from all hospitals on the Maltese Islands. Accuracy and completeness of data sent on the NOIS reporting sheets is the responsibility of the Hospital providing data.

There were a total of 876 deliveries registered in the Maltese islands for the second quarter of 2004, which resulted in a total of 887 births.

Comparing these figures with those of the same period last year one can see that the number of maternities and deliveries decreased by 57 deliveries and 59 births (*deliveries: 933, births: 946- 2nd quarter 2003*).

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 (38%), 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. There were no deliveries in the 45+ 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 28 years.

The frequency distribution of deliveries according to maternal age group is given in the table below.

Age group (years)	2nd Quarter '04		2nd Quarter '03	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<15	1	<1	2	<1
15-19	38	4	36	4
20-24	158	18	191	20
25-29	332	38	351	38
30-34	244	28	230	25
35-39	81	9	103	11
40-44	21	2	19	2
45+	0	-	-	
Unspecified	1	<1	1	<1

When comparing the second quarters of this and last year, one can see that this quarter the rate of deliveries decreased by 2% in the 20 to 24 and 35-39 year age groups. On the other hand there was an increase of 3% in the 30-34 year age group this quarter.

For the second quarter of this year, 16% (137) of all deliveries occurred to mothers who were never married (single); while 83% (730) of all deliveries occurred to mothers who were married once (married, widowed, separated). The remaining 1% (9) of deliveries had no marital status specified. When comparing these figures to the same quarter of 2003, one can see that deliveries to women who were never married increased by 2%, this quarter (*2nd quarter 2003- deliveries to women never married (14%), deliveries to women who were married once (85%), unspecified 1%*).

In the second quarter 2004, according to the data registered in NOIS, of the 16% (137) mothers who have never been married, 99% (135) were registered as having 'Support at home to raise the infant'. One of these mothers did not have 'support at home' and for another mother this data was not specified.

94% (823) of all deliveries this quarter, occurred to women of Maltese nationality while 4% (32) were Non-Maltese. In the remaining 2% (21) nationality was not specified.

There were 51% (450) of mothers who were primiparas while 49% (426) were multiparas in the second quarter of this year. For the same period last year the primipara and multipara rate were 49% and 51% respectively.

MATERNAL LIFESTYLES

There were 7% (61) of mothers who smoked one or more cigarettes during pregnancy in the second quarter of this year. When comparing these figures to the same quarter of 2003, it can be seen that the smoking habits of mothers increased by 5% in this year's quarter (*2nd quarter 2003-2%*).

The table below gives the smoking, alcohol and drug habits of mothers for the second quarters of 2004 and 2003.

<i>Maternal Lifestyles</i>	<i>2nd Quarter 2004</i>	<i>2nd Quarter 2003</i>
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
<i>Cigarette smoking during pregnancy:</i>		
1 to 3/day	9	2
>than 3/day	52	19
Do not smoke	814	909
Unspecified	1	3
<i>Alcohol consumption during pregnancy:</i>		
Up to 1unit/day	-	-
>than 1unit/day	-	-
None	875	930
Unspecified	1	3
<i>Drug Abuse during pregnancy</i>		
Yes	4	5
No	871	925
Unspecified	1	3

PATHOLOGY DURING PREGNANCY

The table below gives the number of mothers for the second quarters of this year and 2003, recorded with a specific obstetric pathology during pregnancy.

There were 5% of mothers who had gestational hypertension this quarter while for the same period last year this rate was at 6%.

<i>Pathology recorded during pregnancy</i>	<i>2nd Quarter 2004</i>			<i>2nd Quarter 2003</i>		
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Unspec.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Unspec.</i>
Antepartum Haemorrhage:	8	865	3	12	920	1
Gestational hypertension:	43	832	1	55	876	2
Pre-eclampsia:	3	873	0	3	925	5
Placenta praevia:	2	874	0	7	924	2
Abruption of placenta:	2	874	0	2	926	5
Assisted fertilisation (ART):	5	871	0	7	922	4
Cardiovascular disease:	0	876	0	1	931	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 6 mothers who was registered as being Insulin Dependent Diabetic before this pregnancy while there were no mothers recorded with Non-Insulin Dependent diabetes. In addition, there were a total of 18 mothers registered with gestational diabetes, who were controlled without the use of insulin and one mother registered as having gestational diabetes treated with insulin.

