



SOCIALWATT

CONNECTING

OBLIGATED PARTIES

TO ADOPT INNOVATIVE SCHEMES TOWARDS
ENERGY POVERTY ALLEVIATION



D4.8



Webinar proceedings

March 2023



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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PREFACE

SocialWatt aims to develop and provide **utilities** and **energy suppliers** with appropriate tools for effectively engaging with their customers and working together towards **alleviating energy poverty**.

SocialWatt also enables obligated parties under **Article 7** of the Energy Efficiency Directive across Europe to develop, adopt, test and spread **innovative energy poverty schemes**.

SocialWatt contributes to the following three main pillars:

- 1 Supporting utilities and energy suppliers contribute to the fight against energy poverty through the use of **decision support tools**.
- 2 Bridging the gap between energy companies and social services by promoting collaboration and implementing **knowledge transfer** and **capacity building activities** that focus on the development of schemes that invest in Renewable Energy Sources / Energy Efficiency to alleviate energy poverty.
- 3 **Implementing** and **replicating** innovative schemes to alleviate energy poverty.



CONSORTIUM



ICCS	INSTITUTE OF COMMUNICATION & COMPUTER SYSTEMS	EL
IEECP	INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN ENERGY AND CLIMATE POLICY STICHTING	NL
RAP	REGULATORY ASSISTANCE PROJECT	BE
E7	E7 ENERGIE MARKT ANALYSE	AT
ISPE DC	ISPE PROIECTARE SI CONSULTANTA SA	RO
EDP NEW	CNET CENTRE FOR NEW ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES SA	PT
NATURGY	NATURGY ENERGY GROUP SA	ES
PPC	PUBLIC POWER CORPORATION S.A.	EL
CEZ VANZARE	CEZ VANZARE SA	RO
GREN	SIA GREN JELGAVA	LV
HEP ESCO	HEP - ESCO DOO ZA VODENJE I FINANCIRANJE PROJEKATA ENERGETSKE UCINKOVITOSTI	HR
EVISO	EVISO SPA	IT
CARITAS AUSTRIA	OSTERREICHISCHE CARITASZENTRALE	AT



CONNECTING OBLIGATED PARTIES TO ADOPT INNOVATIVE SCHEMES TOWARDS ENERGY POVERTY ALLEVIATION

GA#: 845905 **Start Date:** September 2019
Topic: LC-SC3-EC-2-2018 **Duration:** 43 Months
Type of Action: CSA **Coordinator:** ICCS

Deliverable Number	D4.8
Deliverable Title	Webinar proceedings
Work Package Number	WP4
Task Number	Task 4.4
Date of Delivery	March 2023
Dissemination Level	Public
Work Package Leader	IEECP
Lead Beneficiary	IEECP
Contributors	Jean-Sebastien Broc, Axelle Gallerand, George Stravodimos (IEECP)

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1 INTRODUCTION

SocialWatt, a project funded by the EU's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, aims to enable energy suppliers and utilities to develop, adopt, test and spread innovative energy poverty schemes across Europe. More specifically, the project focuses on building the capacity of energy suppliers and utilities and developing tools to effectively support them in identifying energy poor customers, as well as in designing and monitoring schemes to alleviate energy poverty.

One of the objectives of the project is to prepare the ground for the replication of innovative schemes to alleviate energy poverty across Europe. As such, SocialWatt organised a series of webinars to discuss how energy efficiency schemes can tackle energy poverty, especially in the context of the Article 7 of the EU Energy Efficiency Directive (EED). This is particularly important given the current revision of the EED, and the recent proposal for introducing a ringfence for energy poor households under the new Article 8 of the EED proposal. Therefore,

The webinars were organised in a way so that these could trigger discussions between SocialWatt partners and participants, and enable them to share lessons and help in the formulation of policy recommendations.

This first webinar provided an update about the current proposal for the EED recast, and discussed what can be learnt from the available experience in this field.

This second webinar provided an overview of the SocialWatt Analyzer tool developed for the project, presented the French and Italian observatory on energy poverty along with the Belgian barometer on energy and water poverty.

This third webinar provided an overview of the lessons learnt from the SocialWatt plans and what can be done for Member States to scale up their energy efficiency measures tackling energy in the light of previous experiences of energy utilities, public authorities and NGOs.

Table 1: Outline of the three webinars

No.	Title	Date	Participants
1 st	Energy efficiency to tackle energy poverty: what will the EED recast change?	17 November 2022 (Online)	45
2 nd	National energy poverty observatories: the more you know, the better you act!	14 December 2022 (Online)	45
3 rd	Tackling energy poverty with energy efficiency: Who should be involved? How to scale up?	11 January 2023 (Online)	36

This report includes the briefings developed for each webinar, summarising the key findings of the webinars, lessons learnt and possible recommendations from stakeholders, presenters and participants. The report also outlines communication activities implemented to promote and disseminate the webinars.

2 1ST WEBINAR: “ENERGY EFFICIENCY TO TACKLE ENERGY POVERTY: WHAT WILL THE EED RECAST CHANGE?”

2.1 SHORT DESCRIPTION

The first online webinar took place on the 17th of November 2022. The webinar provided an update on the current proposal of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) recast.

