



COVID-19 IN LAC

SAINT LUCIA

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



September 2022

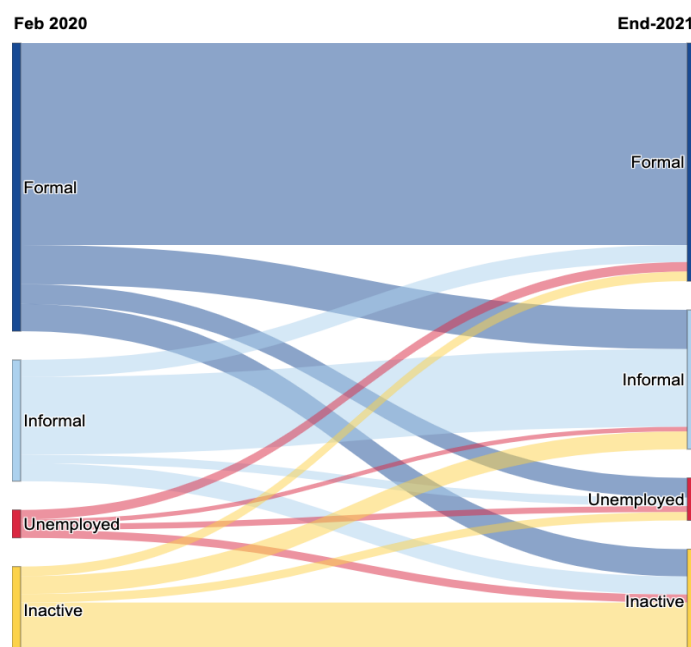
Saint Lucia is one of the countries in the Caribbean most heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, with cases and deaths being among the highest in the subregion as of February 2022. The economic consequences of the pandemic have also been dire for the island, which relies heavily on international tourism. In 2020, the contraction in real GDP of 20.4 per cent was the second largest in Latin America and the Caribbean. The recovery, in turn, has been far from complete: GDP is estimated to have grown by 6.6 per cent in 2021. By the end of 2021, the effects of the pandemic on labour market dynamics were still evident, and the recovery was proving slow—some 18.0 per cent of those who had been employed before the pandemic lost their jobs. While 6.9 per cent of these chose to remain in the labour force, 11.1 per cent opted to drop out altogether. Older adults were hit hardest by these changes: 41.4 per cent lost their jobs. Conversely, 41.2 per cent of those who were economically inactive before the pandemic entered the labour market. Three out of every four young people (those aged 18–24) and three out of five people with secondary education became economically active. Some 76.6 per cent of those entering the labour market found work. Of these, only 34.9 per cent were formal jobs. According to the survey, some 44.2 per cent of those who held formal jobs, were unemployed or were economically inactive pre-Covid had become informal workers by late 2021. Three out of four young people (those aged 18–24) moved into informal employment during the pandemic, revealing a deterioration in employment conditions. The time spent on unpaid care work in the home increased as a result of the pandemic, especially for women. In mid-2021, 58.4 per cent of women and 48.6 per cent of men reported that they were spending more time providing support for their children's schooling. This gap narrowed slightly by the end of the year when the share of women doing so dropped to 51.1 per cent (down 7.3 percentage points) and that of men to 44.0 per cent (down 4.6 percentage points).

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	18.0%	41.2%	44.2%	-5.8
Females	22.5%	36.0%	48.7%	-7.3
Males	14.0%	54.6%	40.5%	-4.6
18 to 25 years old	18.7%	75.8%	75.5%	2.6
26 to 45 years old	16.2%	55.1%	45.6%	-5.7
46 to 64 years old	16.8%	19.4%	32.5%	-11.9
65 and older	41.4%	17.0%	49.3%	3.6
Primary or less	24.3%	19.6%	44.2%	-0.3
Secondary	20.7%	59.9%	45.4%	-3.4
Tertiary and more	10.1%	45.7%	42.3%	-22.5

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

Figure 1: Transitions in the labour market



Government transfers and changes in approaches to generating income for the population have fallen short of mitigating the adverse effects of the pandemic on household welfare. By late 2021, some 34.9 per cent of households reported drops in their income compared with the middle of the year. These changes had the greatest impact on households with lower asset availability and less educated heads. To offset them, households were forced to resort to coping strategies that included not paying financial obligations, using savings and adults and children who were previously economically inactive entering the workforce. Specifically, some 72.8 per cent of households made recourse to at least one of these mechanisms to cope with the financial stress caused by the pandemic. This figure was as high as 81.0 per cent in households with children under 18. Specifically, in 6.1 per cent of households with school-age children, a child had to seek employment during the pandemic. This figure was even higher among households with lower asset holdings (11.1 per cent).

