



NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)

MALTA

Third Quarterly Report: July to September 2010

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

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NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (NOIS)

Background

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

Systematic data collection for NOIS commences once the mother delivers her baby. Information regarding the course and outcome of each pregnancy is recorded by the relevant staff at each centre on a standard NOIS sheet. Once the data are 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. All 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 third quarter of 2010 and where appropriate compares it to the figures reported for the same period of last year. The data in this report describes the birth statistics for all maternities (Maltese and non-Maltese) and infant births registered into the system. All births, live or still, of gestation 22 weeks and above are registered and analysed in this report.

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/strategy_policy/healthinfor_research/registries/births.aspx or by e-mail: healthinfo@gov.mt .

ANALYSIS

There were a total of 1045 maternities/deliveries registered in the Maltese Islands for the third quarter of 2010, which resulted in a total of 1072 infant births.

Comparing these figures with those reported for the same period last year one can see that the number of infant births increased by 2 births (1070 births reported in 3rd quarter 2009).

MATERNITIES / DELIVERIES

MATERNAL AGE, MARITAL STATUS, NATIONALITY AND PARITY

Maternal Age:

The maternities have been grouped according to standard age groupings and the frequency distribution of deliveries according to maternal age at delivery has been analysed. In the third quarter of 2010, the greatest number of deliveries (33.8%), occurred in the age group 25 to 29 years, followed by the 30-34 year age group (30.0%). There were <1% deliveries in the age group <15 years and no deliveries in the 45+ age group. The minimum age of mothers at delivery was 14 years while the maximum age was 43 years. The most frequent age at delivery was 29 years (96 mothers) and the average age at delivery was also 29 years.

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

Table 1- Deliveries according to maternal age group

Age in years	3 rd Quarter 2010		3 rd Quarter 2009	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<15	1	<1	1	<1
15-19	54	5.2	75	7.1
20-24	165	15.8	150	14.3
25-29	353	33.8	355	33.7
30-34	313	30.0	335	31.8
35-39	148	14.2	119	11.3
40-44	11	1.1	14	1.3
45+	0	0	3	<1
Unspecified	0	0	0	0

Marital Status:

For the third quarter of 2010, 24.8% (259) of all deliveries occurred to mothers who were reported as single (never married); while 71.7% (749) of all deliveries occurred to mothers reported as married, and 3.4% (36) of mothers were reported as widowed, separated or divorced. Marital status was not specified for one mother.

In the third quarter of 2010, all mothers were registered as having 'Support at home to raise the infant'.

Nationality:

91.0% (951) of all deliveries this quarter, occurred to women of Maltese nationality while 8.8% (92) were Non-Maltese. In the remaining 0.2% (2) nationality was not specified.

Parity:

There were 51.1% (534) of mothers who were primiparas (ie. delivering for the first time) while 48.9% (511) were multiparas (ie. having already delivered at least one live or still birth) in the third quarter of 2010.

MATERNAL LIFESTYLES

There were 90 (8.6%) mothers who were reported to smoke one or more cigarettes during pregnancy in the second quarter of this year. Two were reported to drink some alcohol in pregnancy and 3 were reported to be drug abusers.

The following table gives the smoking, alcohol and drug habits of mothers for the third quarters of 2010 and 2009.

Table 2 – Maternal lifestyles

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
<i>Cigarette smoking during pregnancy</i>		
1 to 3/day	9	13
> than 3/day	81	80
Do not smoke	955	954
Unspecified	0	5
<i>Alcohol consumption during pregnancy</i>		
Up to 1unit/day	2	0
> than 1unit/day	0	0
None	1043	1047
Unspecified	0	5
<i>Drug Abuse during pregnancy</i>		
Yes	3	10
No	1042	1037
Unspecified	0	5

SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF PREGNANCY

In the third quarter of 2010, there were 16 cases of assisted reproduction (ART) reported, this includes all forms of ART namely ovulation stimulation, IVF and ICSI (11 cases of ART reported in 3rd quarter 2009).

The table below gives the number and frequency of mothers recorded with specific obstetric conditions during pregnancy. The most frequently recorded was gestational hypertension; in fact 4.3% of mothers were registered as having gestational hypertension in the third quarter of 2010.

