Towards universal energy access – empowering and educating the user

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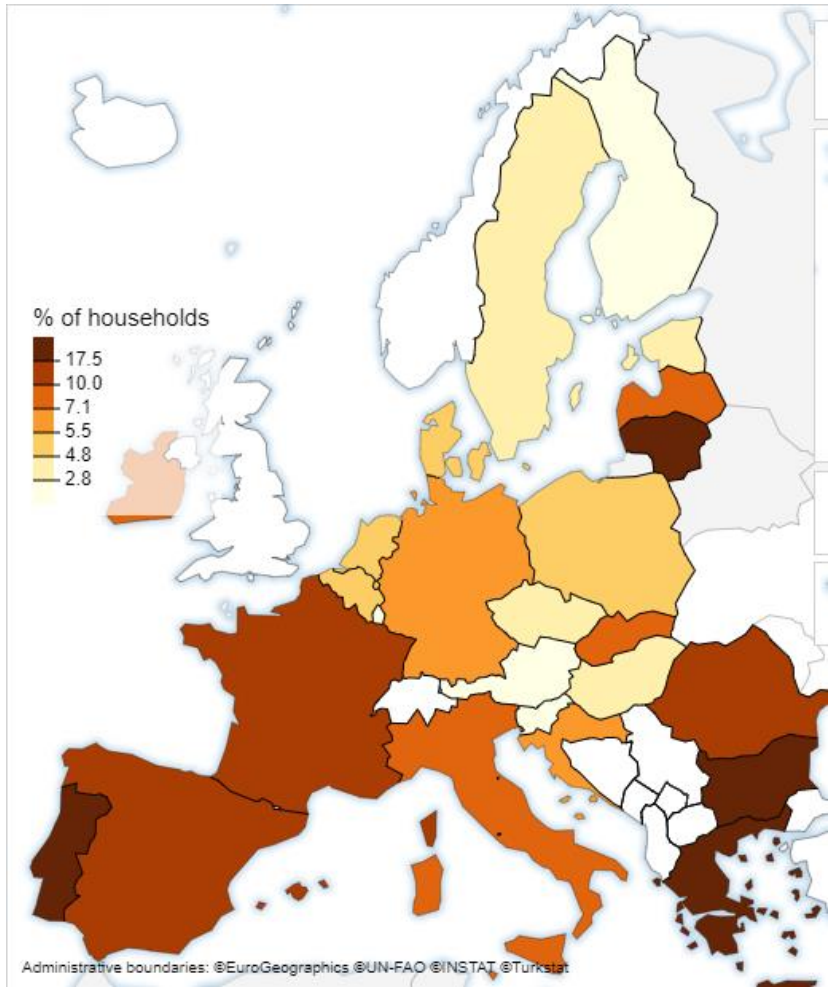
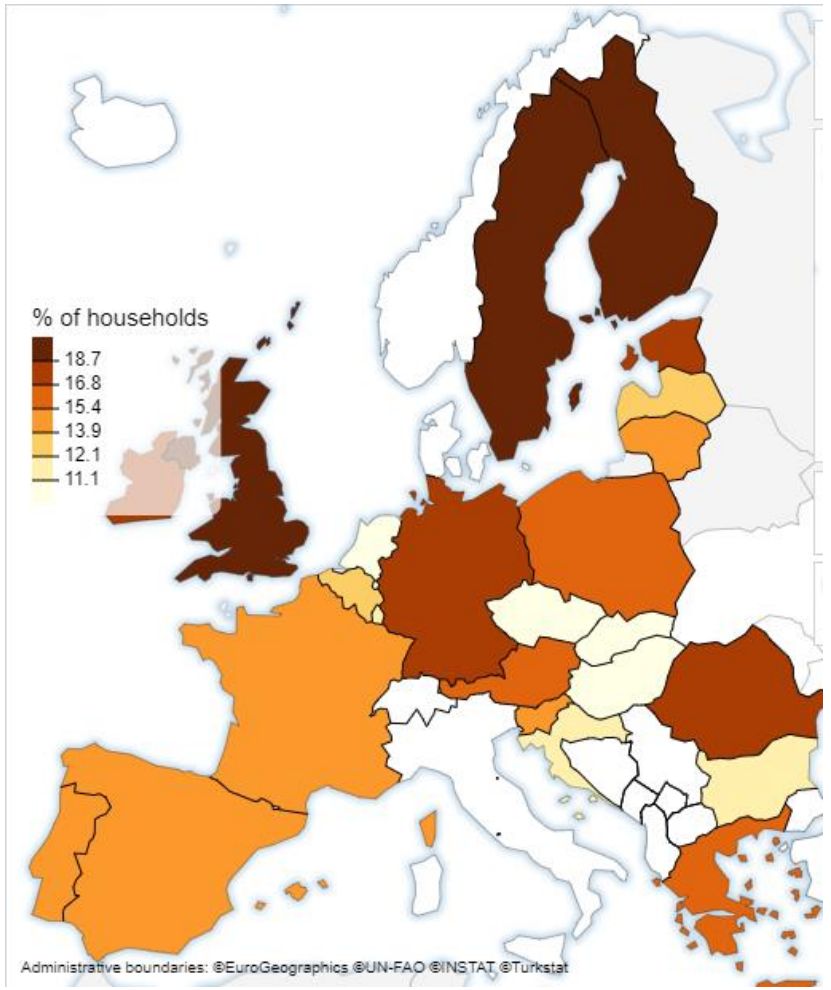
Energy poverty in Europe – (some) common indicators

