

# Inspiring Stories from Municipalities

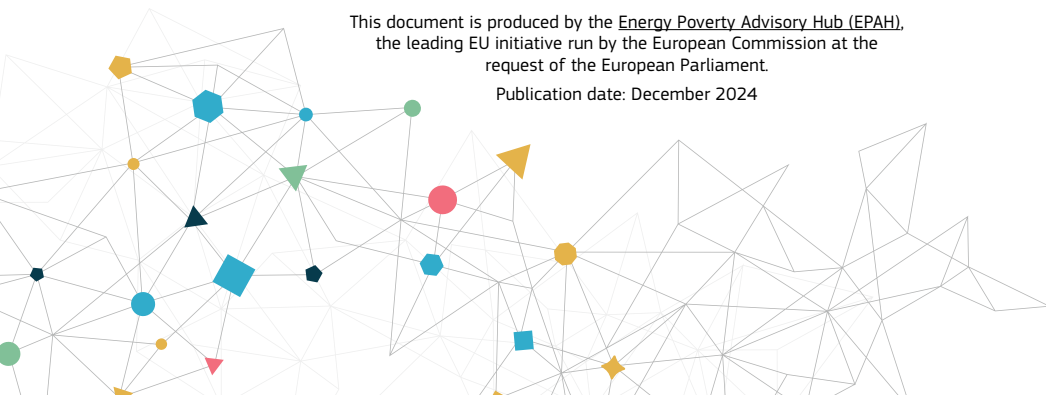
## Six Cases from the Energy Poverty Advisory Hub Technical Assistance Scheme



Each local reality is unique. Tackling energy poverty requires adapted solutions. Having that in mind, the Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (EPAH) run a scheme of technical support to pair municipalities and local organisations working with them with local experts to develop tailored solutions. Through this support scheme, about **300 municipalities** received support **from 2022 to 2024** from different EU countries. We have selected **six cities** to present the inspiring results of this collaboration.

This document is produced by the [Energy Poverty Advisory Hub \(EPAH\)](#), the leading EU initiative run by the European Commission at the request of the European Parliament.

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# Summer energy poverty in Valencia, Spain

September 2023



February 2024

Energy poverty phase:

Implementation



Objectives

Valencia, facing the growing challenge of summer energy poverty, partnered with *Caritas Diocesana de València* and *AEIOLuz Coop* to build local capacity. The goal was to equip energy agents and municipal staff with the skills to reduce heat vulnerability and support vulnerable communities.



Activities

The project brought together **30 participants**, including energy agents assisting at-risk households and municipal technicians shaping climate strategies. Through **23 hours of training**, they gained insights into summer energy poverty, microclimates, and cooling solutions. The training concluded with recommendations for integrating summer energy poverty into local policies, laying the groundwork for further action.

