

*Energy companies and utilities
designing and implementing schemes
to alleviate energy poverty –
lessons learnt from SocialWatt.*

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SocialWatt

Energy companies designing and implementing
schemes to alleviate energy poverty

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SocialWatt in a Nutshell

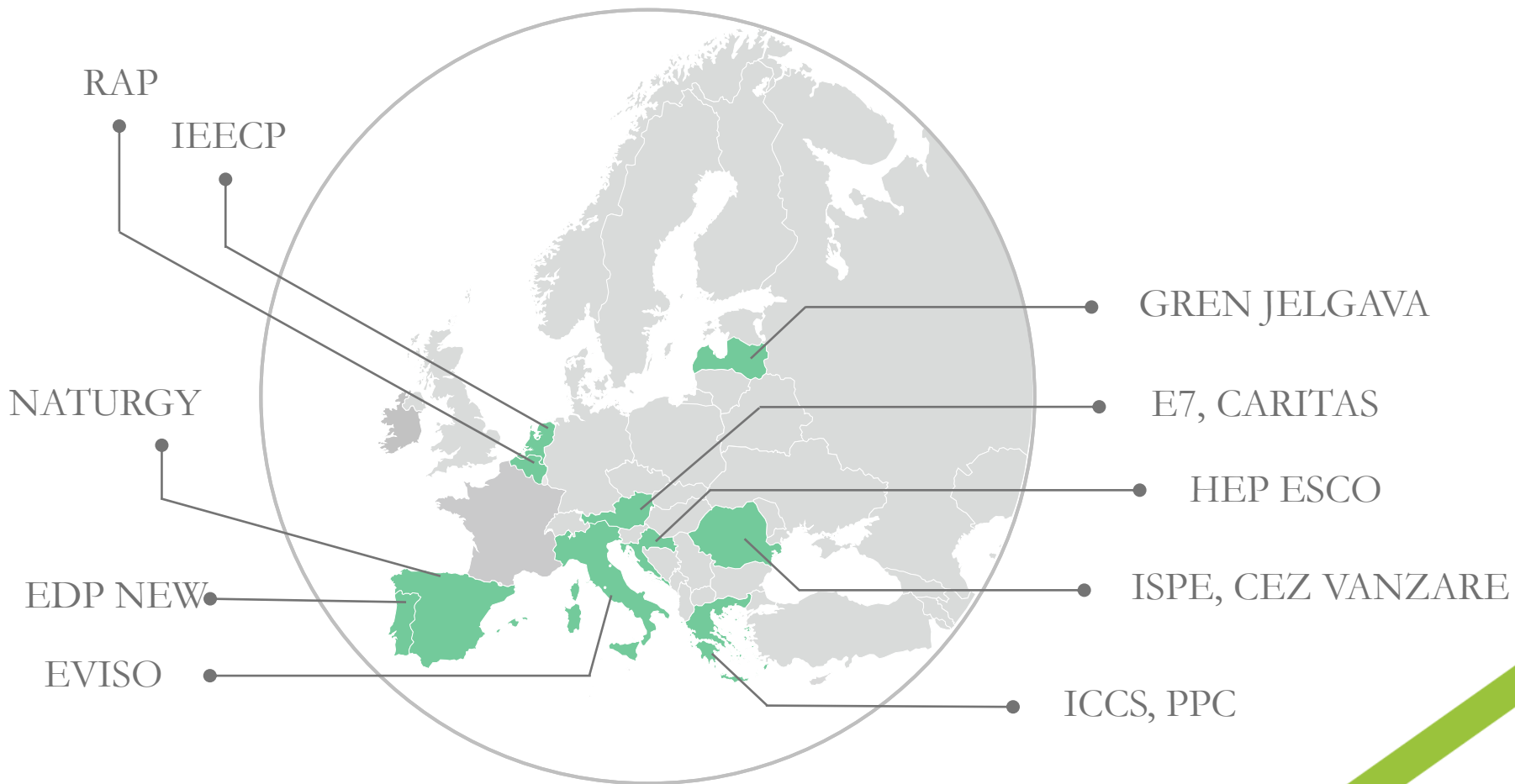
SocialWatt aims to:

