



COVID-19 IN LAC

MEXICO

2021 LAC HIGH FREQUENCY PHONE SURVEYS: Results Phase II, Wave 1



April 2022

After severe impacts from the initial COVID-19 outbreak, Mexico's economy has started to recover. By February 2022, more than 5 million people had contracted the virus, according to official statistics. The country's real GDP contracted by 8.3 percent in 2020, but has since recovered, with estimated GDP growth of 5.7 percent in 2021. However, recent findings from the High-Frequency Phone Surveys (HFPS) point to an uneven recovery with deep fractures along several household well-being dimensions.

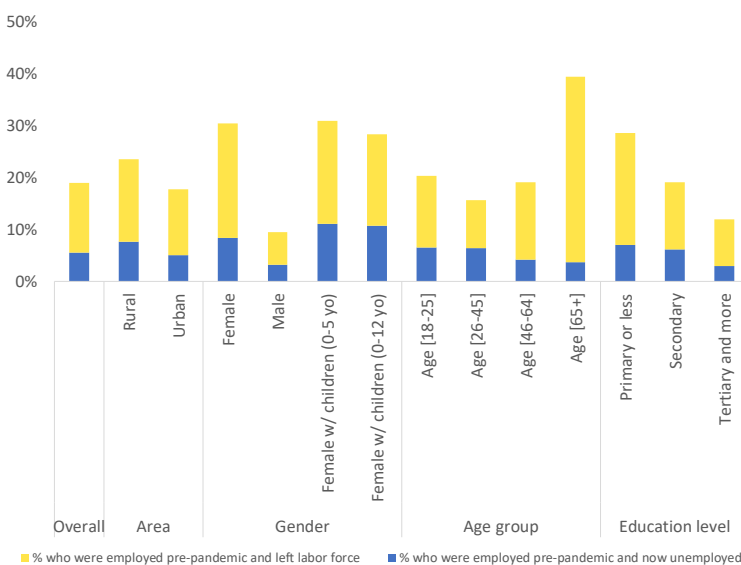
A year and a half into the pandemic, the labor market in Mexico had undergone considerable shifts. 18.9 percent of individuals employed before the pandemic had lost their job by mid-2021, more than half of them leaving the labor force altogether. Working conditions for the employed worsened, as 20.8 percent of formal workers transited into informality. Job loss affected female and older (65+) pre-pandemic workers more than the average worker. About three quarters of those who had left the labor force at the time of the survey were women. The new inactive are also predominantly low-skilled. Most striking, however, is the share of previously inactive people who entered the labor force during the pandemic (43.3 percent). 83.7 percent of them found a job, most of them in informality.

These observed labor market dynamics reflect the insufficiency of fiscal aid to compensate for income losses during the pandemic. Only 5.0 percent of households reported benefiting from emergency government transfers, while 44.2 percent reported reductions in total income compared to before the pandemic. This drop was more frequent in rural areas, where more than half of households reported income reductions. Food insecurity continues to be a concern: the share of families that reported having run out of food 30 days before the survey rose to 19.3 percent, in contrast to 10.2 percent before the pandemic. These rates were more prevalent in rural areas (30.5 percent) and households with low asset ownership (41.3 percent). This situation has likely worsened with food price inflation in late 2021 and early 2022.

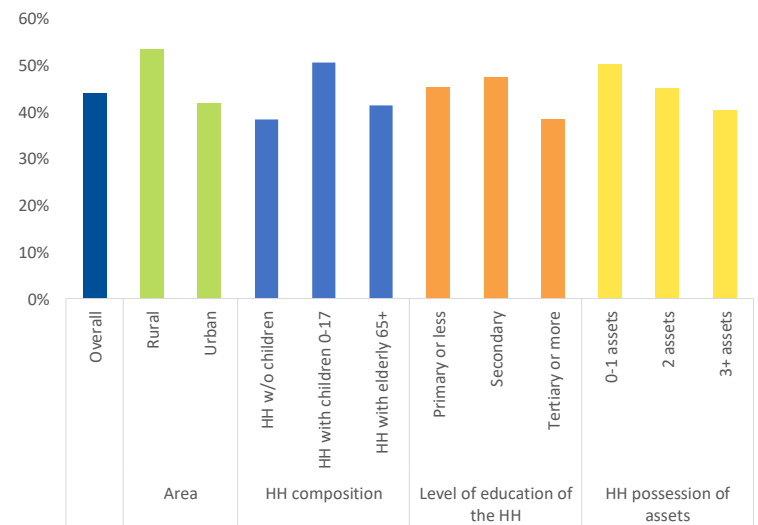
Schools were closed for 17 months and 21.5 percent of school-age children were not engaged in virtual or in-person education by mid-2021. This share was higher in rural and low-income households. Virtual attendance allowed more children to be engaged in school in 2021 than in 2020, but only 67.3 percent of children reported having a direct interaction with a teacher (online or in-person). School closures increased the burden of household responsibilities on adults, although disproportionately more for women: 37.8 percent of men and 53.5 percent of women reported an increase in the time spent supporting children's education during the pandemic.