Three experts in energy efficiency and energy poverty formed the panel and engaged in discussions on the proposed EED recast and how it affects policies to tackle energy poverty. Discussions emphasised that it is hard for Member States to identify and quantify energy poverty. From experience, ringfences have proven to be a useful tool, but this can be only part of the solution. It was also noted that the full costs of energy efficiency interventions should be covered for energy poor households and that there should be a stronger focus on deep renovations to tackle energy poverty.

2.2 WEBINAR AGENDA

- › The new provisions in the EED recast about energy poverty, as proposed by the European Commission – Veronika Jirickova, European Commission (DG ENER)
- › Energy poverty – What's next in the energy efficiency directive: hot topics in the Council's and Parliament's positions – Marion Santini (RAP)
- › Lessons learnt from the SocialWatt energy efficiency schemes – Andriana Stavrakaki (ICCS, coordinator of SocialWatt)
- › Panel discussion with
 - Ioanna Giannouli (PPC, Greek electricity supplier),
 - Javier Tobias (ECODES, Spanish NGO) and
 - Sarah Coupechoux (Fondation Abbé Pierre, French NGO)
- › Possible effects of other upcoming energy transition policies on low-income households - Marco Peretto (IEECP)

2.3 WEBINAR BRIEFING

The webinar briefing includes an overview of speakers' presentations, along with relevant links and references. The briefing also outlines some of the key points raised during the panel discussion. The briefing can be downloaded on the SocialWatt [website](#).





Webinar Series

17th November 2022 / Webinar briefing



SOCIALWATT

Webinar 1: Energy efficiency schemes to tackle energy poverty

Guest Speakers and Panelists



Introduction to the new provisions in the EED recast about energy poverty // Veronika Jirickova, DG ENER

New Article 8 (3) and Article 22 address how energy efficiency is the most effective solution to alleviate energy poverty and overcome negative impacts of pricing measures.

When no national indicator to define energy poverty, Member States should refer to the following:

Inability to keep home adequately warm

Arrears on utility bills

Share of disposable income spent on energy

More resources
current
Article 7 (future
Article 8)

Fit-for-55
Package

Article 22: "Vulnerable consumers and energy poverty.":

Identify those who are in need

Obligation to implement energy efficiency measures as priority amongst vulnerable groups.

Broader to Art 8 (3) from indicators to concrete fields for action



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Energy poverty – What’s next in the energy efficiency directive : hot topics in the Council’s and Parliament’s positions // Marion Santini, RAP

So far, Member States are required to take into account energy poverty alleviation. Only 2 Energy Efficiency Obligation Schemes (EEOS) include ringfences for energy savings for energy poor households (France and Ireland).

Current challenges

- Utilities find it hard to prioritise energy poor households;
- Few alternative measures are designed to tackle energy poverty.

Therefore, the Commission has proposed a new mandatory sub-target ringfence where Member States can decide which measures fit for target populations, and can decide their own target groups. This is more flexible and adaptive to implement for Member States.

Amendments being processed by Commission and Parliament

- Ringfence calculations: parliament proposes new method with more savings from 6% to 10% at EU level of the energy savings obligation at EU level;
- Addition of new target groups: low-income households (by Parliament) and financially weak households (by Council) ;
- Provision of energy savings calculations specific to measures tackling energy poverty by Council (topic also tackled by the [Streamsave project](#)).

Lessons learnt from the SocialWatt energy efficiency schemes // Andriana Stavrakaki, ICCS

SocialWatt, a project funded by Horizon 2020, aims to enable energy companies, utilities and obligated parties under Article 7 of the Energy Efficiency Directive across Europe to develop, implement and replicate innovative schemes to alleviate energy poverty. More information on the website: <https://socialwatt.eu/>

Challenges

- Often no national definition of energy poverty
- Developing a convincing business case
- Securing financing
- Engaging energy poor households
- Complexities in setting up and designing schemes

More about the [SocialWatt Schemes here!](#)

Lessons learnt

- Utilities find it hard to prioritise energy savings for energy poor consumers, as these actions are more costly to deliver (e.g higher grants needed)
- Policy stability is needed
- Alleviating energy poverty through EEOS is not sufficient
- A shift towards deep renovation is needed
- Combined funding and financing should be facilitated (e.g EEOS and public grants).

Panel discussion with Ioanna Giannouli (PPC, main Greek electricity supplier), **Javier Tobias** (ECODES, Spanish NGO) and **Sarah Coupechoux** (Fondation Abbé Pierre, French NGO)

Ioanna Giannouli

- Obligation schemes are important but pushing energy savings and behavioural changes cannot generate long term changes and building renovations are difficult for utilities to trigger.
- Ringfences have proved to be very useful but should they be part of EEOS? It can be easier to have alternative measures to address this as it is a struggle for energy suppliers to have it as an obligation.
- Stopping fossil fuel technologies with the EED recast was very important for energy to avoid locking energy poor households in fossil fuel dependency with increasing prices.
- We need support from the State and support on financing so that investments for energy poor households are 100% covered with combined financing.
- There is a need for more technical measures to address energy poor households, but 40% of energy poor households live in rented houses which is a big issue, we need a framework to split incentives. Tenants tend to be very reluctant to do things by fearing a higher rent if there are renovations, so the change is slow.

