

# POWERTY

## NEWSLETTER N° 3

*Renewable energies for vulnerable groups*



## WELCOME TO THE 3RD EDITION OF OUR NEWSLETTER

During this third semester of the project, 08/01/2020 to 01/31/2021, the first Interregional Thematic Seminar of the project took place, which dealt with the topics: technology (renewable energies) and economics (financing mechanisms). This was followed by meetings of regional experts where each European partner of the project transferred the information from the Interregional Thematic Seminar to their regional experts.

For the preparations of the Interregional Thematic Seminar and to ensure the quality of the steps to be followed in the project, several meetings have been held among the POWERTY partners.

Among the novelties in the area of energy poverty, the Commission's Recommendation (EU) 2020/1563 on energy poverty and the I Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the Elderly of Andalusia has been published.

POWERTY has been present at a large number of international events, which we will detail later, and has had a great impact on our networks, thanks to its participation in the "Ding Dong Challenge", by Lithuanian partners, the creation of the vlog "POWER and TY" by Polish partners and publications on its [website](#), among others.

## FIRST INTERREGIONAL THEMATIC SEMINAR



The public entity Andalusian Energy Agency in Spain (AEA), as lead partner of the POWERTY project, together with the public entity Agency for the Development of Public Investment in Lithuania (VIPA), organized the First Interregional Thematic Seminar of this project. This seminar had a good impact, with the international participation of more than 120 experts, who positively evaluated the event (70% of those surveyed rated the event as very satisfactory).

The main objective of the seminar was been to share good practices identified by POWERTY partners that, in the field of renewable energies and energy poverty, have been developed in the different European regions, to facilitate their replication in other regions.

This event, which should have been held in person in Lithuania, was held virtually for two days, [November 24 and 25, 2020](#), due to mobility restrictions caused by the current pandemic. The first day focused on the most appropriate **innovative technological solutions** to overcome energy poverty through renewable energies; and on the second day, different **financing formulas** were analyzed to facilitate the use of renewable energies by vulnerable groups.

Good practices were presented such as solar cookers, 100% solar modular homes, intelligent energy management system in homes and entrepreneurs, ESCO models for vulnerable groups, rental of facilities that make the most of renewable energy sources, changes in government programs, Clean Air Program and AEELA Program, etc. These good practices presented have been added to the Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform ([PLP](#)) where, after being evaluated by experts, they are validated and published in the database of PLP,, accessible at an international level.

- Link to presentations shown during the seminar: [here](#)
- Link to press release about the seminar [here](#)
- Link to the POWERITY good practices identified: [here](#)

## POWERITY REGIONAL EXPERT MEETINGS

During the **meetings of regional experts**, each POWERITY partner transferred the information from the seminar to these experts. These encounters are detailed below:

- **Andalusian Energy Agency (AAE - Spain)**

[On January 28, 2021](#), 40 experts attended the third meeting of POWERITY regional experts, organized by AEA, where the welcome came from their General Director and the University of Manchester introduced energy poverty. The University of Seville presented a study on health and energy rehabilitation and the Andalusian Energy Agency presented the content of the First Interregional Thematic Seminar, highlighting Spanish good practices presented from the University of Huelva ([solar cookers](#)). Quantum Energia ([quantum rental](#)) and PylonData (advanced data analysis tools developed for its application in the management of collective renewable energy installations in residential buildings), in addition to presenting the incentive Program for the energy renovation of buildings in Andalusia.

The Networking section was very dynamic and encouraged stakeholders to create collaborations to promote new projects related to renewable energy and vulnerable groups inspired by the good practices presented. The stakeholders highlighted the interest in collective self-consumption and energy communities.

