

Living in COVID Times - IDF Europe COVID & Diabetes Survey Experiences from People living with Diabetes



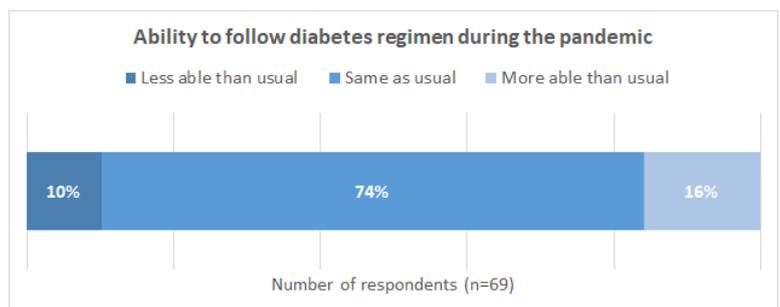
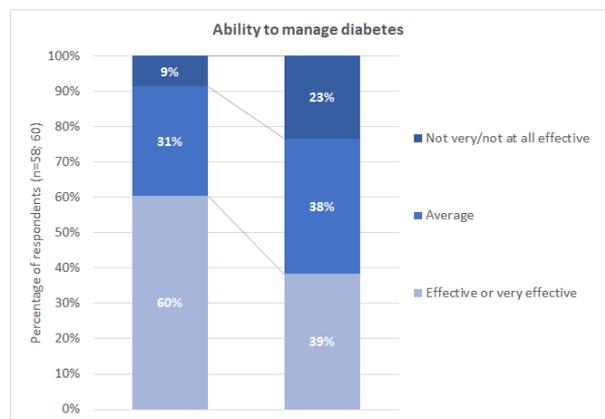
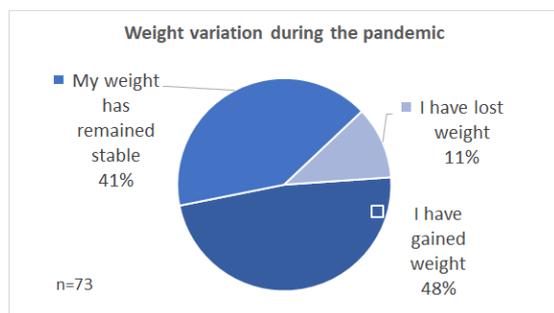
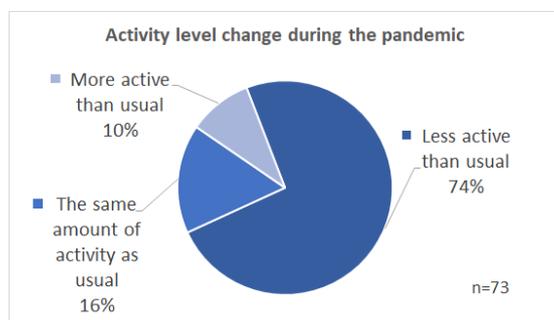
Romania

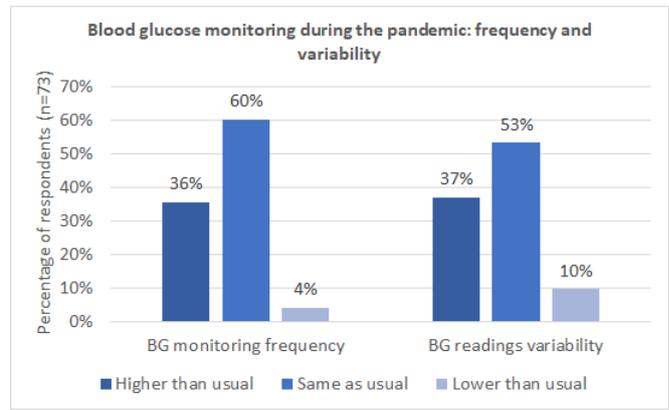
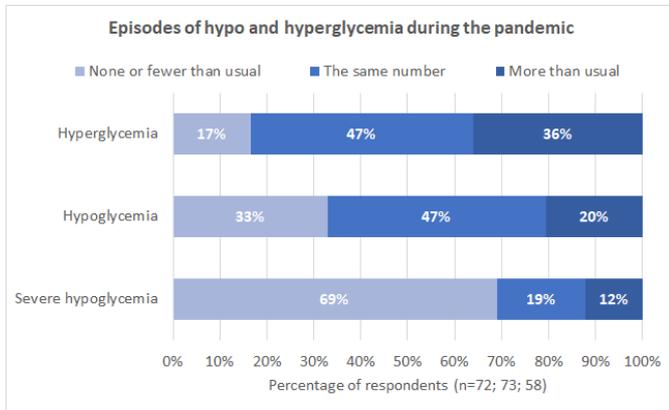
Summary

