

**Brazil: big, diverse and divided**[Clique aqui para ver a notícia no site](#)

Brazil, where far-right President Jair Bolsonaro faces leftist Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva in a second round election Sunday, is South America's biggest economy, but is plagued by gaping inequalities and violence. Here are some key facts about the world's fifth-biggest country: - Half of South America - Brazil is South America's largest country, occupying nearly half the continent with a surface area of 8.5 million square kilometers (3.3 million square miles). It shares borders with all South American countries except Chile and Ecuador. It is the continent's only Portuguese-speaking nation and the world's biggest Catholic country. Brazil contains about 60 percent of the Amazon, the world's largest rainforest and a cradle of biodiversity. But the Amazon is in growing peril due to massive deforestation on Bolsonaro's watch, with thousands of fires consuming 3,750 square kilometers of forest in the first half of 2022 alone. - Monarchy, dictatorship, democracy - Brazil gained independence from Portugal in 1822 and became a monarchy. It abolished slavery in 1888, the last country in the Americas to do so. A republic was established in 1889, followed by a military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985, after which civilian rule was restored. The towering political figure of the country's modern history is Lula, who in 2003 became Brazil's first president elected from the left-wing Workers' Party (PT). He was reelected in 2006, and left office in 2010 with an unprecedented 87 percent approval rating. His social programs have helped lift millions of Brazilians out of poverty but his successor, Dilma Rousseff, was removed from power in 2016 after being impeached for alleged financial wrongdoing. In 2019, Jair Bolsonaro became Brazil's first far-right president despite accusations of racism, sexism and homophobia. He won with the support of the powerful "beef, bullets and Bibles" caucus -- the farm lobby, gun hardliners and evangelical Christians. There have been more than 150 bids for Bolsonaro's impeachment, and Brazil's 685,000 Covid-19 deaths have prompted several criminal investigations, including for "crimes against humanity." Lula was jailed for 18 months before having a corruption conviction, which kept him out of the 2018 race against Bolsonaro, overturned last year. - Coffee and cotton - Brazil is among the world's leading exporters of coffee, sugar, orange juice, beef, poultry, ethanol, soybeans, iron, cotton and maize. In 2021, its economy grew by 4.6 percent after contracting 3.9 percent in 2020 due to the pandemic. But it battles high inflation and unemployment. - Deep inequality - With 47,503 murders in 2021, Brazil is one of the world's most violent countries, accounting for a fifth of global homicides. This was nevertheless the lowest number recorded in a decade. In 2021, a rape occurred every 10 minutes, according to the Brazilian Forum on Public Safety. Glaring inequalities were worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic. The country has several thousand impoverished "favelas" or shantytowns. The number of people living under the international poverty threshold of \$5.50 a day leaped from 24 percent to 30 percent between 2014 and 2022, according to the Getulio Vargas Foundation. Hunger affects 33.1 million of the country's 214 million inhabitants, according to the Brazilian Research Network on Food Sovereignty and Security. - Five-time World Cup winners - Brazil is the only country to have won football's World Cup five times (1958, 1962, 1970, 1994, 2002), producing legends such as Pele and Neymar. It is also renowned for its abundance of musical styles, from samba to Brazilian funk and bossa nova, reflecting the country's ethnic and cultural diversity. The annual Rio carnival of dancers and outsized floats is the biggest in the world, drawing millions of people.