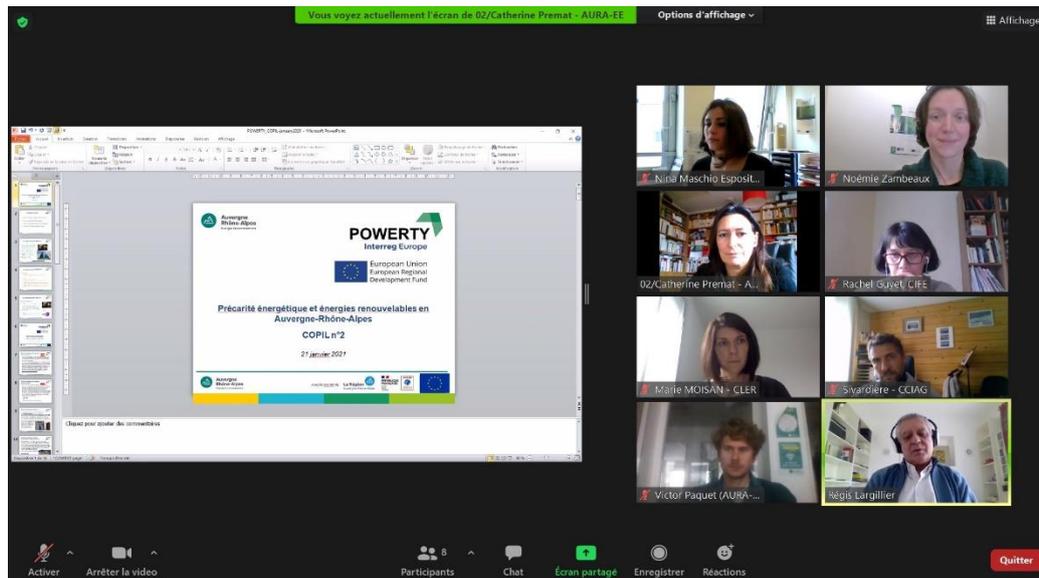
**Indica 3 acciones posibles en Andalucía relacionadas con energías renovables para grupos vulnerables para superar la pobreza energética en Andalucía:**

This figure shows one of the task which was to indicate 3 possible actions in Andalucía related to renewable energies and vulnerable groups to tackle energy poverty in the region. Some popular suggestions were collective self-consumption, energy communities and public involvement.

- Auvergne-Rhone-Alpes Energy Environment Agency (AURA-EE - France)

On January 21, 2021, 8 experts attended the second POWERTY regional experts meeting, organized by AURA-EE to inform stakeholders about the First Interregional Thematic Seminar and discuss the activities of the POWERTY project.

During this meeting good practices were presented, among which there was great interest in the module houses presented by the Polish partner (AOT) with whom information has been exchanged and shared with the members of the steering committee. In addition, the review of the SWOT analysis gave rise to ideas and opinions for the preparation of the second interregional thematic seminar, which will be organized by AURA-EE, next semester on normative and regulatory issues.

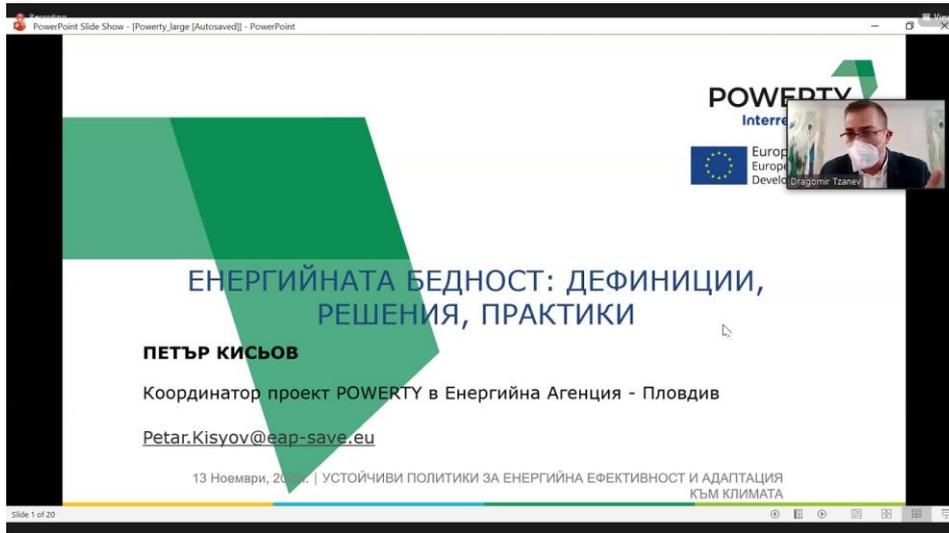


- Energy Agency of Plovdiv (EAP - Bulgaria)

