



COVID-19 IN LAC

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

2021 LAC HIGH FREQUENCY PHONE SURVEYS: Results Phase II, Wave 2



September 2022

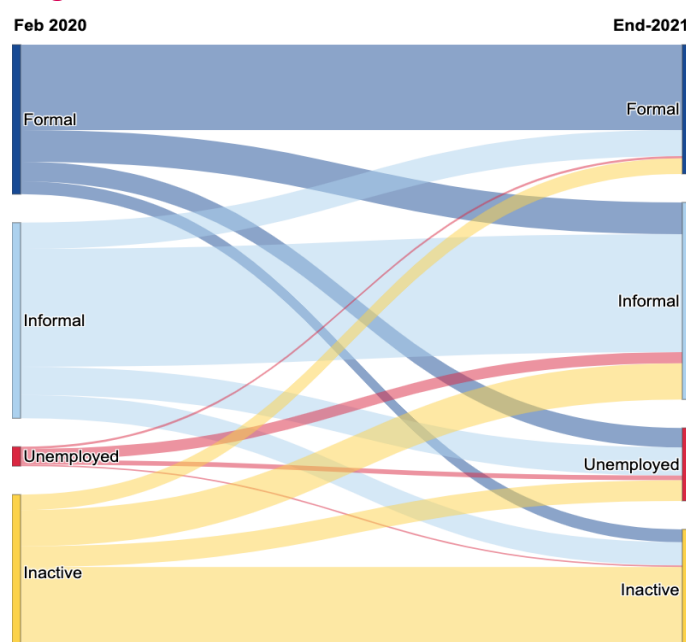
The Dominican Republic was one of the fastest-growing economies in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2015 and 2019. As a result, the Covid-19 crisis hit the country when macroeconomic conditions were favourable. GDP contracted by 6.7 per cent in 2020, but the economy had reopened by mid-2021, and tourism was rallying, leading to 12.3 per cent GDP growth in 2021. However, the effects of this rapid economic recovery have been slow to be reflected in the dynamics of the labour market. By late 2021, 24.3 per cent of the population who were employed before the pandemic had lost their jobs. Of these, 13.8 per cent became unemployed, and 10.5 per cent dropped out of the labour force altogether. Some 27.4 per cent of young people lost their jobs. Some 34.1 per cent of women lost their jobs, double the share of men that did so (17.3 per cent). By late 2021, these departures from the labour force were offset by the entry of 46.7 per cent of those who were economically inactive before the pandemic. Entry rates were much higher for men and adults aged 26 to 45. Some 71.5 per cent of those entering the labour market found work. However, for 69.9 per cent, this work was informal, pointing to a deterioration in the quality of employment. Specifically, 40.1 per cent of those who held formal jobs, were unemployed or who were economically inactive before the pandemic moved into informal employment. One out of every two women transitioned to informal employment. On the other hand, there was an overall drop of 14.4 percentage points in the proportion of respondents reporting spending increased time providing their children support with school activities. This may be explained by the reopening of educational establishments in the second half of 2021. Unlike most countries in the region, the change in care burdens compared to the middle of the year was very similar for men and women.

Key indicators: Individuals (18+ years old)

Distribution among groups	Labour		Childcare	
	% of employed population (pre-pandemic) who lost their pre-pandemic job	% of inactive population (pre-pandemic) who entered the labour market	% of formal, unemployed or inactive (pre-pandemic) who were working and transited into informality	Change in % of population reporting an increase in time spent supporting children's education activities (compared to pre-pandemic) between mid-2021 and end of 2021 (pp)
Overall	24.3%	46.7%	40.1%	-14.4
Females	34.1%	41.0%	50.3%	-13.2
Males	17.3%	61.0%	32.4%	-15.8
18 to 25 years old	27.4%	62.5%	39.3%	-5.7
26 to 45 years old	25.1%	70.8%	37.7%	-17.9
46 to 64 years old	20.9%	39.8%	41.2%	-16.2
65 and older	21.8%	13.8%	55.4%	-4.0
Primary or less	25.0%	35.2%	31.1%	-10.5
Secondary	22.8%	50.5%	41.0%	-13.0
Tertiary and more	26.5%	57.4%	46.9%	-16.0

Source: LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 2

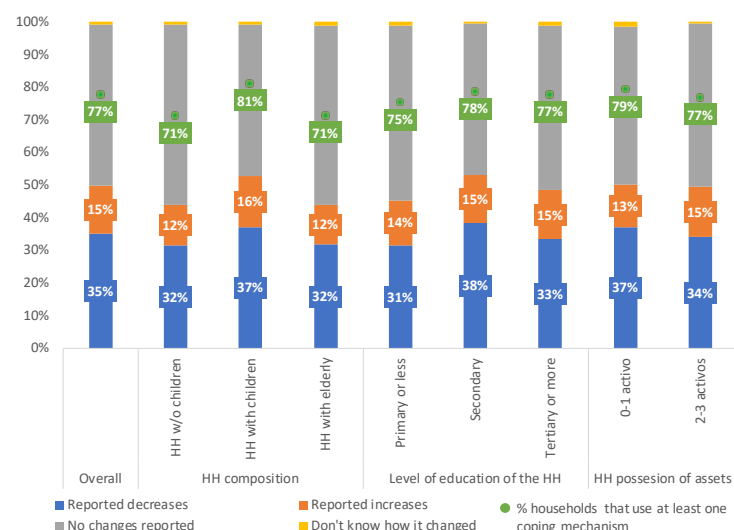
Figure 1: Transitions in the labour market



