

# Fair Energy Transition for All

## Final recommendations



National Report of Spain  
 Results of energy transition dialogues with vulnerable citizens and experts

September 2022  
[www.fair-energy-transition.eu](http://www.fair-energy-transition.eu)



## LEGAL NOTICE

This national report is part of the "Fair Energy Transition for All (FETA)" project. FETA is based on focus group research carried out in nine countries in Europe: Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland. FETA is supported by a consortium of foundations including Fondazione Cariplo, Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, IKEA Foundation, King Baudouin Foundation, Stiftung Mercator, Network of European Foundations and Open Society Foundations. The project is led by the King Baudouin Foundation and operated by ifok, Climate Outreach, the European Policy Centre and facilitators and policy experts from participating countries. FETA's national partners are Atanor and Levuur, ENEFFECT, Danish Board of Technology (DBT), ifok, Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia Leonardo da Vinci, Berenschot and University of Groningen, Missions Publiques, Polish Foundation for Energy Efficiency (FEWE), Instituto Sindical de Trabajo, Ambiente y Salud (ISTAS).

If you are interested in a summary publication of all countries and more information on the project and methodology, please consult the FETA website: <https://fair-energy-transition.eu/what-vulnerable-people-have-to-say/>

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# 1. Overview of the project, process and methodology

## 1.1 The FETA project: rationale and objectives

The Fair Energy Transition for All (FETA) project arose in the context of a climate crisis that is forcing European countries to implement policies aimed at rapidly reducing their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. A fundamental part of this process is the profound transformation of the current energy system, which is based on the consumption of fossil fuels and is therefore one of the main generators of emissions.

The energy transition to a decarbonised system has profound and important social and economic implications that will affect the entire population, both on a day-to-day level (costs of electricity, gas, transport and basic necessities) and on a macroeconomic level. Adequate management of this transition, which foresees and corrects the imbalances in the distribution of efforts that may arise during its development, is essential to reduce current inequalities and avoid scenarios of tension and social conflict that could hinder efforts to tackle global warming and its consequences. It is therefore of utmost importance to take into account the opinions, concerns, worries and proposals of society as a whole. This is particularly relevant for social sectors which, given their socio-economic situation, may be more negatively affected by the application of energy transition policies; groups which, owing to the complex situation they are going through in their lives, are also often ignored in discussions on the decarbonisation of the energy system and its consequences for citizens.

FETA is a proposal that has put the focus on listening to the concerns and ideas of economically and socially disadvantaged people who are not heard in the current debate. Based on the experiences of these people, the aim has been to adapt concrete solutions for and with them. The idea has been to identify the best way for the costs and benefits of the energy transition to be distributed fairly within society, so that the policies of the European Union, and of each of its member states, do not negatively affect the poorest households, combining energy transition with social justice.

The main objectives of the project have been:

- Better understanding of vulnerable people's views, fears and emotions about the energy transition and its current and potential impact on their living conditions.
- Provide information to national and European policymakers, researchers and stakeholders in the development of fair energy transition policies.

Various types of organisations from nine European countries have participated in the development of the FETA project: Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Poland and Bulgaria.

## 1.2. Process and methodology

In order to achieve its goals, the FETA project has been structured in three consecutive phases:

**Phase 1:** Establishing a dialogue with groups of vulnerable people or "focus groups". This has been a nationwide process, the results of which have subsequently been discussed with experts on energy policies in the fields of housing and transport.

**Phase 2:** The reflections of the different national debates have been complemented by the contributions of a European working group.

**Phase 3:** Stakeholders have developed policy recommendations for a fair energy transition. These recommendations have been subject to a second phase of citizen participation for review and finalisation. The final results will subsequently be published at national level and in summary at European level. These reports will provide information on the positions of vulnerable people in the energy transition and suggestions for the development of fair energy transition policies.

The formation of the "focus groups" has involved identifying and locating socio-economically vulnerable people and persuading them to participate in the dialogue process.

Once the groups were constituted, during Phase 1 they were provided with a survey to create their socio-economic profile in terms of age, gender, origin, household composition, dependent children, location and use of their home, quality of public transport in the area where they live, employment status, perception of social benefits and educational level.

Also during this initial phase, as a tool to facilitate and stimulate discussion, the so-called "Energy Diaries" were presented to the groups. These "diaries" consisted of a set of assumptions of what daily life might be like in the future after implementing measures for the energy transition.

Based on the reactions, observations, comments and opinions expressed in the first focus group meeting, two types of materials were developed:

- The "Summary Note", which provides a brief summary of the session.
- The "Persons" (or characters), a series of archetypes constructed from the profiles of the focus group members, highlighting certain social and economic traits and characteristics.

The summary note and the characters were provided to the members of the expert groups to guide them in reflecting on the most disadvantaged groups in the search for policy recommendations for the development of concrete fair energy measures.

The "policy expert" groups were created by looking for people linked to different fields related to the implementation of energy measures in housing and transport. In all cases, their participation had to be in an individual capacity and not as representatives of any kind of organisation or institution.

During phases 2 and 3, as a result of the dialogue and work with experts, a series of recommendations were drawn up for the competent authorities to promote an energy transition that does not forget the most economically vulnerable elements of society.

In the third phase of the project, the focus groups were reconvened to present the policy recommendations developed by the experts. This second public consultation was called the "Fair Energy Forum".

