**POWERTY PROJECT** <https://www.interregeurope.eu/powerty/>

The decarbonisation of the energy system requires that all European citizens can make full use of renewable energies. However, there is a high percentage of citizens with many difficulties to have renewable energy facilities and equipment, in particular the vulnerable groups, including those affected by "energy poverty". These difficulties are motivated by economic and technological issues (renewable energy solutions are not adapted to vulnerable groups), but also by other factors of a social and cultural type, use and owners of housing, etc., which influence the types of solutions that should be used, as well as how to manage them. . The general objective of the project is to increase the use of renewable energies in vulnerable groups. This way, thanks to the project, new renewable energy installations will be facilitated to provide safe and clean energy to vulnerable households. In addition, companies supplying renewable energies will be encouraged through the project to offer technological solutions that are adapted to vulnerable groups, activating their corporate social responsibility.

In this way, [POWERTY](https://www.interregeurope.eu/powerty/) will help to tackle energy poverty, promoting vulnerable households with adequate energy supplies, thanks to renewable energies. Given the exceptional conditions of these households, social innovation measures will be promoted, based on greater participation, integration and empowerment of vulnerable groups.

The project will develop a complete learning process to facilitate an effective knowledge flow among regions, counting on 6 partners with different complementary expertise and different levels of competences (regional/national) which enriches the transfer of knowledge. More than 50 best practices and almost 50 events involving 60 stakeholders will establish 5 Regional Action Plans covering a population of more than 25 million inhabitants.

**Main objective:**

The main objective of the project is to improve policy instruments to contribute to a greater use of renewable energies among vulnerable groups, which will lead to increasing the share of energy from renewable sources and to a reduction of energy poverty in the EU. In addition, the project will contribute to a low carbon economy by favouring a reduction in the consumption of fossil fuels, which in a high percentage, come from outside the EU.

**Sub-objectives:**

1. Identify the renewable energy technologies, tools and methods that are best adapted to the vulnerable groups to improve their quality of life, including urban energy systems (as an example, district heating and cooling facilities) and self-consumption systems.
2. Identify financing mechanisms adequate for these types of groups that involve both public and private capital, simplifying and improving of society's accessibility to these new schemes.
3. Overcome normative and regulatory barriers related with renewable energies and vulnerable groups.
4. Empowering citizens and local authorities. Defining strategies of social innovation to promote and stimulate citizen participation of the vulnerable groups and facilitating municipalities with the tools and guides to tackle this issue at local level.

In addition to residential buildings, POWERTY will also include solutions aimed at buildings that provide public services for vulnerable groups (schools, welfare centres, social food kitchens, etc.).

A common methodology will be defined to characterise energy poverty in the partner regions, allowing a better adaptation of the proposed measures to the social and cultural reality of each region in line with previously defined sub-objectives.

**General info:**

The participating regions have specific funds in their operative programme of ERDF funds for renewable energy and energy-planning tools with objectives set on renewable energy ensuring the viability of the measures foreseen in the project. On the other hand, all partners have indicated their National/Regional Strategies up to 2020 as strategic documents to be influenced by the project, which allows aligning the results of the project with the implementation of these plans and strategies.

This will be fostered by creating a specific and influential regional stakeholder group in each partner region that will monitor impacts, evaluate activities and quantify & qualify the benefits achieved, in order to produce a framework that should be adopted to secure region’s future actions.

It is also worth noting that beyond the ERDF funds available, the set of measures foreseen to be developed in the project (new financial mechanisms, empowering vulnerable groups, promoting innovation) have been proposed with the aim of ensuring the sustainability of the project after the end of the EU financed support.

In this sense, it should be emphasised that the normative measures that will be analysed and developed in the framework of the project as one of its main topic will establish the legal framework to support the above measures to be implemented.

In addition, the project will favour the development of interregional strategies, creating an interregional stakeholder group among the main stakeholders of different regions, policy makers, the business sector and knowledge institutes, fostering strategic collaborations that will endure beyond the duration of the project.

Lastly, the inclusion in the project of other actors and relevant entities as stakeholders at European level will ensure the influence on the future European policy development.

**Main outputs:**

In quantitative terms, the main outputs to be produced are:

* 7 study visits will be organised, where specific and detailed information on the good practices identified in the host regions will be provided.
* 4 interregional thematic seminars.
* 10 Bilateral meetings between regions, where each partner will identify specific needs to deepen the learning process
* 1 Exchange of experience meeting to share the Action Plans
* 25 Regional workshop with the stakeholder groups (5 per region and 5 per semester)
* 4 Topic Reports and 20 Benchmarking Fiches
* 1 high level dissemination event at European level
* 5 dissemination events at regional / local level
* 5 Regional Action Plans designed by the end of Phase 1 in close cooperation with and approved by regional stakeholders
* 7 Steering Committee and Interregional Panel of Experts meetings
* 4 Poverty and Managing Authorities (PMA) Network meetings

**Partners:**

Andalusian Energy Agency, SPAIN (AEA)

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

Energy Agency of Plovdiv (EAP), BULGARIA

The Agglomeration Opole Trust (AOT), POLAND

The Public Investment and Development Agency (VIPA), LIETUVA

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