- ▶ Enable **utilities, energy suppliers and energy service companies** across Europe to develop, adopt, test and spread **innovative schemes to alleviate energy poverty**
- ▶ Develop **appropriate tools** for helping them identify energy poor households and work towards alleviating energy poverty
- ▶ **Build their capacity** and **promote collaboration** with social services and other stakeholders



Project Summary (2/2)

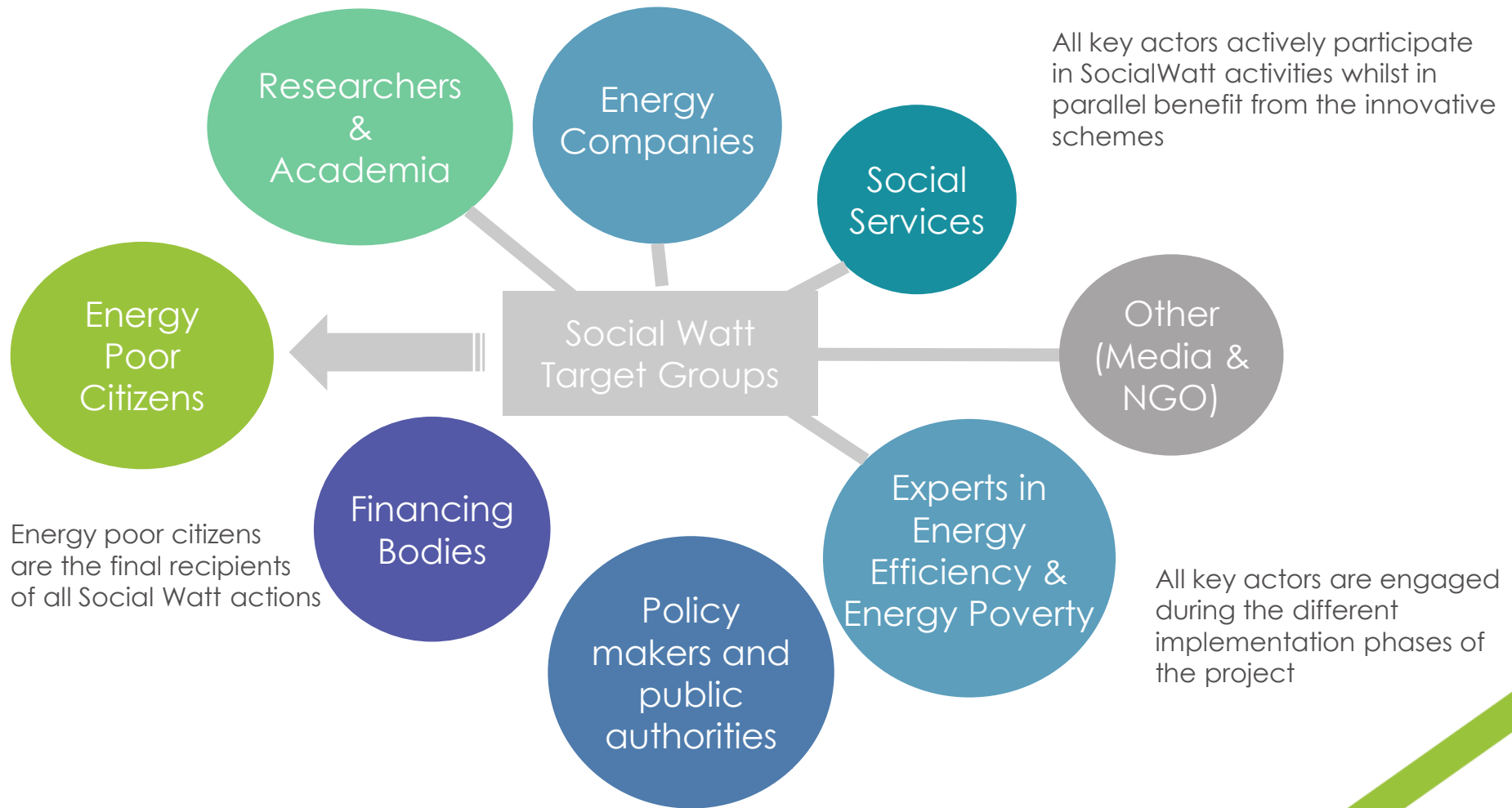
Who we are?



