

Voices of the youth:

energy as a human right and an essential resource

The vision and proposals of Brazilian youth groups regarding SDG 7 targets and their implementation in the country



Since the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was created, in 2015, Instituto Pólis has been engaged in numerous activities aimed at disseminating and implementing sustainable development goals in the country.

With the establishment of the institution's energy justice department in 2022, the discussion of SDG 7 - ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all, - has taken center stage.

Among the institute's actions is a strong engagement with the youth by getting involved with international youth networks and collaboration with

young climate activists from all across the country

who work on the topic and have strong connections to their territories. However, they are not necessarily recognized as leaders in the field due to their low media visibility and a lack of opportunities to participate in discussions.

While the current context shows that, in recent years, **Brazil's energy policies have shifted away from SDG 7 goals**, we present a political **manifesto from young people**, with insights for the future and **proposals for a fair, inclusive, and affordable energy transition.**

Manifesto:

Youth groups advocating for energy as a human right and an essential resource



What do young Brazilians have to say about the Brazilian energy context and the Sustainable Development Targets for affordable and clean energy?

A powerful answer can be found in the manifesto crafted by young individuals from diverse backgrounds, gathered to discuss pathways to a better future.

Throughout the text below, for each SDG 7 target presented, in addition to the young people's proposals in the manifesto, we also provide charts analyzing how its implementation has advanced and data showing Brazil's current scenario in line with the VII Spotlight Report on the 2030 Agenda in Brazil by WG 2030 Agenda, to be launched.

Target classification



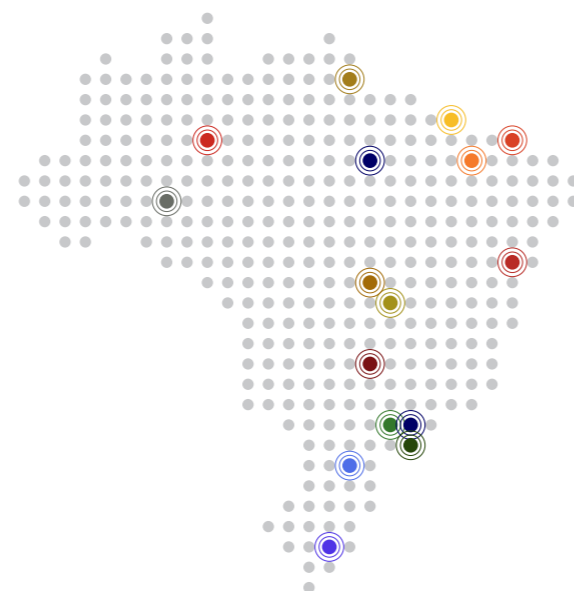
WHO WE ARE

We are **young people from across all five regions of Brazil** (see the cities on the map below), predominantly women, black, LGBTQIAP+, and neurodiverse individuals from the outskirts and rural, quilombola and indigenous communities, marginalized and **driven by social-environmental and climate issues**, with a focus on the energy matter in the face of climate change and energy poverty.

With this manifesto, we seek to address the structural inequalities that permeate the issues of bringing the energy agenda to all and the metrics of the **Sustainable Development Goal 7 - Affordable Clean Energy**.



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Porto Velho | RO
São Paulo | SP
Cajamar | SP
Montenegro | RS
Suzano | SP
Ituiutaba | MG
Acará | PA
Balsa Nova | PR
Feira de Santana | BA
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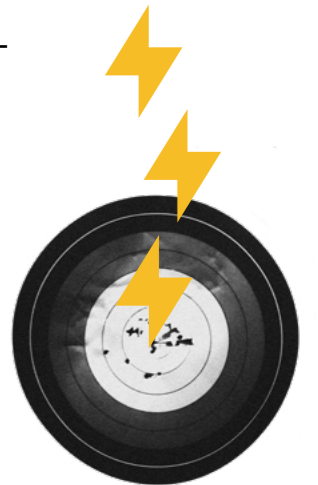
THE SUMMIT

This manifesto is the outcome of the **"Youth for Energy - Reviewing SDG 7 from the Perspective of the Brazilian Youth"** Summit, organized by Instituto Pólis and Engajamundo, in partnership with the Civil Society Working Group for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda (GT Agenda 2030, for its acronym in Portuguese). The summit was held **from August 4th to 6th in São Paulo**.

