

# Energy Poverty as is: research results and experiences from the field

3.12.2025



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΟ ΔΙΚΤΥΟ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΚΑΤΑΠΟΛΕΜΗΣΗ  
ΤΗΣ ΦΤΩΧΕΙΑΣ  
HELLENIC ANTIPOVERTY NETWORK

# EAPN Greece & energy poverty



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- ❖ Why we care
- ❖ What we do
- ❖ How often we do it
- ❖ How we work
- ❖ What we would like to do next

# Hellenic | Greek Anti-Poverty Network

- An independent coalition of 39 CSOs, grassroots organisations and experts implementing actions with an aim to eradicate poverty and social exclusion (national level)
- Founding member of the European Anti-Poverty Network, the extensive network of national member-networks in Brussels (EU level)
- Est, in December 1990 and legal entity of a non-profit association in 1995.
- Aim: networking for raising awareness on poverty and social exclusion, recording and documenting of policy proposals on their eradication, enhancing the voices of people who experience poverty.

# Poverty

- Complicated discussion by the need for a clear definition. EU: both absolute and relative poverty used to understand the phenomenon. Within the framework of the “Europe 2020” strategy, for the first time, specific target for reducing poverty: lowering by 20 million the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion/“Europe 2030” – 15 million.
- The AROPE indicator: the share of the population experiencing at least 1 of the following:
- **Risk of poverty:** income below the relative poverty threshold (60% of the median equivalised income). In Greece, this threshold is €6,510/ind. and € 13,671/fam+2).
- **Severe material deprivation:** inability to afford at least 7 out of 13 essential items or needs, i.e. unexpected expenses, adequate heating, annual holidays, proper nutrition, replacement of worn-out items, internet access, or basic personal goods.
- **Very low work intensity:** when the working-age members of a household worked less than 20% of their total potential working time during the previous year.
- The combination of these three dimensions provides a more comprehensive understanding of poverty and social exclusion within the EU.

# Energy Poverty (eapn Greece)

•EAPN Greece: not a single, legally established definition different from international/European definitions.

•Why? It is a complex and multidimensional condition, “measured” through various indicators and *parameters* according to geographical, economic, and social contexts rather than through a single, one-dimensional definition.

•“Energy poverty” exists when a household cannot access basic energy services—such as adequate heating, hot water, lighting, and energy for essential household uses—without excessively burdening its income.

•The key factors leading to energy poverty are mainly:

**low household income, high energy costs, and/or low energy efficiency of dwellings** (e.g., old or poorly insulated homes).

•This has negative impacts on quality of life, health, and household dignity—since essential needs (heating, lighting, cooking, etc.) are not adequately met.

•EAPN Greece includes energy poverty as one of the dimensions of poverty and social exclusion.

•This means that when EAPN Greece refers to “energy poverty,” it refers to a broad and multidimensional combination of conditions—not only low income or inability to pay bills, but also problems related to housing, energy efficiency of buildings, and access to basic energy services.



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# Energy Poverty (eapn europe)

- Historical context — earlier definition
- In an older *Working Paper on Energy Poverty* (2010), EAPN defined “energy (fuel) poverty” more narrowly: as “the inability to heat one’s home to an adequate level at an affordable cost.”
- Since then, EAPN has moved toward a more structured and multidimensional approach, recognising that energy poverty is connected to broader socio-economic inequalities and housing and welfare issues.

- *Position Paper* on the eradication of poverty, “energy poverty” is described as a “multidimensional phenomenon” that cannot be captured by a single indicator.

- The key factors leading to energy poverty, according to EAPN, are:
- income inequalities
- the disproportionate share of disposable income spent on energy costs (“disproportionate expenditure of disposable income on high energy costs”)
- poor energy efficiency or insulation of housing/residential infrastructure (“poor energy efficiency and insulation in the residential sector”)

