

Hunger for growth – 05/26/2022 – Opinion

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Misery and hunger are associated concepts, although the measures of one and the other vary. Poverty is commonly defined as the lack of income necessary for a minimum consumption of nutrients, which involves complex calculations. More simply, you can detect hunger just by asking who experiences it or who fears it. Based on global questionnaires, the UN detected the increase in food insecurity in the world and in Brazil. According to the most recent report by the entity, the percentage of people who report having had difficulty buying food in the last 12 months rose on the planet from 23% in the period 2014-16 to 27.6% in 2018-20. In the same comparison, the Brazilian rate went from 18.3% to 23.5%. If only considered severe insecurity is taken into account, the most recent rates in the document are 10.5% worldwide and 3.5% here. The devastating impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was the most obvious and general explanation for the worsening in the year before. But there are factors that vary by region, including wars, political turmoil, climate change and natural disasters. In Brazil, the main cause is poor economic performance since the 2014-16 recession. A new work by FGV Social, based on data from the Gallup global survey (which is also a reference for the UN), points to a 36% food insecurity in the country at the end of 2021, slightly above the world average of 35%. Figures may vary depending on the methodology, but the trend is indisputable — and consistent with the fragility of the economy. In the last eight years, the national Gross Domestic Product has shrunk by 1.6%. In the same period, the average income per inhabitant, in values adjusted for inflation, fell from R\$ 44.1 thousand to R\$ 40.7 thousand per year. After the crisis caused by the collapse of public finances under Dilma Rousseff (PT), GDP shows low growth rates, which should be repeated this year after the contraction of the pandemic is over. Now, it is Jair Bolsonaro (PL) who is following the path of economic irresponsibility. To make matters worse, the rising inflation in the world as a result of Covid-19 and the war in Ukraine is hitting food hard and, therefore, the country's poorest population. In such a context, the effectiveness of social security programs, particularly Auxílio Brasil, in overcoming poverty and hunger, is drastically reduced. editoriais@grupofolha.com.br