Just under a quarter of respondents to this survey reported difficulties in managing their diabetes during the first wave of the pandemic, up from 9% pre-pandemic, outlining the huge effect of COVID-19 on people living with diabetes (PwD) in Romania. Three-quarters of respondents found themselves less physically active; anxiety rose sharply and experiences of low mood were experienced by a large proportion of respondents more often. Access to diabetes medicines, supplies and equipment was disrupted. Some 15% of respondents reported difficulties accessing their diabetes supplies (needles, test strips, etc.); 17% found it challenging to access their technological equipment (CGMs and sensors, insulin pumps) and 22% of respondents struggled to get their medication. Access to care, both for routine diabetes care and screening for complications, was also an issue, with many appointments cancelled or rescheduled. Virtual healthcare solutions were widely available and were generally well received. Many respondents had to rely on themselves to manage their diabetes during these difficult times, with a majority not receiving any advice from their usual healthcare professionals.

Diabetes Management

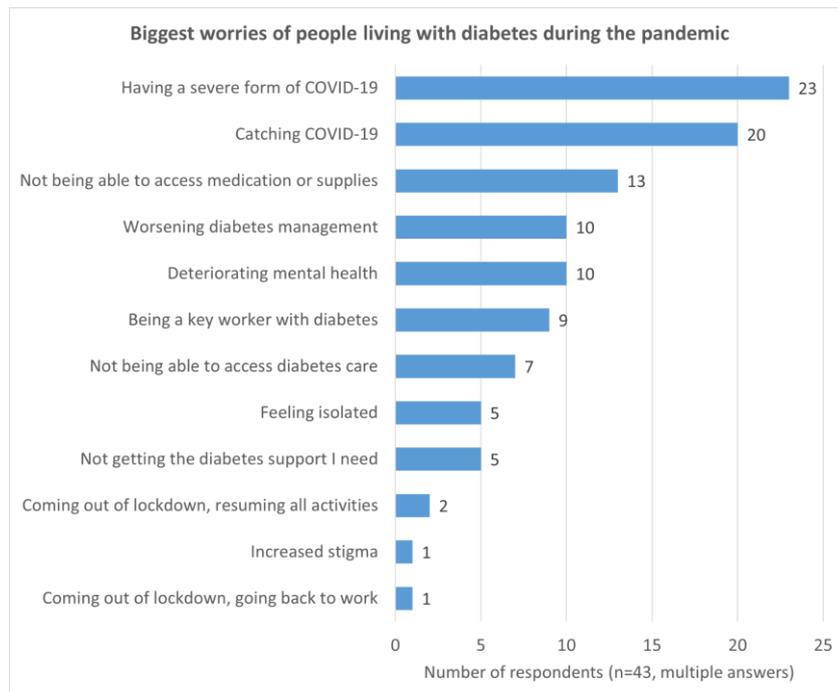
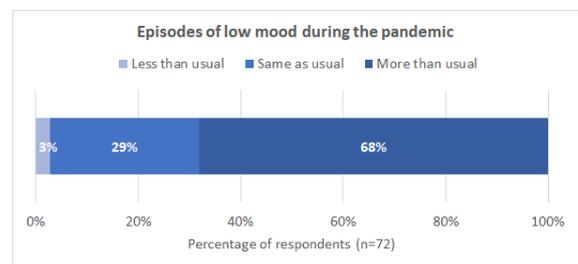
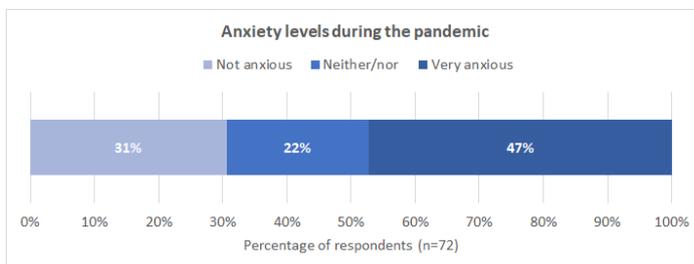
While 90% of survey respondents were able to follow their diabetes regimen as well as usual or better during the COVID-19 crisis than they had done prior to it, just 39% rated their overall ability to manage their condition as being effective or very effective, down from 60% pre-pandemic. Physical activity levels fell sharply, with 74% of respondents exercising less and one in two gaining weight. One third of respondents experienced more variability in their glucose levels; one fifth more hypoglycaemic episodes; and one third more hyperglycaemic episodes.

