



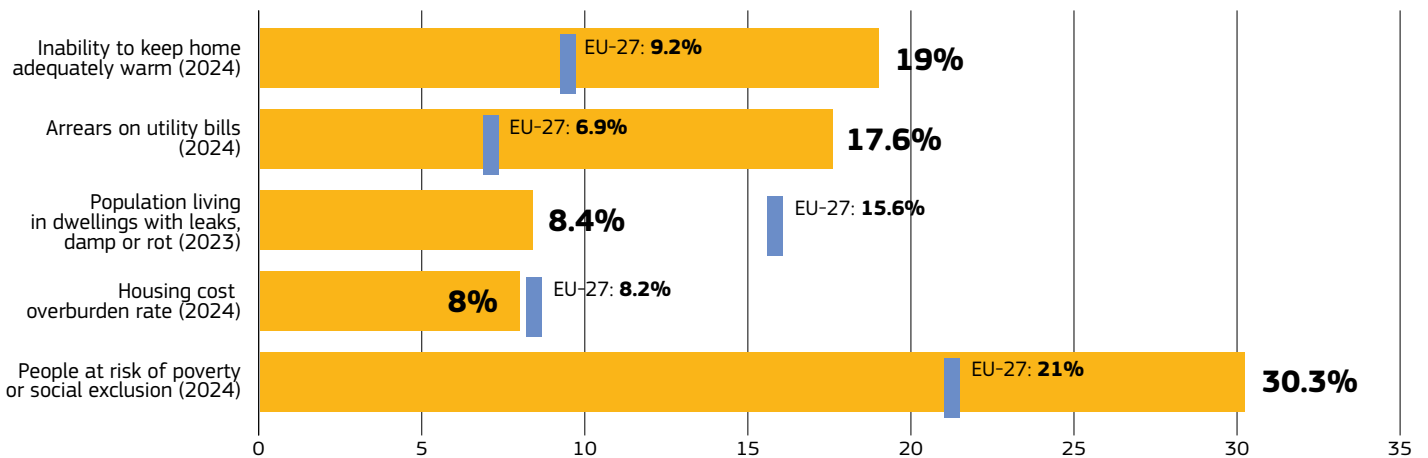
BULGARIA

NATIONAL ENERGY POVERTY DEFINITION

The official definition of energy poverty in Bulgaria was introduced through the [amendments to the Energy Act \(2023\)](#). A household in energy poverty is “a household that, at current energy prices, has an average monthly disposable income per household member for the previous year that is less than or equal to the official poverty line, after deducting its expenditure for the typical energy consumption determined according to the energy characteristics of the dwelling, and which therefore does not have access to basic energy services for adequate heating, cooling, lighting and provision of energy for household appliances”.

ENERGY POVERTY EPAH INDICATORS

A selection of indicators, based on the Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/1563 on energy poverty.



[EPAH'S ENERGY POVERTY INDICATORS DASHBOARD](#)



NATIONAL ENERGY POVERTY INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Bulgaria has established criteria for assessing whether a household is in energy poverty. These are specified in [Decree no. 267 on the adoption of an Ordinance on the criteria, conditions and procedure for determining the status of households in energy poverty and the status of vulnerable customers for electricity supply \(2023\)](#), based on 1) average monthly disposable income of household members, 2) cost for typical energy consumption, 3) energy performance of the home.

A household is in energy poverty when its disposable income, after deducting energy costs, falls below the national poverty line. Energy costs are estimated based on the building typology's energy performance, household composition (including vulnerability coefficients for households with children, older adults, or persons with disabilities), and standard energy prices. According to this indicator, the [National Energy and Climate Plan \(2024\)](#) reports that the number of people living in energy poverty was 1,809 million in 2023 (28% of the population). While Bulgaria has not yet defined official energy poverty targets, the [draft Social Climate Plan](#) includes a headline target for reducing the share of the population in energy poverty by 10% until 2032, as well as other quantitative targets related to the uptake of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies.