The event aimed to **decentralize the discussion on access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and renewable energy**, actively involving Brazilian youth groups in the review of SDG 7 targets and indicators. It took into account the interconnected dimensions of gender, race, and social class that intersect the energy debate.

OUR GOALS

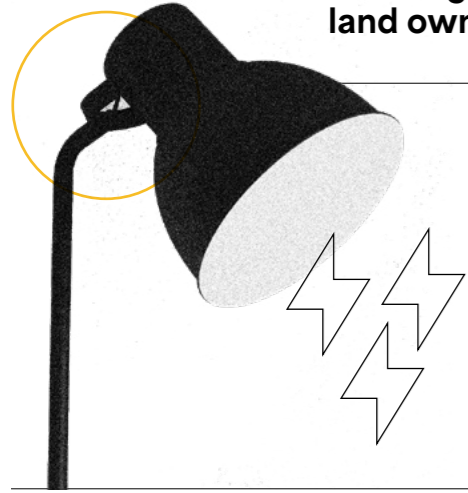
- ⚡ Advocate for energy sovereignty
- ⚡ Facilitate the exchange of experiences and networking for energy-related topics
- ⚡ Share knowledge and capacity-building among the youth regarding energy-related initiatives
- ⚡ Build knowledge and promote spaces for discussion, participation, and deliberation
- ⚡ Make decisions and influence public policies to strengthen governance
- ⚡ Engage in discussions that contribute to an inclusive, fair, and sustainable energy transition
- ⚡ Strengthen ongoing education and energy-related social technology initiatives in various regions.



OUR DEMANDS

Based on the debate held over these three days of immersion, we hereby demand through this manifesto:

The **recognition of access to energy as a fundamental and basic right**, understanding that access should encompass **land ownership security and the right to housing**.



The **revision of the 2030 Agenda's SDG 7** in a democratic, fair, and equitable manner, ensuring a cross-cutting approach for informing and empowering the population about their rights and ensuring equitable and reliable access to energy as a fundamental right. In this process, the civil society, especially those most affected, should be included in all stages of energy planning.

The implementation of **community-based and institutional monitoring, oversight, and accountability mechanisms** to ensure that **energy plants projects are planned and executed in a socially and environmentally fair and transparent manner**.

That the 2030 Agenda includes horizontal and comprehensive participation, not top-down, so that **people are involved in the decision-making** process.

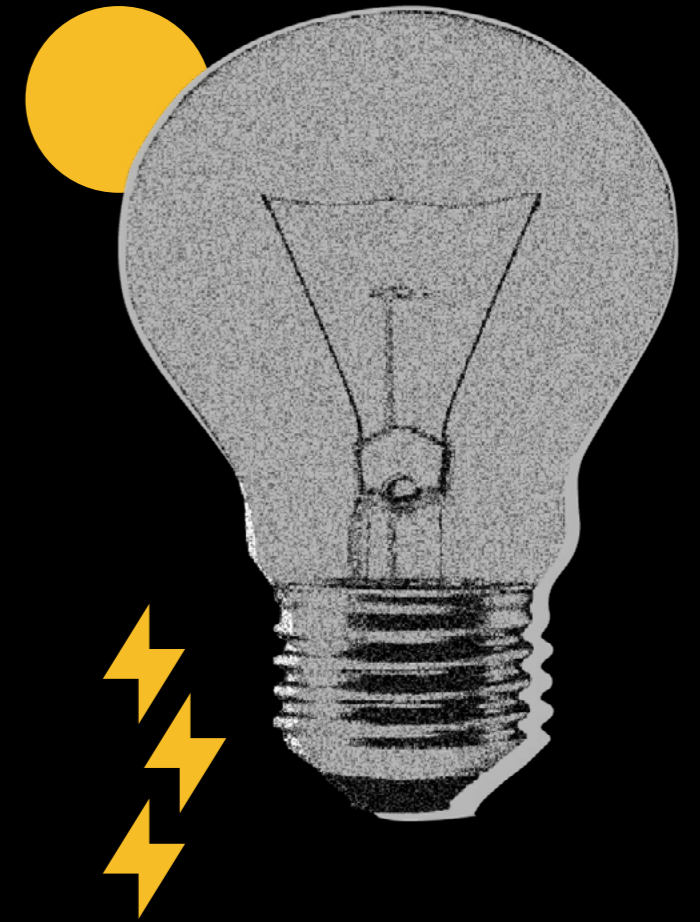


Priority to **formal and informal education to disseminate socio-environmental issues and to value diverse forms of knowledge**. We understand that many communities, groups, and territories have already incorporated the 2030 Agenda into their struggles against the inequalities. Thus, the goals of the Agenda are already being addressed in these territories, but not necessarily through the language of Sustainable Development Goals.