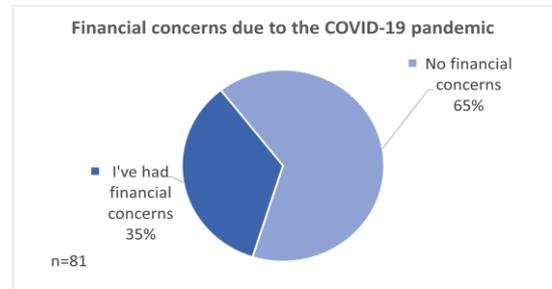
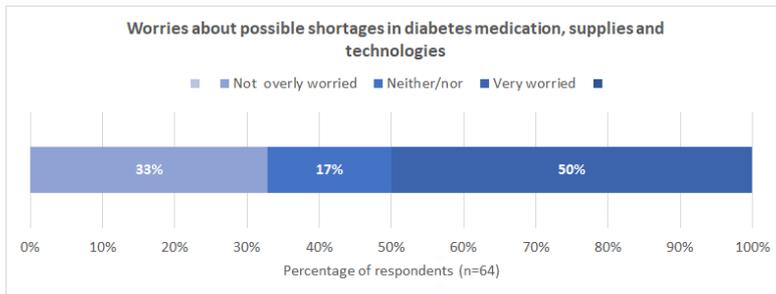




Psychological Impact

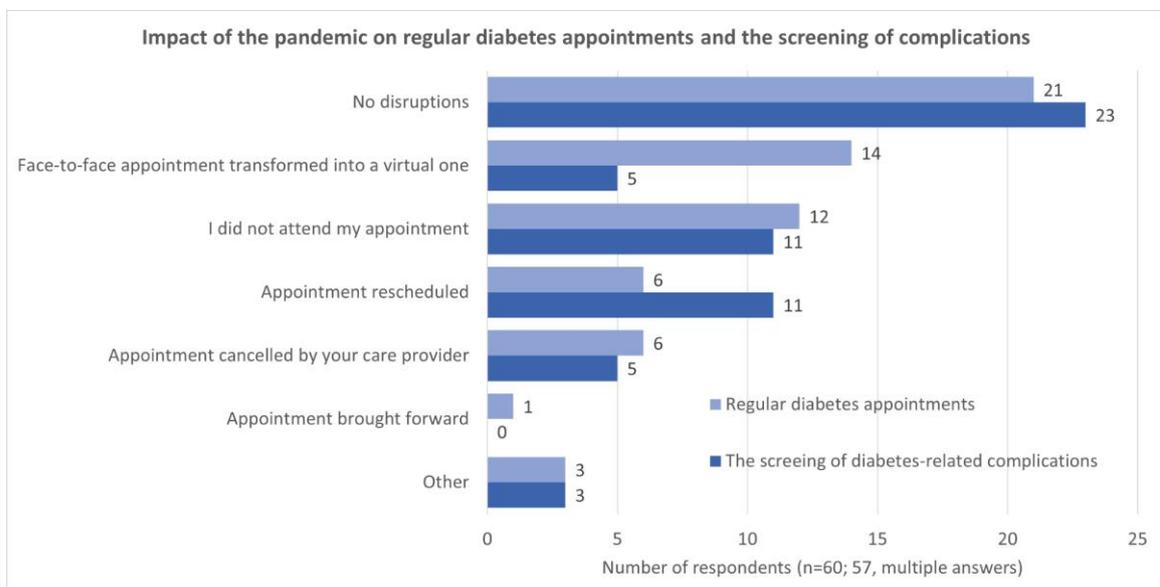
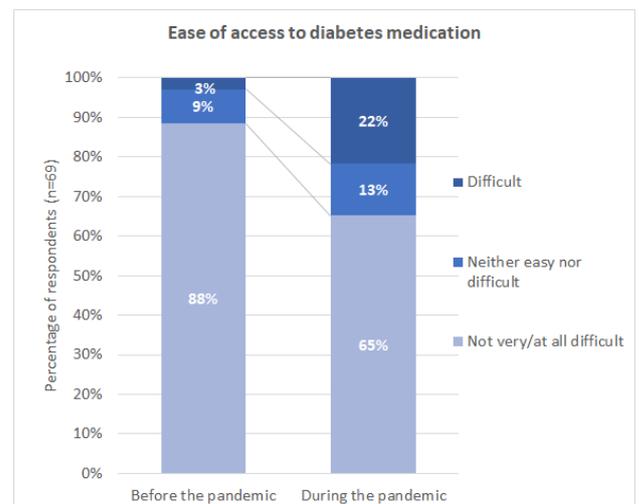
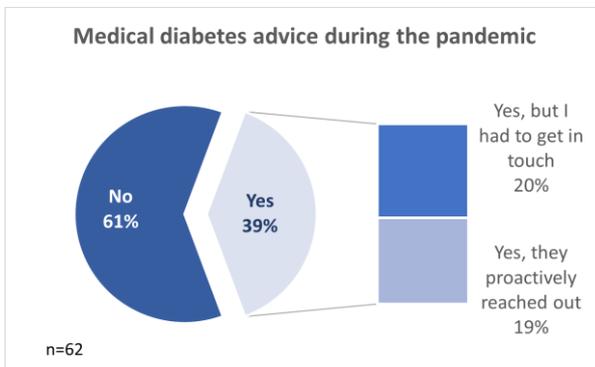
Underlining the psychological impact of the COVID-19 pandemic for PwD, 47% were more or much more anxious during the first wave of COVID-19 than before the crisis and one in two respondents worried about shortages of medicines and supplies. Over two-thirds of the respondents experienced more frequent episodes of low mood than usual. Developing a severe form of COVID-19 was the concern most frequently cited by survey respondents, together with catching the disease in the first place. Financial concerns were experienced by two-thirds of respondents. Fear of not being able to access medication and supplies was one of the major worries reported by survey respondents.