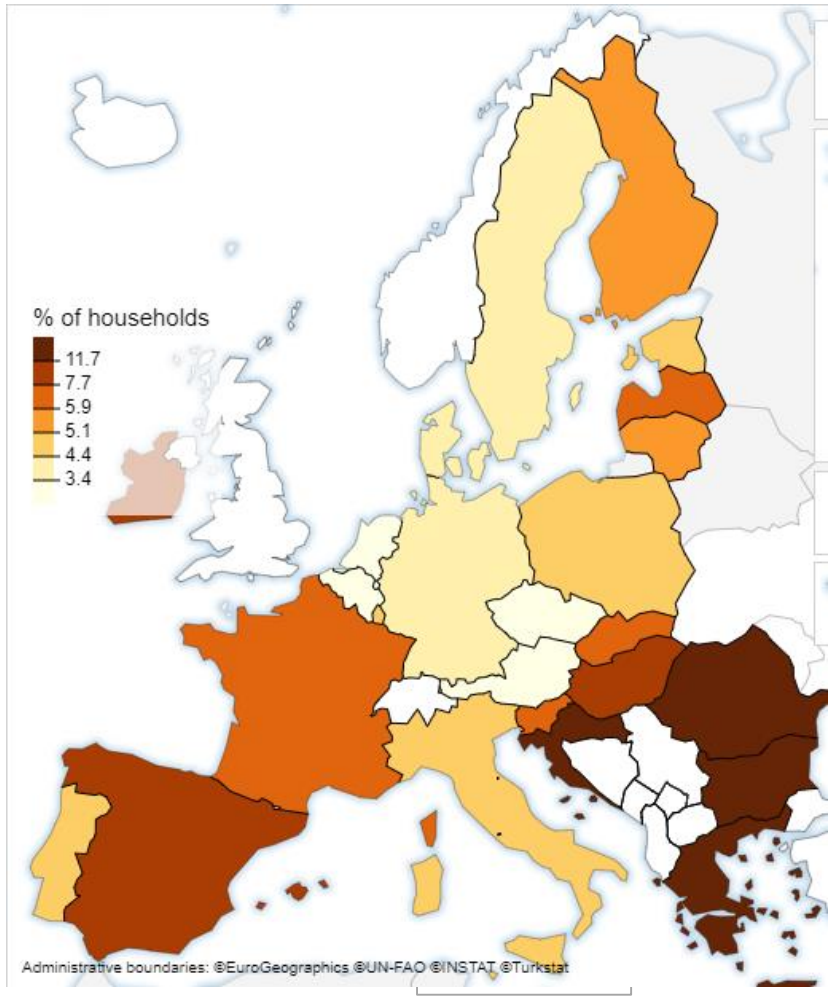
Inability to keep home adequately warm, 2022



High share of energy expenditure in income, 2015



Arrears on utility bills, 2022



Source: https://energy-poverty.ec.europa.eu/observing-energy-poverty/national-indicators_en

Is it colder inside the house than it is outside?

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Energy poverty and vulnerability in Europe