Greater tangibility of the agenda to **the specificities of communities in both urban and rural areas**. It is essential that there is dialogue, and we see the 2030 Agenda as a means rather than an end. We recognize the effects of environmental racism on both an international and regional level, and it is paramount that we work together to mitigate this violence.

That **the targets set by the Sustainable Development Goal 7 be reviewed** in accordance with the following points, incorporating the cross-cutting aspects of people and territories and including new indicators.

What we propose for the targets



What young people propose

By 2030, ensure universal, reliable, modern, and affordable access to energy services

Indicators

7.1.1

Percentage of the population with access to electricity

7.1.2

Percentage of the population with primary access to clean fuels and technologies

Promotion of **research and surveys on populations carried out by the communities and young people** in the territory where they reside, as well as on access to energy across the globe, to support assertive and targeted actions.



Development of **disaggregated and transparent data** from a regional and local perspective, as well as ethnic, racial, gender, and age-based data on energy access.

Equitable access that ensures **energy quality**.

Reduced electricity costs for populations in areas where fossil fuels are extracted, dams are built, and hydroelectric power plants are installed.

Nationalization, renationalization, and public management of the energy sector, free from private initiatives, with a vision and planning focused on an all-encompassing and fair energy transition.



A cap on the sale price of kWh to the system.

What Instituto Pólis proposes

Service price in relation to income:

measure the ability of the households to afford the electricity bill and purchase modern cooking sources (liquefied petroleum gas, natural gas, or electricity) without compromising the family budget, as well as the impacts of fuel price fluctuations on the income of energetically-vulnerable populations.

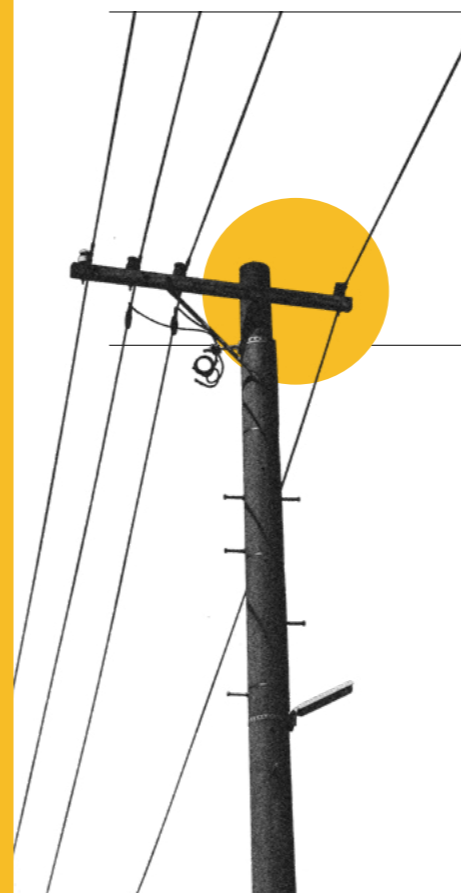


Suitable and reliable access:

understand the populations most vulnerable to difficulty accessing a minimum energy supply and interruptions in service in order to develop energy policies and social protection mechanisms.

Electrification in rural, urban, and remote areas:

prioritize universal access to energy, ensuring that all communities, regardless of their location, socioeconomic status, and culture, have adequate and reliable access to services. Monitoring differences in access in urban, rural, and remote areas is essential for directing investments and energy policies.



1 National Household Sample Survey (PNAD, for its acronym in Portuguese) 2019
2 IPEC's 2021 survey
3 National Agency for Electric Power (ANEEL, for its acronym in Portuguese)
4 2022 Domestic Energy Balance

Analysis of the target progress in Brazil



REGRESSION

The data blackout during the last governments has affected the monitoring of the goal, but research from civil society organizations and the Energy Research Company allows us to identify **a regression**.