ULTRASONOGRAPHY

According to NOIS for the second quarter of this year, there were 216 (25%) of mothers who had two ultrasounds carried out during pregnancy while 54 (6%) had more than five scans. The table below gives the number and rate of ultrasound scans carried out during pregnancy.

<i>No. of Scans</i>	<i>2nd Quarter 2004</i>		<i>2nd Quarter 2003</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
1	196	22	210	23
2	216	25	294	32
3	194	22	189	20
4	95	11	111	12
5 or more	54	6	49	5
None	0	0	1	<1
Unspecified	121	14	79	8

CATEGORY OF MATERNITY ACCORDING TO DELIVERY

For the second quarter of this year, there were a total of 865 (99%) singleton and 11 (1%) twin deliveries, no triplet or quadruplet deliveries. These figures are similar to those of last year for the same period (see table below).

Category	2nd Quarter 2004	2nd Quarter 2003
Singleton	865	920
Twin	11	13
Triplet	-	-
Quadruplet	-	-

INFANTS AND METHOD OF BIRTH

In the second quarter of this year, there were 595 (68.0%) of births delivered as a vertex delivery, 265 (30.3%) by emergency or elective Caesarean section and 26 (3.0%) by assisted vaginal delivery (includes forceps, ventouse and breech). These figures are similar to those of last year's second quarter (2nd quarter 2003: vertex: 68.5%, Caesarean section: 27.8%, assisted vaginal delivery: 3.7%).

Method of Birth*	2nd Quarter 2004	2nd Quarter 2003
Infants delivered by vertex delivery	595	648
Infants delivered by emergency/elective Caesarean Section	266	263
Infants delivered by forceps	1	3
Infants delivered by ventouse	25	30
Breech deliveries	-	2

**Data analysed according to total infant births*

BIRTHWEIGHTS AND GENDER OF BIRTHS

In the second quarter of 2004, there were 821 (93%) of the total births that occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4999g. 58 (7%) of the total births were in the low birth weight (LBW) range of 1500g to 2499g, while 5(<1%) of births were of very low birth weight (VLBW) 500g to 1499g. In addition there was 1 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 range of 2500 to 4999g increased by 1%, this quarter, while the rate in the LBW range increased by 2% (see table).

Birthweights	2nd Quarter 2004	2nd Quarter 2003
<500g	-	1
500-1499g (VLBW)	5	11
1500-2499g (LBW)	58	47
2500-4999g	822	886
5000+	1	1
Unspecified	1	-
Average Birthweight	3245	3206

The male and female distribution of births in the second quarter of 2004 was 469 and 418 respectively (*2nd quarter 2003: males- 472, females- 474*).

OUTCOME OF BIRTH

The number of live births for the second quarters of this year and last year were 877 and 939 respectively which accounted for 99% of the total birth rate at a national level. The remaining 1% were stillbirths. There was one case of early neonatal death and one case of late neonatal death (see table below).

<i>Outcome of Birth</i>	<i>2nd Quarter 2004</i>	<i>2nd Quarter 2003</i>
Babies born alive	877	939
Stillbirths	8	7
Early Neonatal deaths	1	4
Late Neonatal deaths	1	-

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.

<i>Infant feeding methods at time of discharge</i>	<i>2nd Quarter 2004</i>	<i>2nd Quarter 2003</i>
Breast only	500	506
Bottle only	232	354
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	139	65
Baby died before discharge	10	11
Other (including babies who are at SCBU at 28 days)	1	4
Unspecified	5	6