# Energy Poverty (eapn europe)...

- EAPN emphasises that the causes and consequences of energy poverty are structural—economic, social, energy, fiscal, housing, health, and social welfare policy factors.
- Individuals / households experiencing energy poverty often belong to categories of “specific vulnerability”: not only low-income households but also people facing “multiple or intersectional” disadvantages—e.g. low-income households without access to social support networks, the digitally excluded, the socially excluded, etc.
- In practice:
- Not simply an economic problem (low income)—a complex mix of income, energy costs, and housing (quality of dwelling, energy performance).
- Not enough to look at whether someone pays their bills—one must assess whether homes are thermally safe, whether energy expenditure is disproportionate to income, and whether households lack access to essential energy services (heating, hot water, lighting, etc.).
- Response not limited to isolated measures (e.g. only bill subsidies)—must combine energy policy, social policy, housing, health care, and inequality-reduction policies—as we argue within the framework of the right to access “essential services.”

# HO.P.E. WATCH



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3. With what of the following are the main requests of your locals related?  
(145 responses)

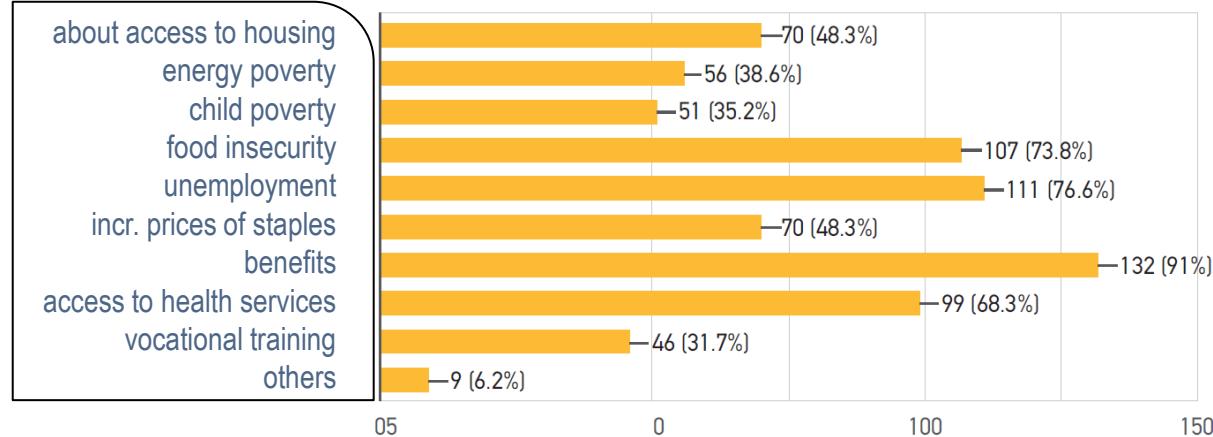


Chart 1. Inquiry 1 on the citizens' main requests

# HO.P.E. WATCH

1. In which of the following [...] is your municipality taking action either directly or indirectly?

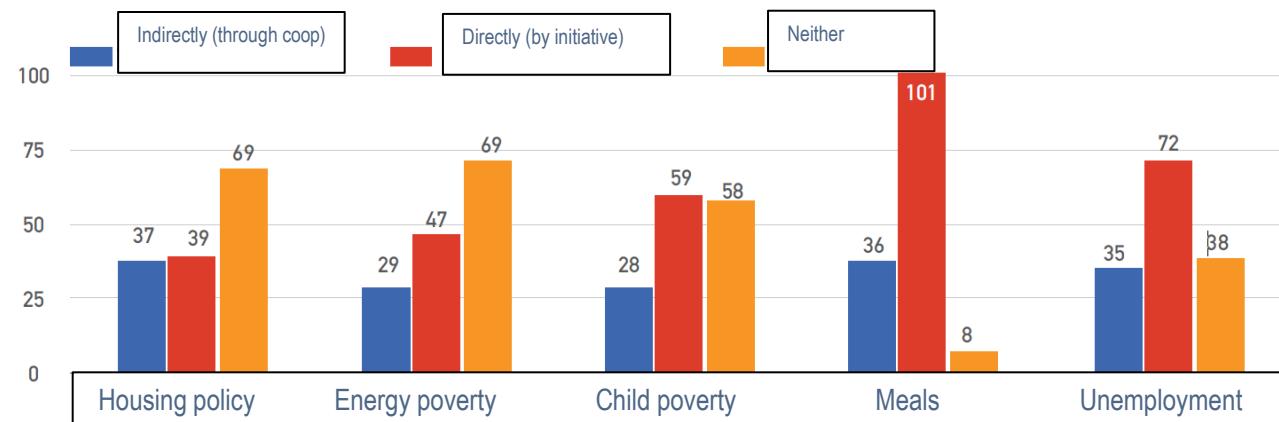


Chart 4. Inquiry into activation of Municipalities in major poverty issues

# HO.P.E. WATCH



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- ❖ Thematic Think Groups
- ❖ Training
- ❖ PEP experiences

