

Energy Poverty with a Gender Lens

EESC Conference on Energy Poverty

19 July 2023
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Energy Poverty

- In 2022/23 households are spending much more on energy than in 2020
- Governments are spending billions to help consumers: cut taxes, direct transfers, retail price regulation
- Energy poverty is a structural problem, not only energy prices, caused by indecent housing, fossil fuel dependency and lock-ins, systemic and structural inequalities

Gender is a crucial part of all of these: as majority female-led households are on frontlines

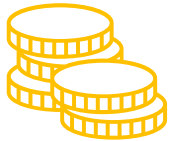


(Energy) Poverty has a female face
due to structural inequalities

Dimensions of gender and energy poverty

The **intersectional perspective** analyses various factors that lead to women facing higher levels of EP:

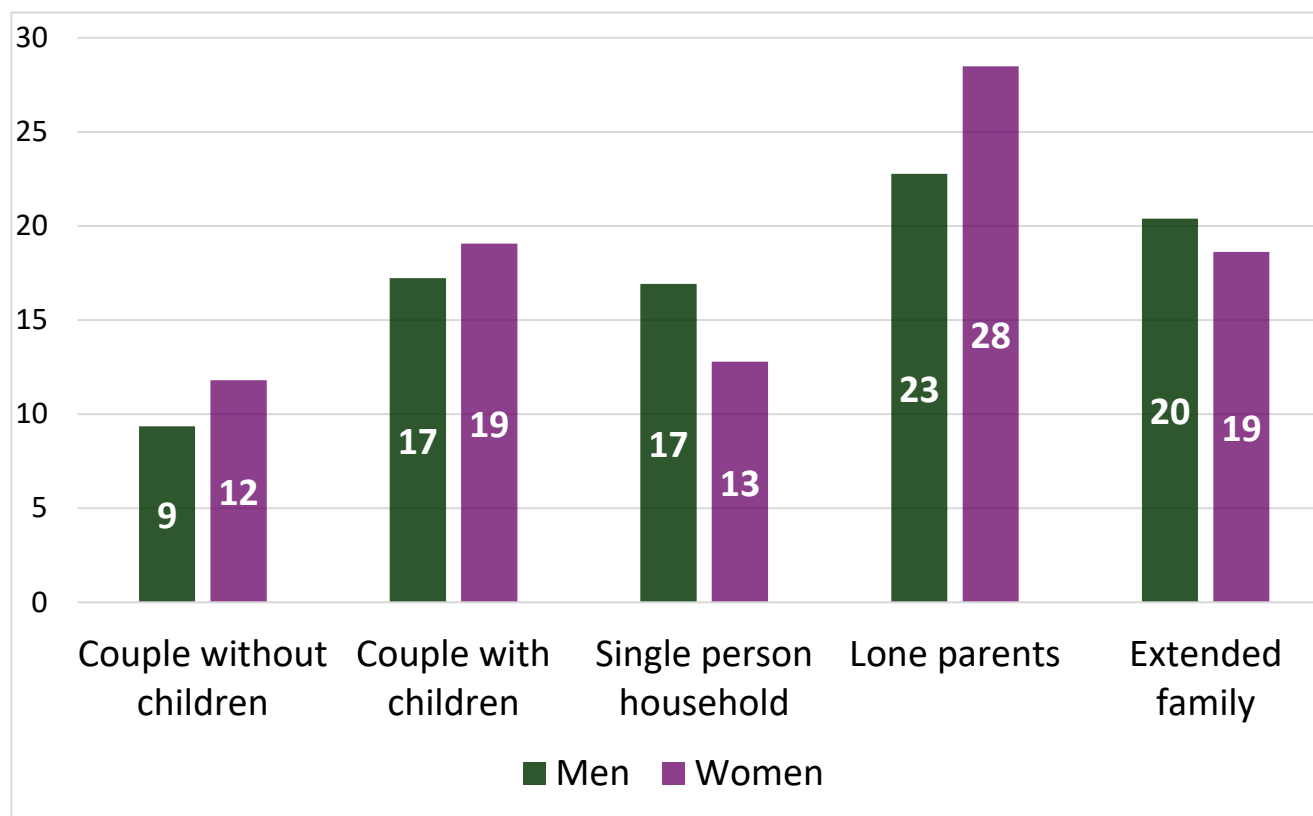
- **Physiology:** age, life expectancy, cold and heat sensitivity, to extreme temperatures, winter mortality
- **Health:** mental, physical and social health
- **Economy:** gender pay (13%) and pension gap (30%), single parent households, less time for paid work
- **Social/cultural:** household roles, care work vs. paid work, decision-making, underrepresentation of women



