



## ***NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEM (NOIS)***

***MALTA***

*Third Quarterly Report: July to September 2008*

*Department of Health Information and Research  
National Obstetric Information System (NOIS), Malta*

[www.sahha.gov.mt/pages.aspx?page=92](http://www.sahha.gov.mt/pages.aspx?page=92)

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## **NATIONAL OBSTETRIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (NOIS)**

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.

### *Data collection and Sources of Information*

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, Gozo General, St. Philip's, Sta Venera, 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 2008 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 or of birth weight 500g and above are registered and analysed in this report, as per DH circular DH10/07.

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: [www.sahha.gov.mt/pages.aspx?page=92](http://www.sahha.gov.mt/pages.aspx?page=92) or by e-mail: [healthinfo@gov.mt](mailto:healthinfo@gov.mt).

## **ANALYSIS**

There were a total of 1130 maternities/deliveries registered in the Maltese Islands for the third quarter of 2008, which resulted in a total of 1150 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 49 births (1001 *births reported in 3rd quarter 2007*).

## **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 third

quarter of 2008, the greatest number of deliveries (35%), occurred in the age group 25 to 29 years while there were <1% deliveries in the age group <15 years and <1% deliveries in the 45+ age group. The minimum age of the mothers was 14 years while the maximum age was 47 years. The most frequent age at delivery was 29 years, while the average age at delivery was 28 years.

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

**Deliveries according to maternal age groups:**

<i>Age group (years)</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2008</i>		<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2007</i>	
	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>%</i>
<15	2	<1	2	<1
15-19	67	6	69	7
20-24	188	17	183	18
25-29	395	35	310	31
30-34	336	30	297	30
35-39	112	10	107	11
40-44	25	2	19	2
45+	2	<1	1	<1
Unspecified	3	<1	3	<1

*Marital Status:*

For the third quarter of 2008, 26% (290) of all deliveries occurred to mothers who were reported as single (never married); while 71% (803) of all deliveries occurred to mothers reported as married, and 3% (37) of mothers were reported as widowed, separated or divorced. Marital status was specified for all mothers.

In the third quarter of 2008, all mothers were registered as having ‘Support at home to raise the infant’.

*Nationality:*

90.5% (1023) of all deliveries this quarter, occurred to women of Maltese nationality while 8.8% (100) were Non-Maltese. In the remaining 0.6% (7) nationality was not specified.

*Parity:*

There were 53% (601) of mothers who were primiparas while 47% (528) were multiparas in the third quarter of 2008, in one case parity was not reported.

***MATERNAL LIFESTYLES***

There were 50 (4.4%) mothers who were reported to smoke one or more cigarettes during pregnancy in the third quarter of this year. None were reported to drink excessive alcohol and 14 were reported to be drug abusers.

The following table gives the smoking, alcohol and drug habits of mothers for the third quarters of 2008 and 2007.

<i>Maternal Lifestyles</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2008</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2007</i>
	<i>No.</i>	<i>No.</i>
<b><i>Cigarette smoking during pregnancy:</i></b>		
1 to 3/day	17	3
> than 3/day	33	10
Do not smoke	1074	955
Unspecified	6	23
<b><i>Alcohol consumption during pregnancy:</i></b>		
Up to 1unit/day	0	0
> than 1unit/day	0	0
None	1124	968
Unspecified	6	23
<b><i>Drug Abuse during pregnancy</i></b>		
Yes	14	4
No	1110	964
Unspecified	6	23

### ***SPECIAL CONDITIONS OF PREGNANCY***

In the third quarter of 2008, there were 19 cases of assisted reproduction (ART) reported, this includes all forms of ART namely ovulation stimulation, IVF and ICSI (3 cases of ART reported in 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2007).

The table below gives the number of mothers recorded with specific obstetric conditions during pregnancy. The most frequently recorded was gestational hypertension, there were in fact 6% of mothers who were registered as having gestational hypertension in the third quarter of 2008.

