

# **DSi COVID-19 survey of member organisations – April 2020**

## **Summary of results**

# Survey background



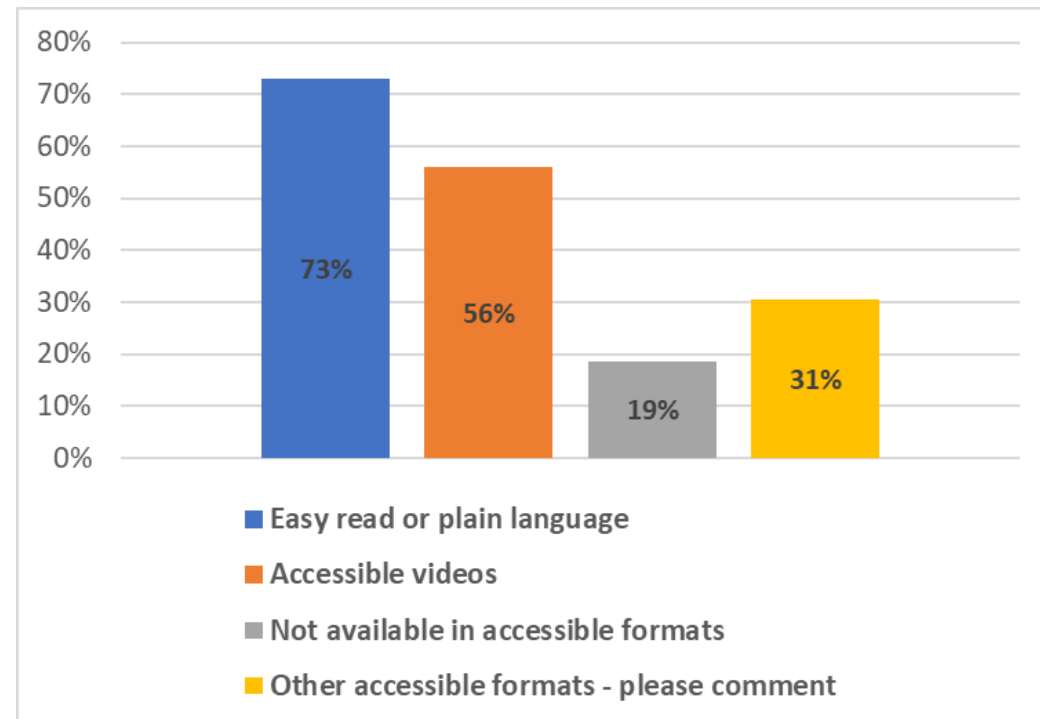
- The survey was sent to DSi's member organisations
- It was open for responses between 6 April and 22 April 2020
- We received 59 responses from 50 countries

# Section 1: COVID-19 and persons with Down syndrome

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## Availability of accessible information related to COVID-19 in respondents' countries

