Energy Poverty in Austria

EnR - Thinking Group Meeting - Salzburg

Austrian Energy Agency (AEA)
Shruti Athavale | 27.9.2017

Introduction – Energy Poverty in Europe

Energy Poverty in the Media

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Energiearmut: Wenn die Wohnung im Winter kalt bleibt

FRANZISKA ZOIDL
17. Jänner 2017, 06:00

106 POSTINGS

foto: istockphoto.com/argument

Wenn es draußen kalt ist, dann wird es auch in so mancher Wohnung ungemütlich, deren Bewohner sich das Heizen nicht leisten können. Ein Grund liegt oft im schlechten thermischen Zustand des Gebäudes.

Für eine Studie wurde erhoben, welche Rolle bei Energiearmut die Gebäudequalität spielt und wie das Einbinden der Bewohner helfen könnte

In manchen österreichischen Wohnungen ist es im Winter ungemütlich: 268.000 Menschen sind laut einer Erhebung aus dem Jahr 2014 von Energiearmut betroffen. Drei Prozent der Bevölkerung also, die sich die Energiekosten ihrer Wohnung nicht leisten können. Das bedeutet nicht nur, dass sie nicht heizen können, sondern auch, dass es keinen Strom und kein warmes Wasser gibt.

"Betroffene müssen sich häufig entscheiden, ob sie lieber warm duschen wollen oder ein bisschen heizen", sagt Theresia Vogel, Geschäftsführerin des Klima- und Energiefonds. In Österreich werde das Thema Energiearmut erst seit 2010 zunehmend thematisiert. Eine einheitliche Definition davon fehle aber, erzählt Vogel: Zu vielfältig seien die Ursachen, zu inhomogen die Gruppe der darunter leidenden Menschen.

Für Betroffene gebe es derzeit hauptsächlich kurzfristige Maßnahmen wie Heizkostenzuschüsse. "Damit wird aber nicht die Ursache bekämpft", betont Vogel. Oftmals liege der Grund für nicht bezahlbare Energiekosten nicht nur in einem geringen Einkommen, sondern auch im schlechten Zustand des Wohnhauses.

oesterreich.orf.at/stories/2614798

Meistbesucht Erste Schritte Amazon eBay Toshiba P

90.000 Haushalte lei Energiearmut

90.000 Haushalte und damit sind von Energiearmut betrof Prozent aller Haushalte, wie e ergibt.

Energiearm sind nach der E-Cont über ein verfügbares Einkommen unter der Armutsgefährdungssch überdurchschnittlich hoh gilt ein verfügbares Eink des Medianeinkommens überdurchschnittlich we sie - in Anlehnung an die 140 Prozent der Median Für die IFES-Studie im Au Haushalte befragt.

Pensionistinnen in Westen

Von Energiearmut betrof Pensionistinnen in große würden sich schwertun, Energierechnung zu bez Smartphone, so die E-Co Durchschnitt monatlich typischerweise mehr als

TIME

GOING GREEN

The Worst Kind of Poverty: Energy Poverty

By Bryan Walsh | Tuesday, Oct. 11, 2011

Tweet G+ Read Later

I want you to try to imagine what it's like to live without electricity. It's boring, for one thing — no television, no MP3 player, no video games. And it's lonely and disconnected as well — no computer, no Internet, no mobile phone. You can read books, of course — but at night you won't have light, other than the flicker of firewood. And about that firewood — you or someone in your family had to gather it during the day, taking you away from more productive work or schooling, and in some parts of the world, exposing you to danger. That same firewood is used to cook dinner, throwing off smoke that can turn the air inside your home far more toxic than that breathed in an industrial city. You may lack access to vaccines and modern drugs because the nearest hospital doesn't have regular power to keep the medicine refrigerated. You're desperately poor — and the lack of electricity helps to ensure that you'll stay that way.

Issouf Sanogo / AFP / Getty Images

Vendors in a market in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, use candles during a power outage. Over 95% of those without electricity are either in sub-Saharan Africa or developing Asia

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WHY IS ENERGY POVERTY STILL AN ISSUE?