# HO.P.E. WATCH 2.0

- **Develop practical tools and training for municipalities**

- Create an online training platform and practical templates (e.g., Action Plans, policy tools).
- Shift from webinars to structured capacity-building sessions leading to concrete outputs.

- **Strengthen inter-municipal cooperation**

- Establish a permanent inter-municipal network/forum to promote collaboration between municipalities, regions, civil society organisations, and people with lived experience of poverty.

- **Systematise and expand the work of Thematic Think Groups**

- Produce coordinated policy recommendations and strategic documents Papers) per thematic area (housing, child poverty, energy poverty, social services).

- **Improve data collection and documentation**

- Advocate for standardised methods of recording homelessness and poverty at the local level.
- Work with regional observatories to improve data quality and representation.

- **Support municipalities in drafting Local Action Plans**

- Provide mentoring and tools to help integrate local needs into targeted interventions.

- **Strengthen the observatory's institutional role**

- Advocate for its recognition as a national advisory and documentation body linking local and central government.

# People Experiencing Poverty Reports

PEP Report 2023

Record pep/beneficiaries' views on energy poverty (1/3)

- “We have central heating but we never use it. This winter we didn’t turn it on at all.”
- “The air conditioner stays off. Maybe we used it for one hour the whole summer.”
- “I’ve had three pneumonias... I don’t live under normal conditions. I just survive.”
- “I always unplug everything... lights are always off unless absolutely necessary.”
- “My electricity bill was €400 and the adjustment clause was €700.”
- “All my money goes to electricity and water first — only then to survival.”

- Many felt deceived by energy providers and found government subsidies ineffective.
- Participants emphasised the psychological toll: anxiety, loss of dignity, and constant struggle for basic stability.

# People Experiencing Poverty Reports

- **Perceived Causes** across all three domains, interviewees identified:
- Unemployment or low/unstable income
- Ineffective or inaccessible state policies
- High cost of living and inflation
- Lack of legal documents (for migrants)
- COVID-19 economic aftermath
- **Structural inequality and market-driven housing/energy systems**

**Proposed Solutions** participants suggested:

- **More effective state subsidies, especially for rent and energy bills**
- Job opportunities and better support from employment services
- Easier access to legal documentation for migrants
- Social housing, reuse of abandoned buildings, and municipal support
- Better coordination among NGOs
- Simplified, inclusive welfare criteria without excessive bureaucracy

1.

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2.

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# More (?!?) People Experiencing Poverty

PEP Report 2023 with quotes like

“my kid wakes up in the middle of the night to turn off the mosquito repellent plug-in to economise on power”  
and the subsequent mental stress and anxiety for the families