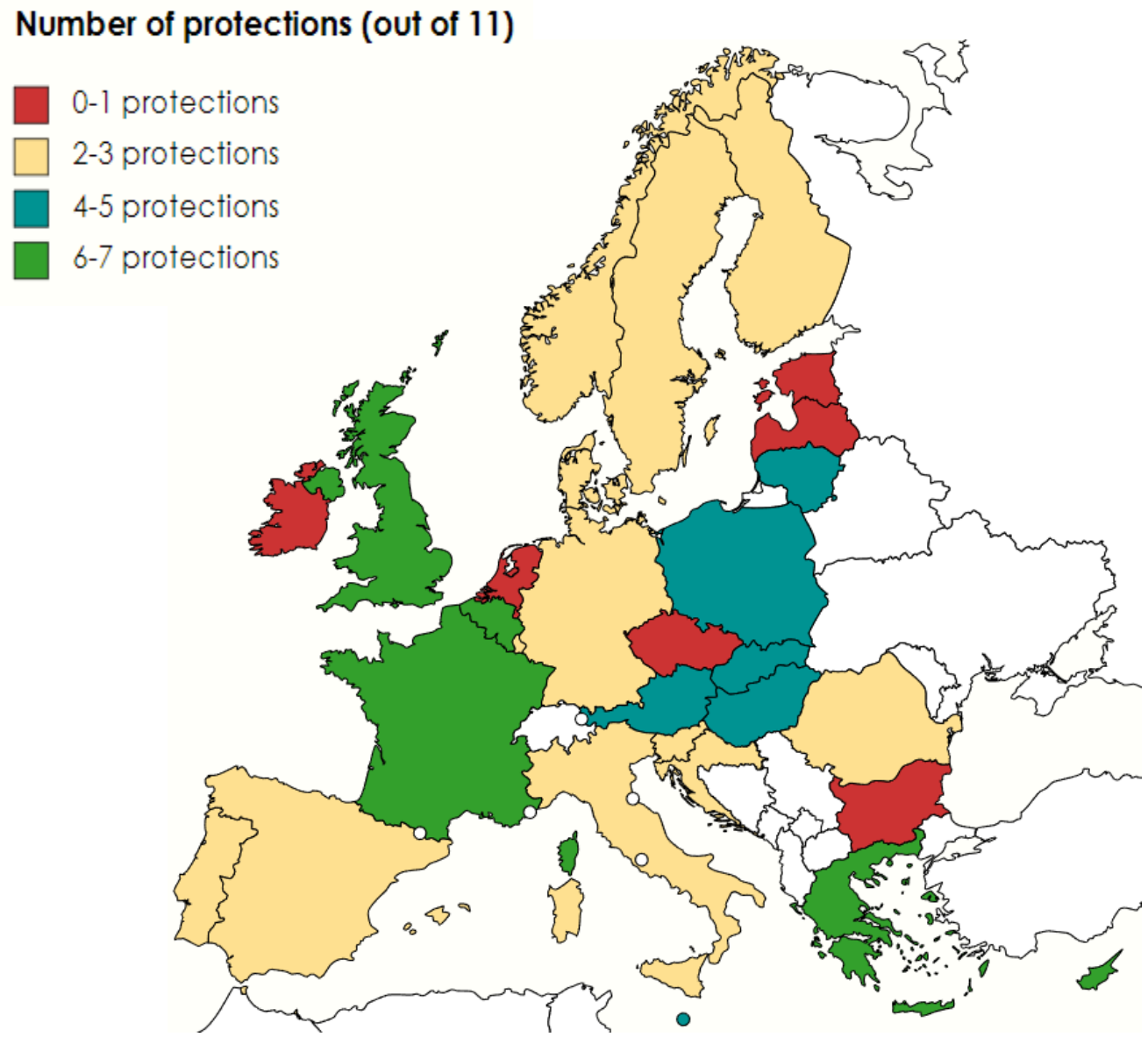
Vulnerability

Wide range of situations beyond income levels:

- Critical dependence on electrical equipment for health reasons
- Socio-demographic factors (age, education)
- Mental and/or physical disabilities
- Larger family size
- Unemployment or remote locality
- Etc.

