

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004545/21  
to the Commission**

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(6 October 2021)

*Subject:* EU-wide monitoring of energy poverty

Energy poverty is an increasing problem throughout the EU. For example, more than 500 000 Dutch households live in energy poverty <sup>(1)</sup>. Moreover, at least two million Dutch homeowners do not have the financial means to make their homes more energy efficient <sup>(2)</sup>. The European Green Deal proposals will also disproportionately affect low- and middle-income households, because energy has a lower price elasticity for these households <sup>(3)</sup>.

In its country-specific recommendations (CSRs), the Commission has already made references to energy poverty and recommendations on energy efficiency <sup>(4)</sup>. Better EU-wide monitoring of energy poverty is necessary in order to understand the developments, distribution and size of the problem and to allow for more targeted and effective policy making.

1. Given that the Energy Poverty Observatory <sup>(5)</sup> is inactive, is the Commission currently monitoring the degree of energy poverty throughout the EU? If so, how and where precisely, and on the basis of what common definition?
2. What developments does the Commission expect regarding the number of people living in energy and mobility poverty in each Member State, bearing in mind the proposals of the European Green Deal?
3. To what extent has the Commission investigated corporate energy poverty? Can it apply the energy poverty metric to small and medium-sized enterprises too, and especially to small companies?

**Answer given by Ms Simson on behalf of the European Commission**  
(12 January 2022)

The Energy Poverty Observatory has been upgraded to an Energy Poverty Advisory Hub <sup>(6)</sup>. It will continue monitoring national indicators and will provide technical assistance to local actors addressing energy poverty.

In follow up to last year's Recommendation on Energy poverty <sup>(7)</sup>, the Commission proposed a common definition of energy poverty in the recent review of the Energy Efficiency Directive <sup>(8)</sup>.

As an immediate follow-up to the Commission's toolbox <sup>(9)</sup> of measures to support Member States in addressing the impact of the price increases, an Energy Poverty and Vulnerable Consumers Coordination Group will be established to continue cooperation with the Member States in this area.

As regards future developments, the Commission's statistical office is currently updating data on energy poverty for 2020 <sup>(10)</sup>. The Commission assessed distributional impacts when preparing the legislative package to implement the European Green Deal.

It proposed a dedicated Social Climate Fund (SCF) <sup>(11)</sup> to address the risks of the disproportionate impacts the introduction of emissions trading for buildings and road transport may have on the energy poor and other vulnerable groups.

The energy poverty concept refers to households, however, links between energy poverty and energy vulnerability of small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular of micro-enterprises, are relevant within the scope of the proposed SCF.

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<sup>(1)</sup> According to the Dutch independent research organisation TNO: <https://www.tno.nl/nl/over-tno/nieuws/2021/9/tno-brengt-energiearmoede-gedetailleerd-in-kaart/>

<sup>(2)</sup> According to the National Institute for Family Finance Information: <https://www.nibud.nl/beroepsmatig/rapport-kunnen-woningeigenaren-energie-investeren-gedebeten/>

<sup>(3)</sup> According to a report by the Polish Economic Institute, the European Roundtable on Climate Change and Sustainable Transition and Cambridge Econometrics: <https://secureservercdn.net/160.153.137.163/z7r.689.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/20210628-Final-Report-New-Title.pdf>

<sup>(4)</sup> The Commission has included recommendations regarding energy efficiency in, for example, the Dutch, Romanian, Polish and Bulgarian CSRs in 2019. Energy poverty is highlighted in the recitals of the Polish CSR of 2019.

<sup>(5)</sup> <https://www.energypoverty.eu/>

<sup>(6)</sup> <https://energy-poverty.ec.europa.eu/>

<sup>(7)</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32020H1563>

<sup>(8)</sup> COM(2021) 558 final.

<sup>(9)</sup> COM(2021) 660 final.

<sup>(10)</sup> The Commission's statistical office (Eurostat) publishes annually the 'at risk of poverty and social exclusion rate'. This is the main indicator to monitor the EU 2030 target on poverty and social exclusion. Eurostat will also collect distributional information (households) on housing conditions, including deprivation and energy efficiency in 2023.

<sup>(11)</sup> COM(2021) 568 final.