The forums have been the space for analysis, discussion and final definition of the proposals formulated by the groups of experts. Their findings form the core of the various national reports, which will serve as the basis for a summary report compiling the recommendations of the nine European countries that have joined the project.

These reports will be forwarded to decision-makers on energy transition policy at both national and EU level.

## 1.3 The FETA project in Spain

FETA's national partner in Spain has been the Instituto Sindical de Trabajo, Ambiente y Salud (ISTAS), an organisation that is to be integrated into Fundación 1 de Mayo from 2022.

### 1.3.1 Focus groups

To develop Phase 1 of the project, ten focus groups were set up with a total of 116 participants. The meetings with the groups were held between 27 May 2021 and 11 November 2021. These meetings took place in nine urban locations and one rural location. The cities in which they took place were: Barcelona, Bilbao, Madrid, Puerto de Sagunto (province of Valencia) and Valencia. The meeting with the rural focus group was held in the town of Tordesilos (Guadalajara).

#### Characteristics of group members

Participants in the groups were given a questionnaire to obtain information about their socio-economic situation. The responses to this survey give the following overall picture:

- **Age.** The participants ranged in age from 18 to 68 years, although most of them were in the 22-26 years age range.
- **Sex.** Women made up the majority of the attendees (65.5%), compared to 33.6% of men. The remaining 0.9% were non-binary.
- **Origin.** 60.7% of the participants were Spanish and 39.3% were migrants.
- **Type and composition of households.** The proportion of attendees in single-parent households was high (43.5%). The most frequent number of household members was three (27.1%). In terms of the presence of minors, the most common number was two children in each household (38.6%).
- **Area where they lived.** The area in which the focus group members lived was mostly urban (87%), with only 7% of the focus group members living in rural areas. 6% of respondents reported living in peri-urban areas.

- **Quality of public transport in the area of residence.** 44% of group members who responded to this question felt that it was adequate but could be improved, and another 44% felt that it was sufficient for them and their family's needs. The remaining 12.1% considered it poor or non-existent.
- **Employment status.** The predominant employment status among focus group members was unemployment (64%). 9% of the attendees were retired. Among those who worked, 44.4% were in the services sector, 37% in industry and construction, and 18.5% in agriculture.
- **Level of education.** The most common type of education among the participants was secondary education (51.8%). 27.2% of those interviewed said that they had a primary education, and 21.1% had a university education.
- **Social assistance.** 60.6% of the participants indicated that they did not receive any kind of social assistance compared to 39.4% who received some kind of subsidy.
- **Housing location** Most of the focus group (56%) lived in rented accommodation. 28.4% owned their home or lived with a relative who did. The remaining 15.6% lived in social housing.

More detailed information on the responses to the questionnaire can be found in Annex b, "Detailed information on the characteristics of the participating vulnerable citizens", of this document.

### **Observations and reactions recorded during the focus group workshops**

The focus group meetings consisted of workshops in which, based on a script, participants were asked about the role of energy in everyday aspects of their lives and about climate change, the energy transition and how they thought it might affect them. The issue of equity and responsibility for bearing the costs of the energy transition was also discussed with them. The workshops presented a scenario of what life could be like in the future based on the implementation of a series of measures to facilitate the energy transition, in order to stimulate reflection and debate. The following is a list of the main observations and reactions gathered in these workshops at a general level.

#### a) Level of awareness and understanding of the topics covered

- There was an awareness that climate change is on political and media agendas.
- They linked climate change to energy, but in a diffuse way, without being clear about its causes, scope and impact.
  
- They were unaware of the term "energy transition" and the existence of energy transition policies.



- Climate change was not part of their concerns. Their concerns are the lack of jobs, access to housing and competition for access to social benefits.

b) Key issues raised during the discussions

- Freedom of choice over energy use, and the possibility of social participation, conditioned by the lack of regular income.
- Difficulty of access to housing, especially in large cities.
- Inequality and injustice in the distribution of wealth and access to opportunities.
- The precariousness and inadequacy of public aid.
- Racism exacerbates inequality in access to employment and housing.
- The frugality and austerity of their lives is a matter of subsistence, not environmental concerns.
- The responsibility for the climate crisis lies with business: the impact of individual behaviour is minimal.
- Precariousness does not allow them to choose the origin of the energy they consume.
- Dependence on fossil fuels is especially relevant in rural areas where they are necessary for productive activities associated with the primary sector.

c) Aspects not covered in the initial script and that emerged during the workshops

- Dignity before aid. The majority of participants demanded more opportunities for decent jobs and living conditions rather than subsidies.
- Resignation about their current situation.
- A certain attraction for the populist and media discourse of the extreme right.
- Distrust of the political class and central administration.
- Some trust in local government, especially in NGOs.

d) Attitudes towards energy equity

- They did not expect fairness from the Energy Transition, as they do not find society fair in general.
- They could not think about the climate fairness of their spending decisions, as they were heavily conditioned by the scarcity of their income.
- They tried to provide for all their needs without luxury or waste, although this was not always possible.
  
- They believed that climate change is the result of the wasteful lifestyle of the rich, and that the poor could do nothing about it.