<i>Conditions recorded during pregnancy</i>	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2008</i>			<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2007</i>		
	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>Unspecified</i>
Antepartum Haemorrhage	1113	17	0	984	7	0
Gestational hypertension	1060	70	0	924	67	0
Pre-eclampsia	1109	21	0	988	3	0
Placenta praevia	1113	17	0	978	13	0
Abruption of placenta	1130	0	0	990	1	0
Cardiovascular disease	1122	8	0	985	6	0

### ***Diabetes in Pregnancy***

In the third quarter of this year, there were 3 mothers who were reported as being Insulin Dependent Diabetics before the current pregnancy while 6 mothers were reported with Non-Insulin Dependent diabetes prior to pregnancy. In addition, there were a total of 42 mothers registered with gestational diabetes who were controlled without the use of insulin, and no mothers were registered as having gestational diabetes treated with insulin.

**CATEGORY OF MATERNITY ACCORDING TO DELIVERY**

For the third quarter of 2008, there were a total of 1111 (98%) singleton and 18 (2%) twin deliveries, there was 1 triplet delivery but no quadruplet deliveries.

<i>Category</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2008</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2007</i>
Singleton	1111	983
Twin	18	7
Triplet	1	0
Quadruplet	0	1

**INFANT BIRTHS**

**TOTAL INFANT BIRTHS AND GENDER DISTRIBUTION**

In the third quarter of this year, there were a total of 1150 infant births.

There were more male infants born than female, the gender distribution for this quarter was 617 (53.6%) males and 531 (46.2%) females. There were also 2 cases of macerated stillbirths where the gender was uncertain (*3rd quarter 2006: males – 516-; females – 485*).

**INFANTS AND METHOD OF BIRTH**

Of the 1150 infants born, 773 (67%) were delivered as a vertex delivery, 330 (29%) by emergency or elective Caesarean Section and 47 (4%) by assisted vaginal delivery (this includes forceps, ventouse and breech deliveries).

<i>Method of Birth*</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2008</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2007</i>
Infants delivered by vertex delivery	773	634
Infants delivered by emergency/elective Caesarean Section	330	323
Infants delivered by forceps	3	2
Infants delivered by ventouse	42	42
Breech deliveries	2	0

*\*Data analysed according to total infant births*

This quarter there were 330 babies born by caesarian section but 311 caesarian deliveries performed, this due to the fact that a number of caesarians are done in multiple birth deliveries. The Caesarean Section operation rate was 27.5% of the total maternal deliveries (1130) this quarter.

**INFANT BIRTH WEIGHTS**

In the third quarter of 2008, there were 1067 (93%) of the total births that occurred in the birth weight range of 2500g to 4999g, 62 (5%) of the total births were in the low birth weight range of 1500g to 2499g, 14 (1%) of births were of very low birth weight 500g to 1499g and 1 was less than 500g although having a gestation of 22 weeks or more. In 3 cases the birth weight was unspecified. There were 3 infants born 5000g or over.

<i>Birth weights</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2008</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2007</i>
<500g	1	1
500-999g	10	2
1000-1499g	4	5
1500-1999g	12	12
2000-2499g	50	49
2500-2999g	236	215
3000-3499g	519	474
3500-3999g	258	208
4000-4499g	49	28
4500-4999g	5	6
5000+	3	0
Unspecified	3	1
Average Birth weight (g)	3222	3195

**OUTCOME OF BIRTH**

The number of live births for the third quarter of this year was 1139 which accounted for 99% of the total births at a national level. The remaining 11 births were stillbirths.

<i>Outcome of Birth</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2008</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2007</i>
Babies born alive	1139	998
Stillbirths	11	3

Of the 1139 live births this quarter, there were 7 early neonatal deaths and one late neonatal death.

<i>Neonatal Deaths</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2008</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2007</i>
Early Neonatal deaths	7	5
Late Neonatal deaths	1	0

**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.

<i>Infant feeding methods at time of discharge</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2008</i>	<i>3rd Quarter 2007</i>
Breast only	679	576
Bottle only	369	301
Mixed (Breast & Bottle)	81	109
Other*	20	13
Unspecified	1	2

\* '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
- Gozo General Hospital, Victoria
- St. James Hospital, Sliema
- St. James Hospital, Zabbar
- St. Philip's Hospital, Sta Venera.