March 2026

NATIONAL ENERGY POVERTY GOVERNANCE

KEY POLICIES ADDRESSING ENERGY POVERTY

YEAR	LAW	DESCRIPTION
2020	Long-Term Building Renovation Strategy	The LTRS sets the vision and framework for modernizing and decarbonising the country's building stock until 2050. It recognises energy poverty as a widespread national challenge driven by poor building performance, inefficient heating, and low incomes. To overcome financial and structural barriers, the strategy proposes higher or zero co-financing requirements for vulnerable households and better alignment between heating aid and long-term renovation support.
2023	Decree no. 199 Amendments to the Energy Act	The amendments to the Energy Act enshrine for the first time a national definition of energy poverty and vulnerable consumers, as part of a broader reform to liberalize the electricity market. It provides the legal basis for targeted social protections and priority support for energy-poor households and vulnerable consumers, mandates tracking and monitoring of energy poverty, and foresees a long-term program for reducing energy poverty.
2023	Decree No. 267	This Decree establishes the criteria, conditions and procedure for determining if a household is in energy poverty and/or is a vulnerable consumer. It operationalizes the definitions set out in the Energy Act and guides the implementation of measures.
2024	National Energy and Climate Plan for 2030	The NECP lays out the plan for Bulgaria to meet the EU's energy and climate goals for 2030. It includes a comprehensive approach to reducing energy poverty by combining social protection, energy efficiency measures, and market reforms. The plan prioritises renovation of homes occupied by energy-poor households, expansion of renewable energy in residential buildings, and modernisation of heating systems. It also foresees a National Observatory on Energy Poverty to coordinate policies, improve data collection, and guide decision-making across institutions.
Ongoing	Draft National Building Renovation Plan	Bulgaria has submitted its draft National Building Renovation Plan to the European Commission, building on the previous Long-Term Building Renovation Strategy. The country plans to conduct a public consultation process prior to the publication of the final version of the Plan in 2026.
Ongoing	Social Climate Plan	Bulgaria is currently developing its Social Climate Plan. A draft version was made available for public consultation in July 2025.



NATIONAL ENERGY POVERTY GOVERNANCE

NATIONAL ENERGY POVERTY OBSERVATORY

Bulgaria does not yet have a National Energy Poverty Observatory. However, the [National Energy and Climate Plan for 2030](#) foresees the establishment of an Observatory to function as a platform for collaboration among policymakers, researchers, and practitioners. As of September 2025, the EU-funded [LIFE NEXUS](#) project aims to establish an energy poverty observatory in the country.

EPAH ANTENNAS AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

EPAH Antenna: EPAH has established partnerships with energy poverty stakeholders in all EU Member States. In Bulgaria, the EPAH Antenna is Cleantech Bulgaria (CTBG). CTBG focuses on increasing awareness and understanding of energy poverty and empowering local authorities, communities, and civil society by providing knowledge, technical assistance, and opportunities for collaboration.

Website: <https://cleantech.bg/en/home/>. Contact: info@cleantech.bg. Check [EPAH's Organisations List](#) to discover other energy poverty stakeholders in the country.



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NATIONAL MEASURES AND ILLUSTRATIVE PRACTICES

This section highlights a selection of ongoing national measures and local initiatives addressing energy poverty. Further projects and updated information are available in the online EPAH Atlas database.