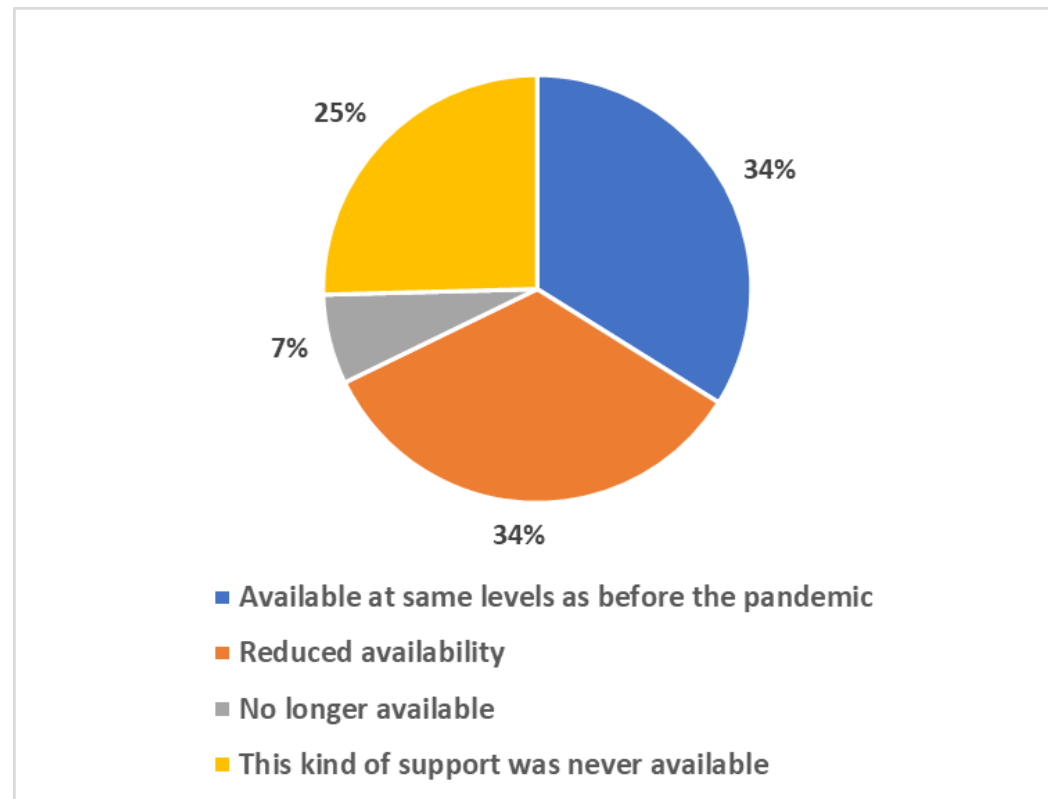
- Some respondents described formats that are accessible for other persons with disabilities but not necessarily for persons with Down syndrome, so the number of countries with no information available in accessible formats for people with Down syndrome is probably higher than indicated.
- Other formats:
  - Songs
  - Radio and TV
  - Sign language
  - Infographics
  - Pictures



# Section 1: COVID-19 and persons with Down syndrome

## Availability of personal support systems outside the family during the COVID-19 pandemic

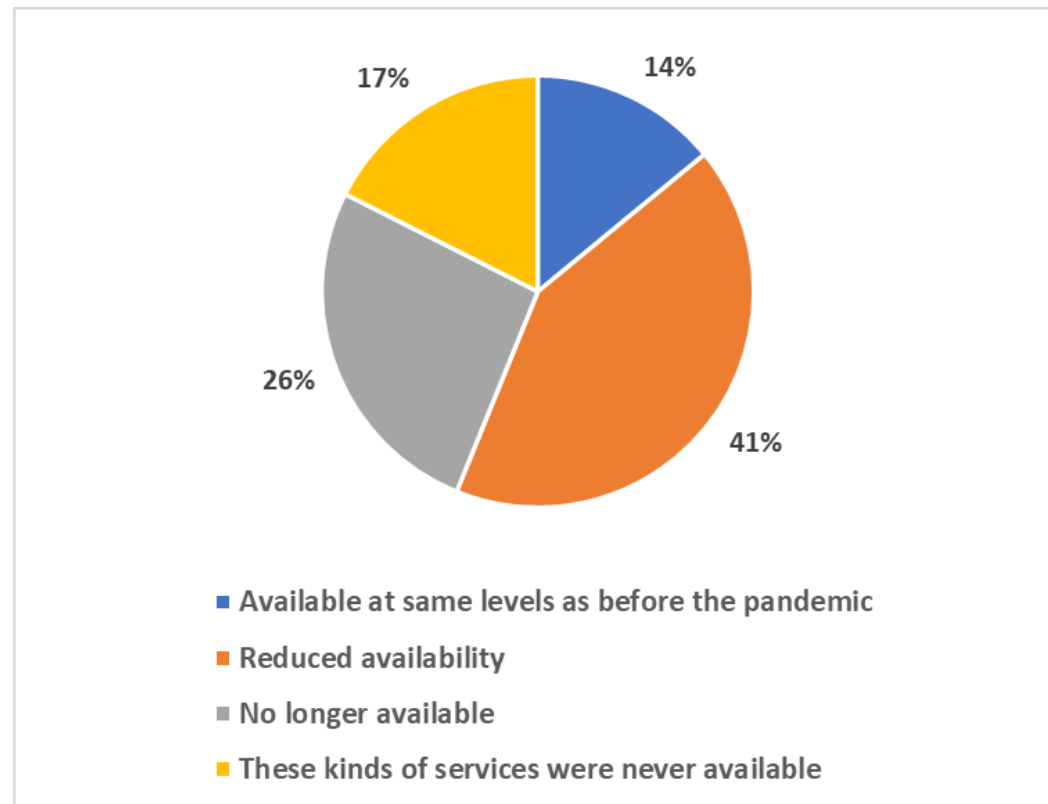
- The proportion of countries with reduced levels of personal support was high, especially if you take out the 25% where this kind of support was never available
- Some countries described creative ways to continue providing personal support while following social distancing guidance, using phone calls or technology.