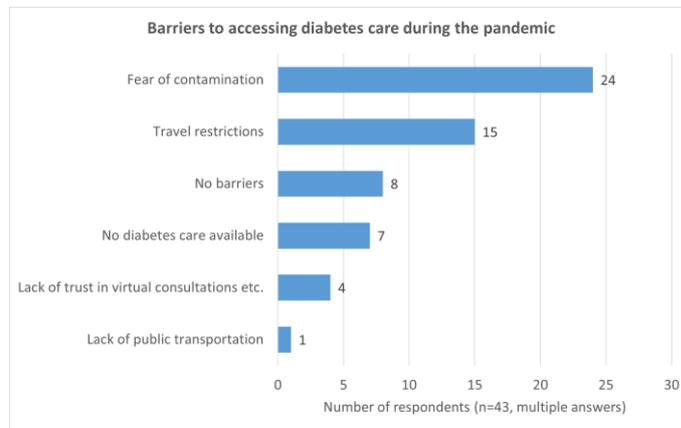
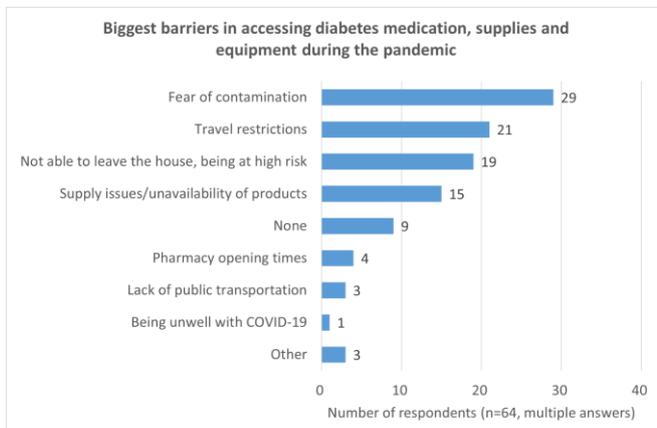