- They saw it as unfair that if, due to energy transition measures, certain products were to become more expensive, they would still be affordable for the rich.
- They saw a tax on excessive energy consumption for the rich as fair.

e) Participants' energy status

- Some of the attendees were illegally connected to the electricity supply.
- Some of the attendees had their energy costs fully or partially covered by social benefits.
- In general, energy was seen as just another item in the shopping basket, which they tried to cover from their overall budget and which, depending on the circumstances, they might have to do without owing to it being displaced by other expenses.
- Some participants lived in a sublet room, the fixed price of which included energy costs. In these case it was the sublessor who imposed restrictions on consumption according to the circumstances.
- In the case of people living in social housing, the entity that managed them advised them to save energy.

(f) Relationship between participants and energy consumption

- The women were the ones in charge of managing energy savings through their intervention in everyday habits.
- Younger people were less aware of the importance of changing their household habits to achieve greater energy savings.
- There was a lack of awareness of the real role energy plays in their lives. For most, it was just another essential consumer product, but of less importance than food, housing or health.
- There was a lack of awareness of the part played by fossil fuels and their derivatives in their lives.
- In general, they did not perceive the connection between the intensive use of resources for food production and the price of food.
- Similarly, they did not perceive the extent of the potential impact of the energy transition on their lives.
- Their energy discourse was limited to being careful with the use of heating and electricity.
- From their perspective, "fair transition" should mean that their status does not get worse.

- They did not see themselves as affected by the environmental crisis and therefore thought that action on social conditions should be prioritised over environmental aspects.
- They expressed concern that the measures to be implemented for the energy transition would have a negative effect on employment.

### **The "energy diaries".**

These imaginary diaries described what everyday life could be like in the future if a series of measures to achieve the energy transition were implemented, through short stories narrated by their protagonists. The "energy diaries" focus mainly on two aspects of everyday life: the home and transport. In the home, they point to items such as modernising buildings to make them energy efficient, teleworking, online shopping, smart installations and equipment, energy communities, community gardening, 3D printing and shared equipment, and lab-grown meat. In transport, they point to the widespread use of electric vehicles, universal access to public transport, carpooling, subsidised train travel, the eradication of combustion vehicles from cities, and urban configuration along the lines of the 20-minute city model (where citizens can cover most of their daily needs in a 20-minute walk). The main reactions of the focus group participants to the content of these diaries were:

- Lack of identification with the protagonists of the stories.
- They perceive these narratives partly as a return to the past, as a step backwards in progress, but also as a contradiction between leading a "life of the rich", in which you don't seem to have to work to meet needs, and at the same time a "life of the poor", in which you have to be careful with consumption.
- Concern about the impact of 3D printing, electric cars and artificial meat on job losses.
- Rejection of artificial forms of food production, not least because of the break in the link with nature.
- They accept the possibility of the local production of agricultural products but doubt its feasibility.
- Welcoming of any improvements in public transport.
- Lack of awareness of the possibilities of forms of shared mobility.

In short, they accepted the inevitability of a change in the energy system, but underlined their sense of exclusion from the process.

## **Who will pay for the energy transition?**

One issue of particular importance in the workshops was the issue of who was to assume the cost of decarbonising the energy system. When asked, "Who should pay for the energy transition?", the main reactions were:

- The transition must be paid for by enterprise and "the rich".
- The state must ensure that this transformation does not increase inequalities and social exclusion.
- Energy transition measures must be accompanied by support for people in vulnerable situations so as to avoid their exclusion.
- To ensure access to clean and cheap energy for all, governments should be in charge of producing it independently of large enterprises.

In the debate on this issue, the arrival of EU funds for the implementation of energy transition measures and their management by the administration was also considered. In this regard, focus group participants reiterated their distrust of public institutions, especially those at state level. Their confidence increased as administrators became closer to the public, although the general opinion was that NGOs should be the most appropriate entities to ensure "non-corrupt" management of funds.

### **1.3.2 People (characters)**

The observations, comments and results of the discussions in the 10 focus group workshops were compiled in a "summary note". This material served as information and reflection material for the expert groups to discuss and come up with proposals for action in the field of energy policies from the perspective of equity and social justice. It was also used, together with the results of the participant questionnaires, as the basis for constructing five "People" (or Characters); idealised profiles of individuals that bring together (not necessarily majority) characteristics of the focus group participants.

The characterisation included the assignment to each profile of a series of social and economic characteristics, and the answers to three questions:

- What does this person think about the energy transition?
- What types of challenges does this person face in their daily life?
- What does this person need to make the energy transition fair?

The description of the character was completed with the insertion of some of the opinions or observations expressed by the participants in the focus group workshops.

Five characters were constructed: three women and two men. Four of them correspond to urban areas and one to rural areas. The characters were identified as Osman, Almudena, Jorge, Antonia and Fatiha.

- **Osman**

**Age:** 28 years.

**Employment status:** precarious jobs in the shadow economy.

**Place and form of residence:** Urban area, as squatter.

**Family situation:** single, no children.

*"The state and aid have to step in to make this future accessible for everyone"*

**What does this person think about the energy transition?**

It is necessary. Doing nothing will bring more poverty and more migratory pressure.

**What types of challenges does this person face in his daily life?**

Lack of papers (and the rights that come with papers), finding a decent job, and racism.

**What does this person need to make the energy transition fair?**

That it does not increase the cost of the essential goods and services they have to buy.