Despite all these efforts to meet their basic needs, one-third of households (33.2 per cent) experienced food insecurity in the 30 days leading up to the survey due to a lack of means. This figure is just 1.9 percentage points lower than in mid-2021 and remains 19.5 percentage points above where it stood before the pandemic started. Food insecurity was even more severe for households with low asset ownership (45.3 per cent) and those whose heads had primary education or less (40.0 per cent). Turning to education-related indicators, although the in-person school attendance rate fell by 1.3 percentage points between mid- and late 2021, Saint Lucia had the highest face-to-face schooling rates in the region (96.2 per cent). Despite this, the country's education system is yet to recover fully from the ravages of the pandemic. Some 39.2 per cent of respondents said they thought children were learning less than before the pandemic. This downturn in the quality of education could affect not only the future welfare of households but also the accumulation of human capital over time.

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

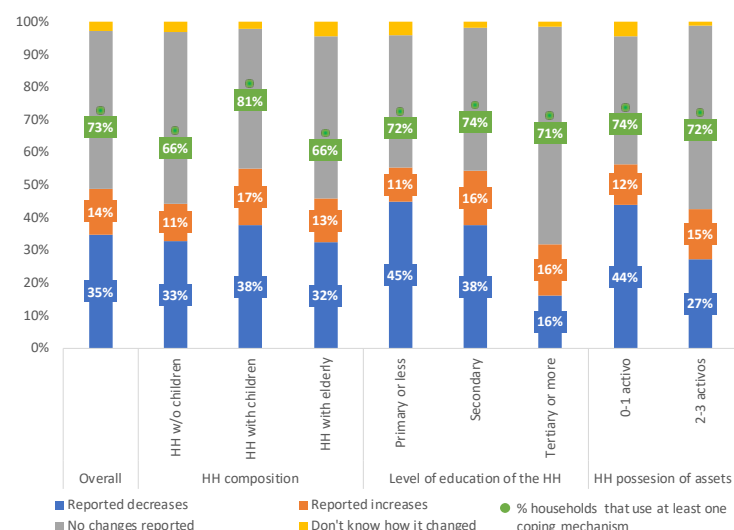
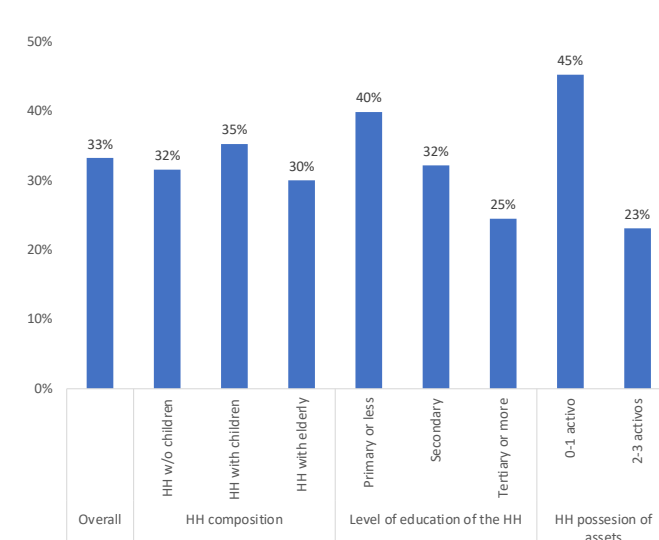


Figure 3: Household that ran out of food (%)
End of 2021



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

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	34.9%	72.8%	6.1%	33.2%	-1.3	39.2%
HH w/o children (0-17)	32.9%	66.5%	-	31.6%	-	-
HH with children (0-17)	37.6%	81.0%	6.1%	35.3%	-1.3	39.2%
HH with elderly (65+)	32.4%	66.0%	1.6%	30.1%	6.3	37.6%
HH with 0-1 asset	44.0%	73.7%	11.1%	45.3%	-7.3	33.5%
HH with 2-3 assets	27.4%	72.0%	3.6%	23.2%	1.7	41.9%
HH education - Primary or less	44.8%	72.4%	8.5%	40.0%	1.1	33.5%
HH education - Secondary	37.8%	74.4%	7.1%	32.3%	-4.6	41.7%
HH education - Tertiary or more	16.3%	71.1%	1.0%	24.5%	1.4	42.8%

* 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](#).