The gender and household aspect of energy poverty

Arrears with utility bills, EU27 (% of each gendered household configuration)

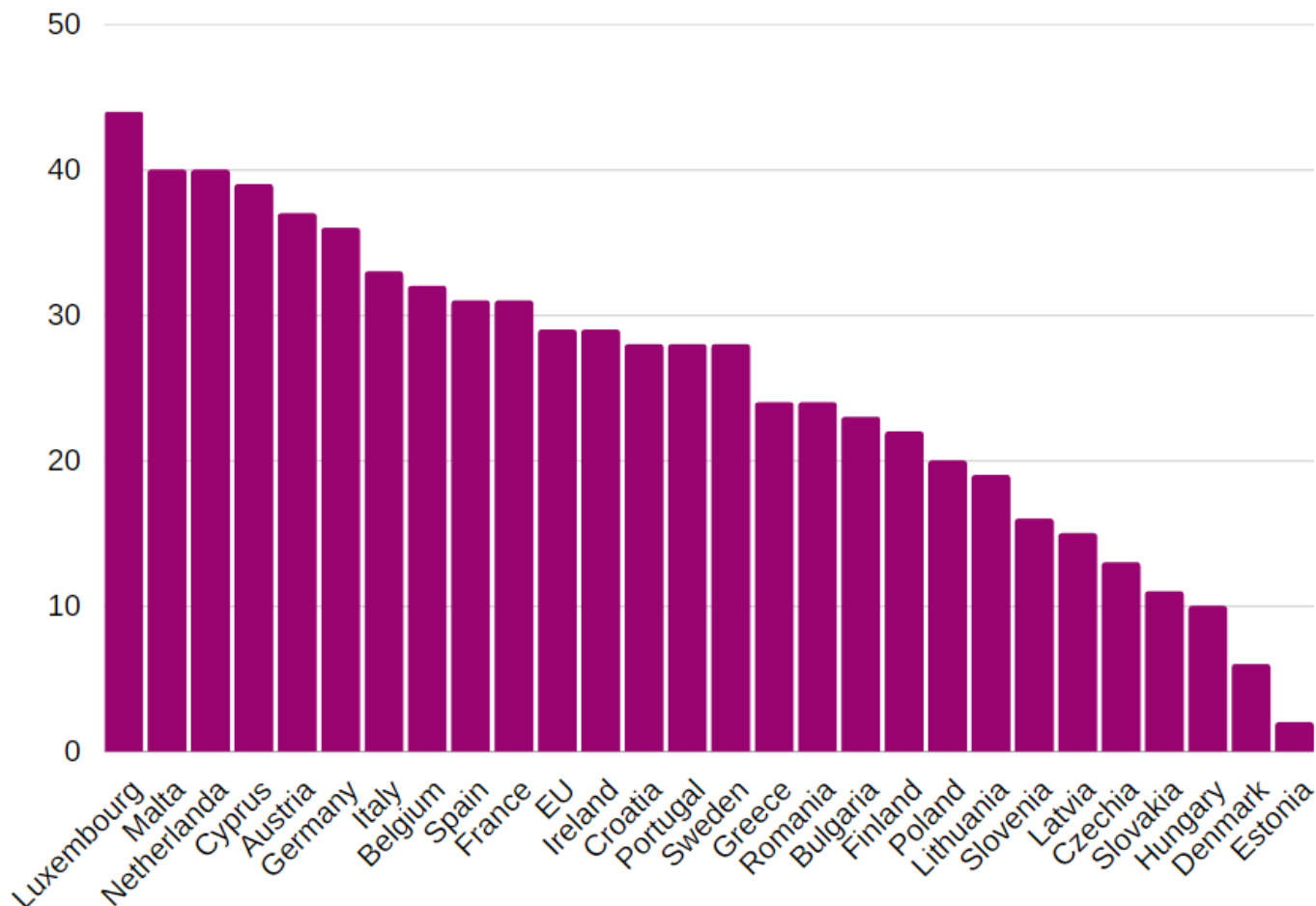
- Groups who are already vulnerable or marginalized are worse hit by energy poverty, its effects aggravated by their existing situation of vulnerability