was the incentive to research the Family Budgets with the help of

Georgia Kaplanoglou, Professor of Economics at UOA, who produced the study

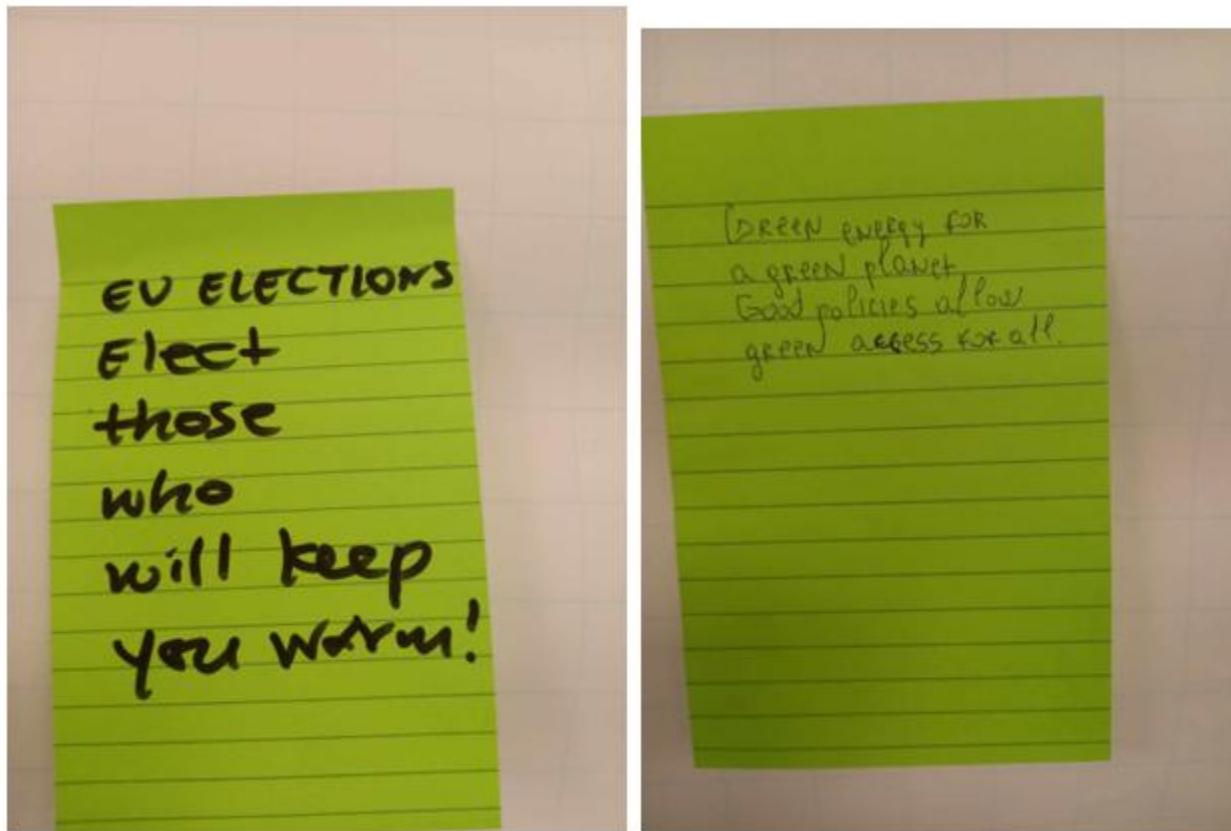
Expenses on Food of Families with Children in 2008 and Now:  
Quantitative and Qualitative Differences

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1KH-36QLBTPv0tElzz5kGqAntAdHCybBi/view?usp=sharing>

The study concludes that the living standards and food consumption of households in Greece—especially families with children, and even more so the poorest among them—have deteriorated permanently since 2008, despite the so-called return to positive economic growth.



ΤΥΟ ΓΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΚΑΤΑΠΟΛΕΜΗΣΗ  
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THE EU IS YOU!  
VOTE  
TO SAY  
ENERGY  
IS A  
PUBLIC  
RIGHT!

