



NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)

MALTA

First Quarterly Report: January to March 2016

*Directorate for Health Information and Research (DHIR)
National Obstetric Information System (NOIS), Malta*

https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/chief_medical_officer/healthinfor_research/registries/births.aspx

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NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (NOIS)

Background

A national obstetric information system was launched in 1999 at the Directorate for Health Information and Research (DHIR) and covers practically all the deliveries taking place on the islands of Malta and Gozo.

Systematic data collection for NOIS starts upon delivery of the baby. Information regarding the course and outcome of each pregnancy is recorded by the relevant staff at each centre which contributes for data collection on a standard NOIS sheet. Infant progress is followed until discharge from hospital or up to a maximum of 28 days after birth. Once data is recorded, the sheets are forwarded to the DHIR on a regular basis. At the DHIR the relevant sheets are processed and entered into the NOIS database where data is kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act, 2001.

The maternity centres actively participating in this information system are: Mater Dei Hospital, Gozo General Hospital, St James Hospital Sliema and Zabbar.

Report analysis

This report analyses the national maternities/deliveries and infant births that occurred in the first quarter of 2016 and where appropriate compares it to the figures reported for the same period of the previous year. The data in this report describes the birth statistics for all maternities (Maltese and non-Maltese) and infant 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.

This report provides basic statistics regarding births and deliveries in the Maltese Islands. If required, further information and details may be obtained from our website:

https://ehealth.gov.mt/HealthPortal/chief_medical_officer/healthinfor_research/registries/births.aspx or by e-mail: healthinfo@gov.mt

ANALYSIS

There were a total of 1071 maternities/deliveries registered in the Maltese Islands for the first quarter of 2016, which resulted in a total of 1095 infant births.

Comparing these figures with those reported for the same period last year one can see that the number of infant births decreased by 15 births (1110 births reported in the 1st quarter of 2015).

MATERNITIES / DELIVERIES

MATERNAL AGE, MARITAL STATUS, NATIONALITY AND PARITY

Maternal Age:

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 first quarter of 2016, the greatest number of deliveries 385 (35.9%), occurred in the 30-34 year age group, while there was one delivery in the age group <15 years and one delivery in the 45 and over age group. The minimum age of the mothers was 14 years while the maximum age was 46 years. The most frequent age at delivery was 31 years, and the average age at delivery was 30.2 years.

The frequency distribution of deliveries according to maternal age group is shown in the following table.

Table 1 - Deliveries according to maternal age groups

<i>Age group (years)</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>		<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<15	1	0.1	0	0
15-19	34	3.2	36	3.3
20-24	116	10.8	129	11.8
25-29	317	29.6	334	30.6
30-34	385	35.9	386	35.4
35-39	182	17.0	175	16.0
40-44	35	3.3	30	2.8
45+	1	0.1	1	0.1
Unspecified	0	0.0	0	0.0

Marital Status:

For the first quarter of 2015, 28.3% (303) of all deliveries occurred to mothers who were reported as single (never married); while 68.6% (735) of all deliveries occurred to mothers reported as married, 0.2% (2) to mothers reported as widowed and 2.9% (31) of mothers were reported as separated or divorced. Marital status was specified for all mothers.

Nationality:

81.3% (871) of all deliveries this quarter occurred to women of Maltese nationality, while 18.7% (200) were of known non-Maltese nationality. Nationality was specified for all mothers.

Parity:

In the first quarter of 2016, there were 51.7% (554) of mothers who were primiparous while 48.3% (517) were multiparas, having had one or more live and/or stillbirths before current pregnancy.

MATERNAL LIFESTYLES

There were 83 (7.7%) mothers who were reported to smoke during pregnancy in the first quarter of this year. 2 mothers was reported to drink alcohol and 5 (0.5%) were reported as being illicit drug abusers.

The following table gives the smoking, alcohol and drug habits of mothers for the first quarters of 2016 and 2015.

Table 2 – Maternal Lifestyles

	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
<i>Cigarette smoking during pregnancy:</i>		
1 to 3/day	17	19
>than 3/day	66	51
Do not smoke	988	1021
Unspecified	0	0
<i>Alcohol consumption during pregnancy:</i>		
Up to 1unit/day	2	1
>than 1unit/day	0	0
None	1069	1090
Unspecified	0	0
<i>Illicit Drug Abuse during pregnancy</i>		
Yes	5	4
No	1066	1087
Unspecified	0	0

SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF PREGNANCY

In the first quarter of 2016, there were 38 cases (3.5%) of assisted reproduction (ART) reported, this includes all forms of ART (*19 cases of ART were reported in 1st quarter 2015*). This data field was not specified for one mother.

The table below gives the number of mothers reported with specific obstetric conditions during pregnancy. The most frequently recorded was gestational hypertension with 4.9% of mothers recorded as having gestational hypertension in the first quarter of 2016.