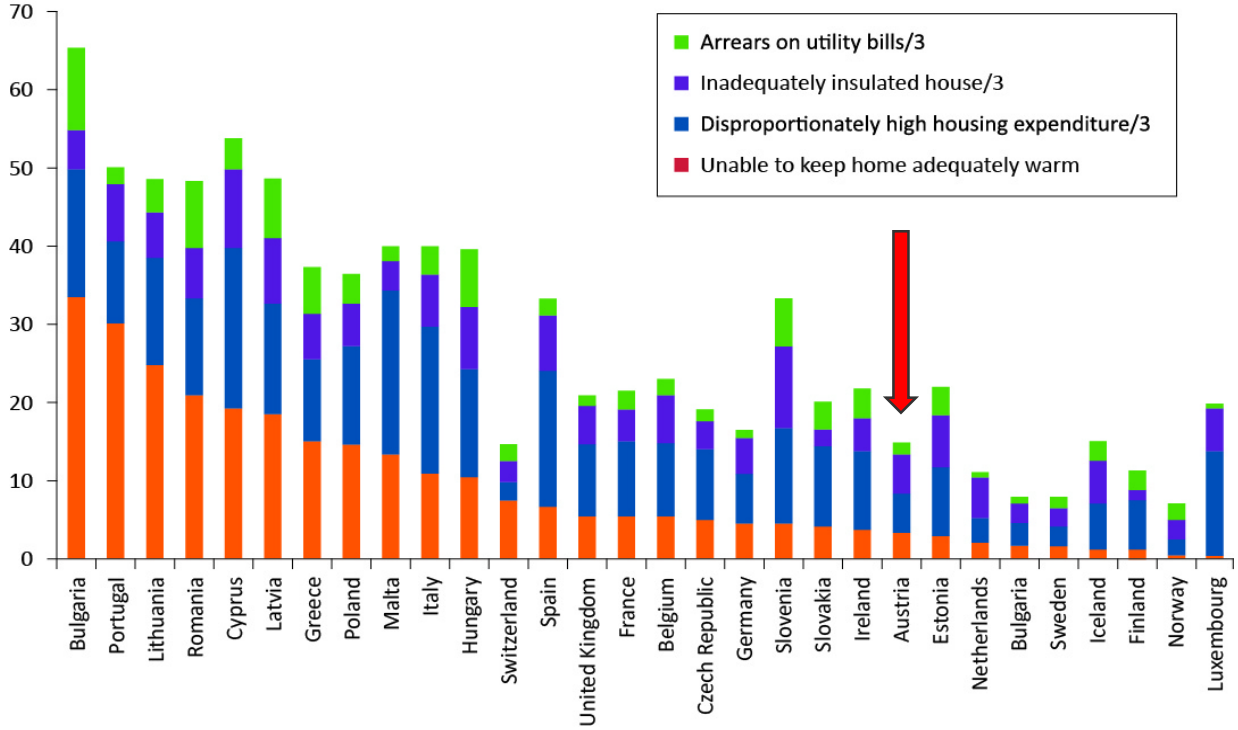
Hard to imagine though it is, there are still people in Europe in 2016 who are compelled to choose between heating and eating during wintertime. It is the bitter reality in one of the most developed economies of the world, the European Union. The countries that suffer the most are not the ones with cold climate in the North, but those with old and inefficient building stock, a largely privatised rental sector, weak social protection and services, and above all low household income in relation to energy prices. Only an integrated and complex policy approach, in which energy market regulation and social support work towards the same goal, can solve this problem.

Energy Poverty Definition & Measures Across Europe

- Definitions vary significantly across Member States, reflecting differences in:
  - **Problem** identification
  - Approaches to **action**
- Less than a **third** of Member States explicitly recognise concepts of energy poverty:
  - Four countries have legislated definitions (UK, Ireland, France, Cyprus)
- Best practice measures:
  - **Financial** interventions
  - Consumer **protection** measures
  - Energy **efficiency** measures
  - **Information** provision & **awareness** campaigns

Source: Energy poverty and vulnerable consumers in the energy sector across the EU: analysis of policies and measures; Policy Report

A Composite Fuel Poverty Indicator Based on the Percentage of Populations in Different EU Countries



Source: Bouzarovski, S. (2011, November). Energy poverty in the EU: A review of the evidence, ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/archive/conferences/energy2011nov/doc/papers/bouzarovski_eu_energy_poverty_background%20paper.pdf

Commonly-Used Indicators

- Energy deprivation
  - Paying the energy bills
  - Warning/Notice from the energy producer
- Energy inefficient home
  - Leaky windows
  - Mould in bathrooms and bedrooms
  - Cold walls and floors
- Use of energy
  - Heating single room
  - Lack of knowledge

