About this Release

The data presented here are mainly obtained from the Scottish Morbidity Record 02 (SMR02) submitted by maternity hospitals to ISD, who have collected this information since 1975. Although there is no legal requirement to submit these data to ISD, the level of submission falls only slightly short of the known total number of births occurring each year.

Key Points

- Mothers are getting older: There was a steady increase in the proportion of births to mothers aged 30-34, from 13.5% in 1976 to a peak of 31.1% in 2002, but this has now declined slightly to 28.2% in 2011. The proportion of births to mothers in the 35-39 group climbed steadily to 17.1% in 2008 from 4.4% in the late 1970s and has now decreased to 16.1% in 2011. 3.6% of births are to mothers aged forty and over compared to 0.8% during the 1980s.

- Smoking in pregnancy: The overall percentage of women who reported smoking at the time of their first antenatal booking has decreased from 29.0% in 1995 to 19.3% in 2011.

- Caesarean section: In singleton births, the emergency caesarean section rate increased from 3.9% in 1976 to a peak of 15.4% in 2006, The figure for 2011 is 15.3% The rate of elective* or planned caesarean sections has continued to rise from 4.7% in 1976, to 11.2% in 2011. Together this has resulted in an overall increase in caesarean section rates from 8.6% in 1976 to 26.5% in 2011.

  [*An elective caesarean section refers to a caesarean section which has been planned in advance and in most cases will have been recommended for clinical reasons such as breech or multiple births or previous caesarean section. It may also be the case that the woman will have chosen this method of delivery for non-clinical reasons.]

- Forceps deliveries: After falling from 13.5% in 1980 to 6.8% in 2001 the use of forceps in delivery has risen over the last 10 years and is now at 10.0%.
- Premature babies: The percentage of pre-term (born before 37 completed weeks) singleton babies rose from 5.2% in 1976 to a peak of 6.7% in 2004 and has now fallen to 5.8% in 2011.

- Deprivation: The most common age for starting a family in the area of lowest deprivation is 30, which is 10 years later than the most common age in the area of highest deprivation.

**Background**

**Maternity Data Source (inpatients and day cases)**
Hospital based maternity and birth data are derived from the maternity inpatient and day case record (SMR02).

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**Further Information**
Further information can be found in the [Full Publication Report](#) or on the [ISD website](#)

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**About ISD**
Scotland has some of the best health service data in the world combining high quality, consistency, national coverage and the ability to link data to allow patient based analysis and follow up.

Information Services Division (ISD) is a business operating unit of NHS National Services Scotland - and has been in existence for over 40 years. We are an essential support service to NHSScotland and the Scottish Government Health Department and others, responsive to the needs of NHSScotland as the delivery of health and social care evolves.

**Official Statistics**
Information Services Division (ISD) is the principal and authoritative source of statistics on health and care services in Scotland. ISD is designated by legislation as a producer of ‘Official Statistics’. Our official statistics publications are produced to a high professional standard and comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The Code of Practice is produced and monitored by the UK Statistics Authority which is independent of Government. Under the Code of Practice, the format, content and timing of statistics publications are the responsibility of professional staff working within ISD.

Further information on ISD’s statistics, including compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, and on the UK Statistics Authority, is available on the [ISD website](#)