Table 1 – Pregnancy related conditions

	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>		<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Antepartum Haemorrhage	11	1.0	12	1.1
Gestational hypertension	53	4.9	71	6.5
Pre-eclampsia	6	0.6	8	0.7
Eclampsia	0	0.0	0	0.0
Placenta praevia	12	1.1	8	0.7
Abruption of placenta	2	0.2	3	0.3

Diabetes in Pregnancy

In the first quarter of this year, there were 5 mothers who were reported as having Insulin Dependent Diabetes before the current pregnancy and no mothers were reported as having Non-Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus before pregnancy. In addition, there were a total of 38 mothers registered with gestational diabetes.

DELIVERIES ACCORDING TO PLURALITY

In the first quarter of 2016, there were a total of 1047 singleton and 24 twin deliveries; there were no triplet or quadruplet deliveries.

Table 2 –Delivery by Plurality

<i>Category</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>
Singleton	1047	1070
Twin	24	21
Triplet	0	0
Quadruplet	0	0

INFANT BIRTHS

TOTAL INFANT BIRTHS AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION

In the first quarter of this year, there were a total of 1095 infant births. All infant births of 22 weeks gestation are included in the register.

There were more male infants born than female, the gender distribution for this quarter was 581(53.1%) males and 514 (46.9%) females (*1st quarter 2015: males –556; females – 554*).

INFANTS AND METHOD OF BIRTH

Of the 1095 infants born, 665 (60.7%) were delivered as a vertex delivery, 384 (35.1%) by emergency or elective Caesarean Section and 46 (4.2%) by assisted vaginal delivery (includes forceps, ventouse and breech).

Table 3 – Distribution of births by method of delivery*

	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>
Infants delivered by vertex delivery	665	676
Infants delivered by emergency/elective Caesarean Section	384	384
Infants delivered by forceps	0	3
Infants delivered by ventouse	44	47
Breech deliveries	2	0

**Data presented according to total infant births*

This quarter there were 384 babies born by caesarean section but 360 caesarean deliveries performed, this is due to the fact that a number of caesarians are done in multiple birth deliveries. The Caesarean section operation rate was 33.6% of the total maternal deliveries (1071) this quarter.

BIRTHS BY GESTATIONAL AGE CATEGORY

This quarter there were 81 (7.4%) preterm babies of less than 37 weeks gestation. 9 (0.8%) were very preterm being less than 32 weeks of gestation.

Table 4 – Distribution by gestational age categories

	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>
Extremely Preterm (22 - 27 wks)	6	5
Very Preterm (28 - 31 wks)	4	5
Moderately Preterm (32 - 36wks)	72	79
Term (37 - 41wks)	1012	1020
Post term (>41 wks)	1	1
Unknown	0	0

INFANT BIRTH WEIGHTS

In the first quarter of 2016, there were 1009 (92.1%) of the total births that occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4499g. 70 (6.4%) of the total births were in the low birth weight range of 1500g to 2499g, 6 (0.5%) of the births were of very low birth weight 500g to 1499g. 6 (0.5%) babies were reported with a birth weight of 4500g or more and 4 (0.4%) babies was reported to be less than 500g but over 22 weeks gestation.

Table 5 – Births by birth weight

	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>
<500g	4	1
500-999g	2	3
1000-1499g	4	8
1500-1999g	10	11
2000-2499g	60	48
2500-2999g	235	275
3000-3499g	452	440
3500-3999g	264	271
4000-4499g	58	45
4500-4999g	5	5
5000+	1	1
Unspecified	0	2
Average Birth weight (g)	3218	3208

OUTCOME OF BIRTH

The number of live births for the first quarter of this year was 1088 which accounted for 99.4% of the total births at a national level. The remaining births were stillbirths. Stillbirths are defined as fetal death at or after 22 completed weeks of gestation.

Table 6 – Live and stillbirths

<i>Outcome of Birth</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>
Babies born alive	1088	1107
Stillbirths	7	3

Of the 1088 live births this quarter, there were 4 early neonatal deaths, that is dying within the first 7 days of life while there were no late neonatal deaths.

Table 7 – Early and late neonatal deaths

<i>Neonatal Deaths</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>
Early Neonatal deaths	4	2
Late Neonatal deaths	0	2

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 as these may change soon after discharge from the birthing facilities.

Table 8 – Infant feeding methods at time of discharge

	<i>1st Quarter 2016</i>	<i>1st Quarter 2015</i>
Breast only	583	625
Bottle only	316	316
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	185	162
Other*	11	7
Unspecified	0	0

* 'Other' - include babies who are still at hospital after 28 days and those who die before discharge

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Mater Dei Hospital, Tal-Qroqq l/o Msida

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