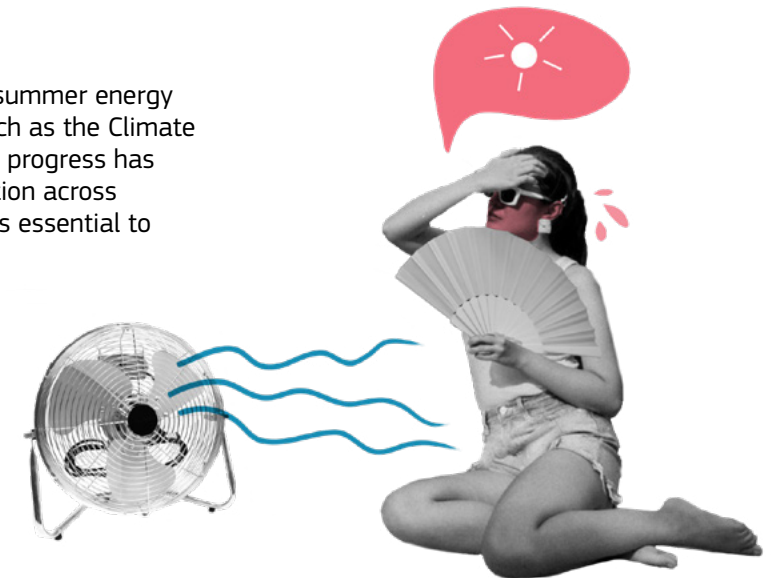


Valencia,  
Spain



Future

Valencia is working to include summer energy poverty in its climate plans, such as the Climate City Contract and SECAP. While progress has been made, ongoing collaboration across municipal departments remains essential to fully address this issue.



# Improving an existing helpdesk in Milan, Italy

August 2022

November 2023



**Technical Assistance (TA) 1**

**Technical Assistance (TA) 2**

September 2023

June 2024



Milan, Italy

**Energy poverty phase:**

**Implementation**



## Objectives

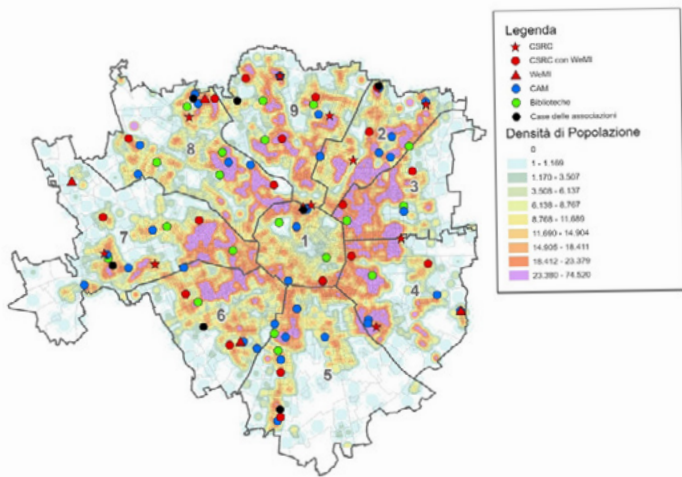
The Municipality of Milan is addressing energy vulnerability and promoting energy welfare by equipping public officers and volunteers with knowledge and tools. A co-designed plan, involving multiple city departments, is nearing completion, with citizen participation facilitated through a One-Stop-Shop helpdesk. Additionally, Milan has launched a Renewable and Solidarity Energy Community, where profits from excess energy sales fund local social projects.

Key objectives include assessing the helpdesk's effectiveness, engaging strategic allies to reach beneficiaries, and developing a community-oriented action model. Experts supported the municipality in analysing and redesigning the helpdesk to focus on social housing. Engagement with service managers and local actors identified priority areas of intervention.



## Activities

Two pilot projects were initiated to test the redesigned model and provide insights for improvement. Mapping the territory and pilot findings informed the final service proposal. Success will depend on building effective territorial networks and adapting co-creation processes, contingent on mobilising sufficient resources.



**CONTACT HELPDESK**





# Energy Community of Telheiras/Lumiar, Portugal

October 2022



July 2023

Energy poverty phases:

Diagnosis

Planning



Objectives

The Lumiar Parish Council, in partnership with the *Telheiras Local Partnership, Coopérnico, and CENSE, FCT-NOVA*, launched one of Portugal's first citizen-led renewable energy communities. This initiative tackled energy poverty and promoted energy democracy by raising awareness, diagnosing energy needs, and counseling vulnerable households and community intermediaries. An open-access guide was created to replicate energy communities locally, aligning with Portugal's energy and climate policies.



Activities

A pilot project installed **13 solar panels** (7.5 kWp), benefiting **17 members**, including three energy-poor families and the parish council itself. Using an inclusive financial model, energy-poor participants faced no upfront costs, with governance rules ensuring equal participation and a non-profit approach. Regulatory approval and legal licensing were secured in November 2023. Detailed energy poverty reports for Lumiar and Lisbon guided the project, which tracked progress through household engagement and pilot actions.



