Reviewer’s report

Title: Are time-trends of smoking among pregnant immigrant women in Sweden determined by cultural or socioeconomic factors?

Version: 1 Date: 11 December 2009

Reviewer: Federica Turati

Reviewer’s report:

This is an interesting manuscript showing time-trends of smoking among pregnant women, taking advantage from a uniquely large dataset of immigrant women in Sweden.

Data, results and conclusions are interesting; the manuscript is clear and well-written. Authors could further improve the present manuscript by considering the following minor comments:

1) Abstract, Results section: In my opinion, one of the main findings of the present paper is given by the huge overall decline in terms of smoking prevalence among immigrant pregnant women in 15 years, only. This should be further specified/considered both in the abstract and in the Results section. I strongly suggest therefore to include data on smoking prevalence, overall and by educational level and/or country of origin, at least for the first and the last period considered.

2) Abstract, Results section: The first sentence should be moved to the Conclusions section of the abstract. Please, delete, or move to the Conclusions section, the last line (“...demonstrating the strong effect of educational attainment”).

3) Material and Methods: Methods are practically identical to those by Moussa et al., 2009 (REF 2). Thus, a sentence (e.g., “Materials and Methods have already been described [2]”) at the beginning of this section is needed. Methods could then be simplified.

4) Material and Methods, Exposure variable: Please, list the name of the countries included in “other Nordic countries”.

5) Results: In order to avoid personal comments in the description of the findings, some of the sentences provided in this section should be moved to the Discussion section, including for example pag 10, last sentence of the first paragraph.

6) Results, pag 10, 2nd paragraph: Please, besides ORs and 95% CIs for the first and last periods for “other Nordic countries, also report in the main text corresponding estimates for other countries of origin, in order to highlight that the strength of the relation between smoking during pregnancy and education increased during the study period in every class of country of origin.

7) Results: The interpretation of AF and sAF are reported twice in Material and
Methods section (pag 8) and in the Results section (pagg 10, 11).

8) Discussion: Add the appropriate reference (reference 2) at the end of the first sentence.

9) Discussion: Please, underline at the beginning of the Discussion section the huge decline in terms of smoking prevalence at first antenatal visit among immigrant women (see point 1).

10) Discussion: The pattern of smoking prevalence for pregnant women from “other Nordic countries (according to time-period and socio-economic level) is almost the same as that for Swedish pregnant women (Ref 2). This should at least be mentioned in the Discussion section.

11) Discussion: In the whole manuscript, authors do not mention Swedish snus. Snus could have had a role on the declining of smoking prevalence among Swedish, as well as immigrant, pregnant women. Are there available data on use of snus among pregnant immigrant women? It would be interesting to understand whether the socio-economic inequalities of smoking trends observed in the present study may be due to different distributions of snus users among pregnant (immigrant) women.

12) Discussion: Please, rephrase the last sentence of pag 13, 1st paragraph (“If the development of pregnant immigrant women...cultural background), in order to simplify/clarify the interpretation of your results according to Berry’s process of acculturation.

13) Table 2: please, clarify whether “n” represents the number of smokers or the total number of subjects according to calendar period end socio-economic characteristics. Moreover, specify that “%” represents smoking prevalence.

Moreover, the entire text should be carefully re-read by authors, for the presence of a few typos, including “county” instead of “country” in the Conclusions section of the Abstract, line 2. Rephrase moreover the first sentence of pag 14.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.