EPAH ATLAS DATABASE



MEASURES	DESCRIPTION
Целева помощ за отопление (targeted heating aid) [at least since 2022]	Bulgaria's standard heating allowance is a social support program managed by the Agency for Social Assistance to help low-income households cover winter heating costs. The monthly allowance is granted during the heating season based on household income, family composition, property, and other criteria, as assessed by local Social Assistance Directorates. It is expected to benefit around 400,000 to 420,000 households across the country in 2025/2026.
National Programme for Energy Efficiency of Multi-Family Residential Buildings [since 2015]	Launched in 2015, it aims to modernize and improve the energy performance of multi-apartment buildings. The programme provides targeted financing for renovations, including insulation, heating system upgrades, and other energy-saving measures, with applications managed by the municipalities. As of recent reports, nearly BGN 1.95 billion has been paid out, resulting in the renovation of approximately 1,970 buildings. In June 2025, the government announced a new programme with a planned budget of BGN 2.5 billion covering up to 2029. The programme benefits households by improving living conditions but does not include specific provisions for energy-poor households.
Renovation of multi-family housing in the regions affected by the energy transition [2021-2027]	Bulgaria has allocated nearly BGN 200 million for energy-efficiency renovations of multi-family residential buildings in coal regions, including Stara Zagora, Pernik, and Kyustendil. The funding is provided under the 2021–2027 Development of Regions Programme. In the first round, 329 proposals were submitted and over 117 contracts have been signed. The programme aims to raise renovated buildings to at least energy class "B" while supporting sustainable development.
National Scheme for Supporting Households in the Field of Energy from Renewable Sources [operational only in 2023]	Launched in 2023 as part of the Recovery and Resilience Plan, this scheme aims to promote the use of renewable energy in households. It finances the installation of solar water heaters and rooftop photovoltaic systems up to 10 kWp, including optional electricity storage. It primarily targets households that rely on inefficient solid-fuel heating.



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NATIONAL MEASURES AND ILLUSTRATIVE PRACTICES

ILLUSTRATIVE PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION
ComAct: Bulgarian pilots	Funded by the EU's Horizon 2020 programme, the ComAct project aimed to make energy efficiency improvements in multi-family apartment buildings affordable and manageable for energy-poor communities. Main achievements in Bulgaria include the renovation of four multifamily residential buildings in Burgas and Gabrovo and the creation of the Energy Office of Burgas as a local one-stop shop that provides advice to citizens and homeowners' associations.
SUNRISE project	The SUNRISE project, funded by the European Climate Initiative (EUKI) of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Protection (BMWK), pilots the installation of small plug-in photovoltaic installations in social and municipal housing to support energy-poor households. In Bulgaria, demonstration systems of up to 800 W were installed in Dupnitsa and Botevgrad, providing partial electricity supply and helping reduce household energy costs.
SHEERenov+ project	Funded by the LIFE programme and building on a previous Horizon 2020 project, SHEERenov+ facilitates the home renovation process through a network of specialized One-Stop Service Centres. These centres are operating in six pilot cities – Sofia, Plovdiv, Stara Zagora, Burgas, Ruse and Gabrovo – offering comprehensive technical, administrative and financial support to homeowners and providing clear, accessible and reliable information on renovation options.

FURTHER READING

- [Energy Poverty in Bulgaria – Dimensions and Factors](#)
- [Conceptualizing and Measuring Energy Poverty in Bulgaria](#)
- [Geographical approach for preparing a National Map of Energy Vulnerability of Households in Bulgaria: Guide to long-term measures for working with energy poor households in Bulgaria](#)
- [Roadmap for sustainable energy renovation of the residential building stock: Second revised edition](#)
- [Infographic: How can energy efficiency with smart technology improve people's health, alleviate energy poverty, and save money?](#)



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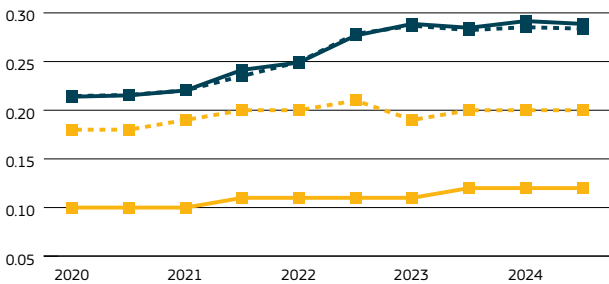
MEMBER STATE BACKGROUND

Bulgaria is a Southeastern European country with a continental climate. The country has a population of [6,445,481 people](#). The real GDP per capita in 2024 was [11,330 euros](#), which is below the EU-27 average value (33,650 euros). Bulgaria has a Gini coefficient of [38.4](#) (a measure of economic inequality), which is above the EU-27 average value of 29.4.