AUSTRIAN ENERGY AGENCY

E-Control Austria

Study on Energy Poverty

Statistics on Poverty and Energy Poverty in Austria

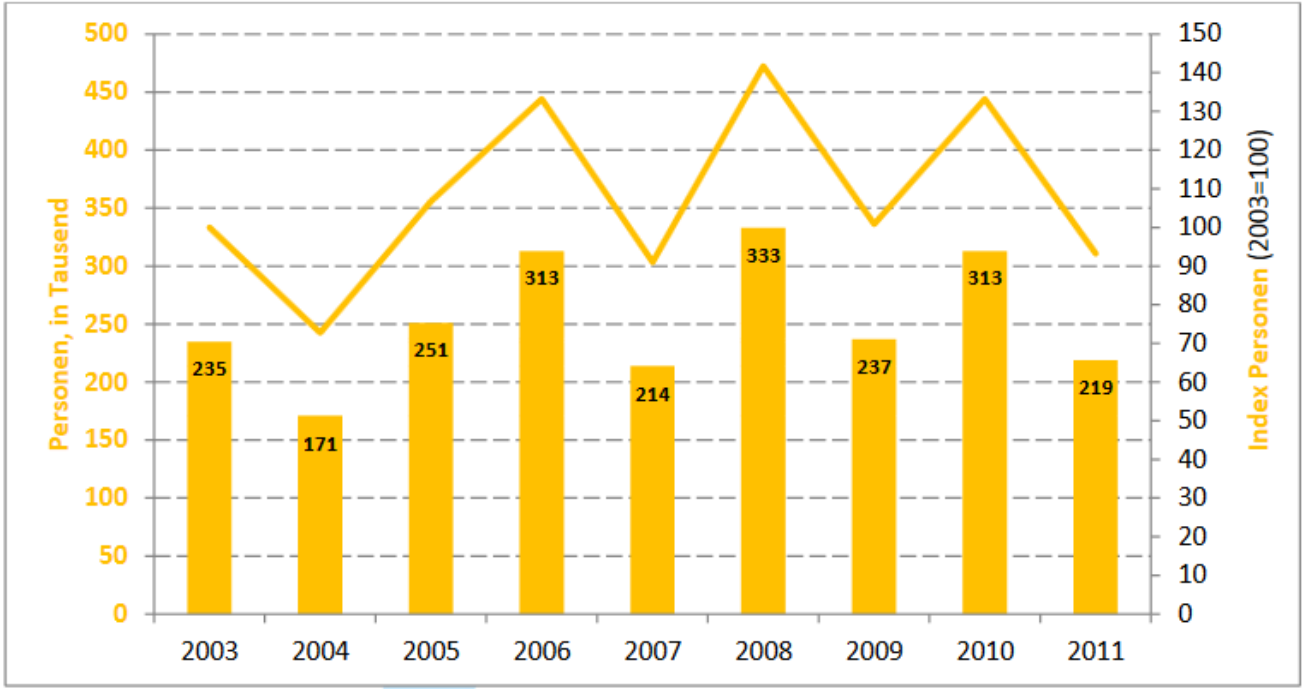
- **BMASK Report (2012):**
  - In the year 2011, approximately 1.05 million people, or approximately 12,6% of the Austrian population, was considered to be „**at risk of poverty**“ (net income of €1,066/month) or less
  - According to the Austrian definition, 1,246,000 persons (or approximately 15% of the population) is „**financially deprived**“. As a result of their low incomes, these individuals can not adequately take part in social life
  - If both „at risk of poverty“ and „financial depreviation“ are present, then one speaks of „**poverty manifestation**“. Approximately 431,000 people (or 5.2%) are affected

Source: E-Control Austria (2014): Energiearmut: Definitionen und Indikatoren. Überarbeitete Version 2013

Statistics on Poverty and Energy Poverty in Austria

- **EU-SILC (2011):**
  - 219,000 people (2.6%), say that they can not afford to keep the entire apartment adequately warm.
  - However, about 95,000 people are at risk of poverty (43%).
- **Consumer Survey 2009/2010 (Statistik Austria 2012):**
  - The average household spends about €137/month or 4.7% of all monthly consumption expenditures for energy (incl. expenses for electricity and heat)
  - Low-income households spend a slightly higher share of energy on average:
    - The poorest 10% of Austrian households (with an available household income of €1,305 or less per month) spend €83 (5.9%) of €1,410 total on energy.
    - Households in the second decile, spend €1,600 for consumption expenditures, of which €106 (6.6%) is for energy.
    - The richest 10% of Austrian households (income of €5,342 / month or more) spend €189 (3.7%) of their average monthly consumption expenditures (€5,110) on energy.

Number of People Affected by Energy Poverty in AT



Quellen: EU-SILC 2011; BMASK 2011, 2010, 2009; Statistik Austria 2012a, 2009, 2008, 2007.

Current Situation in Austria

- Presently, there is no clear and unified definition of energy poverty in Austria.
- Background
  - Low-income households have to spend a disproportionately large percentage of their income on living, food and energy (necessary elements to sustain life)
  - Though low-income households are affected by the high energy costs, this factor shouldn't be the only one that is used to define energy poverty

Source: E-Control Austria (2014): Energiearmut: Definitionen und Indikatoren. Überarbeitete Version 2013

Definition of Energy Poverty in Austria

- "[...] households are deemed to be in fuel poverty if, after deducting their actual housing costs, they have insufficient residual net income to meet their total required fuel costs (...) after all other minimum living
- Wha
- Conr
- Takin
- Adaption of the income to the **structure** of the household (size…)
- **Energy costs** in comparison to other households
- Actual **necessary** energy costs
- **Standards** for energy consumption
- What are the **proper costs** for energy?

