

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The National Obstetric Information System (NOIS) has since its inception in 1999, been collecting data on all deliveries taking place on the islands of Malta and Gozo. The following is a summary of the Annual NOIS report for 2008 relating to the deliveries and infant/fetal births reported to the Registry in 2008 together with trends related to obstetric care and outcomes. During 2008, data collection systems were significantly upgraded and improved.

Further information and comprehensive Annual Reports on the national deliveries and infant/fetal births may be found on our website <http://www.sahha.gov.mt/pages.aspx?page=92> .

Summary statistics and comparative trends

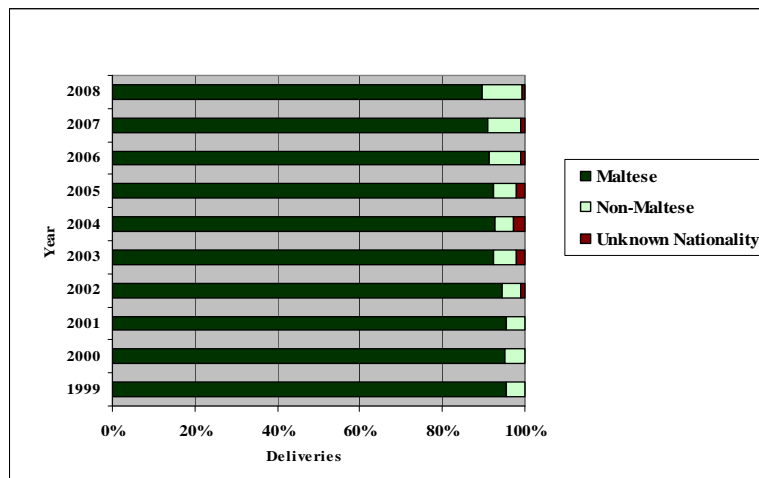
In 2008 there were 4154 deliveries and 4228 infant/fetal births. Following a trend of decreasing births spanning the seven-year period 1999 to 2005, there has been an increasing trend in number of births since 2006. There were 330 more births in 2008 when compared to 2007, this represents an 8.5% increase. There were 3849 deliveries (3919 births) in Malta and 305 deliveries (309 births) in Gozo.

The gender distribution of births was 52.4% (2216) male and 47.6% (2012) female.

Year	Deliveries	Total Births (Live & Stillbirths)	Livebirths
1999	4311	4382	4349
2000	4311	4377	4361
2001	3918	3955	3935
2002	3873	3927	3906
2003	3995	4054	4036
2004	3838	3902	3887
2005	3804	3865	3857
2006	3822	3891	3880
2007	3853	3898	3886
2008	4154	4228	4199

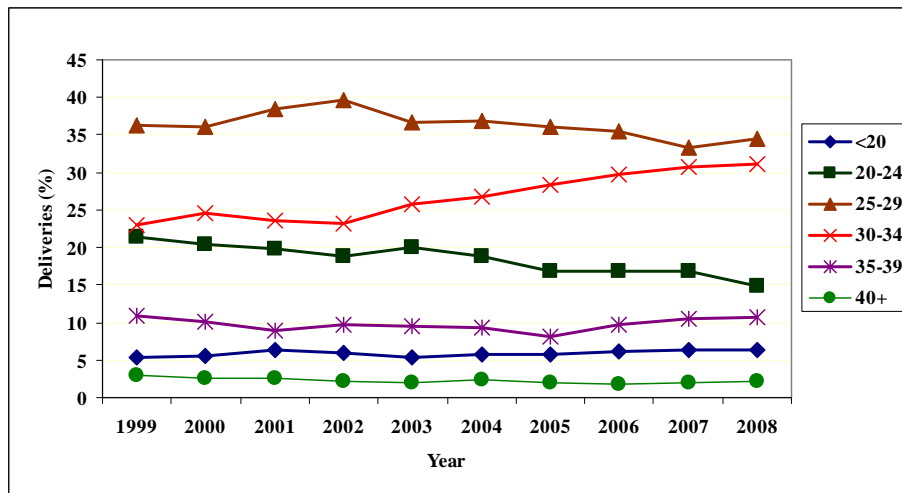
Number of deliveries and births in Malta and Gozo registered in NOIS since 1999

Deliveries to mothers of Maltese nationality made up 89.9% (3729) of all deliveries. The number of deliveries to mothers of non-Maltese nationality has doubled over a 10 year period, from 192 in 1999 to 402 in 2008.