- **Almudena**

**Age:** 24 years.

**Employment status:** works at home.

**Location and form of residence:** urban area, at her parents' home.

**Family situation:** four young children.

*"We're very much on the outside: a lot of difficulties for renting and for work. They give us crumbs, but they don't give us the resources to be independent. Let's see how much the solar panels cost...if the government comes and gives me a solar panel, ok."*

**What does this person think about the energy transition?**

All their energies are focused on getting through each day.

**What types of challenges does this person face in his daily life?**

Making ends meet, lack of work and difficult access to housing, and racism.

**What does this person need to make the energy transition fair?**

That it does not increase inequality, that it does not make basic products more expensive, and that it does not make work scarcer.

- **Jorge**

**Age:** 24 years.

**Employment status:** works on his own farm.

**Location and form of residence:** rural area in depopulated Spain, rented.

*"An increase in the cost of energy leaves us with no margins, and tractors can't work on pedals. Eventually we'll have to stop cultivating the land and looking after livestock and then we'll see who lives in these villages."*

**What does this person think about the energy transition?**

*"It's not that I don't know that there's climate change or that pesticides are not good, but you get the feeling that we're the ones to blame when the real consumers are in the city. Here come the environmentalists to tell us what to do, and they've never seen a cow in their lives."*

**What types of challenges does this person face in his daily life?**

Lack of public services, distance from essential and non-essential services, tight incomes and high dependence on fossil fuels.

**What does this person need to make the energy transition fair?**

Public aid to promote organic farming and extensive livestock farming, certainty about the permanence of aid and investments in the village.

- **Antonia**

**Age:** 68 years.

**Employment status:** retired.

**Place and form of residence:** urban area, rented.

*"I walk everywhere. I prefer to use butane rather than natural gas because I can control my consumption better."*

**What does this person think about the energy transition?**

Too little is being done. The price hits the people who consume the least.

**What types of challenges does this person face in his daily life?**

The cost of rent, and urban pollution.

**What does this person need to make the energy transition fair?**

Affordable gas and electricity prices, especially for those who consume the least, measures to ensure that the cost of energy renovation is not passed on to tenants, and to make urban spaces accessible for pedestrians and bicycles.

- **Fatiha**

**Age:** 34 years.

**Place and form of residence:** Urban zone.

**Family situation:** married, with three children.

*"Spain should invest more in solar energy because it's clean and will bring prices down in the long run."*

**What does this person think about the energy transition?**

It makes sense for us to stop depending on fossil fuels. The price should not be paid by those with less purchasing power.

**What types of challenges does this person face in his daily life?**

Maintain her employment and family.

**What does this person need to make the energy transition fair?**

Affordable energy and public transport fares.

These five characters were introduced at the first expert group meeting and were present at its discussion meetings through printed posters displayed in prominent positions in the work rooms. The aim was for the convened experts to develop policy recommendations with a focus on the energy needs of individual people.

### **1.3.3 The expert sessions**

The group of experts consisted of fourteen people linked to the tertiary sector, academia and consultancy, whose professional careers were related to energy, social and mobility policies.

Two meetings were held with the group of experts, both in Madrid on 10 February and 9 March. Each meeting was structured in plenary sessions and workshops, one on housing and the other on transport.

During the first of the meetings, the FETA project was presented to the participants, the results of the focus group workshops were shared with them, and an overview of the state of current housing and transport policies and regulations in Spain was analysed from the perspectives of energy transition, energy poverty and social equity. Possible actions and initiatives that could respond to the energy reality of the most economically vulnerable social groups were also pointed out.

In the second session, different recommendations for energy policies in housing and transport that could benefit the most impoverished groups were discussed and drawn up. The question of how to communicate the proposed measures to the focus groups could not be addressed because the discussions continued for longer than the time of the meeting.

The expert group proposed 17 recommendations: 9 in the field of housing and 8 in the field of transport (the list of recommendations with their detailed content can be found in section 2.1 of this report).

### **1.3.4 The Fair Energy Forums (FEF)**

They were the space in which members of some of the focus groups analysed, debated and prioritised the policy recommendations made by the experts.

It was logistically unfeasible to reconvene the 116 participants in the initial 10 focus groups, so it was decided to limit the participants to a smaller number in order to make the discussion more fluid.



Two Forums were held: one in Madrid on 6 June 2022, with 15 participants; and another in Valencia on 16 June 2022, with 13 participants. The final recommendations that emerged from these meetings, together with comments addressed to policymakers for each of them, are given in section 2.2 of this document.

## 2. Results

### 2.1 Expert recommendations

The expert group proposed 17 policy recommendations that should be taken into consideration by the authorities when implementing energy transition measures so that they do not negatively affect citizens in a precarious social and economic situation. The proposals were made in the areas of housing (9 recommendations) and transport (8 recommendations), ranked consecutively from highest to lowest priority.

#### Recommendations in the field of housing

**1. Replace the current social discount with a social tariff that includes a minimum vital consumption.** The main tool currently being used to assist people in fuel poverty is the social discount. This system has a number of drawbacks that make it less effective in terms of assistance and as a mechanism to contribute to the energy transition: its application involves complex bureaucratic procedures for people at risk of exclusion, the information to access it is insufficient, and there is no link between its allocation and the implementation of energy renovation measures in households. It is financed by the energy marketing companies. The financing mechanism should be reconsidered: it should be borne by all the companies in the three segments of the electricity system (generation, distribution, marketing), it should be covered by the general state budget (thus preventing the marketers from passing it on to the rest of the users), or it should be paid by the large electricity companies through a surcharge on corporate income tax. The social discount is aid for the payment of energy, something that is not even affordable for many households, so it is recommended to replace it with a "social tariff" that would allow access to a vital minimum of energy at zero cost for the beneficiary. The possibility of linking the implementation of this measure to the energy diagnosis of dwellings is also considered so as to allocate aid to improve energy efficiency.