On November [5](#) and [11](#), 2020, 62 experts attended the workshop "Turning green and/or staying warm?" in which climate neutrality and energy poverty in Bulgaria were addressed and which has been made to coincide with the second meeting of POWERTY regional experts in Bulgaria.

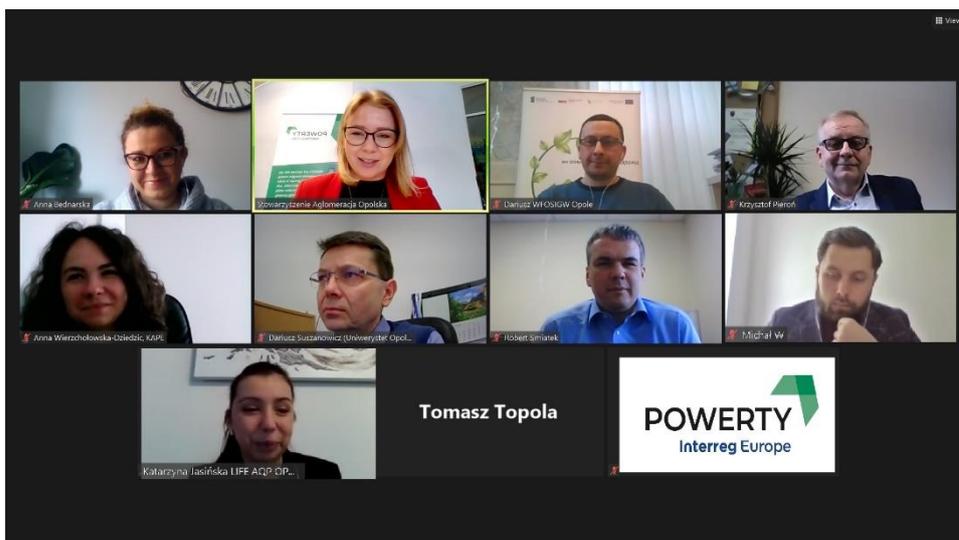
During the first day, with the support of the American University in Bulgaria, energy poverty and the experience in Bulgaria and Poland was discussed, where in the case of Bulgaria, Mr. Petar Kisyov (EAP) spoke about current challenges and futures. On the second day, under the auspices of the XXII Annual Ecoenergy Conference, Mr. Kisyov addressed the main national stakeholders. A dedicated panel focused on energy poverty and sustainable energy efficiency and climate adaptation policies.

In Mr. Kisyov's presentation, special attention was paid to energy cooperatives and community practices, as a possible means of alleviating energy poverty and current and future policies in this regard. Good practices related to virtual net measurement and national statistics were also shared.



- The Agglomeration Opole Trust (AOT - Poland)

