

# Mapping European Projects

## Energy Citizenship and Energy Poverty

### INTRODUCTION

Protecting vulnerable citizens and tackling energy poverty have become specific policy priorities in the legislative package Clean Energy for All Europeans, and have been also recently strengthened with the Recommendation on Energy Poverty issued as part of the Renovation Wave package.

In these documents, energy poverty is generally defined in terms of high-energy prices, low income and inefficient housing. Therefore, retrofit measures, funding mechanisms and targeted protection practices are often identified as a way to mitigate energy poverty.

However, it is only when vulnerable citizens get their different needs, rights and experiences recognized, and have access to the energy decision-making process, that the energy transition is likely to *leave no one behind*.

In this regard, **energy citizenship** represents a way not only to address energy poverty and vulnerability, but also to promote energy justice. However, its potential is still under-researched.

This mapping exercise contributes to the recent emerging literature on energy citizenship by looking at the best practices offered by European projects.



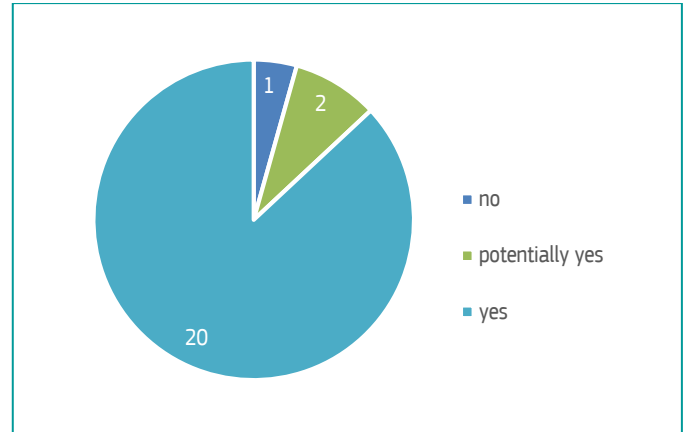
## METHODOLOGY

This review of European research and innovation projects aims to investigate how and whether European projects promote energy citizenship among citizens facing energy poverty. The selection of European projects was based on information provided by CINEA, ending with a total of **23 European projects**.

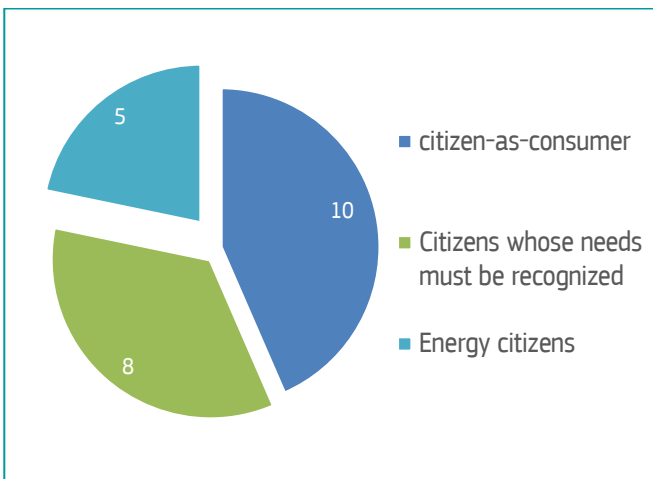
### FOCUS ON ENERGY POOR AND VULNERABLE CITIZENS

The majority (20) of projects analysed has energy poverty or vulnerability as main project goal.

The few exceptions either focus only on the promotion of energy citizenship among the general population, or target energy poor or vulnerable citizens as a non-primary project goal.



### HOW CITIZENS ARE VIEWED



The majority of projects assumes the role of citizens in the energy transition and the fight against energy poverty as “consumers” who need to be supported in their decisions (10). This is followed by projects, which place emphasis on the recognition of the different needs that citizens in energy poverty and vulnerability display (8). Finally, only a minority of projects views citizens as active participants of the energy transition beyond their consumption and investment decisions (5).

#### Citizen-as-consumers:

Citizens in energy poverty and vulnerability can participate to the energy transition and can better their conditions by engaging in optimal investment and consumption decisions. This view calls for actions empowering their **capacity to act** (e.g. to afford energy bills and energy efficiency).