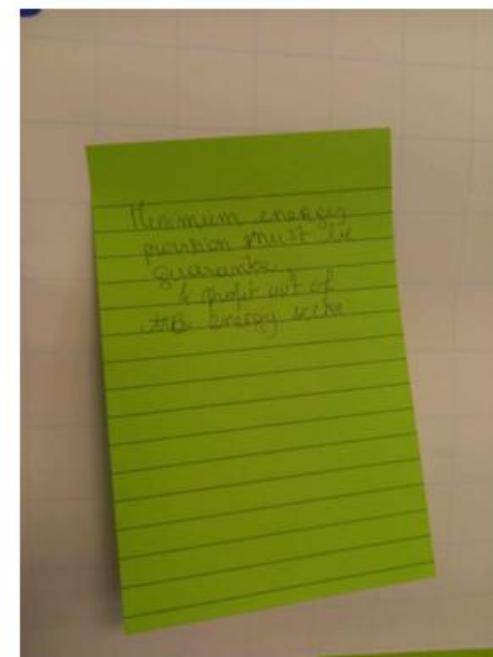
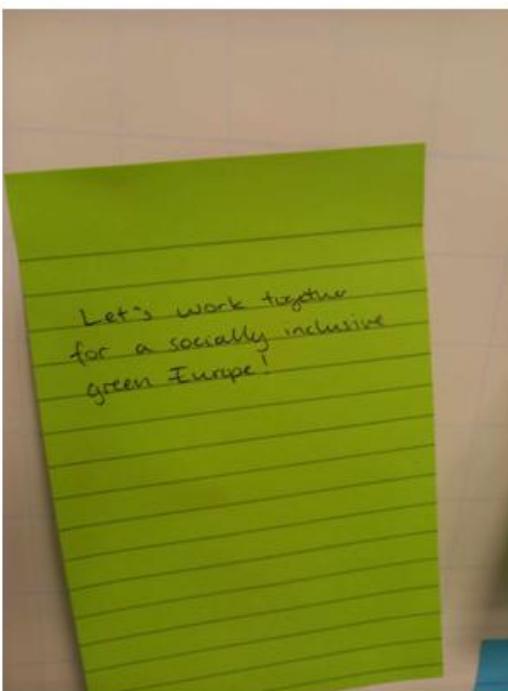
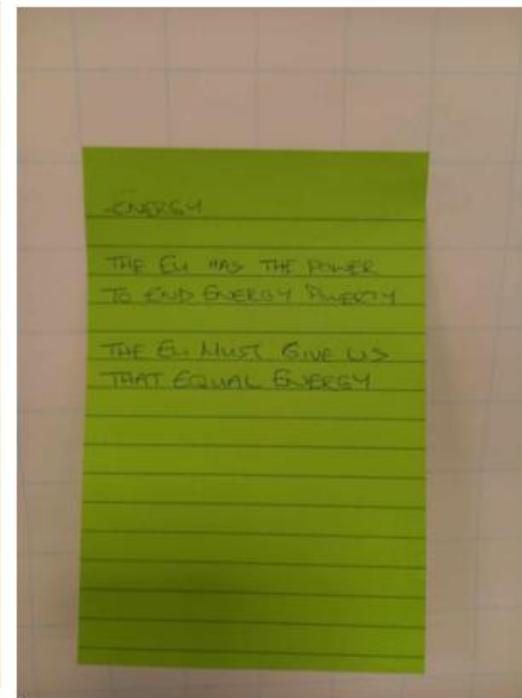
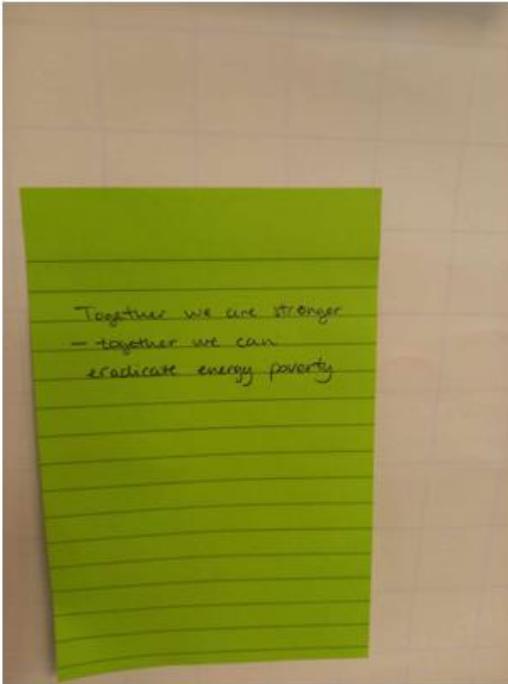
Leave no one  
behind!

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE  
TO ENABLE ALL THE  
CITIZENS OF THE  
EUROPEAN UNION  
ADEQUATE HEATING  
OF THEIR HOMES

Energy poverty /  
inequality  
is a lack of  
adequate heating  
not individual  
consumption



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Request!  
PW 2025-3 external  
projects  
Know of/are working on in  
2026 TELL US!



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Mapping of Deprivation in  
Athens – the Red Zone

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