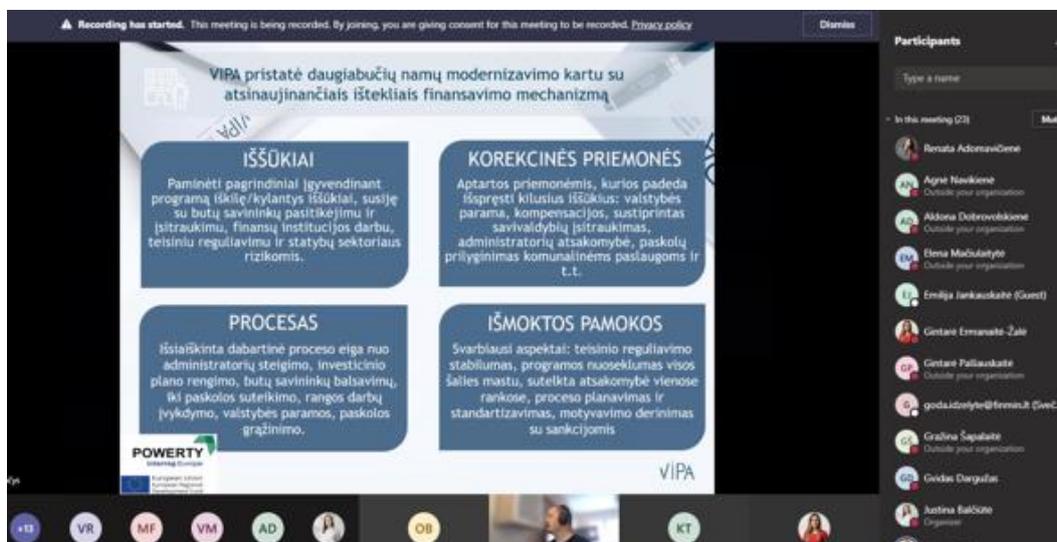
On January 15, 2021, 19 experts attended the second POWERTY regional experts meeting, organized by AOT, where good practices in the field of renewable energy and financial solutions were discussed, which have proven to be an effective tool to tackle energy poverty in countries like Spain, France, Lithuania and Poland. Solutions were presented such as: solar cookers, intelligent energy management system in homes and entrepreneurs, modular homes, rental of self-consumption installation, changes in government programs.



- Public Investment Development Agency (VIPA - Lithuania)

On 28 January, 2021, 30 experts attended the second POWERTY regional experts meeting, organized by VIPA, where they informed stakeholders about the First Interregional Thematic Seminar in Vilnius and commented on the activities of the POWERTY project.

During the meeting, it was agreed that cooperation between all institutions that seek to adapt measures to combat energy poverty is very important and participation should be at all levels: ministries, municipalities, social workers and vulnerable groups.



## MEETINGS OF EUROPEAN PARTNERS

During the meetings of the POWERTY partners, the preparations for the First Interregional Thematic Seminar and the steps to be followed in the project during this semester were discussed. These encounters, attended by all partners, are detailed below:

- Steering Committee meeting [on October 8, 2020](#) where measures derived from the pandemic were voted to extend the duration of the project by 6 months following the indications of Interreg Europe. In addition, the status of the project and the next steps to follow were reviewed, focusing on the preparation of the First Interregional Thematic Seminar led by AEA and VIPA.
- Coordination meeting [on November 16, 2020](#) to finalize preparations for the First interregional Thematic Seminar.

- Steering Committee meeting [on January 21, 2021](#) to analyze the First Interregional Thematic Seminar, review the steps to follow for the development of the project and focus on the preparation of the next seminar through, among others, the presentation of good practices by the partners on normative and regulatory issues.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON ENERGY POVERTY

[On October 27, 2020](#), the European Commission published the [Commission's recommendation \(EU\) 2020/1563 of October 14, 2020, on energy poverty](#), aimed at the Member States to address the energy poverty situation in which many households find themselves. Energy poverty is a major challenge for the EU.

This recommendation considers **energy poverty** as the situation in which households cannot access essential energy services, including adequate heating, air conditioning and lighting and energy to operate appliances to preserve a decent standard of living and health, highlighting that in 2018, according to Eurostat, almost 34 million European homes that were unable to heat properly.

Access to energy services is essential for **social inclusion**. Energy is included among the **essential services** to which everyone has the right to access. Support for access to such services must be available for those in need.

Tackling energy poverty can have **multiple benefits**, including lower spending on health, reduced air pollution (by replacing unsuitable heating sources), increased comfort and well-being, and improved household budgets. Used together, these benefits would directly boost economic growth and prosperity in the European Union.

A central element of the European **Green Deal** is the **"Renovation Wave"** as a boost to the structural renovation of private and public buildings. It is considered essential that the **"Renovation Wave"** and this recommendation be adopted together in order to achieve mutual reinforcement between calls to tackle energy poverty and less efficient buildings.