99.8% of Brazil's households have access to electricity¹, but issues such as **service quality** and the **ability to afford energy bills** are not measured, even though they are crucial for assessing access

In 2021, Brazilian families **had to forgo purchasing basic groceries** to cover their electricity bills, and the poorest households (with a monthly income of up to one minimum wage) as well as those in D and E classes had

over half of their family income compromised by the costs of **cooking gas** and **electricity**².

In 2021, **non-payment among low-income consumers** exceeded **40%** in most utility companies³.

In 2022, the number of households covered by the "Luz para Todos" (Power for All) Program dropped by 13% compared to 2021.

There was a **3.2% uptick in the consumption of firewood** between 2020 and 2022.



What young people propose

By 2030, substantially increase the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix

Indicator
7.2.1
Share of renewable energy in the Domestic Energy Supply (OIE, for its acronym in Portuguese)



Establishment of **exclusive financing mechanisms** for renewable sources.

Global fund for renewable energy.

Timeline for reducing resources for fossil fuels and decommissioning.

Gradual phasing out of fossil fuels in energy generation processes.

Creation of **local/regional financial instruments** to facilitate the transition.



Charging climate-debtor countries in a restorative manner to finance energy transition in the vulnerable countries and financially compensate them for environmental liabilities.

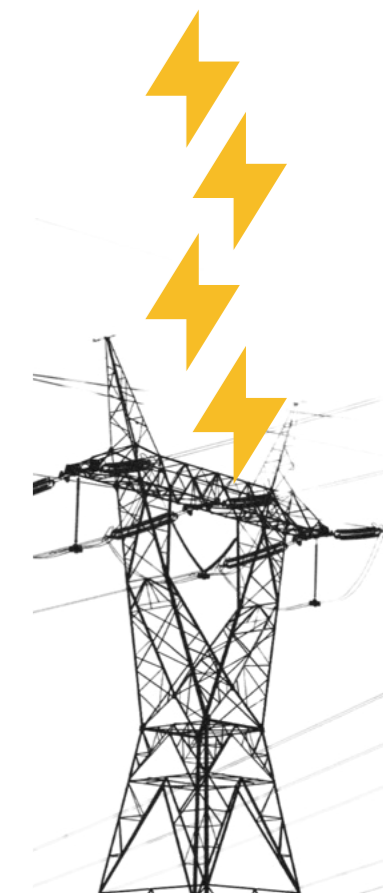
Strengthening and financing of a **local sovereign energy fund**.

What Instituto Pólis proposes

Involvement of vulnerable populations in the energy planning: in light of the need for disaggregated data, it is essential to address socio-economic inequalities to ensure that marginalized communities, including indigenous peoples, quilombola communities, and traditional populations, have significant participation in the planning and development of energy projects and policies. This includes establishing guidelines to ensure the participation and empowerment of these populations and communities in decisions affecting their access to energy, territories, and livelihoods. Measuring local communities' capacity to influence energy-related decisions, access resources and technologies for self-generation of energy, and implement community-wide energy initiatives.

Equitable access to renewable energies: overseeing the proportionality of access to renewable energies among different population groups, considering factors such as income, geographical location, gender, race, and other socioeconomic aspects, to ensure that everyone has equal opportunities to benefit from the energy transition.

Investment in renewable energy based on social-territorial criteria: monitoring investments, tax incentives, regulatory incentives, and public policies to promote projects that prioritize distributed generation, access to energy for essential services, and the supply of renewable energy in areas with vulnerable populations.



Analysis of the target progress in Brazil

 REGRESSION

Brazil's energy policies have relied on **thermal powerplants** as an **alternative source to hydroelectric powerplants** to diversify the energy mix.

There has been an increase in tax incentives **for fossil fuels**, including thermal power plants, which exceeded **R\$118 billion**⁵ in 2021.



This choice **threatens the expansion of renewable sources**, especially wind and photovoltaic solar, in the energy mix and puts the country at odds with the commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 2040.

In 2022, a law that extended subsidies for coal **for energy generation until 2040** was passed, bucking the trend of a clean energy transition.

Renewable energy sources accounted for **48.4% of Brazil's energy mix** in 2020 and

44,7% in 2021⁷.