# Section 1: COVID-19 and persons with Down syndrome

## Availability of other services specifically for persons with Down syndrome during the pandemic

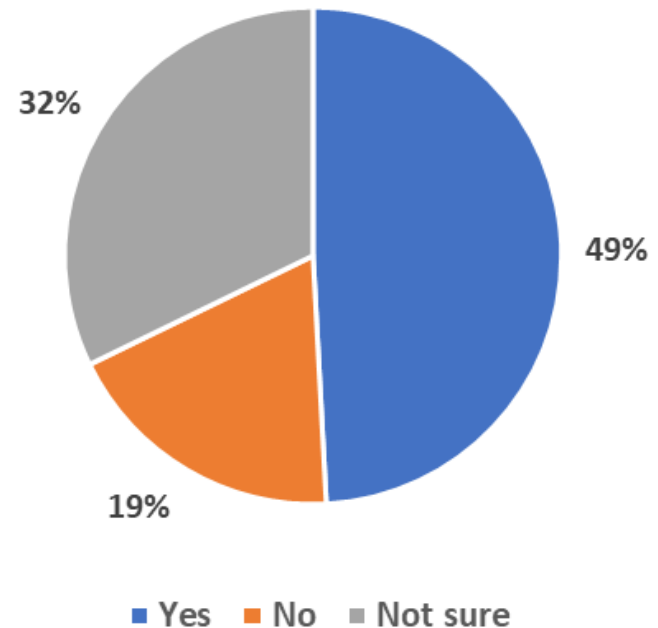
- Again the proportion with reduced availability was very high



# Section 1: COVID-19 and persons with Down syndrome

**Do you think persons with Down syndrome can access medical care on an equal basis with others in your country during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

- Some countries did not yet have enough cases of COVID-19 to comment on this
- Many of those that answered 'Not sure' said they were worried about discrimination against persons with Down syndrome in medical responses to COVID-19



# Section 1: COVID-19 and persons with Down syndrome



## Examples of good practice in the inclusion of persons with Down syndrome in responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

- Schools using Zoom and other technology to support inclusive homeworking and arrange meetings with other students
- Information on COVID-19 being translated into accessible formats that are easy to understand
- Government distributing personal protective equipment (PPE) to organisations working with persons with Down syndrome
- Government providing guidance for health workers treating patients with Down syndrome with COVID-19
- Adaptations made to social distancing rules for persons with intellectual disabilities
- Involvement of self-advocates in responses
- National programme of COVID-19 testing of persons with disabilities at their homes
- Extra financial support being given to families that include a person with a disability



# Section 1: COVID-19 and persons with Down syndrome



## Examples of the exclusion of persons with Down syndrome in responses to the COVID-19 pandemic

- Down syndrome and/or disability community not being consulted by governments in COVID-19 response planning
- No Down syndrome or disability specific government provision
- Inaccessible information related to COVID-19
- Virtual schooling without any adaptations for students with Down syndrome
- Exclusion due to existing stigma
- Social distancing exacerbating existing marginalisation
- persons with Down syndrome living in residential settings very isolated

# Section 1: COVID-19 and persons with Down syndrome



## Challenges members think persons with Down syndrome will face with the COVID-19 pandemic

- Low levels of awareness of COVID-19 and prevention measures
- Discrimination in access to intensive care
- Difficulty accessing basic services
- Lack of technology needed to access services online
- Difficulty getting masks and other forms of PPE
- Social distancing and necessary hygiene very difficult in some situations
- Increased financial hardship and risk of poverty
- Struggle meeting basics needs – nutrition, health
- Withdrawal of support of parents or family members become unwell
- Persons with Down syndrome in employment may lose jobs
- Psychological harm due to isolation – impact on mental health
- Decline in physical health