The gender and household aspect of energy poverty

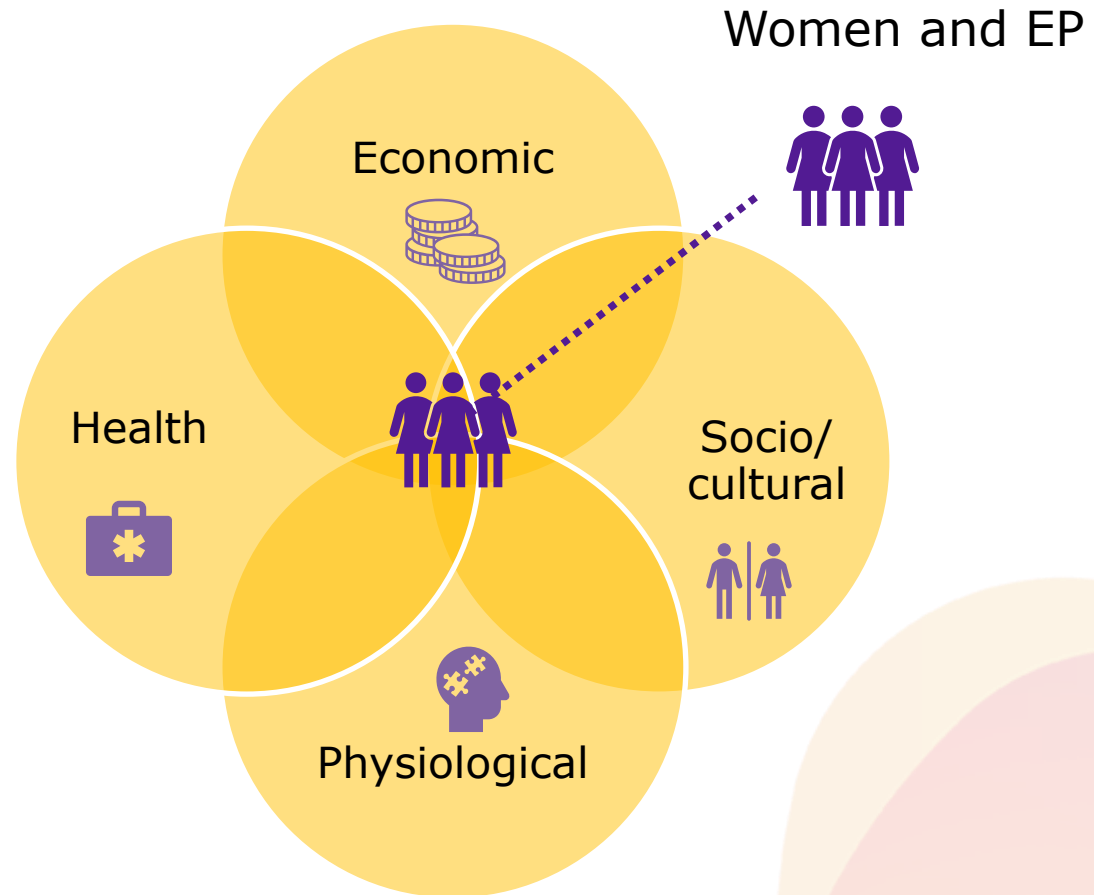
Gender Pension Gap, EU27 (% difference between pensions of men and women over the age of 65)

- The share of elderly women living alone (39.8%) was almost twice the share for men (20%)
- 1 in 7 or 15.1% of pensioners are at risk of poverty in the EU



Energy Poverty and Gender

The physiological, health, economic and social situation of women and women-led households put them and their households at **higher risk of energy poverty**.