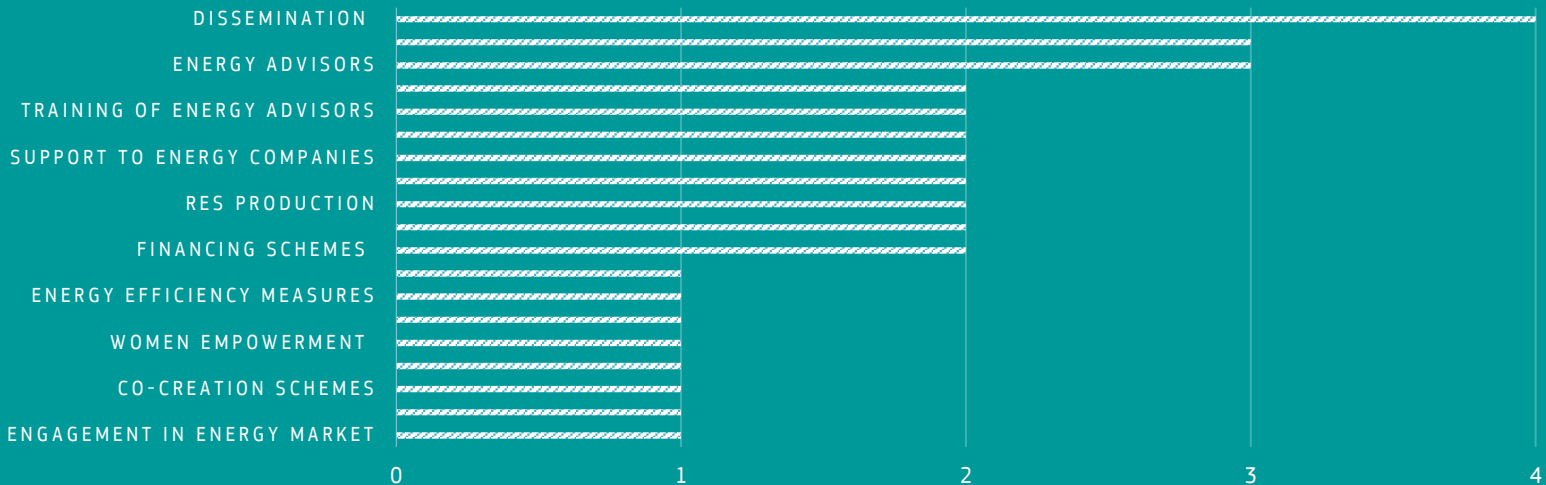
#### Citizen-as-consumers whose needs must be recognised

Citizens in energy poverty and vulnerability display heterogeneous energy needs. This view calls for actions empowering capacity to act while promoting **recognition** of their energy needs.

#### Energy citizens

Citizens in energy poverty and vulnerability can be active participants of the energy transition, who can engage not only through material but also through political forms of participation. This view calls for actions empowering **power-shift** (e.g. taking ownership of the energy production).

## EMPOWERMENT CHANNELS



### HOW CITIZENSHIP IS EMPOWERED

Following the results on how citizens are viewed, we found that the major activities implemented by the selected projects relate to **empowering capacity to afford energy efficiency and energy bills** through dissemination (4), energy advisors (3), provision of energy efficiency (1) and empowerment of women (1). Some projects also **promote activities supporting the recognition of needs**, through support provision to energy companies (2) and training of energy advisors (2). Finally, some projects empowers **energy citizenship in the form of power-shift**, by promoting ownership of RES production (2) and access to RES production through tailored financing (2) and co-creation schemes (1), as well as by promoting engagement with the energy market (1).

### CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The objective of this mapping exercise was to identify trends in how energy poor and vulnerable citizens' energy citizenship is conceived and enacted by European Projects.

The exercise showed that citizens' role in the energy transition and in the fight against energy poverty is mostly conceived as **citizen-as-consumer**, and therefore projects mostly enact actions empowering **capacity to afford energy bills and energy efficiency**.

Some projects also acknowledge that citizens can take a more **meaningful role in the energy transition** and in the fight against energy poverty and, therefore, they enact actions aiming at promoting **power-shift** in the energy system, such as by promoting co-ownership and decentralized energy models.

While this exercise is a limited temporal snapshot of a selection of European projects, it can provide a useful overview on what policy makers and research and development frameworks can further support to promote the fair inclusion of energy vulnerable citizens in the energy transition. Examples of this kind relate to the promotion of **dedicated financing mechanisms** to enable RES production, for which only a few cases have been found.

The next step of this investigation will include and deepen also other European best practices drawing from the academic literature.

## List of Projects

Acronym	Funding source
FIESTA	IEE
SINFONIA	FP7-ENERGY
LEMON	H2020 EE-20-2015
ASSIST	H2020 EE-06-2016-2017
ENGAGER	COST
ASTER	ELENA
SCORE	H2020 EE-06-2016-2017
STEP-IN	H2020 EE-06-2016-2017
POWERTY	Interreg
STEP	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
EmpowerMED	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
SocialWatt	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
ENPOR	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
POWERPOOR	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
EnergyMEASURES	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
ComAct	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
DECIDE	LC-SC3-EC-1-2018-2019-2020
UpSTAIRS	LC-SC3-EC-1-2018-2019-2020
COOLTORISE	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
CEES	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
POWER UP	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020
EC2	LC-SC3-CC-1-2018-2019-2020
Sun4All	LC-SC3-EC-2-2018-2019-2020

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