⁵ INESC, 2022
⁶ LAW no. 14,299
⁷ 2022 Domestic Energy Balance (BEN, for its acronym in Portuguese)

What young people propose

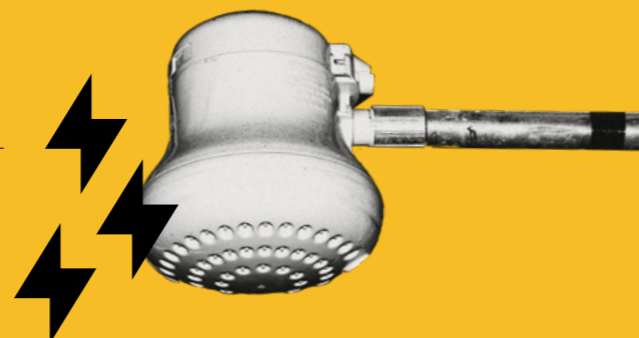
By 2030, **double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency**

Indicator 7.3.1
Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP

Financing and credit for the purchase of energy-efficient equipment.

A regulatory framework for energy efficiency that also ensures **data transparency**.

Mobilizing public maintenance costs for **energy transition**, as is the case with solar power.



What Instituto Pólis proposes



Investments in energy efficiency linked to geographic location: monitoring investments in energy efficiency projects linked to geographic location to advocate for financial resources and government programs to be used to improve access to efficient energy services for energetically-vulnerable groups and territories.

Analysis of the target progress in Brazil



Primary Energy Intensity in Brazil stayed constant: in 2020 and 2021, the variable for **the indicator was 0.100 Domestic Energy Supply (OIE) per GDP** (toe/10³ US\$ [ppp2010])⁸.



⁸ 2022 Domestic Energy Balance
⁹ Renewable Energy Statistics (2022)
¹⁰ Sustainable Recovery Tracker of the International Energy Agency (2022)

What young people propose

By 2030, **strengthen international cooperation to facilitate access to research and clean energy technologies, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies.**

Indicator 7.a.1
International financial flows for developing countries to support research and development of clean energies and the production of renewable energy, including hybrid systems.



Ensuring **investment in research and citizen-generated data** in clean energy technologies.

Strengthening **multi-level governance** with youth and traditional communities.

What Instituto Pólis proposes

Disaggregated data on access to investments in research and development of renewable energy: monitoring the volume of investments in research and development of renewable energy technologies should be done in a way that ensures the perception of disparities and vulnerabilities in terms of geographical location, race and ethnicity, income, gender, and age to assist in the formulation of public policies that can benefit the most vulnerable populations.



Analysis of the target progress in Brazil



In 2020, the amount earmarked for Brazil to support research and development of clean energies and renewable energy production⁹ was **\$970.97 million** – an increase of **92%** versus 2019, when it was **\$506.74 million**.

Despite this growth, economies in the Global South are still far from the necessary levels for sustainable recovery: In emerging and developing economies, approximately **\$52 billion** is planned for

sustainable recovery by the end of 2023, whereas in Global North countries, it amounts to **\$370 billion**. In other words, the volume of resources is equivalent to **14%** of the wealthier countries' total¹⁰

What young people propose

By 2030, **expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for the provision of modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, particularly in the least developed countries, small island developing states, and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective support programs.**

Indicator
7.b.1
Installed capacity of renewable energy generation in developing countries (in watts per capita).

Ensure **transparent, participatory, and safe processes** in the construction and approval of energy projects.



Create mechanisms for **accountability for the damages** caused by large energy projects.

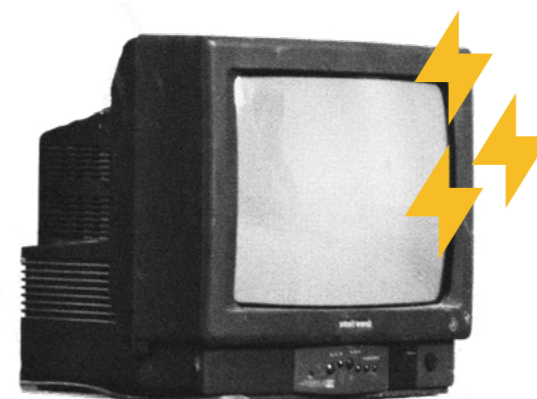
Make sure that indigenous peoples, **quilombolas, and traditional communities actively participate** in the studies, discussions, and decision-making spaces regarding all energy projects that may affect their territories.