Sarah Coupechoux

- Challenge of identifying energy poverty in France: ONPE has a number of 6 million energy poor households whereas the Fondation from Abbé Pierre identified more than 12 million. We can see that depending on indicators, policies can also be different.
- In terms of EEOS, France increased the package for heating systems and decreased the renovation package (insulation and windows). It is however important to promote global deep renovation works and not switch priorities in energy efficiency and savings, and change the way we calculate savings.
- Example of successful programme since 2012 called Toits D'abord. The idea was to create social housing for very vulnerable people, and social housing that has good energy performance in partnership with EDF. It has been funded through white certificates, 5300 dwellings renovated in 10 years and 600 per year now.

Panel discussion with *Ioanna Giannouli* (PPC, main Greek electricity supplier), *Javier Tobias* (ECODES, Spanish NGO) and *Sarah Coupechoux* (Fondation Abbé Pierre, French NGO)

Javier Tobias

- Ringfencing funding is necessary as vulnerable consumers struggle to have access to aid. Grants for energy efficiency are indeed mostly used by households with higher income when there is no ringfence.
- We need to harmonise parameters and have national definitions for a common framework that should respond to territorial challenges, EPCs are different per regions for example.
- Since 2015, ECODES has been supporting low-income households with energy advice and home renovation, it is important to highlight that 2/3 of Spanish households live in multi apartment buildings so the means of necessity is much higher. We also need obligations for landlords and social safeguards for tenants so that housing remains affordable after renovations.

Possible effects on low-income households of other upcoming energy transition policies // Marco Peretto IEECP

Following from a previous study of IEECP for the European Climate Foundation, the degree to which three different policies proposed in the Fit for 55 package to alleviate energy poverty in the EU would be beneficial for low-income groups was analysed again using static simulations. This time seven countries from the EU were analysed, namely: Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia. Additionally, the results obtained in the previous study were verified and confirmed.

The study provided an analysis of 3 policies:

- Introduction of carbon price / ETS on heating fuels
- Introduction of a ban on the installation of oil, coal and gas boilers in new and/or existing buildings
- Introduction of a minimum energy performance standard

IEECP found that upgrading the energy performance standards of buildings up to energy label D by 2030 and then to label C by 2035 would reduce low-income households' energy bills and consumption by 2050 across the seven countries analysed compared to when no additional policies are implemented. The reduction in energy consumption and expenses would be further amplified by both combining the phase out of fossil fuel boilers with the refurbishment of buildings or by combining all three proposed policies. If no additional policies are implemented to decarbonise Europe's buildings, the EU would not only fail to reach its climate targets but low-income households in the seven countries would present higher energy consumption and expenditures in 2050 than in the current situation and would be left out of the energy transition.



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2.4 COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

The webinar was promoted through the SocialWatt social media accounts, with [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#) posts inviting people to register a couple of weeks before the event. Two follow up reminders were sent, a week and a day before the webinar.



Figure 1: Promotion banner for the first webinar

The recording of the webinar was uploaded on [IEECP's YouTube Channel](#), whilst all presentations, the recording and the webinar briefing were made available on the [SocialWatt Website](#). The above-mentioned material was also shared and promoted through [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).



Figure 2: Promotion banner for webinar materials

3 2ND WEBINAR: “NATIONAL ENERGY POVERTY OBSERVATORIES: THE MORE YOU KNOW, THE BETTER YOU ACT!”

3.1 SHORT DESCRIPTION

The second online webinar took place on the 14th of December 2022. The webinar “National energy poverty observatories: the more you know, the better you act!” provided an overview of the SocialWatt Analyzer tool developed within the framework of the project, it and of the French and Italian observatories on energy poverty along with the Belgian barometer on energy and water poverty.

Presentations and discussions highlighted that more data and research on energy poverty is needed so that observatories can provide useful figures that are in line with the current context. It was also noted that the creation of such observatories allows for the better identification of energy poverty and design of policies to tackle it.

3.2 WEBINAR AGENDA

- › The SocialWatt Analyser, by Andriana Stavrakaki (ICCS, coordinator of SocialWatt)
- › The French observatory on energy poverty (ONPE), by Maud Trutta (ADEME / ONPE)
- › The Belgian barometer on energy and water poverty, by Dr. Sandrine Meyer (Université libre de Bruxelles)
- › The independent Italian observatory on energy poverty (OIPE), by Pr. Paola Valbonesi (Università di Padova / chair of the OIPE)

3.3 WEBINAR BRIEFING

The webinar briefing includes an overview of speakers' presentations, along with relevant links and references. The briefing also outlines some of the key points raised during the panel discussion. The briefing can be downloaded on the SocialWatt [website](#).





Webinar Series
14th December 2022 / Webinar briefing



Webinar 2: National energy poverty observatories: the more you know, the better you act!"

Guest Speakers and Panelists

Andriana Stavrakaki
(IOCS, coordinator of SocialWatt)

Maud Trutta
(ADEME/ONPE, France)

Sandrine Meyer
(Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium)

Pr. Paola Valbonesi
(Università di Padova / chair of the OIPE, Italy)

The proposed recast of the Energy Efficiency Directive includes a new Article 22 on "Empowering and protecting vulnerable customers and alleviating energy poverty", with a fourth paragraph requiring the Member States to "establish a network of experts" with the missions, among others, "to establish national definitions, indicators and criteria of energy poverty, energy poor and concepts of vulnerable customers, including final users", and "to develop or improve relevant indicators and data sets, pertinent to the issue of energy poverty, that should be used and reported upon".