The SocialWatt project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 845905



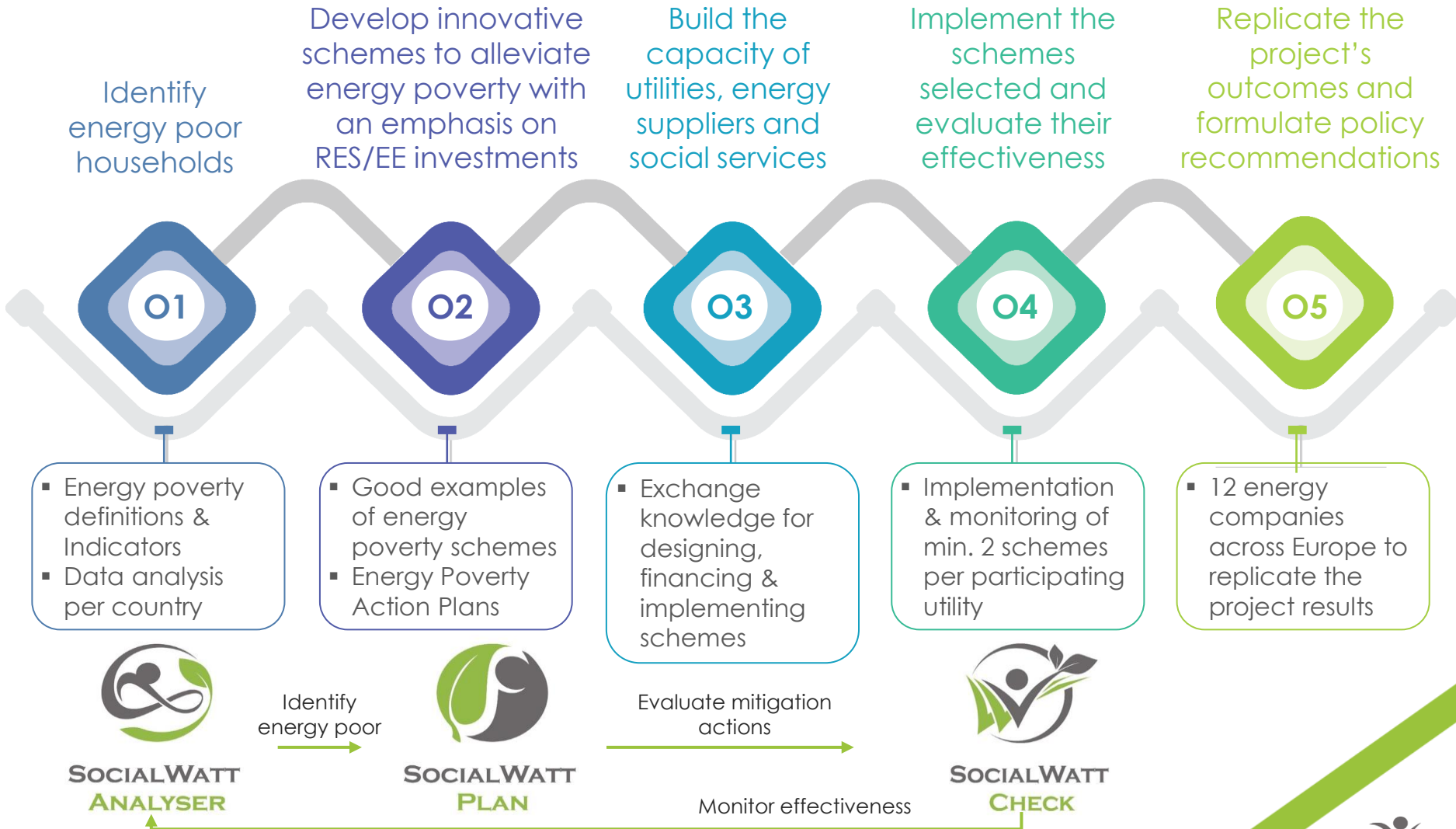
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Examples of SocialWatt Schemes