Table 3 – Pregnancy related conditions

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>		<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Antepartum Haemorrhage	20	1.9	35	3.3
Gestational hypertension	45	4.3	61	5.8
Pre-eclampsia	7	0.7	14	1.3
Eclampsia	0	0	2	0.2
Placenta praevia	12	1.1	8	0.8
Abruption of placenta	3	0.3	2	0.2

Diabetes in Pregnancy

In the third quarter of this year, there was one mother who was reported as being Insulin Dependent Diabetics before the current pregnancy while no mothers were reported with Non-Insulin Dependent diabetes prior to pregnancy. In addition, there were a total of 36 mothers (3.4%) registered with gestational diabetes who were controlled without the use of insulin, and no mothers registered as having gestational diabetes treated with insulin.

DELIVERIES ACCORDING TO PLURALITY

For the third quarter of 2010, there were a total of 1019 (97.5%) singleton, 25 (2.4%) twin and one triplet delivery.

Table 4 –Delivery by Plurality

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>
Singleton	1019	1035
Twin	25	16
Triplet	1	1
Quadruplet	0	0

INFANT BIRTHS

TOTAL INFANT BIRTHS AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION

In the third quarter of this year, there were a total of 1072 infant births, while there were 1070 in the same quarter of 2009.

Uncharacteristically, there were more female infants born than male, the gender distribution for this quarter was 535 (49.9%) males and 537 (50.1%) females (*3rd quarter 2009: males – 549; females – 520 and one baby of uncertain gender*).

INFANTS AND METHOD OF BIRTH

Of the 1072 infants born between July and September 2010, 662 (61.8%) were delivered as unassisted vertex delivery, 364 (34.0%) by emergency or elective Caesarean Section and 46 (4.3%) by assisted vaginal delivery (this includes forceps, ventouse and breech deliveries).

Table 5 – Distribution of births by method of delivery

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>
Vaginal vertex delivery	662	692
Emergency/elective Caesarean Section	364	336
Forceps delivery	4	4
Ventouse	42	37
Breech	0	1

**Data analysed according to total infant births*

This quarter there were 364 babies born by caesarian section but 337 caesarean deliveries performed, this due to the fact that a number of caesareans are done in multiple birth deliveries. The Caesarean section operation rate was 32.2% of the total maternal deliveries (1045) this quarter.

BIRTHS BY GESTATIONAL AGE CATEGORY

This quarter there were 89 (8.3%) preterm babies of less than 37 weeks gestation. 12 (1.1%) were very preterm being less than 32 weeks of gestation.

Table 6 – Distribution by gestational age categories

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>
Extremely Preterm (22 - 27 wks)	7	9
Very Preterm (28 - 31 wks)	5	15
Moderately Preterm (32 - 36wks)	77	54
Term (37 - 41wks)	979	987
Post term (41+ wks)	4	5
Unknown	0	0

INFANT BIRTH WEIGHTS

In the third quarter of 2010, there were 991 (92.4%) of the total births that occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4999g, 68 (6.3%) of the total births were in the low birth weight range of 1500g to 2499g, 13 (1.2%) of births were of very low birth weight 500g to 1499g, none were less than 500g although having a gestation of 22 completed weeks. There were no infants with a birth weight over 5000g, and in no cases was the birth weight unspecified.

Table 7 – Births by birth weight

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>
<500g	0	2
500-999g	4	9
1000-1499g	9	8
1500-1999g	15	17
2000-2499g	53	49
2500-2999g	218	209
3000-3499g	442	492
3500-3999g	281	239
4000-4499g	45	36
4500-4999g	5	7
5000+	0	0
Unspecified	0	2
Average Birth weight (g)	3216	3183

OUTCOME OF BIRTH

The number of live births for the third quarter of this year was 1068 which accounted for 99.6% of the total births at a national level. The remaining 4 births were stillbirths. Stillbirths are defined as fetal death at or after 22 completed weeks of gestation.

Table 8 – Live and still births

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>
Babies born alive	1068	1060
Stillbirths	4	10

Of the 1068 live births this quarter, there were 4 early neonatal deaths and no late neonatal deaths.

Table 9 – Early and late neonatal deaths

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>
Early Neonatal deaths	4	4
Late Neonatal deaths	0	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 as these may change soon after discharge from the birthing facilities.

Table 10 – Infant feeding methods at time of discharge

	<i>3rd Quarter 2010</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2009</i>
Breast only	571	628
Bottle only	355	304
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	139	123
Other*	7	15
Unspecified	0	0

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

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St. James Hospital, Zabbar