Access to Medicines, Supplies, Technologies, and Care

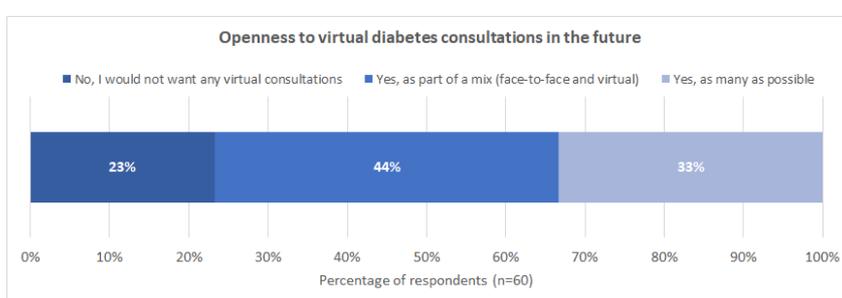
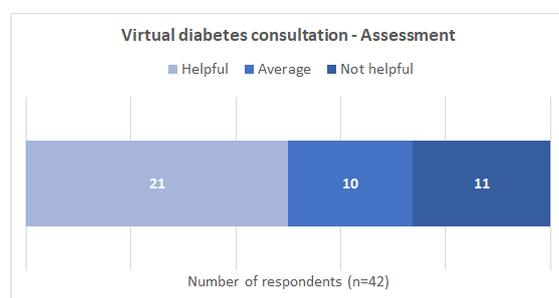
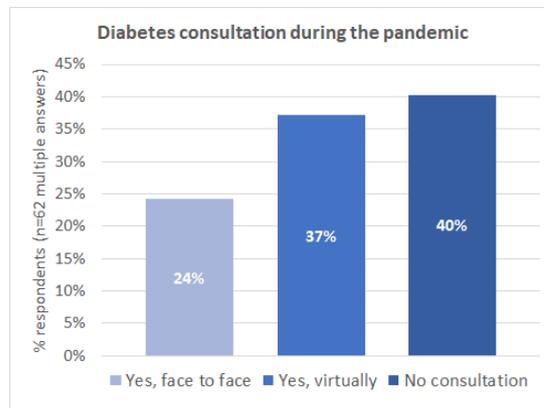
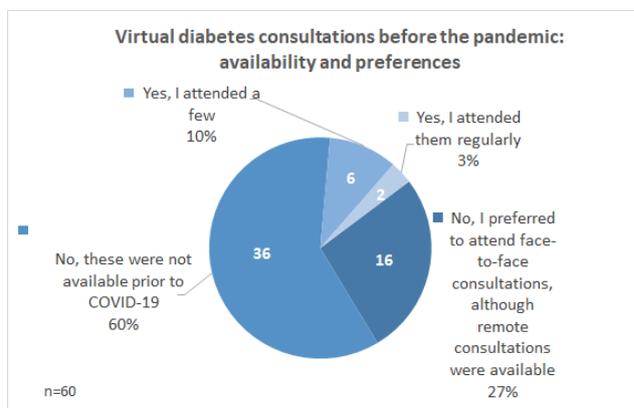
During the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of respondents who indicated experiencing some degree of difficulty in accessing medicines, supplies, and technologies rose sharply, from 3% to 22% in the case of diabetes medication. While 88% of respondents could access their medication with few or no difficulties prior to COVID-19, the figure fell to 65% during the pandemic. There were also some difficulties relating to access to care, with some appointments rescheduled or cancelled. Fear of contamination and travel restrictions were the biggest obstacles preventing PwD from accessing medicines, supplies, equipment, and care. Close to two-thirds of PwD in Romania did not receive specific advice from their medical team about how to manage their condition during the pandemic.





E-health

As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, virtual consultations were made more widely available in Romania, as in other European countries. Although remote consultations did exist before the pandemic, more PwD seemed to use them during the crisis. About half the respondents who attended virtual consultations found them useful; and as many found them of average use as found them not helpful. Overall, though, three quarters of respondents indicated that they would consider attending such consultations in the future. Most of them favoured a mix of face-to-face and virtual consultations, but many were open to virtual consultations only.



Background

This country profile was developed as part of 'Living in COVID times', an online survey conducted by IDF Europe between August and October 2020. It collected answers from 3,480 people living with diabetes across 32 countries in Europe and aimed to understand how the COVID-19 crisis affected PwD's lives and their diabetes care. In Romania, 87 people responded to the survey, 14 of them parents or caregivers and 73 themselves living with diabetes. There was a stronger representation of people living with Type 1 diabetes. Most respondents were between 21 and 60 years old and three quarters were women. A large majority of the respondents had been living with diabetes for less than 20 years.

The Europe-wide report "Living in COVID times" can be found [here](#).

If you wish to share a testimonial of your life with diabetes in Romania during the pandemic, write to idf-europe@idf-europe.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