The absence of a standard definition of "energy poverty" encourages Member States to develop their own criteria based on their national context. However, the legislative package **"Clean energy for all Europeans"** offers general principles and useful information on the possible causes and consequences of energy poverty. It also underlines the importance of policies to address the problem, especially those related to National Energy and Climate Plans (NECP) and long-term renovation strategies (LTRSs).

In these plans, the Member States must assess the **number of households in a situation of energy poverty** and establish objectives consistent with this indicator, establish a timetable, and outline the pertinent policies. It is recalled that the Commission published [working documents](#) on individual evaluations of said plans for each Member State giving guidance, especially regarding energy poverty, on their implementation.

Member States must protect vulnerable clients, especially those in remote areas, and assess the number of households in a situation of energy poverty, as well as establish and publish the criteria on which this assessment is based.

Member States must take into account the need to alleviate energy poverty in the context of their energy efficiency obligations. A quota of energy efficiency measures should be applied as a priority in vulnerable households, including those affected by energy poverty.

For the Commission, identifying the homes most in need of protection and the homes most in need of renovation contributes to better targeting and managing public interventions, providing practical results for consumers, improving energy efficiency and minimizing any distortion in the functioning of the internal energy market.

Taking all this into account, the **Commission recommends** that the Member States:

- Develop a systematic approach to the **liberalization of energy markets**, in order to share the benefits with all sectors of society, particularly those most in need.
- Take particular account of the [working document of the Commission](#) services that offers guidance on **energy poverty indicators**, as well as on the definition of what constitutes a significant number of households in a situation of energy poverty. They should use the Commission's guidance when implementing and updating their existing NECP in accordance with Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1999 on the governance of the Energy Union and Action for the Weather.
- Use the indicators described in the annex to the recommendation to carry out their energy poverty assessments. These indicators have been developed by the statistical office of the European Union (Eurostat) and the European Energy Poverty Observatory (EPOV) to monitor the situation at Union level and detect national specificities, as well as promote more efficient mutual learning and the exchange of best practices.
- Develop **integrated policy solutions** as part of energy and social policy, which should include social policy measures and energy efficiency improvements that are mutually reinforcing, especially in the area of housing.
- Assess the distributional **effects of the energy transition**, in particularly energy efficiency measures in the national context, and define and implement policies that address associated concerns. Due attention should be given to barriers to investment in energy efficient housing

and the profile of dwellings in most need of renovation, in line with national long-term renovation strategies.

- Develop all policies to tackle energy poverty based on meaningful and responsible processes of public participation and broad stakeholder participation.
- Develop measures to address energy poverty based on close cooperation between all levels of the administration, in such a way as to allow, in particular, close cooperation between regional and local authorities, on the one hand, and the organizations of the civil society and private sector entities, on the other.
- Take full advantage of the potential to deploy Union funding programmes, including cohesion policy, to tackle energy poverty by analysing the distributional effects of energy transition projects and prioritizing measures targeting vulnerable groups, in order to ensure their access to support.
- When allocating public funds, especially subsidies, ensure that they go to low-income households included in the categories of beneficiaries that have very limited own resources and also limited access to commercial loans, as well as explore the role of investment companies. energy services and energy performance contracts to provide financing solutions for the renovation of energy-poor households that enable these vulnerable households to overcome high upfront costs.

## THE POWERTY PROJECT INFLUENCES THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE ELDERLY IN ANDALUSIA



The regional government of Andalusia (Junta de Andalucía) has prepared and published in BOJA nº 221 of [November 16, 2020](#), the First Comprehensive Strategic Plan for the Elderly of Andalusia, endowed with an investment of 145 million euros. This plan aims to organize the set of public policies aimed at promoting the well-being of the elderly <sup>1</sup> from a comprehensive, preventive and sustainable perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> : from 55 years

Taking into account that **energy poverty** is a problem that affects a high segment of the elderly group, the Andalusian Energy Agency has participated in the work of preparing the plan, as well as in its execution to alleviate energy poverty. Specifically, within the preparatory work for this plan, the Andalusian Energy Agency has prepared the document "**Diagnosis on energy poverty in the Andalusian group of elderly people**", which, among other aspects, has allowed us to visualize how energy poverty causes serious health problems in the elderly, as well as other problematic situations such as the increased risk of fire, due to the precarious and obsolete devices used to heat homes.