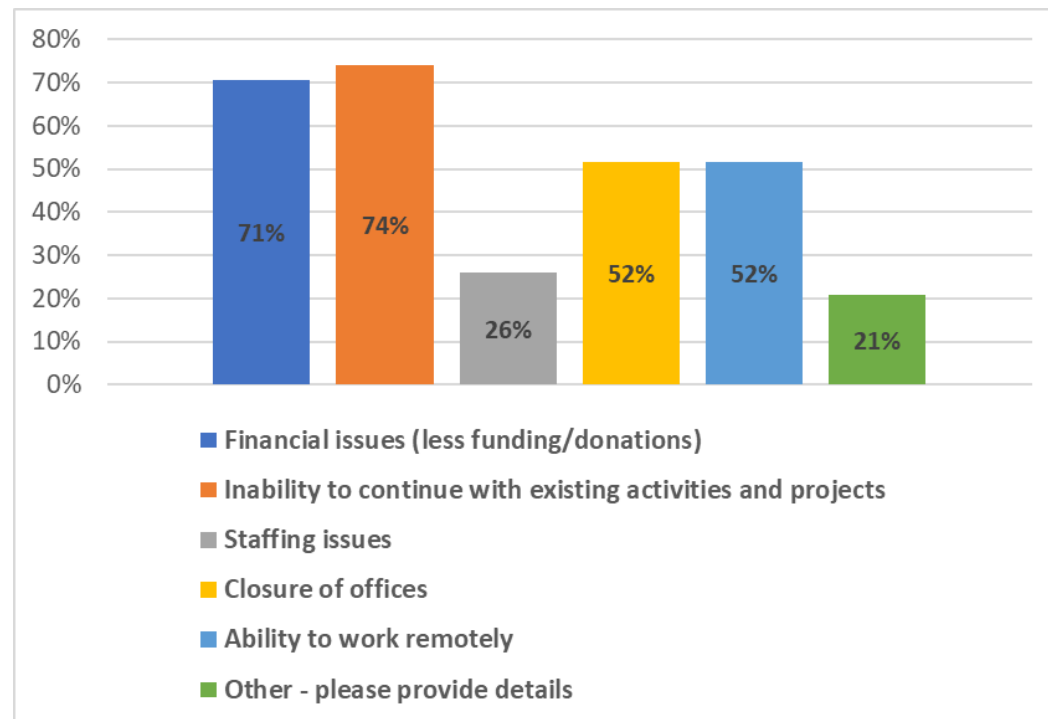
# Section 2: Impact of COVID-19 on member organisations

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## Challenges members are facing as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic

➤ Other challenges identified by members:

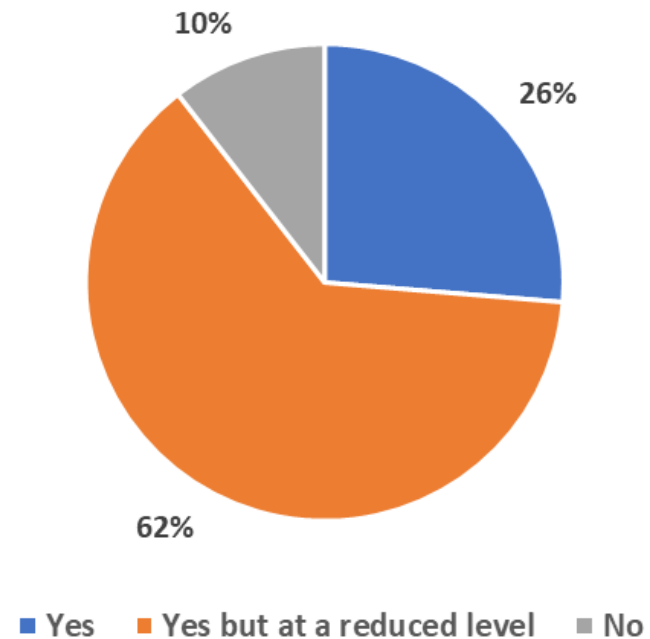
- Inaccessible transportation
- Insufficient finances to support families to meet basic needs
- Potential for funding to be redirected to areas most affected by COVID-19
- Difficulties supporting people that can't access technology