**2. Apply a super-reduced VAT rate of 4% to electricity.** Given that energy is a basic good, it is recommended that a special, super-reduced VAT rate of 4% be applied to it, taking into account its consideration as a basic good.

**3. Granting the electricity social discount automatically, based on income criteria.** Not all people entitled to the social discount to alleviate their situation of energy poverty apply for it due to lack of information, access difficulties and bureaucratic complexity. It is recommended that the granting of this aid be automatic on the basis of income criteria.

**4. Subsidies for energy renovation of dwellings granted to homeowners should be conditional to not increasing the rental price.** Energy renovation is an improvement that often has an impact on the value of the property. This may lead to a rise in the sale and rental prices of housing, which has a more negative impact on people with lower incomes who, in general, do not own a home. To avoid this situation, renovation programmes should include social clauses that make the granting of subsidies conditional on landlords limiting the price of rents, and if they do not respect them, they should be obliged to return the subsidies.

**5. The money that municipalities and other public bodies save by improving their thermal insulation or by installing solar panels should be used to help people in fuel poverty.** The options for people belonging to vulnerable groups to incorporate energy saving and efficiency measures in their homes are very limited. In this context, the proposal is to redirect the money saved in city councils and other public entities by adopting energy saving and efficiency measures to aid for groups in energy poverty.

**6. Advance and finance 100% of the subsidies for energy renovation for people from vulnerable groups.** Currently, the promotion of energy renovation and efficiency actions in housing is carried out through subsidies for part of the investment made by the owners. The most vulnerable households often do not own the homes they live in, and when they do, their level of income is insufficient to make any kind of investment. It is proposed that vulnerable groups should be able to access the renovation of their homes without the need to advance money and at zero cost, with the administrations assuming 100% of the financing.

**7. Create publicly owned energy communities that offer free energy to people from the most vulnerable groups.** The new Energy Communities are a good instrument if they are promoted with public (e.g. local) participation to offer free energy services to groups in fuel poverty.

**8. The Public Administration should carry out communication campaigns to inform about the measures that exist to save energy and the aid available to reduce the cost of electricity and gas bills.** In relation to the communication of the measures to

people experiencing fuel poverty, it is suggested that there is a need for intensive campaigns (on TV, radio, etc.) on the existing measures to alleviate poverty and on their access to them.

**9. The public administration should open offices to provide energy advice to citizens in person, in neighbourhoods and with flexible times.** These offices could be of two types: some more linked to social services, usually of a municipal nature, and others more specific to energy advice. Energy agencies could provide information and advice to other entities and services to advise individuals.

## **Recommendations in the field of transport**

**1. Public investment in transport should give preference to improving public transport infrastructure and services, and to promoting cycling and walking.** In a society in which the private car is a very important means of travel to access basic services and to and from work or during the working day, especially in peri-urban and rural areas, the main challenge is to reduce dependence on the private car<sup>1</sup> and, consequently, to avoid the social exclusion of those who do not have access to it and/or for whom its use represents a significant reduction in their income. In order to decarbonise society and achieve an energy transition that does not cause harm, and benefits socially and economically disadvantaged groups, it is necessary to work with a clear objective of offering more and better mobility alternatives to the private motorised vehicle. Prioritising in this order of most to least inclusive and sustainable travel by the following modes: walking, cycling and scooters, public transport and carpooling.

**2. For people living or working in Low Emission Zones (LEZ), who depend on a polluting private vehicle for their commute or work, and whose income is not sufficient for them to switch to a non-polluting vehicle, provide them with grants so that they can make the switch.** Not all people who rely on private vehicles and live in a LEZ have the same capacity to replace them with a less polluting vehicle that is allowed to use the roads. These areas are also home to people whose mobility habits are not responsible for the high levels of traffic and emissions in these areas, but who are affected by their restrictions. To avoid these situations, the proposal is to develop active policies to encourage active travel (walking and cycling), public transport and carpooling as part of the catalogue of effective solutions to advance social equity.

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<sup>1</sup> Although bicycles, scooters or other modes of mobility can also be private vehicles, this term refers to the most commonly accepted meaning, which mainly covers cars and motorcycles.

**3. Public administrations should facilitate citizens' access to "on-demand" transport by providing information to users through digital and other means.** On-demand transport is crucial for rural and low-density areas, and its digitalisation is essential for its effective deployment. The measure should address the digital divide that can appear in groups with difficulties in the use of digital tools, either due to lack of training or lack of resources, or both. This disadvantage can be overcome through free digital training plans and the implementation of a customer service through non-digital channels.