In the execution of this comprehensive plan, until 2023, the Andalusian Energy Agency is responsible for one of the programs of the plan, called "**Reduction of energy poverty in the elderly group**", in which all the knowledge will be used generated by the POWERTY project, in particular, the good practices at European level that have been identified will be used.

## DISSEMINATION OF THE POWERTY PROJECT

- POWERTY in the Ding Dong Challenge of the European Commission

[On December 1, 2020](#), the Lithuanian partner (VIPA) was invited to present the participation of the POWERTY project in the "[Ding Dong Challenge](#)" of the European Commission, which consisted of 15 local influencers, including Mr. Mantas Bartusevičius from Lithuania, travelling through 5 European countries (Belgium, Germany, Greece, Lithuania and Portugal) from October to December 2020, to explore more than 70 ecological initiatives that was followed via Instagram (#DingDongEU).

The Lithuanian influencer contacted business owners and entrepreneurs who implement not only green but also ethical practices in their work and have shown Mr. Bartusevičius how they are helping local communities, addressing urgent social challenges, and finding new models of work that leave no one behind.

In his Route 3, "**Good for the people, good for our planet**" (Lithuania), Mr. Bartusevičius has presented the POWERTY project: the goals, objectives, partners and project stage. Also, participants shared ideas about renewable energy and its use in everyday life and a discussion was held on how **to help socially vulnerable groups to take advantage of the opportunities that renewable energy provides to improve their quality of life.**

The meeting was useful for the POWERTY team because it helped to forge new contacts with other programs and their partners, to present the POWERTY project to a wider audience, since the meeting was published on social media through the Instagram account by Mr. Mantas Bartusevičius, and a summary of the meeting was published in the local press.

## • VLOG “POWER and TY” in Poland

The Polish partner (AOT) has created a Vlog called “POWER and TY” to disseminate issues related to the project through interviews with experts. During this semester, the first episode has been produced, [on October 19, 2020](#), which has brought us closer to the “[Clean Air Program](#)”, a Polish aid program aimed at reducing air pollution and energy consumption by replacing heaters for more efficient and sustainable ones. This program is aimed at increasing the use of renewable energy by people living in energy poverty.

## • Radio interview in Spain

[On January 11, 2021](#), on the radio station Onda Local de Andalucía (EMA-RTV), the Spanish lead partner (AEA) participated in an interview talking about POWERTY project. This interview, addressed to the Andalusian population (more than 8 million people), has served to show the main results of the First Interregional Thematic Seminar, and specifically, the best solutions and tools to tackle energy poverty through renewable energies .

- To listen to the interview (Spanish audio): [here](#)
- To read the transcript of the interview in English: [here](#)

## • Presentation of POWERTY in the training course “Social Energy Managers” of Andalusia in Spain

The Spanish lead partner (AEA) has participated in the training course on “Social Energy Managers”, [on October 15, 2020](#), organized by the Association of Environmental Sciences ([ACA](#)), delivering a presentation on the POWERTY project and the potential of renewable energies to tackle energy poverty.

This course, which is part of a cycle of 4 courses of 20 hours, has allowed training, in energy management, professionals from different sectors, such as building, conventional and renewable energy, social services, consumer information, administration of farms, SMEs, among others. Through these courses it is intended to strengthen the figure of the social energy manager and the network of information points for energy consumers, PICE points, which are being developed throughout Spain.