Expand new **power generation models.**

Decentralize the energy mix in the transition and **overseeing mega-projects.**



What Instituto Pólís proposes



Disaggregated data on investments in infrastructure and technology: monitoring the proportion of investments aimed at updating energy infrastructure in areas with higher percentage of vulnerable groups.

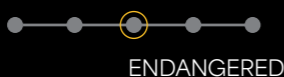
Access to modern energy services: measuring the proportion of the population with access to modern energy services, including reliable electricity, renewable sources, and advanced distribution systems, to gauge the extent to which improvements in infrastructure and technology are benefiting vulnerable populations.

Implementation of decentralized technologies: measuring the adoption of decentralized technologies, such as solar panels in housing complexes and houses, and microgeneration systems, especially in fragile geographical locations and government housing programs, to assess the promotion of autonomous and affordable energy solutions for the population. Also, measuring the proportion of the population among the benefited vulnerable groups that has received technical training in renewable energy to empower communities with the skills to adopt and implement these technologies.

¹¹ BEN, 2021
¹² IBGE (2020)



Analysis of the target progress in Brazil



Considering the most recent data from 2019 and 2020, there is a **slow expansion in the installed capacity for renewable energy** and a **reduction in energy efficiency investments** in the country.

The installed capacity for renewable electricity generation **grew by**

4.1%¹¹, while the **population increased by 0.7%**¹². Therefore, in 2021, the country recorded a rate of **747 watts per capita**, representing a **modest 6%** increase compared to 2020.

Regarding public and publicly-oriented investments, **R\$ 1,019.9 million** were allocated in 2019, and **R\$ 980.2 million** in 2020, directed towards the National Program for Electric Energy Conservation (Procel, for its acronym in Portuguese), the Energy Efficiency Program (PEE, for its acronym in Portuguese) of electricity distributors, and projects for research, development, and demonstration

(R&D) in energy efficiency (Inova-E Brasil).

In 2021, **R\$ 75.98 million** were invested in Procel, a **63%** increase compared to 2020, when the financial resources channeled to the program amounted to **R\$ 46.6 million**.



Household Appliances vs. Energy Efficiency

The lack of data regarding the sale of household appliances by energy efficiency class makes the formulation of public policies in this area harder.



Data from the 2019 Household Electrical Equipment Ownership and Usage Habits Survey (PPH, for its acronym in Portuguese) show **it is hard for the lower-income class to have access to energy-efficient household appliances.**



Between 2000 and 2014, the awarding of the Procel label to refrigerators resulted in **a 26% reduction in the energy consumption** of these appliances. Therefore, we can infer that the expenditure of the D/E classes could be reduced by replacing their refrigerators with more efficient models.

26%
reduction in
the energy
consumption

NEW METRICS

There is also a need for new metrics, points that have not been explicitly addressed in the SDG 7 so far, but are of utmost importance to achieve the objectives fairly and equitably. They include:

By 2030,

⚡ ensure **energy as an inviolable fundamental human right.**

⚡ develop, implement, and invest in **fair energy transition plans.**

⚡ **bring the energy debate to all and provide for the participation of people in decision-making spaces**, as well as creating mechanisms and spaces for civic, responsible, critical, and participatory education about energy.

⚡ **strengthen communities, especially non-urban ones**, so that the use of traditional biomass and other sources that threaten human integrity is not vital.

⚡ **promote the dialogue with active and trained youth groups**, and create capacity-building mechanisms for vulnerable groups to engage in the energy agenda in an intersectional manner.

This material is a summary, with a focus on youth, of the study "**Considerations on SDG 7 and its implementation in Brazil**", developed by Instituto Pólís.

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ABOUT INSTITUTO PÓLIS (PÓLIS INSTITUTE)

A Civil society organization (CSO) with a national scope, established as a non-profit, non-partisan, pluralistic civil association. Since its foundation in 1987, Pólís has focused its activities on the city. The defense of the Right to the City is present in its research, advisory work, or assessment of policies, working along the civil society to promote local development in the construction of fairer, more sustainable, and democratic cities. With over 35 years of operation, it has multidisciplinary teams of researchers who actively engage in public debates on urban social issues.

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