**4. Public administrations should open offices to provide information and enable access to existing public transport passes.** Its main task would be to inform and provide existing social public transport passes. In addition to public transport, social fares should include subsidies for public bicycle loan services and carpooling (carpooling fleet). In order to simplify and extend its usefulness, an integrated pass incorporating these other mobility alternatives should be implemented. Funding could be made available depending on the size of the town. In the case of the smaller towns and cities, through co-financing by the Autonomous Communities and the Provincial and City Councils. In municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants, it should be assumed by the City Hall. The competent administration should endeavour to publicise the existence and functioning of these entities. Possible mechanisms to support the financing of sustainable transport modes and social passes include: through the adoption of a public transport financing law, a vehicle pollution tax, on-street parking charges, road and parking fees, and the introduction of a public transport tax: the polluter-pays principle (Eurovignette), charges on large car parks (e.g. in shopping centres for hourly parking fees) and the possibility of introducing urban tolls.

**5. Creation of a single transport card valid for all modes and for any place in the country.** With the aim of ensuring that there is a minimum and guaranteed social tariff for public transport and other mobility services and that it is consistent across the different territories of Spain, with guaranteed state funding. In other words, the idea is that anyone, wherever they live, should be able to benefit from this aid, unlike what is happening now, where there is a great disparity with great benefits in some areas and hardly any in others. In addition, the state must provide the technology to adapt and digitise all transport passes, including social transport passes.

**6. For the state to finance part of the public transport of municipalities, they would have to demonstrate that they have measures in place to support transport for people with lower incomes.** Law 2/2011 on sustainable economy links the financing of public transport to local authorities having such plans, but does not condition the

implementation and evaluation of these plans. A regulation should be drawn up that does take these conditions into account and that also obliges this planning to include aspects to advance social equity. European funds could be used to finance Sustainable Mobility Plans in order to extend their scope to the most disadvantaged sectors.

**7. Ensure that people living in rural areas have access to efficient public transport alternatives by recovering and reinforcing rail transport and, where the train is not available, implementing other collective transport systems on demand.** To this end, the territory must be organised with a dense, sufficient and efficient transport network, based on the combination of rail and regular bus services as structuring transport and, for capillarity, the extension of modalities such as on-demand transport. A carpooling management and promotion service can also be established. In other words, to have an overall vision of the entire modal chain, planning and managing all mobility services and infrastructures in the territory in a unified and efficient manner. To this end, there should be one single management body for the entire sustainable mobility offer, as if it were a metropolitan urban transport consortium, but at provincial or regional level. This measure would be financed by the State Budget.

**8. Give aid for the conversion of internal combustion vehicles to electric vehicles ("retrofit"), giving priority to people with lower incomes.** For those who cannot afford to buy a cleaner, zero-emission vehicle, a retrofit or conversion of an internal combustion engine vehicle to a pure electric vehicle could be carried out. This retrofit is much cheaper than buying a new car, thus expanding the electric car fleet and reaching out to less affluent segments of the population. This initiative should have legal and financial backing so that people without sufficient resources to purchase an electric vehicle can receive help to convert their vehicles.

## 2.2 The work of the FEFs

The main task of the FEFs was to obtain final recommendations that reflect their concerns and whose development would protect them in the most comprehensive and effective way from any negative effects resulting from the implementation of energy transition measures. To this end, they analysed, discussed and prioritised the recommendations proposed by the expert group, accompanied by comments that should be considered by policymakers when implementing them.

### 2.2.1 Final recommendations

Policy proposals in order of priority

## **Recommendations in the field of housing**

### **1) Replace the current social discount with a social tariff that includes a minimum vital consumption.**

- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that minimum consumption must be universal, defined, reasonable, sufficient and climate-adapted.
- This recommendation should only apply if the cost of this minimum consumption is not otherwise charged on the same bill.
- In implementing this recommendation, it is important to bear in mind that the process of discriminating between who is and who is not entitled to such a social tariff should not be bureaucratised.

### **2) Grant the electricity social discount automatically, based on income criteria.**

- This recommendation should only be implemented if it is monitored to prevent people with money who know how to circumvent the regulation from taking advantage of this measure.
- This recommendation is only fair if persons in an irregular situation are not excluded.
- In implementing this recommendation, it is important to take into account the situation of people who are forced to receive part of their salary irregularly (shadow economy).

### **3) Apply a super-reduced VAT rate of 4% to electricity.**

- In applying this measure we want politicians to know that it should only apply to those who need it. Large industries, if they are reduced, increase profits because they do not reduce the prices of their products.
- In implementing this recommendation, it is important to ensure that the poor are not forced to increase their energy consumption (in which case it would not make sense).
- In implementing this measure, we want politicians to know that it does not make sense to lower taxes across the board because the state cannot then provide aid to those who need it most.

### **4) The Public Administration must carry out communication campaigns to inform about the measures that exist to save energy and the aid available to reduce the cost of electricity and gas bills.**

- This recommendation should only be implemented by cutting red tape and ensuring that communication reaches more vulnerable groups.
- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that communication campaigns must be financed by Industry.

**5) Advance and finance 100% of the subsidies for energy renovation for people from vulnerable groups.**

- This recommendation should only be implemented if the vulnerable groups are well defined.
- This recommendation is only fair if conditions are set to avoid speculation.

**6) Create publicly owned energy communities that offer free energy to people from the most vulnerable groups.**

- This recommendation should only be implemented if the vulnerable groups are well defined.
- In implementing this recommendation, it is important to keep in mind that in small settings, the reality of the community's needs is known.

