



# COVID-19 IN LAC

## MEXICO

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



September 2022

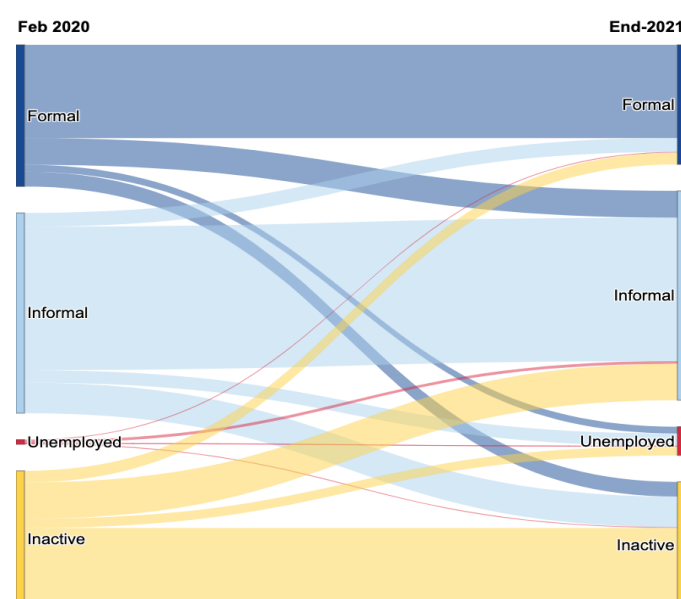
Mexico was severely impacted by the initial outbreak of Covid-19. The country's real GDP contracted by 8.3 per cent in 2020, but has since recovered, growing by an estimated 5.7 per cent in 2021. However, the labour market has been slow to recover. By late 2021, 18.9 per cent of those who were employed before the pandemic had lost their jobs. While 5.7 per cent chose to remain in the labour force, 13.2 per cent opted to leave it altogether. Young people between the ages of 18 and 25 and older adults were affected most by job loss (29.7 per cent in both cases). Women were more than twice as likely to lose their jobs and drop out of the labour force as men (19.6 per cent versus 8.0 per cent). At the same time, 41.7 per cent of the population that was economically inactive before the pandemic entered the workforce. Some 84.0 per cent of those entering the labour market found work. Men were twice as likely as women to become economically active (63.0 per cent versus 32.9 per cent), although it was more difficult for them to find a job. The jobs that 75.7 per cent of those entering the labour market found were informal. Indeed, 31.5 per cent of those who held formal jobs, were unemployed or who were economically inactive before the pandemic moved into informal employment by late 2021. Young people (those aged 18–25) became informal workers more frequently than other population groups (46.5 per cent). The pandemic also affected the way in which activities are distributed within households. In mid-2021, 46.4 per cent of respondents reported that they were spending more time helping their children with schoolwork. By the end of the year, this share had increased to 47.6 per cent. This childcare burden fell mainly on women (54.2 per cent versus 39.1 per cent for men).

### 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	18.9%	41.7%	31.5%	1.2
Urban	18.3%	41.5%	32.0%	-0.8
Rural	20.9%	42.7%	30.4%	6.7
Females	26.0%	32.9%	34.4%	0.7
Males	13.1%	63.0%	28.5%	1.3
18 to 25 years old	29.7%	58.4%	46.5%	-0.6
26 to 45 years old	15.5%	53.6%	33.0%	2.3
46 to 64 years old	16.8%	37.1%	22.1%	-5.1
65 and older	29.7%	12.2%	29.3%	18.3
Primary or less	23.4%	26.4%	27.2%	6.3
Secondary	19.6%	43.8%	31.3%	-0.5
Tertiary and more	14.0%	57.4%	37.3%	4.4

