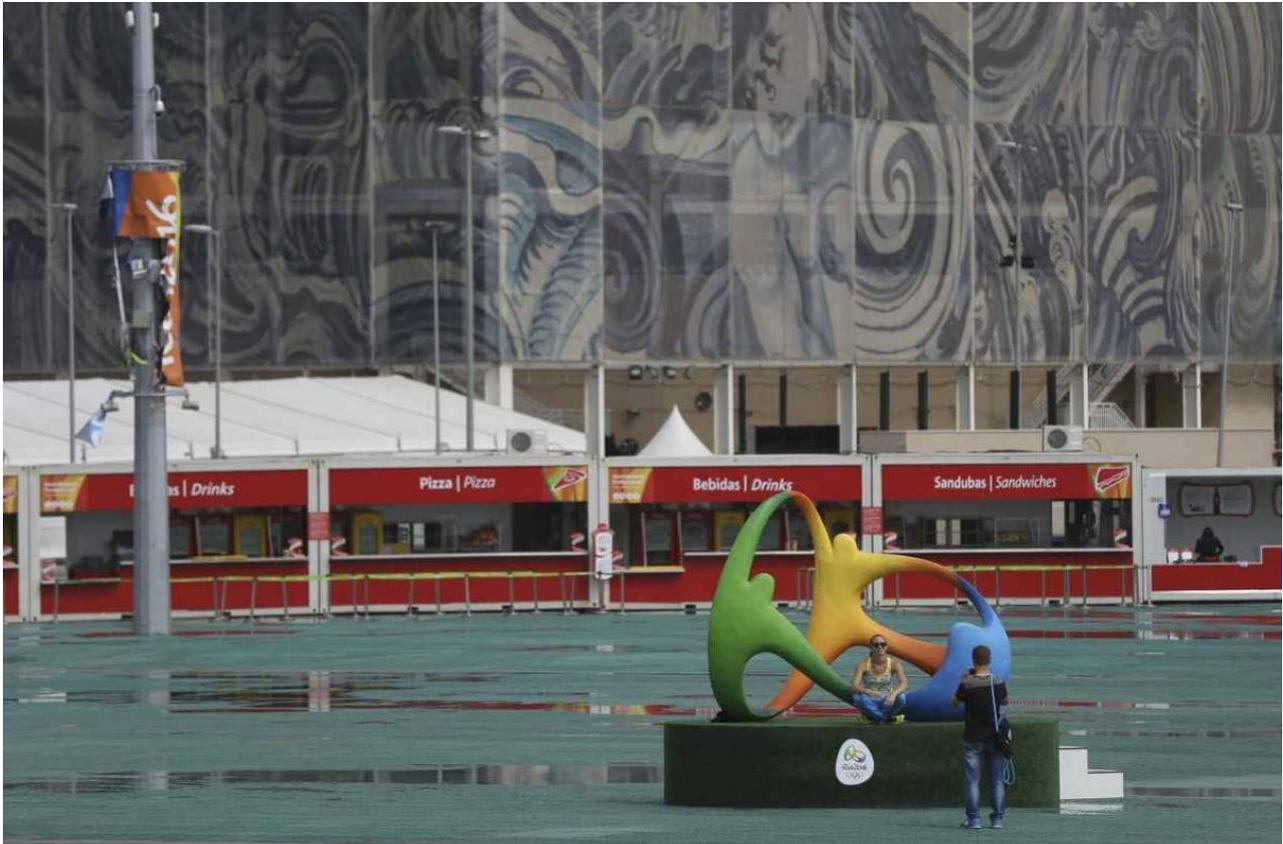


The Olympics reversed the decline of social indicators in Rio, says economist – 07/23/2021 – Market

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What were the impacts of the 2016 Olympics on the well-being of the population of Rio de Janeiro? It is from this question that the economist Marcelo Neri and 13 other experts wrote the book “Evaluating the Local Impacts of the Rio Olympics”.

The launch took place this week, amidst expectations for the new edition of the sporting event, held in Tokyo, Japan. Director of the FGV Social Study Center, Neri was responsible for organizing the book, in addition to being co-author of the work, divided into 16 chapters.

TO **leaf** the economist claims that, as of 2009, when Rio was chosen as the host of the Olympic Games, the event helped to reverse the “decay” of a series of quality of life indicators for the population of Rio de Janeiro.

In this sense, the competition somehow contributed, until 2016, to the improvement in areas such as employment and combating poverty, highlights the specialist in social policies. The city, on the other hand, failed to advance in points such as the depollution of Guanabara Bay, ponders Neri. The book compares a series of indicators from the period 2009 to 2016 with previous years.

“In general, the book shows that Rio was in decline, but between the announcement of the venue and the holding of the Olympic Games, there was an inversion of this trend, in a V shape”, indicates the economist.

In the last decade, the capital of Rio de Janeiro has also hosted events such as the 2014 World Cup. The problem is that, according to Neri, Rio started to decline again after the Olympics, suffering from a combination of factors. Economic crisis, oil sector shock and corruption cases are part of this list.

“After the games, the perception is that Rio threw itself to the other side of Olympus”, defines the economist, who was chief minister of the Secretariat of Strategic Affairs of the Presidency of the Republic and president of Ipea (Institute for Applied Economic Research).

Initially, the book organized by Neri is only available in English. The publisher is Routledge, of British origin. The Portuguese version should be out by the end of the year.

According to the expert, the preparations for the Olympics also played an important role in alleviating, in Rio, the difficulties of the crisis that hit the country between 2014 and 2016. At the time, the Brazilian economy ran out of steam and went through a period of recession.

“An important point is that, in most Olympic Games venues, economies have been growing a lot. The event was like an icing on the cake. In the case of Rio, it was different, because Brazil went into recession before”, he points out.

“The Olympics made a difference, it had a contribution to keep the wheels of the economy turning. The problem is that, after that, Rio began to decline again. Informality has increased in the labor market, there has been a series of inflections”, he completes.

In Neri’s view, the legacy of the Olympics will depend on the management to be carried out in the coming years.

“We learned that Rio is also written with a W, because there is a lot of fluctuation in indicators. The city had been falling, improved in most dimensions with the Olympics, but fell later. Whether there is a legacy or not depends on the management that is done. This is an issue that has to be conquered. It is not given. Maybe we’ll know the legacy 10 or 20 years from now”, he stresses.

According to the economist, the idea for the book arose to show whether or not the competition generated a change in social conditions in the city.

“The Olympics is a great metaphor for human overcoming. Tokyo’s will be very strong because of Covid-19. In Rio, there may be doubt about how the games served the city, but the city served the games well, in the sense of the stage and real life stories. Rio de Janeiro is much closer to the world compared to Tokyo or London, which form the world’s elite.”

EVALUATING THE LOCAL IMPACTS OF THE RIO OLYMPICS (ASSESSING THE LOCAL IMPACTS OF THE RIO OLYMPICS)

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- **Publishing company** Routledge
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