**7) Subsidies for energy renovation of homes granted to homeowners should be conditional on not increasing the rental price.**

- This recommendation is only fair if control and sanction mechanisms are in place.

**8) The money that local councils and other public bodies save by improving their thermal insulation or by installing solar panels should be used to help groups in energy poverty.**

- This recommendation should only be implemented if the vulnerable groups are well defined.

**9) The Public Administration should open offices to provide energy advice to citizens in person, in neighbourhoods and with flexible times.**

- This recommendation should only be applied if the process is not bureaucratized, information is individualised and there are flexible times.

**Recommendations in the field of transport**



**1) Public investment in transport should give preference to improving public transport infrastructure and services, and to promoting cycling and walking.**

- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that economic efficiency should not take precedence over quantity and quality of service.
- In implementing this recommendation, it is important to note that the bicycle and scooter service should be free of charge.
- This recommendation should only be implemented if it leads to an improvement of public transport in the city and the local train service.
- This recommendation is only fair if more investment is made in the depopulated areas of Spain.

**2) For people living or working in Low Emission Zones (LEZ) who depend on a polluting private vehicle for their commute or work, and whose income is not sufficient for them to switch to a non-polluting vehicle, provide them with grants so that they can make the switch.**

- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that it is important to get the private vehicle out of the city centre.
- This recommendation is only fair on a case-by-case basis.

**3) Public administrations should enable citizen access to "on-demand" transport, providing information to users through digital and other means.**

- In implementing this recommendation, it is important to bear in mind that basic services should be available within a 15-minute walk in any town, including villages, which should have basic services guaranteed.
- This recommendation is only fair if consideration is given to the digital divide, which affects older people, and those with fewer financial and educational resources.
- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that basic services must be restored where they have been lost, by implementing measures such as mobile services.

**4) Creation of a single transport card valid for all modes and for any place in the country.**

- This recommendation is only fair if the card fee takes into consideration the user's income level.
- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that workplaces, places of consumption and leisure should be brought closer to where people live, or conditioned to the availability of public transport.
- In implementing this recommendation, it is important to bear in mind that the mobility of vulnerable people should be facilitated.

**5) Public administrations should open offices to provide information and access to existing public transport passes.**

- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that the humanisation of information must be encouraged.
- This recommendation is only fair if there is a face-to-face service for the immigrant population or those with cultural or economic difficulties to access a smartphone or other digital media.

**6) For the State to finance part of the public transport of local councils, the latter would have to demonstrate that they have measures to help people with lower incomes.**

- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that we consider it a disgrace that this measure does not exist.

**7) Guarantee that people living in rural areas have access to efficient public transport alternatives, recovering and strengthening public transport by recovering and reinforcing rail transport and, in places where the train does not reach, by implementing other collective transport systems on demand.**

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- When applying this recommendation, it is important to bear in mind that the private electric car is not a good option: it is very expensive, users will pay more electricity to recharge it and there are few recharging points, so it is not a worthwhile option.
- In implementing this recommendation, we want politicians to know that the most important thing is to switch from cars (electric or not) to public transport, and that the car should not be necessary in big cities.
- This recommendation should only apply in cases where there is no choice but to rely on the private car.

### 3. Acknowledgements

The realisation of the FETA project in Spain would not have been possible without the collaboration of many committed people who have given their time, knowledge and willingness to work together for a fair energy transition.

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## 4. Annexes

### a. Results of the FEFs

#### Final recommendations

Policy proposals in order of priority

#### Recommendations in the field of housing

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## **b. Development of the workshops**

**Issues of major relevance to the participants during the discussion of the recommendations.** Among the issues that mattered most to participants were:

- The need to define what a vulnerable person is.
- Concern that people in an irregular situation or without access to electronic devices for cultural and economic reasons would be left out of the implementation of the recommendations.
- The difficulties of implementing the proposals for those who depend on the shadow economy to survive.
- The limited specificity and applicability of some recommendations, in particular some related to mobility.

- The capacity of public authorities to implement the recommendations and ensure that they actually reach the target population.

### **Relevance of the equity issue and how it was discussed**

- The equity issue is very relevant for the Forum participants, and it is closely linked to one of the most important questions in the discussion of the recommendations, that of the definition of vulnerable people/groups and whether they should be the subject of particular policies.
- There is significant concern about whether the lowering of VAT on energy may lead to a reduction in aid for the poor from the state and its institutions. Also on the effect that a universal minimum vital energy consumption could have on the public purse. They are aware that the current welfare state (or what most resembles it) must be maintained through taxation.
- They believe that those with the highest incomes should pay the most, both in terms of taxes and energy consumption.
- They point out that it is unfair that the recommendations place the burden of the measures for a Fair Energy Transition on public administrations, and not on large companies and industries.
- The unequal situation of people living in small towns in terms of frequency and quality of public transport and of basic services that avoid the need for certain journeys is unacceptable.
- They consider situations where mobility requires the use of private vehicles to be exclusive, as they discriminate against people when exercising the right to mobility to get to the workplace and even to get a job.
- Regarding the solutions that point to digitalisation to improve access to services (even if they are free), they believe that it is unfair because it leaves out those who, due to education, culture or lack of economic resources, cannot access telematic means.
- In general they understand that they live in an unfair society where not everyone has the same opportunities. They stress the idea that fairness means that everyone should have their basic needs covered and have access to measures to increase efficiency and energy savings in the home (purchase of more efficient household appliances, energy renovation of housing).
- Reflection on equality leads them to think that it is very difficult to achieve a completely fair society in which everyone is happy with their situation.
- Many believe that positive discrimination measures towards the poor are needed for the good of the community as a whole, even though they may not be fair to other sectors of society, to act as a counterbalance and as

compensation. Some, the minority, appreciate the value of measures aimed at the entire population.

