Author's response to reviews

Title: Differences in relative risk of stillbirth among women of different regions of origin compared with women from Germany: an analysis of the German perinatal database, 2004-2007

Authors:

Anna Reeske (reeske@bips.uni-bremen.de)
Marcus Kutschmann (m.kutschmann@bgs-institut.de)
Oliver Razum (oliver.razum@uni-bielefeld.de)
Jacob Spallek (spallek@bips.uni-bremen.de)

Version: 3 Date: 24 June 2011

Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editor,

we revised the manuscript according to your comments. Please find attached a short response.

General:
- Please close the gap between percentage unit and %-sign (98% instead of 98 %).
- The text should be either American or British English systematically.
- The presentation on gestational weeks should be systematized (e.g. Table 1).

*R: We are not quite sure what you mean by the last aspect. The gestational age categories refer to the same categories used by the data holder (BQS).*

Abstract:
- As indicated by the reviewer, clarify, which stratification the result refers: After stratification for small/light for gestational age, the relative risk of stillbirth for women from the Middle East/ and North Africa increased to 1.63 (95 % CI 1.25?2.13).

*R: We clarified this aspect.*

Background:
- it instead of itt (first paragraph)
- Somalia and Ghana instead of Somalia, Ghana (third paragraph)
- congenital anomalies or birth defects instead of congenital malformations (third paragraph)

*R: We corrected this.*

Methods
- Add, how many births with a birthweight of less than 500 g were excluded from the analyses (under Outcome).

*R: There have been only very few stillbirths with a birthweight less than 500g. In Germany they are defined as miscarriage and are not supposed to be registered in the perinatal registry. Thus we did not include the number as it might be confusing, because it does not present the actual number of miscarriages in the time period 2004-2007.*

- 5) the Middle East, and (6) Asia instead of 5) the Middle East, (6) Asia (under Regions of origin)
- housewife instead of house-wife (under Socio-demographic and lifestyle-related factors)
- marital status or being single instead of unclear ?single status? housewife instead of house-wife (under Socio-demographic and lifestyle-related factors and thereafter)
- congenital anomalies (or birth defects) at birth instead of congenital malformations (under obstetrical factors, and thereafter)

*R: We corrected this.*

Discussion
- Please re-consider the use of term ?foreign countries? (under Interpretation of differences in stillbirth risk)

*R: We changed it into “women originating from foreign regions of origin”.*

Table 1:
- Under pre-eclampsia, Yes instead of yes.

*R: We corrected this.*