

Half the Irish couples (51%) undergoing reproduction treatments prefer twins

- Despite doctors' advice on the risks of twin pregnancies, most patients see themselves pushing a double stroller
- Unlike most other European countries, a great number of Irish citizens are highly aware of the risks a twin pregnancy entails
- There are big differences between countries: Spanish and Italian prefer twins. The only child option is the most desired by Germans

Barcelona, April 16th 2012

After years of trying to have a baby and turning to medicine to achieve pregnancy, going from 0 to 2 is most couples' dream.

A study conducted by [Institut Marquès](#) on 980 childless couples from 31 different countries who have undergone Assisted Reproduction treatments in this same center, reveals that most of them prefer to have twins rather than an only child, even though there are significant differences between countries.

In Spain, Italy, and some Scandinavian countries such as Norway, over 60% of couples would like to have twins whilst only between 20% and 30% want their pregnancy to be single. The rest aren't worried about this matter as long as they become pregnant.

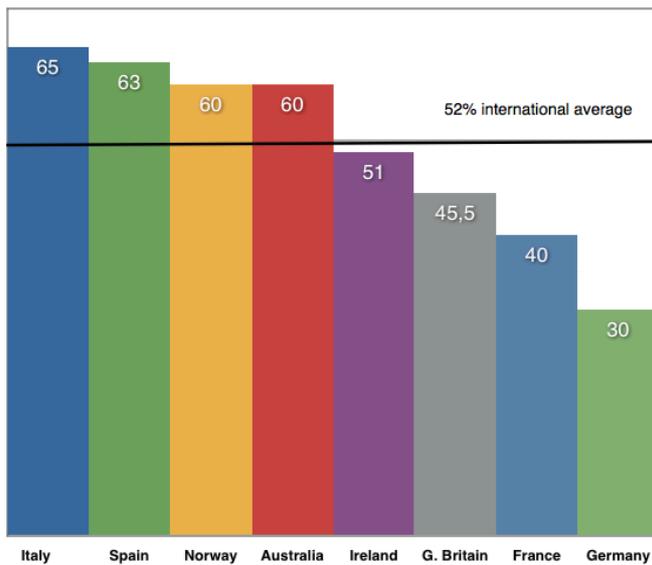
On the contrary, in countries like Germany or France, this percentage is halved and only 30% and 40% of couples, respectively, see themselves pushing a double stroller.

The results of this survey haven't surprised infertility specialists. According to Dr. Marisa López-Teijón, head of the Assisted Reproduction service at Institut Marquès: "It's hard to explain the risks of a twin pregnancy to a woman who fears not getting to be a mother, as most imagine a double pregnancy would make them two times happier."

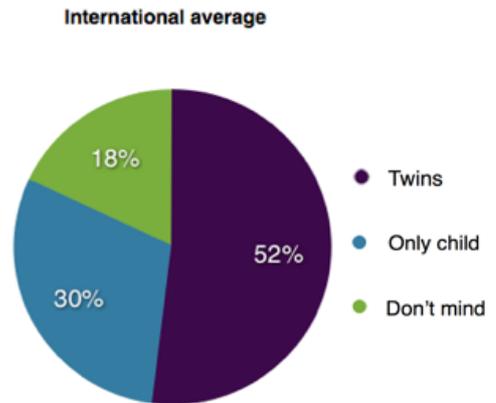
As for the differences between countries, Dr. López-Teijón asserts: "In Norway's case it may be due to the broad social helps to maternity, whilst in France and Germany more importance is given to the information on possible risks."

The study was carried out between November 2010 and October 2011. The patients were asked if they would rather have twins, an only child, or if they didn't mind. The most significant results can be observed below:

■ Italy ■ Spain ■ Norway ■ Australia ■ Ireland ■ G. Britain
■ France ■ Germany



Percentages of couples who would like to have twins



A twin pregnancy is a high risk pregnancy

Adapting to such an overload requires a big effort for a woman's organism, as it entails:

- arterial hypertension in 15-20% of pregnant with twins
- diabetes in 5-10%
- moderate to severe anemia in 40%, requiring postpartum transfusion in 5% of cases
- cesarean sections in 50-85% of cases dependant on the centers.

For children, the risks are mainly related to prematurity (birth before 35th gestational week) and intrauterine growth delay.

- 19% of twins are premature
- delay in growth of one of the twins in 30% of twin pregnancies, and of both 15% of the times
- perinatal mortality (death that happens between the 5th gestational month and the 1st week of life) is multiplied by 6 in twin pregnancies. In singleton pregnancies it's 5 in every 10,000, whilst in twins pregnancies it's 30 in every 10,000.

All these risk factors are compounded by the woman's age.

According to Dr. Alex Garcia Faura, Head of the Clinical Service at Institut Marquès: "the fact that 30% of the women we visit are over 40 must be taken into account, as a twin pregnancy has additional risks at this age. They know about these risks, but they also are aware that about 80% of cases around them work out perfectly, and believe it's an effort that is worth while as their dream becomes true."

Less multiple pregnancies every day

During the last few years, the rate of multiple births in Assisted Reproduction treatments has been reduced considerably. This is due to a greater awareness on the matter and to the latest advances in Reproductive Biology, including [IMSI](#), [Embryoscope](#), the culture of embryos up to their 5th day of development, or [genetic analysis of oocytes or embryos](#) that make the transfer of a fewer amount of embryos possible in order to avoid the risk of having a multiple pregnancy.

Being able to choose the embryos with greatest implantation potential to result in a pregnancy allows transferring fewer embryos, or even just one without compromising success rates.

At Institut Marquès, according to [officially accredited data](#), in 2010 only 14.5% of patients who underwent a fertility treatment gave birth to twins. None to triplets.

Birth of triplets in Spain has become an exceptional event.

“There is the belief that, nowadays, more twins are born due to the techniques applied in Assisted Reproduction treatments; the natural incidence of twin births is of 0.8% of deliveries, and advanced countries currently 1.6% of births are twins. This is due to the increasing amount of people with fertility problems that come to us seeking for help to become parents”, asserts Dr. Marisa López-Teijón.