Vaccination levels in Mexico are slightly behind regional progress. Yet the country's vaccination hesitancy at the time of the survey was the lowest across LAC. Still, hesitancy rates were particularly high among the less educated population.

JOB LOSS (% OF PRE-PANDEMIC WORKERS)



HOUSEHOLDS (%) WITH REDUCED INCOME



Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 1.

KEY INDICATORS: INDIVIDUALS (18+ years old)

Distribution among groups	Labor		Childcare responsibilities		Health	Finance
	% of employed population (pre-pandemic) who lost their pre-pandemic job	% of inactive population (pre-pandemic) who became active (employed or unemployed)	% of formal workers (pre-pandemic) who became informal	% of population who spent more time accompanying children's education	% of population who is not planning to get vaccinated or unsure (vaccination hesitancy)	% of population using mobile wallets
Overall	18.9%	43.3%	20.8%	46.4%	5.9%	28.1%
Rural	23.4%	55.5%	31.4%	42.7%	9.6%	24.1%
Urban	17.7%	39.9%	19.2%	47.6%	4.9%	29.2%
Females	30.3%	37.7%	22.7%	53.5%	5.5%	23.8%
Males	9.5%	55.8%	19.7%	37.8%	6.4%	32.8%
18 to 25 years old	20.3%	62.4%	27.5%	39.1%	4.5%	32.0%
26 to 45 years old	15.6%	57.5%	22.3%	53.1%	7.6%	30.1%
46 to 64 years old	19.0%	37.0%	14.4%	38.3%	5.4%	26.7%
65 and older	39.3%	13.3%	30.7%	25.1%	3.9%	18.0%
Primary or less	28.5%	27.1%	15.7%	29.2%	8.4%	19.1%
Secondary	19.0%	48.3%	24.5%	48.7%	5.7%	28.7%
Tertiary and more	11.9%	49.9%	16.4%	54.1%	4.4%	34.1%

Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 1.

KEY INDICATORS: HOUSEHOLDS AND CHILDREN

Distribution among groups	Income		Food Insecurity	Education (6-17 yo)		Connectivity
	% HH that report a reduction in total income (current v. pre-pandemic)	% HH that received Emergency Government Transfers during the pandemic	% HHs that ran out of food (last 30 days)	% of children in school age who attended school (in person or virtually)	% of children in school age who interacted with teacher (in-person or online classes)	% HHs that had problems with internet service due to poor access quality / speed
Overall	44.2%	5.0%	19.3%	79.5%	67.5%	57.7%
Rural	53.4%	6.0%	30.5%	73.8%	60.3%	68.5%
Urban	41.8%	4.7%	16.4%	81.5%	70.0%	55.8%
HH w/o children (0-17)	38.3%	4.2%	15.7%	-	-	56.7%
HH with children (0-17)	50.5%	5.7%	23.1%	79.5%	67.5%	58.6%
HH with elderly (65+)	41.4%	4.4%	17.2%	78.7%	70.1%	54.7%
0-1 assets	50.2%	4.7%	41.3%	66.6%	52.0%	56.2%
2 assets	45.1%	4.2%	17.7%	74.3%	63.4%	58.1%
3+ assets	40.2%	5.7%	8.8%	90.1%	79.0%	57.7%
HH education - Primary or less	45.3%	3.4%	28.4%	66.8%	52.2%	45.5%
HH education - Secondary	47.5%	6.5%	22.0%	81.1%	69.5%	58.8%
HH education - Tertiary or more	38.5%	4.3%	6.6%	89.0%	79.5%	60.7%

Source: World Bank and UNDP LAC High Frequency Phone Surveys, Phase II, Wave 1.

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 first wave was collected between May and July 2021, and the data is nationally representative for 24 countries: Antigua & Barbuda, Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, 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 data for Brazil was collected between July 26 and October 1. 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. Key indicators on socioeconomic effects are available at the [COVID-19 monitoring global dashboard](#), which provides 96 harmonized indicators across 50 countries in Latin America and the world. For further information, see [World Bank and UNDP \(2021\)](#).