



EnergyMeasures

Tailored measures supporting energy vulnerable households

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Fighting Energy Poverty: Step-by-Step Guidelines for Change in Energy Related Behaviour

In the EU-funded EnergyMeasures project, organizations from eight European countries have been cooperating since 2020 to support households with small-scale measures to become more resilient to energy poverty. The approach taken is based on behavioral changes in everyday energy use. The project developed a comprehensive step-by-step guideline to help support energy-specific behavioral changes in households.

Energy poverty in Europe is a widespread and complex problem that affects many households. The term refers to the inability of households to pay for sufficient amounts of energy for heating, cooling, lighting and the use of electrical appliances without negative social and economic consequences.

The causes are manifold. Low-income households are more often affected by energy poverty because they have limited financial resources. **Being a particular form of poverty, however, energy poverty is not always a result of lack of income. Poorly insulated housing and inefficient energy systems can also lead to higher energy bills.** Fluctuating energy prices, including electricity and gas prices, can be burdensome for low-income households.

The consequences for affected households are sometimes far-reaching. **Inadequate heating and cooling can lead to health problems, especially among vulnerable groups** such as the elderly and children. Energy poverty can lead to social isolation, as people may not invite friends or family into their homes out of discomfort. Children in energy-poor households may have difficulty learning and doing homework due to inadequate lighting and heating. Energy bills can consume a significant portion of household income, leading to financial strain and possible debt.

The step-by-step guidelines developed by the EnergyMeasures project are designed to help affected households find ways to free themselves from the risk of energy poverty. **Project coordinator Niall Dunphy, a researcher at the University College Cork in Ireland, explains the EnergyMeasures approach:**

„ We often think of government agencies or utilities as agents, which encourage people to do things, but that kind of behaviour change doesn't last and people revert to their old behaviour. It's the people themselves who need to understand why they are doing what they are doing. They need to change their practices. They need to understand, why it is, that they are using so much energy. Maybe they are heating their house too much. What



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practices lead to that? Our project is about empowering the people to make their own decisions. Then, we can have lasting behaviour change.“

Many EU member states, under the recent impact of the sharp rise in energy prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in spring 2022, have implemented energy efficiency programs to improve housing conditions and reduce energy consumption. Some countries provide grants or financial assistance to low-income households to cover their energy costs. The transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources can also reduce energy costs in the long term.

Find more information on the EnergyMeasures Project on www.energymeasures.eu

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