This webinar shared the experience of the SocialWatt analyzer using utility data to identify energy poor households, and from three national observatories or barometer on energy poverty. They can be good examples to answer the new provision of the EED recast.



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The SocialWatt Analyser // Andriana Stavrakaki (ICCS, coordinator of SocialWatt)

SocialWatt, a project funded by Horizon 2020, aims to enable energy companies, utilities and obligated parties under Article 7 of the Energy Efficiency Directive across Europe to develop, implement and replicate innovative schemes to alleviate energy poverty. More information on the website: <https://socialwatt.eu/>

What is the SocialWatt Analyser Tool?

The aim of SocialWatt Analyser is to help utilities/energy companies identify energy poor households among their clients. It is designed to facilitate users to more effectively target and engage with consumers in actual need.



3 major implementation pillars:

To provide in-depth information about energy poor households at national, regional and local level depending on input data.

To enable utilities/energy companies to identify energy poor households, using customer data collected and held internally, especially energy consumption and costs at household level, as well as diversified layers of information in terms of open data (climate, socioeconomic, etc.) and other customer data as well as comfort levels.

To allow customisations, in terms of different input methods, data types and structures, and facilitate utilities/energy companies (even those with limited expertise and technical skills on tools) to identify energy poor households. Functions for configuring the tool and appropriately adjusting its settings are built in. For example the tool enables users to select different energy poverty indicators and to import income data at national, regional or local level, depending on available data.

Useful links:

SocialWatt Plan:
evaluating the performance of different schemes and actions to tackle energy poverty

SocialWatt Check:
assist parties to effectively monitor and evaluate schemes being implemented

SocialWatt Analyser

SocialWatt Analyser -
A smart tool to identify energy poor households



Introducing the French National Energy Poverty Observatory (ONPE) // Maud Trutta (ONPE / ADEME)

The ONPE (Observatoire National de la Précarité Énergétique) was established in 2011 after the adoption of the Grenelle 2 Law that defined energy poverty in France. The national observatory has become a reference on energy poverty in France. The main goal of ONPE is to assess and monitor policies alleviating energy poverty and collect trustworthy data on energy poverty in France.

Main missions:

Observe the phenomenon of energy poverty and analyse the related policies.

Serve as a platform for exchanges between stakeholders and contribute to public debate on energy poverty.

Disseminate and promote works on energy poverty.

Some Tools:

[Energy Poverty Dashboard \(FR\)](#)

- Data from annual statistics and partners
- Composed of indicators to quantify and qualify energy poverty
- Monitors the factors and impacts of households
- Monitors public policies and results

[Find publications here \(FR\)](#)

[GEODIP: energy poverty location map \(FR\)](#)

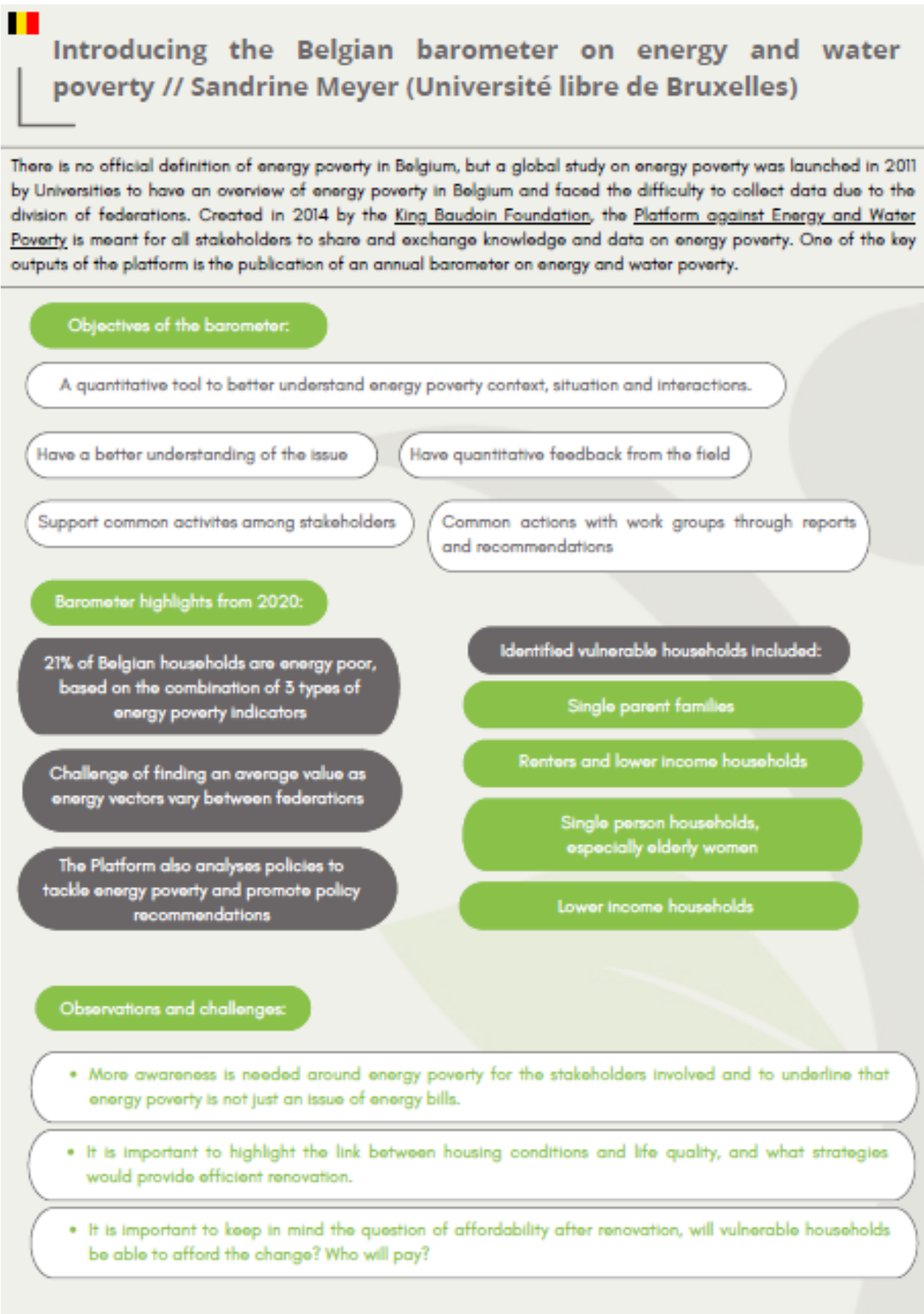
- Tool to geolocate the areas most affected by energy poverty
- Use of ONPE indicators to establish a diagnosis of energy poverty across France
- Establishment of synthesis report per area of research
- Several thousands of users among local authorities