- To access the video of the presentation (Spanish audio): [here](#)
- More information about PICE points in Spanish: [here](#)

## • Presentation of POWERTY in FEDARENE Prospect's Virtual Workshop

[On October, 20, 2020](#), five PROSPECT mentors presented 5 modules of their learning programme to enhance stakeholders`s ability to attract green investments. One of the modules were "**Private Buildings: Smart finance for building, Solutions for energy poverty**", was presented by Ina Karova from EAP (Bulgaria) who presented POWERTY project and some of the good practices developed in Bulgaria for tackling energy poverty.

More information: [here](#)

## • POWERTY at other international events

Stefan Bouzarovski from the University of Manchester has represented the POWERTY project at various events as a speaker, moderator or panelist:

- [22/09/2020](#): POWERTY in the 3rd biennial conference of The Political Ecology Network
- [02/10/2020](#): POWERTY in the Just Energy Conference, University of Westminster
- [08/10/2020](#): POWERTY in the 5th Energy & Climate Technical Working Group Workshop of the Energy Community Secretariat.
- [20/11/2020](#): POWERTY in Vision for Energy Consumer`s Conference, Council of European Energy Regulators.

- [20/11/2020](#): POWERTY in Fair Energy Transition for All Workshop, European Policy Centre.
- [20/11/2020](#): POWERTY in the National Energy Poverty Conference, National Technical University of Athens and Greek Regulatory Authority for Energy.
- [17/12/2020](#): POWERTY in Transformations towards Energy Democracy Conference, Global Environment Fund.

## • POWERTY in the press

During this semester, the press appearances related to POWERTY include:

- [04/11/2020](#): Tackling energy poverty is the biggest challenge for Bulgaria on the path to a full liberalization of its energy market
- [21/12/2020](#): Press release on the international seminar
- [04/01/2021](#): POWERTY in ENERGIES Journal “Confronting Energy Poverty in Europe: A Research and Policy Agenda”
- [14/01/2021](#): POWERTY interregional seminar in ENGAGER (Energy Poverty Action)

- Access to our press kit: [here](#)

## • POWERTY Website

On the project website you can consult the information generated and news related to its subject, in addition to the **good practices** that have been identified, including those evaluated by Interreg Europe experts in the “Policy Learning Platform”.



In the library you can find our **“Good practices guide”** which include all the good practices identified, including some from different countries other than POWERTY partners regions. Also, there are some available sections in local languages of each POWERTY partner: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/powerty/library/>

## FOCUS ON Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Energy Environment Agency (AURA-EE)

The [Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Energy Environment Agency \(AURA-EE\)](#) is the regional sustainability agency of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region. Created in 1978 with the support of the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Regional Council, the agency aims at promoting, coordinating and developing programmes and actions in favour of sustainable energies in the building and transport sectors, climate change mitigation and adaptation, environment protection and sustainable development.

The regional sustainability agency is a private non-profit organization gathering more than 70 members including regional and local public authorities, energy producers, distributors and retailers, NGOs in the field of sustainable energy and environment protection, professionals' organisations in the social housing, energy and service sectors, financial bodies, etc.

AURA-EE's activities are mainly targeted at local and regional authorities of the public and social sectors. The agency is accompanying them through their process of project development and implementation as well as the definition of local policies and programmes. The agency coordinates multiple regional level thematic networks, allowing regional and local stakeholders to share experiences and join forces in the following areas: sustainable energy planning, energy efficiency in buildings and transports, local and decentralized energy production, bioenergy, green public procurement, sustainable mobility, circular economy, etc.

At a national level, the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Energy Environment agency is chairing the RARE network, the French network of regional energy agencies.

At the European level, the regional agency is one of the first one created in Europe. It is also a founding member of FEDARENE, the European Federation of Agencies and Regions for Energy and Environment. AURA-EE's president is Vice-President for Climate Change. AURA-EE supports the EU Covenant of Mayors (CoM) initiative and signed up to the CoM as supporting regional energy agency.

AURA-EE is also co-leader of the Action Group 9 Energy of the EU Strategy for the alpine region (EUSALP). It contributes to the implementation and enhancement of the governance of this

Strategy, alongside with the Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes Region.

