

EPIDEMIOLOGY, BURDEN, AND NCDS RISK FACTORS

DIABETES IN SERBIA: EPIDEMIOLOGICAL PROFILE AND IMPLICATIONS

*Ivana Rakočević, Nataša Mickovski Katalina, Snežana Plavšić, Snežana Živković Perišić,
Dragan Miljuš, Zorica Božić*

Institute of Public Health of Serbia Dr Milan Jovanović Batut, Belgrade, Serbia

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Background: In the last few decades, world is facing dramatic increase in diabetes prevalence imposing heavy burden of this chronic disease. The greatest escalation is occurring in low and middle-income economies.

Methods and Objectives: The aim of this study was to analyse incidence, prevalence and mortality of diabetes in Serbia between year 2000. and 2022. Data were obtained from Serbian Diabetes Registry and Serbian National Health Survey. Standardized incidence and mortality rates were calculated by direct method using the World population as standard. To examine trend analysis, a linear regression model was performed.

Results: During the 20-yr study period, the prevalence of known diabetes increased by 66%, from 5.0% in year 2000 to 8.3% in 2019. The majority of patients (90-95%) were people with type 2 diabetes, between the ages of 45 and 65. Besides, the significant increasing trend of type 1 diabetes was observed. Unlike type 2 diabetes, type 1 was the most frequent in childhood, at the age of 10-14. In addition, a north-south gradient was recorded, with incidence rates being higher in Vojvodina (16.9/100,000) than rates in central Serbia (15.8/100,000). While incidence and prevalence showed increase, diabetes mortality in Serbia had a slightly downward trend with standardized mortality rate of 15.0/100,000 in year 2022.

Conclusions: This study indicates the high prevalence of diabetes in Serbian population. Moreover, our prevalence data were based on known cases of diabetes only, thus underestimating the prevalence of predominant type 2 diabetes. However, type 2 diabetes is largely preventable implicating that lifestyle changes, screening for high risk individuals and early detection of type 2 diabetes together with diabetes data surveillance are necessary to reduce high burden of diabetes in Serbia.

Keywords: diabetes, prevalence, incidence, mortality