Observations and challenges:

• A national plan to tackle energy poverty is not adopted yet (and remains under development), we need a plan specifically dedicated to energy poverty.

• Need for more data and national studies on a more frequent basis to enable the update of tools so that figures on energy poverty become more precise and are in line with the current context.

• An integrated approach is crucial to help households out of energy poverty and enable policies to integrate social support. Furthermore, providing visuals and pictures is essential to help stakeholders communicate on energy poverty.



Introducing the Belgian barometer on energy and water poverty // Sandrine Meyer (Université libre de Bruxelles)

There is no official definition of energy poverty in Belgium, but a global study on energy poverty was launched in 2011 by Universities to have an overview of energy poverty in Belgium and faced the difficulty to collect data due to the division of federations. Created in 2014 by the King Baudoin Foundation, the Platform against Energy and Water Poverty is meant for all stakeholders to share and exchange knowledge and data on energy poverty. One of the key outputs of the platform is the publication of an annual barometer on energy and water poverty.

Objectives of the barometer:

- A quantitative tool to better understand energy poverty context, situation and interactions.
- Have a better understanding of the issue
- Have quantitative feedback from the field
- Support common activities among stakeholders
- Common actions with work groups through reports and recommendations

Barometer highlights from 2020:

- 21% of Belgian households are energy poor, based on the combination of 3 types of energy poverty indicators
- Challenge of finding an average value as energy vectors vary between federations
- The Platform also analyses policies to tackle energy poverty and promote policy recommendations

Identified vulnerable households included:

- Single parent families
- Renters and lower income households
- Single person households, especially elderly women
- Lower income households

Observations and challenges:

- More awareness is needed around energy poverty for the stakeholders involved and to underline that energy poverty is not just an issue of energy bills.
- It is important to highlight the link between housing conditions and life quality, and what strategies would provide efficient renovation.
- It is important to keep in mind the question of affordability after renovation, will vulnerable households be able to afford the change? Who will pay?

Introducing the Independent Italian observatory on energy poverty (OIPE) // Paola Valbonesi (Università di Padova / chair of the OIPE)

The Independent Italian observatory on energy poverty was established in 2019, the observatory is a network of 63 members including researchers and experts, coming from universities, public and private bodies and institutions, interested in the theme of energy poverty, defined in Italy as "as the difficulty in purchasing a minimum basket of energy goods and services or as the condition for which access to energy services implies a diversion of resources (in terms of expenditure or income) greater than socially acceptable".

Main missions:

Gather, organise and disseminate information and knowledge on energy poverty.

Organise events and conferences

Foster networking of national and international experts

Stimulate team work among observatory members

Have fruitful interactions with other EU observatories and institutions

Reports:

The bi-annual reports have two main parts, one about assessing and understanding energy poverty. And another one about analysing policies to tackle energy poverty or the impact of energy climate policies.

First Report on the State of Energy Poverty in Italy (2019) (I)

Second Report on the State of Energy Poverty in Italy 2021 (II)

Publications on the energy poverty status in Italy and actions to tackle it

Observations and challenges:

- The creation of the observatory has allowed improvements in investigating energy poverty and identifying activities and policies to tackle it.
- There is a need for better data and investigation to have better policy evaluation tackling energy poverty.
- Energy poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon which needs to be explored more by multidisciplinary teams. Best practices in different fields are needed and are more relevant than ever.

