

STATISTICS OF MULTIPLE BIRTHS IN ITALY IN THE YEARS 1948 - 1949

by
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The statistics of multiple births in Italy for the years 1948-1949 have been prepared by the Istituto Centrale di Statistica, and the accompanying tables show the frequencies of all multiple births per 100 births, classified according to the age of the mother and the rank of the birth, for each year. The standard errors of these frequencies are also shown.

From the examination of the tables it is clear that the likelihood that a birth to a woman of any specified age and parity will be a plural birth is almost the same in each year. In general, the maximum frequency of multiple births in each birth rank occurs at maternal ages 35-39 years. There is, in addition, a tendency for the frequency to increase with rising birth rank, and the most marked differences occur between birth ranks 2 and 3. For the three age-groups 25-29, 30-34, and 35-39 years, the frequencies of multiple births are significantly higher amongst births of third rank than amongst births of second rank. However, in spite of this rise in frequency which is independent of the maternal age effect, the gradual increase in the total frequencies for each birth rank is largely due to the increasing preponderance of women of higher ages as the order of birth increases.

Compared with the frequencies given by Stocks (1952) the total frequency of multiple births is greater in Italy than in England and Wales, U.S.A. or Canada, and for England and Wales at least, the source of this difference can be traced to the age-groups 30-34, and 35-39 years. At these ages the frequencies of multiple births amongst all births are higher in Italy than in England and Wales, and it seems likely that this increase derives from the greater average parity of Italian women aged 30-39 years.

Summary

1. The frequencies of multiple births relative to all births change little from year.
2. There are independent increases in frequency with increasing parity and with maternal age up to a maximum at 35-39 years but the influence of maternal age is the more important.

Frequency of multiple births amongst all births according to age of mother and rank of birth
I - Italy, 1948. Multiple births % of all births

Age of mother	Rank of Birth											All birth ranks ²	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
- 15 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-20	0,66±0,04	0,64±0,08	0,88±0,25	3,27±1,44	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0,66±0,03
21-24	0,84±0,03	0,77±0,04	0,98±0,08	1,23±0,19	1,34±0,44	1,49±1,05	—	6,67±6,44	—	—	—	—	0,84±0,02
25-29	1,11±0,03	1,06±0,03	1,25±0,05	1,29±0,07	1,49±0,13	1,69±0,24	1,79±0,44	3,31±1,15	1,71±1,20	3,13±3,08	—	—	1,15±0,02
30-34	1,39±0,06	1,33±0,05	1,56±0,06	1,74±0,08	1,85±0,09	2,19±0,13	2,10±0,17	2,26±0,27	2,52±0,45	2,62±0,78	4,46±1,38	—	1,62±0,03
35-39	1,67±0,10	1,47±0,08	1,87±0,09	1,92±0,09	2,24±0,10	1,96±0,10	2,27±0,13	2,11±0,14	2,15±0,19	2,73±0,30	3,34±0,38	—	1,95±0,03
40-44	1,28±0,18	1,43±0,18	1,18±0,14	1,31±0,14	1,52±0,15	1,68±0,16	1,59±0,15	1,62±0,16	1,79±0,18	1,26±0,18	1,69±0,19	—	1,50±0,05
45	0,41±0,41	0,81±0,57	—	0,25±0,25	0,22±0,22	0,73±0,36	1,57±0,52	0,72±0,36	0,36±0,25	0,41±0,29	0,74±0,30	—	0,63±0,11
Total ¹	1,00±0,02	1,07±0,02	1,42±0,03	1,61±0,04	1,87±0,06	1,95±0,07	2,03±0,08	1,95±0,10	1,95±0,12	1,87±0,15	2,12±0,16	—	1,30±0,01

II - Italy, 1949. Multiple births % of all births

Age of mother	Rank of Birth											All birth ranks ²	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		
- 15 years	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-20	0,63±0,04	0,73±0,08	0,82±0,25	3,61±1,45	—	100,00	—	—	—	—	—	—	0,65±0,03
21-24	0,85±0,03	0,89±0,04	1,01±0,08	0,95±0,16	2,28±0,58	2,40±1,37	—	—	—	—	—	—	0,87±0,02
25-29	1,01±0,03	1,06±0,03	1,20±0,05	1,29±0,07	1,48±0,12	1,81±0,24	1,38±0,38	1,55±0,77	0,98±0,98	5,00±4,87	—	—	1,10±0,02
30-34	1,37±0,07	1,40±0,06	1,60±0,07	1,74±0,08	1,68±0,10	1,98±0,14	2,21±0,20	1,81±0,26	2,02±0,46	1,18±0,59	1,06±0,75	—	1,58±0,03
35-39	1,58±0,10	1,52±0,08	1,81±0,09	1,96±0,09	1,94±0,10	1,90±0,11	2,11±0,13	2,15±0,16	1,93±0,19	2,56±0,31	2,87±0,38	—	1,86±0,03
40-44	1,50±0,21	1,31±0,17	0,96±0,13	1,42±0,15	1,57±0,16	1,40±0,15	1,30±0,14	1,77±0,17	1,62±0,18	1,44±0,20	14,4±0,18	—	1,43±0,05
45	0,48±0,48	0,95±0,67	0,63±0,45	0,79±0,45	0,53±0,37	0,41±0,91	0,73±0,36	0,36±0,25	0,91±0,41	0,43±0,30	0,52±0,26	—	0,59±0,11
Total ¹	0,96±0,02	1,11±0,02	1,38±0,03	1,61±0,04	1,72±0,06	1,81±0,07	1,87±0,08	1,91±0,10	1,74±0,12	1,78±0,16	1,73±0,15	—	1,25±0,01

¹ Including age not stated.

² Including birth rank not stated.

References

P. STOCKS: *Recent Statistics of Multiple Births in England and Wales.*, A. Ge. Me. Ge. 1, 1. 1952.

RIASSUNTO

1. Le frequenze dei parti multipli in rapporto al numero totale dei parti cambiano di poco di anno in anno.

2. Vi sono aumenti indipendenti nella frequenza con l'aumento dei parti precedenti e con l'età materna fino ad un massimo all'età di 35-39 anni, ma l'influenza dell'età materna è la più importante.

RÉSUMÉ

1. La fréquence des naissances multiples par rapport au nombre total des accouchements présente peu de changement d'année en année.

2. Il y a des augmentations indépendentes dans la fréquence avec l'augmentation des accouchements précédents et avec l'âge de la mère jusqu'à un maximum atteint entre 35 et 39 ans, mais l'influence de l'âge de la mère est la plus importante.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

1. Das Verhältnis von Mehrlingsgeburten zur Geburtensamtzahl ändert von Jahr zu Jahr nur wenig.

2. Die Häufigkeit der Mehrlingsgeburten wächst zuweilen mit der Häufigkeit der vorangegangenen Geburten und dem mütterlichen Alter bis zu einem Maximum von 35-39 Jahren; das Alter der Mutter ist jedoch dabei das Ausschlaggebendere.