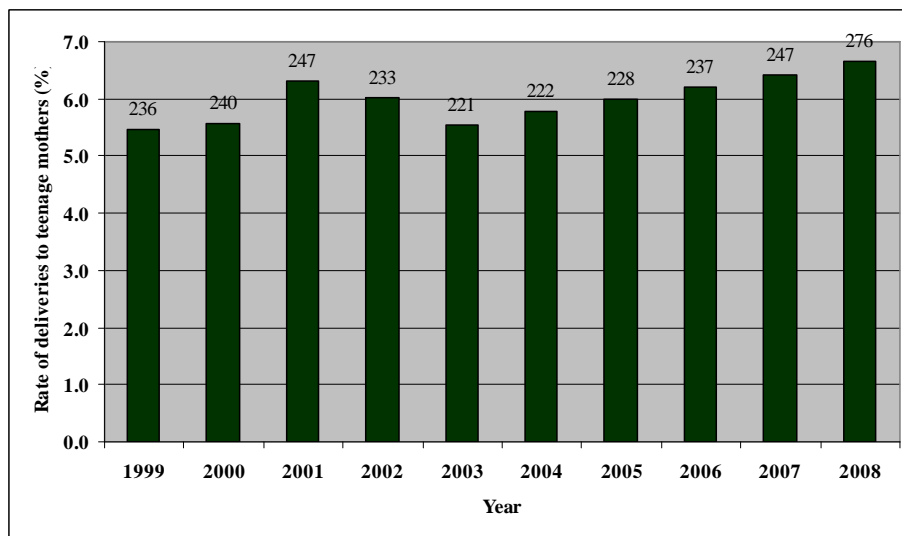


Deliveries by mothers of Maltese and Non-Maltese nationality

The maternal age group having the highest percentage of deliveries since 1999 has been the 25-29 year age group. There has been a steady increase in rate of deliveries in the 30-34 year age group. In fact, whereas in 1999 23% of births occurred within this age group, in 2008 this figure rose to 31%. Concomitantly, there has been a steady decrease in the rate of deliveries to mothers aged 20-24 years, from 21% in 1999 to 15% in 2008.



Percentage deliveries by maternal age group

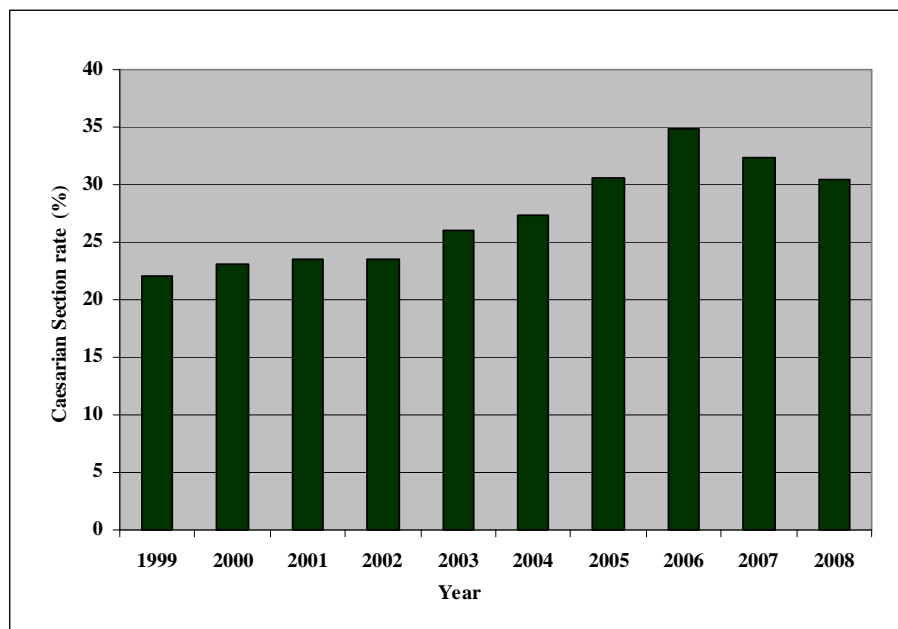


Rate (%) and number of teenage deliveries (<20 years)

Since 2003 there has been a steady increase in the rate and number of teenage deliveries i.e. mothers who are less than 20 years of age.

In 2008 there was a total of 4084 (98.3%) singleton and 66 (1.6%) twin deliveries, 4 triplet and no quadruplet deliveries.

Of the total 4228 infant/fetal births, 2699 (63.8%) were delivered as vertex delivery, 1328 (31.4%) by emergency or elective Caesarean section and 201 (4.8%) by assisted vaginal delivery and breech extraction.



Caesarian Section operation rate as a percentage of all deliveries

The Caesarian section rate has shown a steadily increasing trend between 1999 and 2006 which appears to have been reversed from 2006 - 2008.

2008 registered one maternal death. The number of live births registered was 4199 which accounted for 99.3% of the total births at national level. There were 29 still births of these 25 were of birth weight 500g and over. Of the live births, there were 21 cases of early neonatal deaths and 3 cases of late neonatal deaths. All births of 22 weeks and over irrespective of birth weight are registered into the system.

Year	Fetal mortality rate 500g and over Rate/1000 total births	Neonatal mortality rate 500g and over Rate/1000 live births
1999	6.2	4.8
2000	3.6	5.3
2001	5.1	3.0
2002	5.1	5.1
2003	3.9	5.0
2004	3.8	4.4
2005	2.1	4.4
2006	2.6	2.3
2007	2.8	4.4
2008	6.2	5.7

Fetal and Neonatal mortality rates for infants and fetuses of birth weight 500g or more

There are no statistically significant trends in fetal and neonatal mortality rates over the past 10 years. Rates in 2008 may reflect better reporting systems of very small babies of 22-24 weeks gestation.

Annex I of the full NOIS Annual Report gives some selected comparative birth and perinatal mortality statistics for Malta and the EU. Detailed comparisons of Malta data and other EU member states may be found in the “European Perinatal Health Report” published by Europeristat in December 2008, www.europeristat.com.