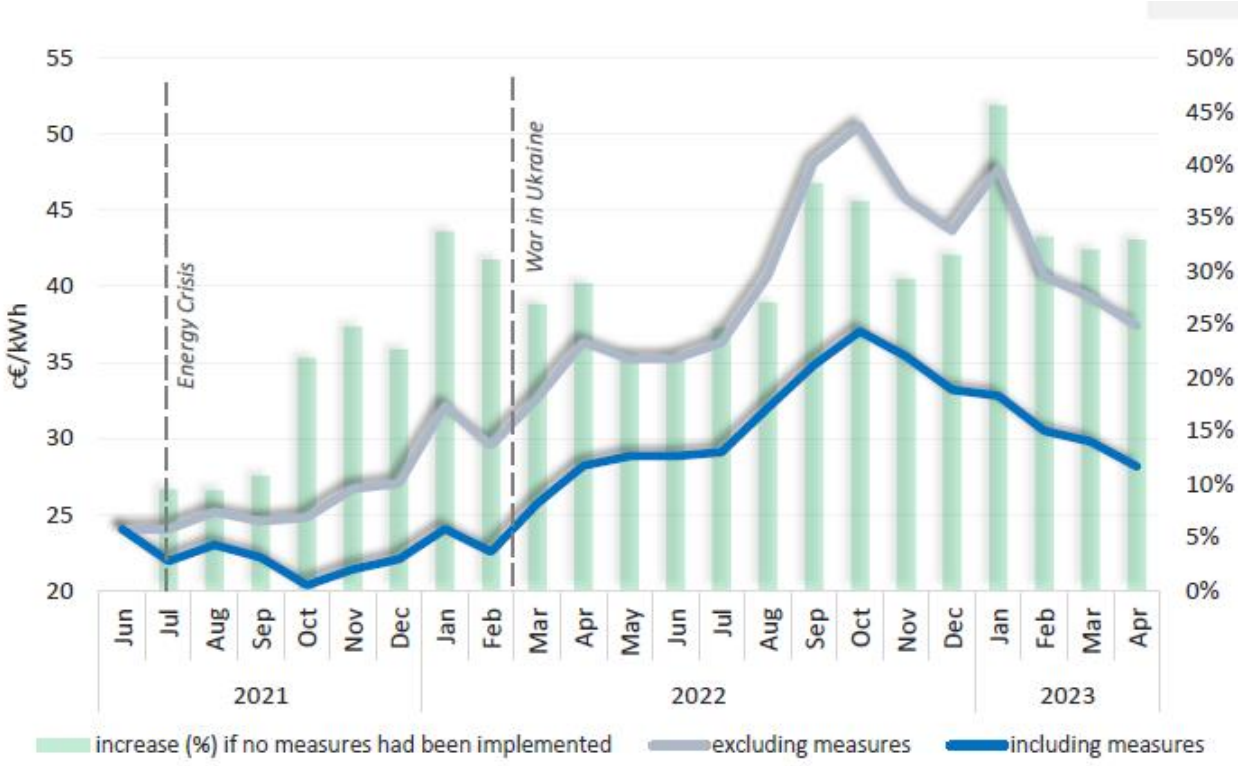
Energy poverty

A household's lack of access to essential energy services, which provide basic levels and decent standards of living and health, including adequate heating, hot water, cooling, lighting, and energy to power appliances



EU's energy crisis affected consumers and strained public budgets

Electricity prices



Natural gas prices

Source: VaasaETT

Delivering “full” access for energy consumers

Essential services

Access to basic energy services is a fundamental right for our citizens and a prerequisite for our societies and economies to grow

Affordability

Access to energy at a fair and affordable price should enable consumers to satisfy their energy needs

Sustainability

Access to sustainable energy sources allows consumers to support the decarbonisation of society, giving them the power to choose how they meet their energy needs

Security

Access to uninterrupted, continuous and reliable energy keeps homes lit, businesses running and society developing

ependence & Democracy

Access to technology and services to produce (and sell / share) their own energy helps to empower consumers in managing security and price risks

Protection

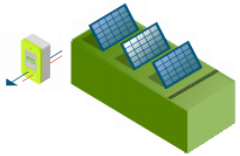
Access to reliable consumer rights and protection provides confidence to consumers, shields the most vulnerable and ensures responsible and responsive business practices in the energy sector

Practical examples: energy communities

Residential building

Horizon 2020 - Compile Project (Lisboa)

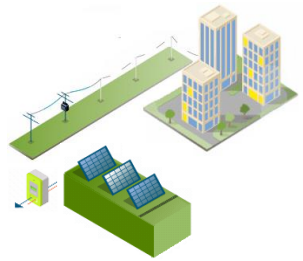
- 8 apartment buildings in 1 condominium
- 180 apartments willing to share rooftop PV electricity



Industrial site

Bondalti, chemical industry (Porto)

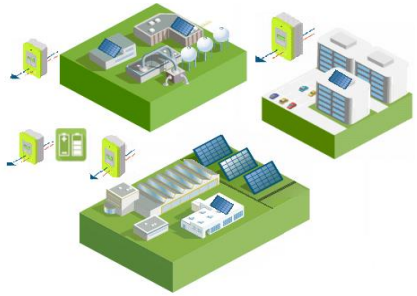
- An intensive electricity user is building a 1MWp PV on site (only <1% of current energy consumption)



Neighbourhood energy community

REC Agra do Amial, EEA Grants Project (Porto)

- REC for a public small social housing district (181 apartments) and a public primary school.
- 130 kWp PV, 3 EV charging points and 115 kVA batteries



Industrial neighbourhood

Sonae Maia industrial complex (Porto)

- REC for an industrial area (3 prosumers), one storage unit, EV charging points.

Citywide neighbourhood

POCITYF, Horizon 2020 (Évora)

- REC for a city centre residential area (11 buildings initially but with potential for dozens others)

Complex social issues – but how can the energy sector, and regulators, help?

Information. Information. Information.

Ensure access to payment plans for late bills and clear rules for disconnections

Continuous outreach on energy efficiency measures and benefits

Offer energy market training and disseminate materials for local public bodies

Remove market and regulatory barriers to self-generation, energy sharing and new services

Facilitate energy community projects (esp. participation of vulnerable consumers)

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