The agency has a long-standing European experience, started back in the mid 90's, in developing, coordinating and participating in EU funded projects. It has been involved in the following programmes: IEE, H2020, FP7, Interreg IV A, B and C, Interreg Europe, Interreg Alpine Space, Interreg MED and Interreg Alcotra. Today, the agency runs more than 15 European projects dealing with energy poverty, building energy retrofitting assistance, eco-mobility, multilevel governance, microgrids, climate change adaptation, waste management, wood energy, etc. The agency is also a privileged partner of European programmes, which regularly consults it for the definition of new programmes for the period 2021-2027.

On the specific subject of energy poverty, AURA-EE is involved in several projects:

- RESILITERRE received ADEME's grant (ecological transition Agency) as part of its 2019 EEST call for projects (Ecological, economic and social transitions). The aim of the project is to provide a quantitative analysis, which will enable new data to be cross-referenced with existing data to define fuel poverty indicators that meet the needs of territorial actors, a qualitative investigation to analyse how fuel poverty (housing and mobility) is approached by actors in the territories and training for future regional managers;
- PEnD-Aura+, winner of a call for proposals launched by the Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition in 2018, focusing on energy saving solutions for people and territories on the fringes of mobility;
- AÉÉLA PRO-INNO-23, which allows farmers - working or retired, owners of their home and living in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes - to be supported in their energy renovation projects and to find out more about the financial aid available.

## NEXT STEPS OF POWERTY PROJECT

The second and third POWERTY Interregional Thematic Seminars (ITS) will take place before the end of July 2021.

The second ITS, which will be focused on **normative and regulatory** issues and will take place online on **April 8 and 9**, and will include presentations of good practices identified in the POWERTY project in addition to contributions of great interest such as the situation of the regulations in Europe and in each of the partner regions. We will also talk about energy communities with Rescoop and other European projects such as Green Social Housing and Local4Green.

The third ITS will be focused on the theme of **empowerment** and is expected to take place during

the month of **June 2021**. We will inform of the date through the website and the distribution-list of stakeholders of the POWERTY project.

After both seminars, a regional workshop will take place by each POWERTY partners to transfer this information to their stakeholders during the months of June – July 2021.

## POWERTY CONSORTIUM

### PROJECT LEADER



Agencia Andaluza de la Energía  
CONSEJERÍA DE LA PRESIDENCIA,  
ADMINISTRACIÓN PÚBLICA E INTERIOR  
CONSEJERÍA DE HACIENDA Y FINANCIACIÓN EUROPEA

SPAIN: Andalusian Energy Agency



**Auvergne  
Rhône-Alpes**  
Énergie Environnement

FRANCE: Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes  
Energy Environment Agency  
(AURA-EE)



ЕНЕРГИЙНА  
АГЕНЦИЯ  
ПЛОВДИВ ENERGY  
AGENCY OF  
PLOVDIV

BULGARIA: Energy Agency  
of Plovdiv (EAP)



POLAND: The Agglomeration  
Opole Trust (AOT)



LITHUANIA: The Public  
Investment and  
Development Agency (VIPA)



UNITED KINGDOM: University of  
Manchester – EU Energy  
Poverty Observatory (EPOV)

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**POWERTY bi-annual newsletter.** If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond to this email indicating "CANCEL SUBSCRIPTION" in the subject of the email.

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*The Interreg Europe programme of the European Union is an initiative of territorial cooperation for the period 2014-2020 which aims to encourage cooperation between regions of the European Union. The aim is to help European regions to design and implement regional policies and programmes more effectively, particularly Growth and Jobs programmes of the European Structural Funds and Investment, but also programmes of the European Territorial Cooperation, through the exchange of experiences, knowledge and best practices between stakeholders of all European regions. The programme has four thematic objectives: research and innovation, SME competitiveness, low-carbon economy, the environment and resource efficiency. The Interreg Europe programme covers the entire territory of the European Union, Norway and Switzerland.*

*POWERTY is part of the Interreg Europe programme, with a total budget of 1.127.226 euros, and co-financed with European Regional Development Fund up to 83,7%.*

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