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

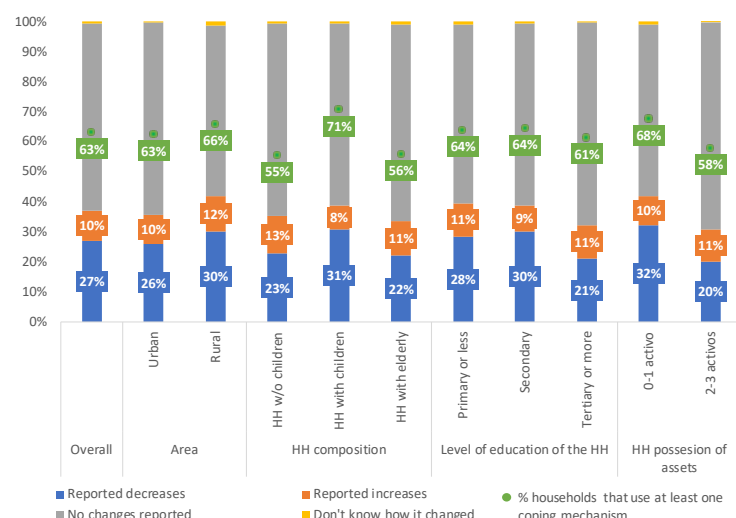
Figure 1: Transitions in the labour market



Government transfers to counter the negative effects of the pandemic have fallen short. In late 2021, 27.0 per cent of households reported that their incomes had dropped since the middle of the year. Households with fewer assets, those with children under the age of 18 years and those located in rural areas were hit hardest. To cope with the financial stress triggered by the pandemic, 63.2 per cent of households resorted to at least one of the following mechanisms: non-payment of financial obligations, using savings and entering the labour force. This figure increased to 70.5 per cent for households with dependent children and to 67.6 per cent for those with few assets. One of the coping mechanisms reported was the entry of children into the labour force, which was used in 12.4 per cent of households with school-age children. This strategy was most commonly used in households with older adults (18.6 per cent).

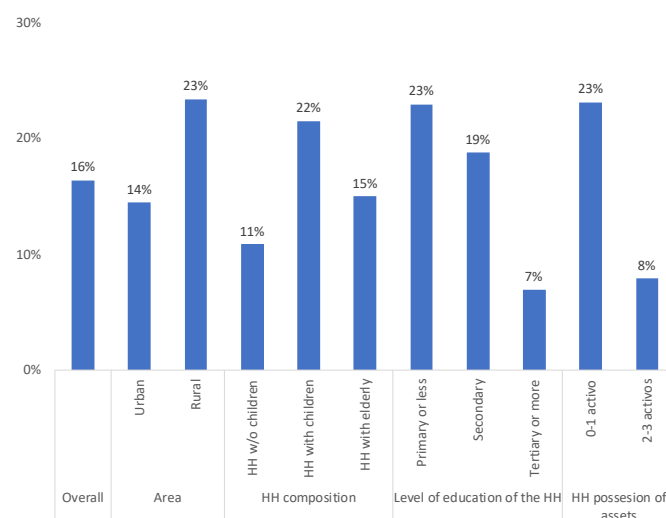
Despite these efforts to mitigate the income loss and other means, 16.4 per cent of households reported going without food in the 30 days prior to the survey. Food insecurity was more common among rural households, those with fewer assets, and those with less educated heads. After half a year in which schools were only partly open, the face-to-face attendance rate increased 35.3 percentage points, reaching 43.5 per cent by the end of 2021. Despite these improvements, the attendance rate in Mexico is still below the regional average (48.3 per cent). The fact that children only participated moderately in face-to-face school activities has affected their learning process. Three out of every five respondents thought that children are learning less than they did before the pandemic. The panorama is even more complex for children in rural areas, where perceptions that children are learning less run as high as 70.8 per cent.

**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 mechanism to manage financial stress in 2021*	% of households reporting school-age children entering in the labour force	% 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	27.0%	63.2%	12.4%	16.4%	35.3	60.7%
Urban	26.1%	62.5%	11.8%	14.5%	36.8	57.0%
Rural	30.1%	65.7%	14.2%	23.4%	31.1	70.8%
HH w/o children (0-17)	22.7%	55.3%	-	10.8%	-	-
HH with children (0-17)	30.9%	70.5%	12.4%	21.5%	35.3	60.7%
HH with elderly (65+)	22.1%	55.8%	18.6%	15.0%	40.5	56.3%
HH with 0-1 asset	32.3%	67.6%	16.3%	23.1%	32.6	60.3%
HH with 2-3 assets	20.2%	57.7%	8.1%	7.9%	38.3	61.2%
HH education - Primary or less	28.5%	63.9%	17.2%	22.9%	34.2	58.0%
HH education - Secondary	30.0%	64.3%	13.3%	18.8%	38.8	61.8%
HH education - Tertiary or more	21.0%	61.4%	6.0%	6.9%	30.2	61.5%

\* 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](#).