**Feedback: participants' opinions on the Forum.** In order to find out what the participants of the Fair Energy Transition Forums thought about the contents, objectives and development of the sessions, they were given a questionnaire to fill in anonymously. They were to indicate which elements they would highlight as the most negative and which as the most positive.

75% of the participants (21 responses) indicated that there was nothing they disliked about the Forum. The rest pointed out the following aspects with which they were dissatisfied:

- Lack of punctuality and the duration of the Forum: 7% (2 responses). The lack of punctuality of the participants shortened the actual duration of the Forum, which, although it was extended several minutes beyond its scheduled end time, was insufficient for some of the participants.
- Intransigent attitude of some participants during the debate: 7% (2 responses). There were participants who at certain points in the debate expressed xenophobic attitudes, blaming migration for their personal precariousness.
- Recommendations on transport: 7% (2 responses). Some of the participants expressed that they did not agree at all with the experts' proposals.
- Lack of ambition in the recommendations: 4% (1 response).

What they did like during the Forum:

39% of the participants (11 responses) indicated that they liked everything about the Forum (welcome, dynamics, recommendations, debate and management). The rest were somewhat more specific, highlighting the following positive points:

- Opportunity to express and share experiences and opinions: 32% (9 responses).
- Recommendations in general: 7% (2 responses).
- Energy efficiency recommendations for housing: 7% (2 responses).
- Learning about the energy transition: 4% (1 response).
- The dynamics and thematic content of the Forum: 4% (1 response).
- The treatment received: 4% (1 response).
- The clarity and involvement of the facilitators: 4% (1 response).

**Communicate recommendations to socio-economically vulnerable people** Time was set aside at the Forums to address the question of how to convey information on policy proposals. Participants were then asked how they would communicate to their peers why they felt the recommendations they had prioritised were fair. They stressed

the importance of communicating the efforts being made to make the energy transition fair. This led to a debate on the concept of fairness. The issue of equity, its relevance and how it was debated has already been discussed in the first section of this summary. In terms of communicating the recommendations, it can be said that the language they would generally use did not differ much from that used in the discussions. The language is direct, appealing to personal experiences and does not emphasise buzzwords or expressions. A greater or lesser effort is made, depending on the cultural level of the speaker, to express themselves in a formal and correct manner, avoiding the use of slang or swear words. When asked how they would communicate the Forum's findings to their family and friends, they do not indicate a need to change their register to a more informal one.

As for the story or the arguments, the situation is similar. Sometimes they would try to explain certain recommendations by using comparisons without having enough or sufficiently verified information to do so. For example, participants living in Valencia complained about the frequency of service and the fares of public transport passes compared to Madrid, where they say the situation is better based on assumptions.

**The facilitators' perception of participants' satisfaction with the overall participation process and their role in it.** As mentioned above, the Forum was held in two different locations (Madrid and Valencia) with two different groups. While the components of the groups had many common traits, the groups behaved differently. The Madrid group turned out to be less dynamic and enthusiastic than the Valencia group. This may have been influenced by the fact that there were internal tensions in Madrid as a result of xenophobic comments which, although addressed by the facilitators, possibly hindered pro-activeness. In Valencia, on the other hand, there was a good rapport among the participants, which facilitated the discussions and the search for conclusions. Nevertheless, in both cases, there was great interest among those attending the meetings to express their opinions, and even a certain pride and satisfaction (more so in Valencia than in Madrid) in having the opportunity and the space to express their common problems and share experiences, doubts and expectations.

Despite the efforts made, not all group members participated equally. Factors such as language proficiency, life and cultural background, personality or possible shyness may have influenced the number and extent of the interventions. It was possible to prevent the most assertive people from monopolising the floor. No complaints were received from those who did not intervene or did so on an ad hoc basis. The overall perception is that the Forum attendees were satisfied with their participation in the debates and discussions.

**From the focus groups to the Fair Energy Transition Forum: evolution of participants' attitudes towards the development of the FETA project and the energy transition.** In relation to the FETA process, in general, people were very positive about the group discussion. Their confidence in the project had increased, if anything, and being contacted again gave them a sense of continuity and a certain "bonding". With regard to the energy transition, they were more oriented, either because they had already understood their role in the project, or because participation in the groups had caught their attention.

Participants in general continue to see little scope for reducing their energy consumption. In the intervening months, the government has adopted measures aimed at combating energy poverty. They have higher expectations that the authorities' measures will contribute to guaranteeing them access to energy and public transport.

**The presence of the Ukrainian war in the debates.** The war conflict triggered by the Russian Federation's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, and its continuation to date, has sent shockwaves across the globe, with growing consequences for the energy market and the economy in general. However, this issue did not come up during the discussions at the Fair Energy Forum. This would underline the precarious economic situation of the participants, in which the concern to cover their most basic needs overrides any other concerns about the international situation.