

Trends in breastfeeding rates in Portugal: results from 5 National Health Interview Surveys

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Background

Breast milk as the perfect food for the new-born starting immediately after birth and exclusively up to at least 6 months of age (WHO).

Aims: Describe changes in breastfeeding rates over time in Portugal as a way to inform social policies and public health initiatives on breastfeeding.

Methods

- Data were from 5 National Health Surveys.
- Information was provided by mothers of children born between 1982-2014.
- Birth cohorts were grouped in block of 3-year period.
- We estimated 3 and 6 months exclusive breastfeeding rates and 95% CI.
- Trends rates for each outcome were assessed by linear regression weighting each cohort-specific estimate by the inverse of variance in the logit scale.

Conclusions

This study shows:

- a positive evolution in breastfeeding practices;
- an increased in the prevalence of women who reported exclusively breastfeeding until the 3rd and 6th month after birth.

Results may be explained by changes in maternity leave duration and the investment in breastfeeding support services and professionals' training in Portugal.

Results

Data from 9172 children born between 1982 and 2014.

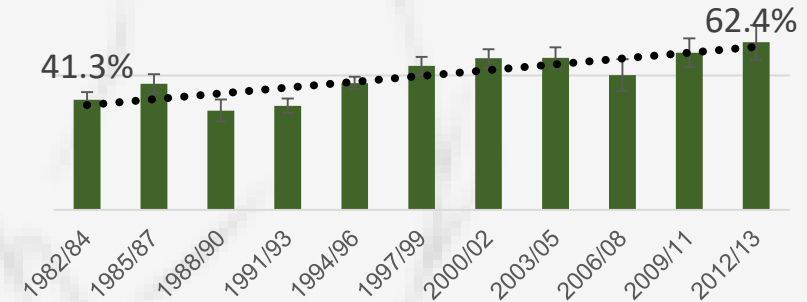


Figure1. 3-months breastfeeding prevalence

3 months exclusive breastfeeding rate increased by 9.5% per 3-year period, from 41.3% in 1982/84 to 62.4% in 2012/14 (figure 1).

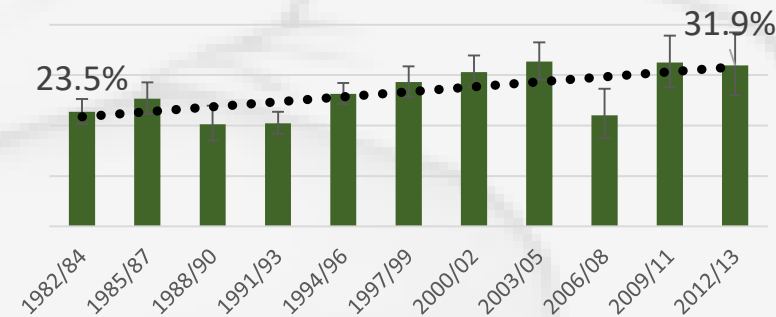


Figure2. 6-months breastfeeding prevalence

6 months exclusive breastfeeding rate increased by 5.6% per 3-year period, from 23.5% in 1982/84 to 31.9% in 2012/14 (figure 2).