Check out our content from our first SocialWatt Webinar:

"Energy efficiency to tackle energy poverty: what will the EED recast change?" :

- [Recording](#)
- [Webinar briefing](#)
- [Presentations](#)

More information on SocialWatt

- Our website: <https://www.socialwatt.eu/>
- Contact us: contact@socialwatt.eu
- SocialWatt Tools: www.socialwatt.eu/en/socialWatt-tools

Follow us!



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3.4 COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

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Figure 3: Promotion banner for the second webinar

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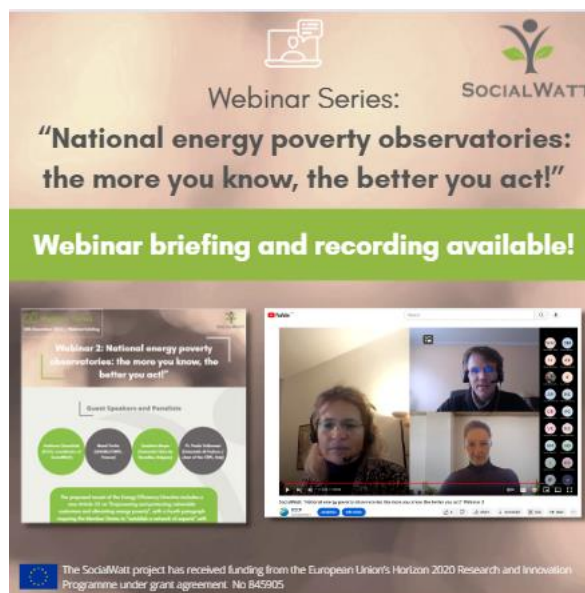


Figure 4: Promotion banner for the webinar materials

4 3RD WEBINAR: “TACKLING ENERGY POVERTY WITH ENERGY EFFICIENCY: WHO SHOULD BE INVOLVED? HOW TO SCALE UP?”

4.1 SHORT DESCRIPTION

The third online webinar took place on the 11th January 2023. The webinar “Tackling energy poverty with energy efficiency: who should be involved? How to scale up” provided an overview of the lessons learnt from the SocialWatt schemes and what can be done to scale up energy efficiency measures tackling energy poverty, based on the experience of energy utilities, public authorities and NGOs.

The panel discussions highlighted that although awareness on energy poverty is rising, local authorities are still at the early stages of familiarising themselves with the phenomenon and do not necessarily have the staff and tools to tackle it upfront. Panellists also noted that it remains difficult to reach out and gain the trust of energy poor households. Lastly, long-term support and fully financed deep renovations were identified as important measures to tackle energy poverty.

4.2 WEBINAR AGENDA

- › Lessons learnt from the SocialWatt schemes: Andriana Stavrakaki (ICCS, coordinator of SocialWatt)
- › Experience from an energy utility: Daniele Bergesio (Eviso, Italy)
- › Experience from a public authority: Claire Valente (SEAI, Ireland)
- › Experience from an NGO: Maria-Elisabeth Bruckl (Caritas, Austria)
- › Experience from local authorities: João Pedro Gouveia (Energy Poverty Advisory Hub / NOVA University Lisbon)
- › Experience from involving citizen: Eleni Kanellou (Research Associate, POWERPOOR project manager, NTUA, Greece)

4.3 WEBINAR BRIEFING

The webinar briefing includes an overview of speakers' presentations, along with relevant links and references. The briefing can be downloaded on the [SocialWatt website](#).



Webinar Series

11th January 2025 / Webinar briefing



Webinar 3: Tackling energy poverty with energy efficiency: Who should be involved? How to scale up?

Guest Speakers and Panelists

Andriana Stavrakaki
(ICCS, coordinator of
SocialWatt)

Daniele Bergesio
(Eviso, Italy)

Claire Valente (SEAI,
Ireland)

Maria-Elisabeth Bruckl
(Caritas, Austria)

João Pedro Gouveia
(Energy Poverty
Advisory Hub / NOVA
University Lisbon)

Eleni Kanellou
(Research Associate,
POWERPOOR project
manager, NTUA,
Greece)

The SocialWatt project organized one more webinar to discuss how energy efficiency schemes can tackle energy poverty, especially in the context of Article 7 of the EU Energy Efficiency Directive (EED).

This third webinar provided an overview of the lessons learnt from the SocialWatt schemes and more on what can be done by Member States to scale up energy efficiency measures tackling energy poverty, in light of experiences from energy utilities, public authorities and NGOs.



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What has SocialWatt achieved? // Andriana Stavrakaki (ICCS, coordinator of SocialWatt)

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What is SocialWatt Plan?

SocialWatt has enabled energy suppliers and utilities build their capacity in energy poverty alleviation, whilst it has also enabled the development of appropriate tools to help them identify energy poor households within their clients, as well as design and monitor the implementation of schemes that aim to alleviate energy poverty. Most importantly, SocialWatt has supported utilities and energy companies develop Energy Poverty Action Plans, that incorporate energy efficiency and renewable energy schemes for the energy poor. As such, within the framework of the project more than 20 schemes have been designed, launched and are being implemented across seven European countries

Lessons Learnt :

The absence of a national energy poverty definition does not have to be a barrier

There is no 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 due to pre-established contacts and access to granular data on energy consumption

Need to raise general awareness on the importance of energy efficiency measures and the issue of energy poverty

Need to establish strong partnerships and collaborations with key stakeholders to effectively engage with energy poor households

Schemes should be offered at no cost for energy poor customers

Policy Recommendations

Support the development of comprehensive renovation packages

More stability in national legislation (for more efficient and sustainable schemes)

Prioritise energy poverty schemes in national legislation

Utilities/energy companies can be well placed to advise government

A firm obligation should be introduced if utilities/energy companies are to have a key role in energy poverty alleviation

Experience from an energy utility: Daniele Bergesio (Eviso, Italy)

eVISO is a company that uses artificial intelligence to create value for commodity users. eVISO is a partner in the H2020 EU funded project SocialWatt and focuses on the design and implementation of innovative schemes to help alleviate energy poverty in Italy.