Some 35.0 per cent of Dominican households reported that their income had dropped between mid- and late 2021, while 15 per cent reported increases. Income loss was more common in households whose heads had secondary education and those with low asset holdings and underage children. The probability of experiencing food insecurity also increased. Some 38.6 per cent of households reported having gone without food during the 30 days prior to the survey due to a lack of means. This figure is 4.6 percentage points higher than was reported in mid-2021 and 16.6 percentage points above pre-pandemic levels. To compensate for pandemic-related income losses and continue meeting their basic needs, 77.5 per cent of households had to resort to at least one new coping mechanism. Among the strategies used were the non-payment of financial obligations, the use of savings and the entry of adults and children into the labour force.

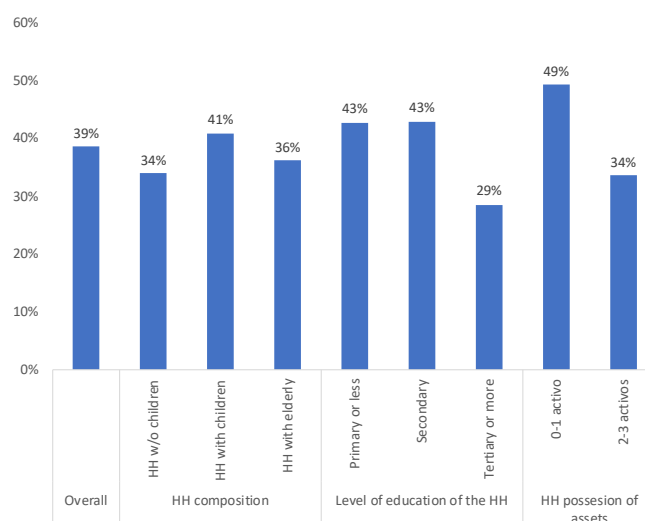
Approximately four out of five households with minor children resorted to at least one of these strategies during the pandemic. One of the most striking data points is that in 8.9 per cent of households with school-age children, a child had to seek employment as a mechanism to mitigate the financial stress associated with the Covid-19 crisis. This figure was even higher for households with limited asset holdings (12.0 per cent) and those in which the respondent was 65 or older (12.5 per cent). The Dominican education system went from total and partial closures during the first half of 2021 to being almost fully operational in the second half. This prompted the in-person attendance rate to soar by 86.4 percentage points, reaching 94.3 per cent (one of the highest rates in the region). However, a quarter of respondents (24.8 per cent) felt that children are learning less than before the pandemic. This view is more pronounced among households with heads with higher education (34.6 per cent). These perceptions reflect the challenges that still lie ahead regarding the quality of the country's education system.

Figure 2: Households reporting a change in income (%)
End of 2021 vs. Mid 2021



Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 2

Figure 3: Household that ran out of food (%)
End of 2021



Key indicators: Households and children

Distribution among groups	Income	Coping	Food Insecurity	Education (6-17 yo)		
	% households that report a reduction in total income (End of 2021 vs. Mid 2021)	% of households that resorted to at least one coping mechanism to manage financial stress in 2021*	% of households reporting school-age children entering in the labour force as a coping mechanism	% households that ran out of food (last 30 days)	Change in the % of school-age children who attended face-to-face classes (End 2021 vs. Mid 2021) (pp)	% of enrolled children who are learning less than before the pandemic
Overall	35.0%	77.5%	8.9%	38.6%	86.4	24.8%
HH w/o children (0-17)	31.6%	71.0%	-	34.0%	-	-
HH with children (0-17)	36.9%	81.0%	8.9%	41.0%	86.4	24.8%
HH with elderly (65+)	31.7%	71.2%	12.5%	36.3%	86.1	19.1%
HH with 0-1 asset	37.0%	79.1%	12.0%	49.3%	85.4	25.4%
HH with 2-3 assets	34.1%	76.7%	8.1%	33.7%	86.4	24.7%
HH education - Primary or less	31.4%	75.1%	11.4%	42.8%	80.8	21.3%
HH education - Secondary	38.4%	78.4%	8.9%	43.0%	88.6	22.5%
HH education - Tertiary or more	33.4%	77.4%	3.2%	28.5%	87.6	34.6%

* Coping mechanisms are the strategies used to cope with the financial stress generated by the reduction in income during the pandemic. Particularly, non-payment of financial obligations, use of savings and entry into the labour force.

Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 2

HIGH FREQUENCY PHONE SURVEY

The World Bank and UNDP conducted a multi-wave High-Frequency Phone Survey (HFPS) in 2021 to assess the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the welfare of Latin American and Caribbean households. The second wave was collected between November and December 2021, and the data is nationally representative for 22 countries: Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia and Uruguay. The HFPS provides information on the welfare impacts that households experienced with respect to food insecurity, changes in employment, income changes, access to health and education services, and coping mechanisms. For further information see [Chapeau Phase II, wave 2](#).