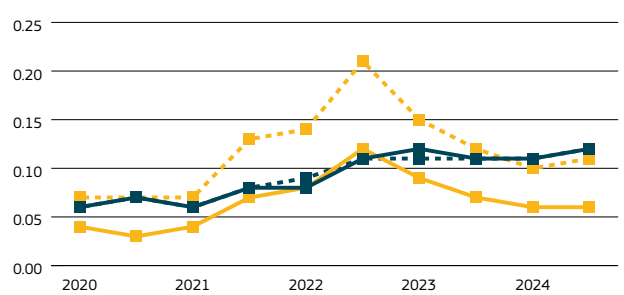
ENERGY PRICES

Legend: Bulgaria (in EURO) (solid orange line), Bulgaria (in PPP) (dashed orange line), EU-27 (in EURO) (solid dark blue line), EU-27 (in PPP) (dashed dark blue line)

ELECTRICITY PRICES FOR HOUSEHOLD CONSUMERS

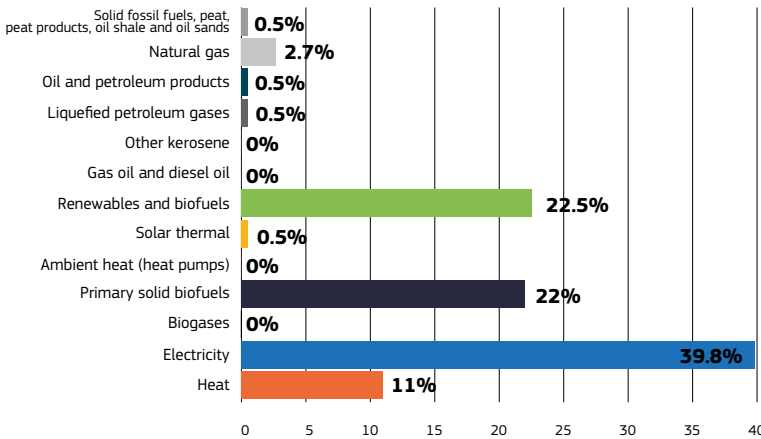


GAS PRICES FOR HOUSEHOLD CONSUMERS

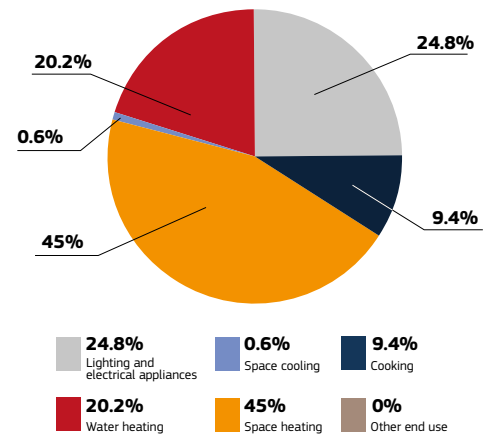


HOUSEHOLDS ENERGY CONSUMPTION

FINAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION IN HOUSEHOLDS BY ENERGY SOURCE (2024)



FINAL ENERGY CONSUMPTION IN HOUSEHOLDS BY END USE (2024)



VULNERABLE AND HARD TO REACH

Note: All data shown as a share of the total population of the country (2024). [Source](#).

Low income	35%	Rural households	31%	Migrants	3%
Low education	11%	Elderly households	18%	Unemployed persons	3%
		Young households	7%	Ill-health and disabilities	19%
		Single parents	4%	Tenants	14%