Observations and challenges:

- A national plan to tackle energy poverty is not adopted yet (and remains under development), we need a plan specifically dedicated to energy poverty.
- Need for more data and national studies on a more frequent basis to enable the update of tools so that figures on energy poverty become more precise and are in line with the current context.
- An integrated approach is crucial to help households out of energy poverty and enable policies to integrate social support. Furthermore, providing visuals and pictures is essential to help stakeholders communicate on energy poverty.
- eVISO's bottom-up approach was to get direct support from social institutions and to build a partnership to tackle energy poverty. The partnership enabled more dialogue and awareness on topics of energy savings and energy management, something social institutions do not always have. eVISO engineers assessed data on how to lower consumption and energy bills, the knowledge was then shared with social institutions to build a strong structure to target the most vulnerable households.
- One difficulty when working with social workers is that they have a low availability (they are already overloaded).
- Winning the trust from households is not easy. It is therefore essential to include partners that are already trusted by households.
- In Italy, it is not possible, for the moment, to link actions for vulnerable households with the white certificates scheme. One of the alternatives for funding energy efficiency schemes to alleviate energy poverty is to work with charity organisations to help vulnerable households to replace their appliances.

Experience from a public authority: Claire Valente (SEAI, Ireland)

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) is Ireland's national sustainable energy authority. SEAI implements Ireland's Energy Efficiency Obligation Scheme, as well as the national renovation programmes (e.g Home Energy Grants) that can be combined with the EEOS.

Energy Efficiency Obligations Scheme (EEOS) between 2014 and 2020 in Ireland:

11 mandatory energy saving targets for the largest energy companies in Ireland

Overall annual target of 550-700 GWh (primary energy):

- 75% non-residential
- 20% residential
- 5% energy poverty (up to 35 GWh per year)



Total Energy Poverty target **exceeded by 29%** (target of 205 GWh and 265 GWh achieved)

Energy Efficiency Obligations Scheme (EEOS) between 2023 and 2030 in Ireland:

Annual target of c.660 GWh (final energy):

- 85% non-residential
- 10% residential
- 5% energy poverty (c.33 GWh per year)

Changes to Energy Poverty eligibility criteria and scoring

- A pre-works BER of D2 or worse
- A post-works BER of B2 or better

Key changes for 2020-2030:

- Focus on the worst efficient dwellings and achieving larger gains (deeper renovations)
- Important to align criteria of the various schemes in place (so that they can be combined more easily)
- Partnerships between obligated parties (that provide technical support) and local authorities (that can identify who is most in need)

Useful documents

[EEOS Guidance Document](#)

[Deep Retrofit Pilot Programme](#)

[Behavioural insights on energy efficiency in the residential sector](#)

Experience from an NGO: Maria-Elisabeth Bruckl (Caritas, Austria)

CARITAS AUSTRIA is an internationally operating non-profit organization under the mission of the Austrian Catholic church and pursues solely and directly charitable and benevolent objectives. There are more than 1,600 projects in Austria where Caritas supports people in need with their full-time employees and 57,000 volunteers.

Caritas Austria and Verbund (2009-2022) teamed up to support energy poor households to escape energy poverty regardless of their energy provider.

Solutions provided:

Immediate financial aid

Energy consultancy sessions

Free household appliances

The experience showed that the combination of the three was crucial to really help households. The multidimensional approach was important.

Basis required:

Primary assessment by social worker

Energy consultancy at client's home

Energy evaluation session after one year to fine-tune measures

Collection of data:

Monitoring effectiveness of measures

Gaining insight on energy poverty at national level

Creation of 2 annual reports shared with sponsors and partners

Useful information for decision makers

Results / Lessons learnt:

15 million euros gathered for energy counselling and new household appliances for 2023-2025

Approximately 82000MWh of energy savings

"Energieschirm": Financial aid for households struggling to pay energy bills

Word of mouth is quite important to get more households interested in the scheme

The scheme started with the energy utility and now gets funding from other ones. Caritas has been able to scale up the scheme thanks to the experience gained and Caritas' network

Experience from local authorities: João Pedro Gouveia (Energy Poverty Advisory Hub / NOVA University Lisbon)

The Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (EPAH)'s mission is to be the central platform of energy poverty expertise in Europe for local authorities and all stakeholders interested in taking action to combat energy poverty by providing direct support, online trainings, and research results and by building a collaborative network of stakeholders interested in taking action to combat energy poverty.

