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Citation: Macfarlane, A. J., Blondel, B., Mohangoo, A. D., Cuttini, M., Nijhuis, J., Novak, Z., Ólafsdóttir, H. S., Zeitlin, J. & Euro-Peristat Scientific Committee, . (2016). Authors' reply re: Wide differences in mode of delivery within Europe: risk-stratified analyses of aggregated routine data from the Euro-Peristat study. *BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology*, 123(13), p. 2231. doi: 10.1111/1471-0528.14140

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Wide differences in mode of delivery within Europe: risk-stratified analyses of aggregated routine data from the Euro-Peristat study: concerns about caesarean section are justified

The purpose of our paper¹ was to draw attention to the wide variations in practice and the ways in which they are correlated. We did not attempt to address the safety and consequences of caesarean section. It is, however, increasingly clear that caesarean section, especially repeat caesarean section, carries serious risks for the mother, such as uterine rupture and abnormal invasive placentation responsible for life-threatening haemorrhage, and can also have short- and long-term effects for babies, including altered bacterial gut colonisation and increased risk of immune-mediated disorders.^{2,3} We therefore think it is important that caesarean section should only be performed when it is clinically necessary to deal with serious problems for the mother or the baby. By drawing attention to the variations in practice, we highlighted the need for further research and informed debate on the subject. ■

References

1 Macfarlane AJ, Blondel B, Mohangoo AD, Cuttini M, Nijhuis J, Novak Z, et al. Wide

differences in mode of delivery within Europe: risk-stratified analyses of aggregated routine data from the Euro-Peristat study. *BJOG* 2016;123:559–68.

2 National Institute of Clinical Excellence. *Caesarean Section. NICE Guideline CG 132*. London: National Institute for Clinical Excellence, 2011. www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg132 (accessed 10 April 2016).

3 World Health Organization. *WHO Statement on Caesarean Section Rates*. Geneva: WHO, 2015 (WHO/RHR/15-02).

Appendix 1

The Euro-Peristat Scientific Committee: Gerald Haidinger (Austria), Sophie Alexander (Belgium), Pavlos Pavlou (Cyprus), Petr Velebil (Czech Republic), Anne-Marie Nybo Andersen (Denmark), Luule Sakkeus (Estonia), Mika Gissler (Finland), Béatrice Blondel (France), Nicholas Lack (Germany), Aris Antsaklis (Greece), István Berbik (Hungary), Helga Sól Ólafsdóttir (Iceland), Sheelagh Bonham (Ireland), Marina Cuttini (Italy), Janis Misins (Latvia), Jone Jaselioniene (Lithuania), Yolande Wagener (Luxembourg), Miriam Gatt (Malta), Jan Nijhuis (Netherlands), Kari Klungsoyr (Norway), Katarzyna Szamotulska (Poland), Henrique Barros (Portugal), Mihai Horga (Romania), Jan Cap (Slovakia), Živa Novak-Antolic (Slovenia), Francisco Bolívar (Spain), Karin Gottvall (Sweden), Sylvie Berrut (Switzerland), Alison Macfarlane (Uni-

ted Kingdom). Project coordination: Jennifer Zeitlin, Marie Delnord, Ashna Mohangoo.

Alison J. Macfarlane,^a Béatrice Blondel,^b Ashna D. Mohangoo,^c Marina Cuttini,^d Jan Nijhuis,^e Ziva Novak,^f Helga Sól Ólafsdóttir^g & Jennifer Zeitlin^b the Euro-Peristat Scientific Committee

^aCentre for Maternal and Child Health Research, City University London, London, UK ^bINSERM, Obstetrical, Perinatal and Paediatric Epidemiology Research Team, Centre for Epidemiology and Biostatistics (U1153), Paris-Descartes University, Paris, France ^cDepartment of Child Health, TNO, Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research, Leiden, The Netherlands ^dResearch Unit of Perinatal Epidemiology, Bambino Gesù Children's Hospital, Rome, Italy ^eDepartment of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Maastricht University Medical Centre, GROW School of Oncology and Developmental Biology, Maastricht, The Netherlands ^fPerinatology Unit, University Medical Centre, Ljubljana University, Ljubljana, Slovenia ^gDepartment of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Landspítali University Hospital, Landspítali v/Hringbraut, Iceland

The Euro-Peristat Scientific Committee members are in Appendix 1.

Accepted 22 April 2016.

DOI: 10.1111/1471-0528.14140

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