



## Do pregnant women really prefer Caesarean sections?

***An international survey conducted within the framework of the [QUALI-DEC project](#)***

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Through an international survey conducted at the beginning of the Quali-Dec research project, pregnant women attending the 32 project partner hospitals were asked how they preferred to give birth (vaginal or caesarean).

The vast majority of these women, who were at low risk of caesarean section, indicated a preference for vaginal delivery. However, 18% of women in Thailand and 11% in Argentina validated a preference for caesarean section, compared to less than 5% of women in Burkina Faso and Vietnam. This is why the [Decision Analysis Tool \(DAT\)](#) developed by the Quali-Dec project for women to make an informed choice about their mode of delivery, could have some impact in Argentina and Thailand to improve their decision making.

There is no major difference between women who prefer a caesarean section and those who choose natural childbirth. However, those who prefer caesarean section are often influenced in their choice by their doctors (this is the case for 70% of women in Vietnam). It is easy to assume that the factors that determine some women's preference for Caesarean section are related to the doctors' practices and the influence they have on their patients.

A Decision Analysis Tool such as Quali-Dec ([booklet or application format](#)) should therefore allow women to clarify their preference for the mode of delivery with their doctor. Its dissemination within hospitals and other health care institutions would also help to inform health care providers about the advantages and disadvantages of caesarean section to encourage them to question their practices, both in terms of abusive or unnecessary use of caesarean section and in terms of influencing their patients directly.

