



NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)

MALTA

Third Quarterly Report: July to September 2014

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

<https://health.gov.mt/en/dhir/Pages/Registries/births.aspx>

NOIS Registry:

Contact person:

Dr. Miriam Gatt

Data management:

Ms. V. Parnis

Ms. M. Mallia

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 all hospital 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 2014 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://health.gov.mt/en/dhir/Pages/Registries/births.aspx> or by e-mail: healthinfo@gov.mt .

ANALYSIS

There were a total of 1139 maternities/deliveries registered in the Maltese Islands for the third quarter of 2014, which resulted in a total of 1155 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 10 births (*1065 births reported in 3rd quarter 2013*).

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 2014, the greatest number of deliveries (32.8%), occurred in the age group 25-29 years, followed by the 30-34 year age group (31.0%). There were no deliveries in the age group <15 years and 1 in the 45+ age group. The minimum age of mothers at delivery was 15 years while the maximum age was 46 years. The most frequent age at delivery was 31 years (86 mothers) and the average age at delivery was 28.7 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 2014		3 rd Quarter 2013	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<15	0	0	1	0.1
15-19	44	3.9	40	3.8
20-24	161	14.1	142	13.6
25-29	374	32.8	319	30.6
30-34	353	31.0	367	35.2
35-39	182	16.0	155	14.8
40-44	24	2.1	19	1.8
45+	1	0.1	1	0.1
Unspecified	0	0	0	0

Marital Status:

For the third quarter of 2014, 27.2% (310) of all deliveries occurred to mothers who were reported as single (never married); while 68.6% (781) of all deliveries occurred to mothers reported as married, and 4.2% (48) of mothers were reported as widowed, separated or divorced. Marital status was specified for all mothers.

In the third quarter of 2014, all mothers were registered as having 'Support at home to raise the infant'.

Nationality:

81.1% (924) of all deliveries this quarter occurred to women of Maltese nationality while 18.6% (212) were of Non-Maltese nationality. In 3 cases mother's nationality was unspecified.

Parity:

There were 52.9% (603) of mothers who were primiparas (ie. delivering for the first time) while 47.1% (536) were multiparas (ie. having already delivered at least one live or still birth).

MATERNAL LIFESTYLES

There were 82 (7.2%) mothers who were reported to smoke one or more cigarettes during pregnancy in the second quarter of this year. one mother was reported to drink some alcohol in pregnancy and 5 were reported to be drug abusers.

The following table gives the smoking, alcohol and drug habits of mothers for the third quarters of 2014 and 2013.

Table 2 – Maternal lifestyles

	<i>3rd Quarter 2014</i>		<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>	
	<i>No.</i>		<i>No.</i>	
<i>Cigarette smoking during pregnancy</i>				
1 to 3/day	18		17	
> than 3/day	64		55	
Do not smoke	1057		972	
Unspecified	0		0	
<i>Alcohol consumption during pregnancy</i>				
Up to 1unit/day	0		2	
> than 1unit/day	1		0	
None	1138		1042	
Unspecified	0		0	
<i>Drug Abuse during pregnancy</i>				
Yes	5		6	
No	1134		1038	
Unspecified	0		0	

SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF PREGNANCY

In the third quarter of 2014, there were 38 mothers with assisted reproduction (ART) reported, this includes all forms of ART namely ovulation stimulation, IVF and ICSI (22 cases of ART reported in 3rd quarter 2013).

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 5.5% of mothers were registered as having gestational hypertension in the third quarter of 2014.

Table 3 – Pregnancy related conditions

	<i>3rd Quarter 2014</i>		<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
Antepartum Haemorrhage	15	1.3	15	1.4
Gestational hypertension	63	5.5	50	4.8
Pre-eclampsia	5	0.4	10	1.0
Eclampsia	0	0	0	0
Placenta praevia	8	0.7	6	0.6
Abruption of placenta	6	0.5	3	0.3

Diabetes in Pregnancy

In the third quarter of this year, there were 4 mothers who were reported as being Insulin Dependent Diabetics before the current pregnancy while one mother was reported with Non-Insulin Dependent diabetes prior to pregnancy. There were also a total of 36 mothers (3.2%) 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 2014, there were a total of 1123 (98.6%) singleton and 16 (1.4%) twin deliveries, there were no triplet or quadruplet deliveries.

Table 4 –Delivery by Plurality

	<i>3rd Quarter 2014</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>
Singleton	1123	1023
Twin	16	21
Triplet	0	0
Quadruplet	0	0

INFANT BIRTHS

TOTAL INFANT BIRTHS AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION

In the third quarter of this year, there were a total of 1155 infant births, while there were 1065 in the same quarter of 2013.

There were more male infants born than female, the gender distribution for this quarter was 603 (52.2%) males and 552 (47.8%) females (*3rd quarter 2013: males – 579; females – 486*).

INFANTS AND METHOD OF BIRTH

Of the 1155 infants born between July and September 2014, 736 (63.7%) were delivered as unassisted vertex delivery, 369 (31.9%) by emergency or elective Caesarean Section and 50 (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 2014</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>
Vaginal vertex delivery	736	685
Emergency/elective Caesarean Section	369	333
Forceps delivery	6	6
Ventouse	42	38
Breech	2	3

**Data analysed according to total infant births*

This quarter there were 369 babies born by caesarian section but 355 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 31.2% of the total maternal deliveries (1139) this quarter.

BIRTHS BY GESTATIONAL AGE CATEGORY

This quarter there were 83 (7.2%) preterm babies of less than 37 weeks gestation, of these 18 (1.6%) were very preterm being less than 32 weeks of gestation.

Table 6 – Distribution by gestational age categories

	<i>3rd Quarter 2014</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>
Extremely Preterm (22 - 27 wks)	7	7
Very Preterm (28 - 31 wks)	11	10
Moderately Preterm (32 - 36wks)	65	58
Term (37 - 41wks)	1066	990
Post term (41+ wks)	6	0
Unknown	0	0

INFANT BIRTH WEIGHTS

In the third quarter of 2014, 1059 (91.7%) of the total births occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4499g, 73 (6.3%) were in the low birth weight range of 1500g to 2499g and 16 (1.4%) of births were of very low birth weight 500g to 1499g. One baby was less than 500g, this baby was a very early neonatal death at 22 weeks gestation. There were 5 infants with a birth weight of 4500g or over, in one case the birth weight was not specified.

Table 7 – Births by birth weight

	<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2012</i>
<500g	1	2
500-999g	7	6
1000-1499g	9	6
1500-1999g	10	18
2000-2499g	63	48
2500-2999g	257	209
3000-3499g	490	465
3500-3999g	277	268
4000-4499g	35	38
4500-4999g	5	4
5000+	0	0
Unspecified	1	1
Average Birth weight (g)	3193	3205

OUTCOME OF BIRTH

The number of live births for the third quarter of this year was 1148 which accounted for 99.4% of the total births at a national level. The remaining 7 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 2014</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>
Babies born alive	1148	1057
Stillbirths	7	8

Of the 1148 live births this quarter, there were 5 early neonatal deaths and no late neonatal deaths.

Table 9 – Early and late neonatal deaths

	<i>3rd Quarter 2014</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>
Early Neonatal deaths	5	3
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 2014</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2013</i>
Breast only	628	628
Bottle only	374	294
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	141	131
Other*	12	12
Unspecified	0	0

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

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgements go to all contributing hospitals and their respective staff:

Mater Dei Hospital, Tal-Qroqq l/o Msida

Gozo General Hospital, Victoria

St. James Hospital, Sliema

St. James Hospital, Zabbar