## Section 2: Impact of COVID-19 on member organisations

### Whether member organisations are still able to function during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Issues highlighted by members:
  - A lack of digital infrastructure
  - Reduction in demand for services they provide within other organisations or settings affected – e.g. interventions in schools
- Some members reported increased demand for information resources and support

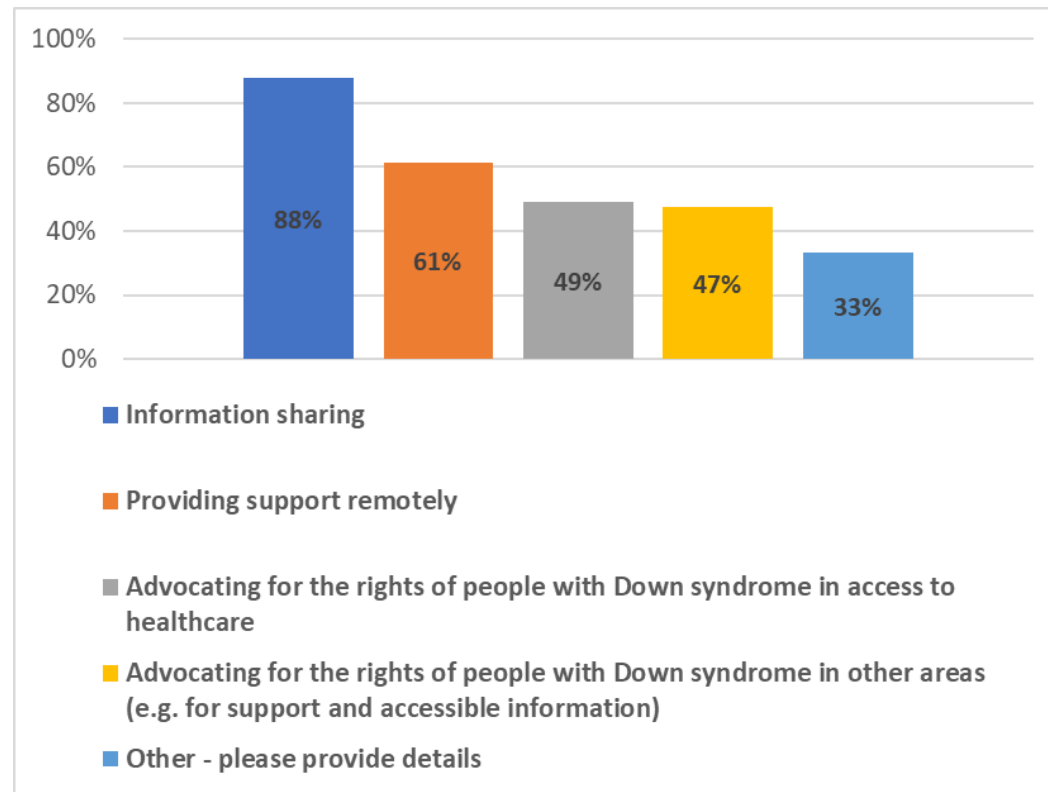


# Section 2: Impact of COVID-19 on member organisations

## What members are doing to support people with Down syndrome and their families/carers during the COVID-19 pandemic

### ➤ Other activities:

- Support via videos, webinars, support via emails, phone, social media, WhatsApp
- Support with education from home
- Writing articles to promote disability inclusive response
- Sharing videos from people with Down syndrome
- Providing financial support and/or basic supplies
- Providing personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Advocacy - lobbying Ministry of Education about lack of planning for persons with disabilities in lockdown



# Next steps



- DSi will continue to collect and share information and experiences of members, and look how best to contribute to our member organisations' important work supporting people with Down syndrome and their families in their countries during these difficult times.
- [Read more about what DSi is doing to help here](#)