Energy poverty affected are households which have an income below the poverty threshold and at the same time have high energy costs above-average… (suggested definition by E-Control)

Suggestions from E-Control Austria

- In order to accurately represent the various facets of energy poverty, E-Control suggests using the following indicators to measure energy poverty:
  a) Additional indicators should make sure to encompass new provisions in energy consumption-related legislation (ex. reminders due to unpaid energy services, threats and execution of shutdowns, installation of pre-payment meters, etc.)
  b) Subjective indicators from the household point of view (ex. long-term payment difficultires, compensation, energy saving measures) should be examined in more detail
  c) Data on household income, as well as housing and energy costs should be gathered
     - This information should be coupled with the reporting related to poverty in Austria („Armutsberichterstattung“ from Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales und Konsumentenschutz - BMASK)

Projects on Energy Poverty

National Project (1)

RedEn - Reduction of Energy Poverty Through Building Renovation with the Participation of Residents (in progress)

- **Funded by:** Austrian Climate and Energy Fund
- **Project Partners:** e7 Energie Markt Analyse GmbH, Catholic Social Academy of Austria (ksoe) & Department for Migration and Globalisation, Donau-University Krems
- **Preliminary Results:**
  - Majority of interviewed persons are happy with their living conditions
  - However, 27% admit that they can't keep their apartment adequately warm - reason: high energy costs
  - Tend to keep apartments cooler → actual number of individuals affected by energy poverty must be higher

- **Method:**
  - Concrete examples are used to investigate the extent to which building renovations can be implemented
  - Interviews on housing and living conditions
  - Identification of poverty risks (ex. resulting deterioration of buildings in less favored locations) and accompanying care/counselling measures
  - Three different research regions (Vienna-Favoriten, Krems, Korneuburg) will be analysed
  - Direct involvement of affected individuals

Source: http://www.e-sieben.at/de/projekte/1320_red_en.php

National Project (2)
Pilot Project: Combating Energy Poverty (2012-2014)

- Suggested measures:
  - Increasing the **thermal renovation** rate
  - Low-barrier and free **energy advisory** combined with small measures to increase energy efficiency
- Establishment of an **energy support fund**
- **Legal** prohibition of **disconnections** during winter in combination with help to prevent disconnections in the first place
- Possibility of applying for an **exemption from fixed costs** of electricity, gas, district heating and an exemption from energy taxes for all households affected by fuel poverty
- Development and funding of a **national strategy** against fuel poverty under the lead of a relevant Ministry

Source: https://www.energyagency.at/projekte-forschung/energie-klimapolitik/detail/artikel/pilotprojekt-gegen-energiearmut-durchfuehrung-evaluation-und-programm-gegen-energiearmut.html

National Project (2)
Pilot Project: Combating Energy Poverty (2012-2014)

- Evaluation of Results
  - Noticeable effect of **energy advisory** in the reduction of energy consumption by the replacement **the inefficient electrical appliances**
  - Recommendations to policy makers in implementing measures to:
    - Raise the **income**
    - Energy prices and **billing**
    - Raise the **efficiency** of the buildings
    - **Protection** of the consumer
    - Raise **awareness** to change consumer behaviour

Source: https://www.energyagency.at/projekte-forschung/energie-klimapolitik/detail/artikel/pilotprojekt-gegen-energiearmut-durchfuehrung-evaluation-und-programm-gegen-energiearmut.html

EU Project (1)
EC-LINC (2011-2014)

- Project partners: Austria, Belgium, Germany, Hungary & UK
- Aim:
  - Providing **information** and **support** to households
  - **Training** long-term unemployed to become energy **advisors**
  - Energy consultations for EE in **appliances** and **behaviour**, information & awareness
- Outputs:
  - Status quo in the countries
  - **Course materials** for trainers
- Results:
  - Savings around 35-228 € per households

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/projects/en/projects/ec-linc

EU Project (2)
Request2Action

- Project partners: Austria, Belgium, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia & UK
- Aim: ***Providing information and eliminating trust barriers to maximise the impact of EPC recommendations***
- Monitoring the uptake of **EPC recommendations**
- Enhancing **self-assessment advice** for householders
- **Providing effective data** from EPCs to different organisations and companies, which need to understand the energy saving opportunity in their country or region
- Developing **national hubs (information spots)** that will make data available to a range of audiences, provide other relevant information and link supply and demand side stakeholders to encourage uptake of energy efficiency measures

Source: https://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/projects/en/projects/request2action

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