Main tasks:

TASK 1: Identification of local, municipal and/or regional level best practices to tackle energy poverty

TASK 2: EPAH makes regular calls for applications for technical assistance, open to local authorities

TASK 3: Project promotion, dissemination and impact maximisation

TASK 4: Energy Poverty Advisory website

Exploring Local Action and Capacity Building

Report: Tackling
energy poverty
through local
actions

24 inspirational cases of how
energy poverty can be alleviated
at local level.

EPAH ATLAS

250 actions identified

Introduction to
energy poverty
and the EPAH -
course

Practical guidebooks for local
governments and practitioners to
tackle energy poverty with a
comprehensive and locally adapted
approach.

Experience from involving citizens: Eleni Kanellou (Research Associate, POWERPOOR project manager, NTUA, Greece)

POWERPOOR is a H2020 funded European project which supports programmes / schemes for energy poor citizens and encourages the use of alternative financing schemes (e.g. establishing energy communities / cooperatives, crowd funding). The project facilitates experience and knowledge sharing, as well as the implementation of small-scale energy efficiency interventions and the installation of renewable energy sources, increasing the active participation of citizens.

Actions:

Pilot energy poor support programmes/schemes designed, developed, and implemented in eight countries across Europe led by a network of certified Energy Supporters and Energy Communities Mentors with the support of Stakeholder Liaison Groups.

Energy Supporters
engage citizens suffering from energy poverty, provide advice and enable them to plan, secure funding and implement energy efficiency interventions.

Energy Communities Mentors provide support and expertise in all key areas associated with the operation and/or creation of an energy community/cooperative, comprised of citizens alleviating energy poverty

POWERPOOR's Energy Poverty Mitigation Toolkit

The toolkit aims at providing an integrated solution to users and supporting them at identifying whether they are energy vulnerable. In case they are, the tool can propose changes (behavioral or low cost energy efficiency interventions) they can take to improve their well being. Finally, the tool can propose customised solutions regarding users' involvement in innovative funding schemes such as crowdfunding or participation in energy cooperatives.

POWER TARGET
Energy Spending Evaluation

POWER ACT
Home Energy Consumption

POWER FUND
Online marketplace for Collective Energy Initiatives

Panel Discussion moderated by Jean-Sébastien Broc, IEECP

Maria-Elisabeth
Bruckl

Existing structures play an important role in alleviating energy poverty. The real question is how many people will it require to implement these actions? We need enough support to train employees who can offer knowledge and solutions. Especially now, with the rise in energy prices, we see that even people above the poverty line struggle to pay their energy bills and are not the target audience for State bills.

There is a balance to be established as we see that energy utilities need to step up with the increase of prices, which requires a lot of management, awareness and cooperation.

João Pedro Gouveia

We are at the early stage of local authorities understanding and gaining awareness on energy poverty. Most local authorities still lack awareness. We need to de-mystify some ideas in practice, as local authorities do not have the staff or capacity to have access to that knowledge.

One-stop-shops remain a challenge as it is very difficult to effectively engage and reach out to energy poor households. Just as energy efficiency vouchers are not known among energy poor households and are often not used by the most vulnerable consumers. For example, in Portugal there are only 17 000 applications for vouchers out of 200 000 available vouchers, whilst these vouchers are also too small to allow for real renovations. Renovation should be the priority when it comes to alleviating energy poverty.

Eleni Kanellou

One-stop-shops are very difficult to implement as households will only go to a structure that they trust, therefore building trust is crucial but difficult to attain. We have seen through POWERPOOR that more local young people have volunteered to address the issue, and this showed how important it is to have local people volunteer, as there are local circumstances and networks that have already been built and that can help gain trust from vulnerable households, which institutions do not have access to.

Panel Discussion moderated by Jean-Sébastien Broc, IEECP

Daniela Bergesio

We have seen that households are very reluctant to provide data on their energy habits and energy consumption. We've also seen that many households lack the knowledge and awareness on energy consumption and how to make savings, people do not necessarily know how to consume energy effectively. We must engage new stakeholders and collaborate more with social services who have established relationships with vulnerable households.

Claire Valente

We need a long-term view and should prioritise deep renovations for the most vulnerable households, especially for the lowest rated homes. We also need to give lower bills to energy poor households to support them in escaping energy poverty.

Maria-Elisabeth
Bruckl

We must rely on existing structures to have long-term support, especially when it comes to renovations, they are expensive and long and require funding and support. We cannot expect energy poor households to pay, they need to be given a full package to escape energy poverty.

Check out our content from our SocialWatt Webinars:

Webinar 1: "Energy efficiency to tackle energy poverty: what will the EED recast change?"

Webinar 2: "National energy poverty observatories: the more you know, the better you act!"

More information on SocialWatt

- Our website: <https://www.socialwatt.eu/>
- Contact us: contact@socialwatt.eu
- SocialWatt Tools: www.socialwatt.eu/en/socialWatt-tools

Follow us!



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



4.4 COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION ACTIVITIES

The webinar was promoted through the SocialWatt social media accounts, with [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#) posts inviting people to register a couple of weeks before the event. Two follow up reminders were sent, a week and a day before the webinar.



Figure 5: Promotion banner for third webinar

The recording was uploaded on [IEECP's YouTube Channel](#), whilst all presentations, the recording and the webinar briefing were made available on the [SocialWatt website](#). The above-mentioned material was also shared and promoted through [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).



Figure 6: Promotion banner for webinar materials