Smart control systems in social housing – Fortum in Latvia

- ▶ Installation of a software to automatically optimize energy use based on data from smart sensors within the building and weather forecasts
- ▶ Partnership with a Municipality and collaboration with a retailer

Smarter home scheme – CEZ Vanzare in Romania

- ▶ Thermostats offered to customers who pay for them in fixed rates without interest through bills (on-bill financing)
- ▶ Collaboration with thermostat providers

Subsidy programme for heating system renovation – PPC in Greece

- ▶ Heat pumps uptake facilitated through a subsidy
- ▶ Collaboration with major heat pump technology providers

Programme of customer information – HEP in Croatia

- ▶ Leaflets and info points to inform vulnerable customers about efficient energy consumption and about habits that result in energy savings



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Lessons learnt

• Targeting & engaging energy poor

- ▶ **The absence of a national energy poverty definition does not have to be a barrier** – e.g. “vulnerable customers” or customers in receipt of benefits can be used as a proxy
- ▶ **There is no one perfect indicator of energy poverty** that is suitable for all countries and contexts
- ▶ **Utilities and energy companies can have a unique role in addressing energy poverty** as they have pre-existing relationships with vulnerable customers and access to granular data on actual energy consumption
- ▶ **There is a need to raise general awareness** of the importance of energy efficiency measures and the issue of energy poverty. Two-way communication can more effectively raise awareness and build knowledge on how to best achieve energy savings



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Lessons learnt

• Designing and delivering schemes

- ▶ **It is important to establish strong partnerships and collaborations** with key stakeholders (e.g. social services) to be able to effectively engage with energy poor households (e.g. overcome trust issues) and design appealing schemes
- ▶ **Schemes should be offered at no cost to energy poor customers**, as these tend to be more successful and have a higher uptake, given that cost continues to be a barrier for the implementation of sustainable energy interventions.
 - ▶ There is a need to build experience in using alternative financial mechanisms.
 - ▶ Energy poverty schemes should facilitate combined funding/financing
 - ▶ Different types of support offered for different levels of energy poverty/vulnerability



Policy recommendations

- ▶ National policy and legislation should require and support the **development of more comprehensive renovation packages**
- ▶ **More stability is needed in national legislation** to facilitate the design of more efficient, and more sustainable schemes
- ▶ **Energy efficiency schemes need to be inclusive** - not leaving energy poor households behind.
- ▶ **Utilities/energy companies can be well placed to engage with and advise government** on energy efficiency and energy poverty alleviation
- ▶ If utilities/energy companies are to have a key role in energy poverty alleviation, a **firm obligation** should be introduced.



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Policy recommendations

- ▶ **National and EU policy briefs** (e.g. the most recent EU one outlines the proposed provisions in the Energy Efficiency Directive to alleviate energy poverty and sets out recommendations for national implementation – to be updated shortly and re-published <https://socialwatt.eu/en/node/107>)
- ▶ **Policy fact sheets** for ten EU countries (including the status quo on energy poverty, the crisis measures and energy efficiency measures for vulnerable groups) <https://socialwatt.eu/en/node/108>
- ▶ Three more policy brief with **cross-cutting recommendations** to be published soon



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