Invisible Energy Poverty

Effects of Under-Consumption



“Refers to scarcity and deprivation in home energy services that is severely experienced by those affected, but insufficiently reflected in established indicators”

The outcome of underconsumption:

- Social isolation – less socialising
- Rejecting heating cost support or energy consulting: one can make do
- Feeling ashamed and humiliated because of less material affordability
- Fear of stigmatization
- Worry and anxiety by high energy costs
- Increased rates of chronic respiratory disease
- Excess winter mortality
- Heat-or-eat dilemma



Activities in 7 countries with 9 partners

Gender - Health - Summer EP - 6 pilot sites

EmpowerMed

Mobilisation of
key local
actors

Capacity
building of key
actors and
partners

Household
energy visits

Collective
assemblies

Analysis and design of
recommendations for
tackling energy
poverty

Advocacy of
gender-just
energy poverty
policy solutions

«Do It
Yourself»
workshops

Health
workshops

Gender Tools

- Active policy recommendation
- Include women in political decision-making positions
- Networking with feminist associations
- EP definition with gender/intersectional aspects

- Gender-inclusive language
- Non-discriminative language
- Collective development of skills
- Visibility and representation
- Recruiting of women



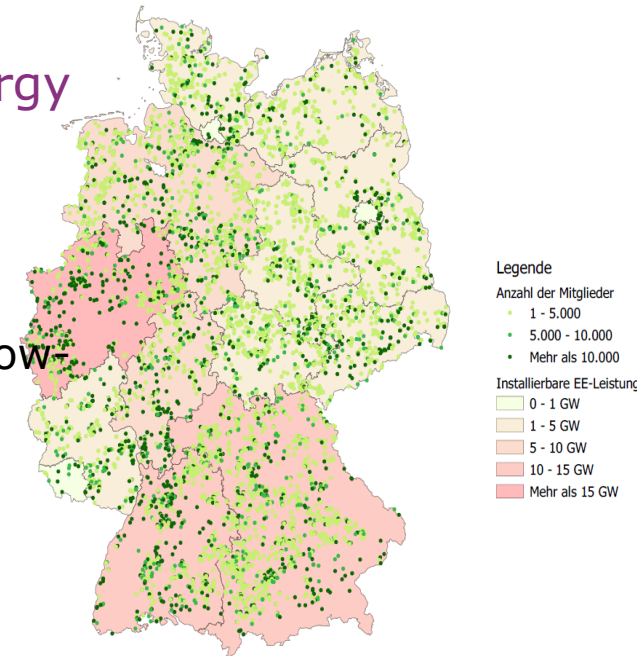
Recommendations (1/2)

- Gender-transformative policy design and implementation
- Gender-disaggregated data on energy poverty at the EU and national level
- Targeted and gender-just financing and budgets

Recommendations (2/2)

Potential of Energy Communities

- REPowerEU/RED III: Strengthen the role of energy communities and prosumers
 - Gender responsive prosumer models
 - Encourage the accessibility of renewable energies to low-income and energy poor households
- Push energy sharing in Member States
 - Successful transposition in Austria, Italy, Spain, NL,
 - High potential in Germany: Energy sharing with 6.000 RECs could contribute to 35% of renewable energy targets



Study on gender-disaggregated data on energy poverty

- Study for European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)
- Data collection, analysis and interpretation
- Thematic areas for case study comparison: data availability, legal framework, programmes and initiatives, actors and partnerships, awareness level
- Timeframe: final study report and presentation: April 2024

	Lithuania	Spain	Cyprus	Bulgaria	Croatia	Germany	Ireland
EP incidence	high	moderately high	high	high	moderately high	moderate	moderate
Main EP issue	heating in winter	cooling in summer	cooling in summer	cooling in summer/ heating in winter	Cooling in summer/heating in winter	heating in winter	heating in winter
Population	2.8 million	47.4 million	<1 million	6.8 million	3.8 million	83 million	5 million
Region	Northern Europe	South Europe	Southeast Europe	Eastern Europe	Eastern Europe	Western Europe	Western Europe

THANK YOU!



EmpowerMed

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N° 847052. The sole responsibility for the content of this document lies with the authors. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union. Neither the EASME nor the European Commission are responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.



