

Poverty falls in Brazil

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Covid-19 has killed over 122,000 Brazilians but it's also driven down poverty and inequality. Brazil, the worst affected after the US, has distributed so much cash to citizens that poverty is approaching historic lows. About 66 million people, 30% of the population, have been getting \$110 a month in the country's biggest social programme. Data from Getulio Vargas Foundation, one of Brazil's top universities, shows those living on less than \$1.9 a day fell to 3.3% in June from 8% last year, and those below the poverty line were at 21.7% compared with 25.6%. Both represent 16-year lows, Bloomberg reports. The scheme's effect, which has made President Jair Bolsonaro very popular, is expected to play out in November's local elections, a precursor to the 2022 presidential race. Economists say the programme is unsustainable—it cost Brazil over \$9 billion in August alone—and the economy is likely to shrink 5% this year.