Telheiras/Lumiar, Portugal



Future

Despite barriers like complex licensing processes, a second solar project is planned to expand impact and share lessons for replication.



# Innovative solutions in rural Bukkszentkereszt, Hungary severely affected by cold winters

September 2023



June 2024

Energy poverty phase: **Implementation**



**Objectives**

*Bükkszentkereszt*, a small village in the Bükk Mountains, faces energy poverty due to reliance on outdated firewood heating and the absence of natural gas infrastructure. A 2021 survey revealed low energy efficiency, poor air quality from wet firewood, and high costs impacting over **25% of residents**. The main goals included improving air quality by transitioning from unhealthy wood-burning practices and evaluating cost-effective, less polluting alternatives.



**Activities**

Key activities included organising public consultations, energy days at schools, and an online survey to gather community feedback. Through these channels, citizens actively participated in shaping the project. Experts explored alternative technologies, visiting factories and assessing the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of different options. The community was involved in discussions about transitioning away from unhealthy wood-burning practices, with a focus on cleaner, affordable and sustainable solutions.



Bukkszentkereszt,  
Hungary



**Future**

The resulting “energy courtyard” concept offers tailored solutions for cleaner and more affordable wood heating. Following positive feedback from the community, the municipality is now actively seeking funding to implement the plan, ensuring citizen support throughout.

# Facing out coal in Eordaia and Grevena, West Macedonia, Greece

## West Macedonia, Greece

September 2023



June 2024

Energy poverty phase: **Diagnosis**



**Objectives**

Western Macedonia, a Just Transition Region, have faced significant challenges due to the energy and economic crises, including rising unemployment, income reductions, and increased heating costs during harsh fall and winter months. The strategic objectives were to identify energy poverty, measure socio-economic impacts, guide local governments in policy formulation, and support educational activities, especially for students.



**Future**

In the future municipal efforts should focus on altering the heating and cooling systems, facing energy illiteracy, and offering targeted financial support via the just transition mechanism in the pathway toward climate neutrality. Phasing out coal production, along with social and structural measures, is crucial for achieving EU climate goals.



**Activities**

The assessment revealed severe energy poverty, with many households struggling with outdated buildings, insufficient insulation, and financial constraints. High energy costs and economic challenges, such as unemployment, worsened the situation. A lack of awareness about Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) highlighted the need for capacity building.





# Home renovation and financial schemes in Besançon, France

September 2023



February 2024



## Objectives

Besançon, part of the Great Besançon Metropolis (GBM), has been addressing energy poverty through initiatives like the SLIME programme. Despite efforts, **15% of households** in Besançon and 13.5% in GBM remain affected by high energy costs and low efficiency.

Key objectives were to analyse public policies on energy retrofitting and recommend improvements, particularly for financial schemes. The analysis highlighted several initiatives which supports energy-poor households, and local subsidies for energy-efficiency renovations, mainly targeting single-family homes. However, challenges persist, especially after the regional council discontinued its pre-financing scheme.



## Activities

Proposed improvements include better support for co-ownerships, advancing subsidies, direct payments to companies, and easier access to zero-interest loans. The diagnosis also opens up funding opportunities, particularly with the creation of a comprehensive one-stop shop for renovation services in collaboration with FIDEO, the Emerging Renovation Bank. This approach, combining technical and human sciences, has helped shape a new territorial strategy to combat energy poverty.



Besançon,  
France

Energy poverty phases:

Planning

Implementation



## Pourcentage de ménages dans les 3 premiers déciles, au taux d'effort énergétique (TEE) – Logement > à 8% – même quartiers

3. PRECARITE ENERGETIQUE ///  
Grand Besançon Métropole  
La précarité énergétique des ménages  
Le taux d'effort énergétique

Une proportion de ménages en précarité énergétique varie en fonction des communes ou quartiers