Gender tools at EmpowerMed

Post cards








HEAT or EAT?

A question people exposed to energy poverty often must deal with.

Approximately 57 million people in Europe cannot keep their homes warm during winter ...

... and still there is a lack of knowledge of and action on energy poverty.

It is time to change policy!

-  Raise awareness about energy poverty!
-  Provide data considering gender and intersectional aspects!
-  Enhance democracy and participation in energy policies!
-  Empower energy-poor households and single-parent families!
-  Promote the integration of renewable energies for vulnerable groups!



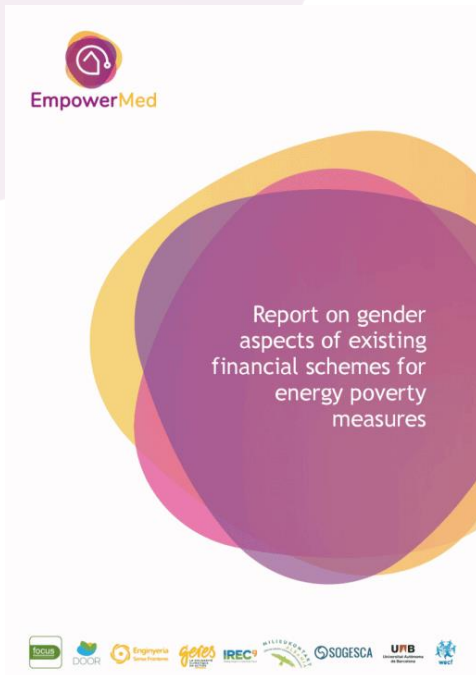
For more information, scan this QR code with your phone.



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Information / Publication / Data

No data - no visibility; no visibility - no interest; no interest - no action; no action - no accountability



<https://www.wecf.org/report-on-gender-aspects-of-existing-financial-schemes-for-energy-poverty-measures/>



<https://www.wecf.org/de/gender-and-energy-poverty-factsheet/>



https://www.wecf.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Report_Green-Deal-Gender.pdf



<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/18990.pdf>



EmpowerMed Film

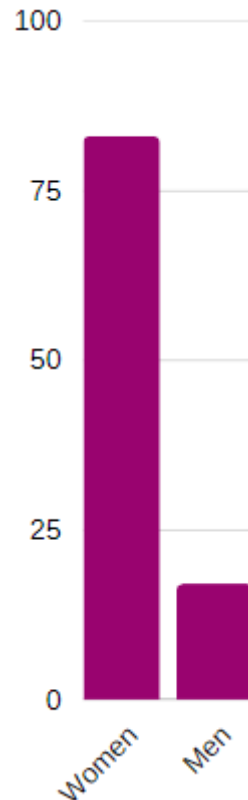
<https://www.empowermed.eu/>

Screenshot of the EmpowerMed website in a web browser. The browser tabs show: E-Mail – Katharina Habers, Kalender – Katharina Habers, (376) Posteo Webmail :: P, Wellbased Webinar May2, and Empowermed – Empower. The address bar shows [empowermed.eu](https://www.empowermed.eu/). The website header includes the EmpowerMed logo, navigation links (Home, EmpowerMed, Our motivation, News & Events, Publications), and a 'Get in touch' link. The main content area features a yellow background with the text 'EMPOWERING WOMEN TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST ENERGY POVERTY' and a video player. The video player shows a thumbnail of a young child with the text 'THE AIM OF EMPOWERMED IS TO CONTRIBUTE TO ENERGY POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND HEALTH IMPROVEMENT...'. The video player controls show a play button, a progress bar at 0:00 / 2:03, and a YouTube logo. The bottom of the browser window shows a taskbar with various application icons and a system tray with the date 24.05.2022 and time 08:00.

Energy Poverty and Gender

One-Parent Families and Material Deprivation

- Women make up almost 85% of all one-parent families in the EU
- Less likely to work full-time, more likely to be employed in lower-paid jobs, less likely to progress in their careers and more likely to do unpaid care work



- Material deprivation is twice as likely in one-parent families with a female head of household (20% female versus 9% male households)
- Younger mothers and women with young children are the least-employed parent groups

