

ENERGY TRANSITION: EVERYBODY IS AFFECTED  
SO **EVERYBODY SHOULD BE HEARD!**



# FINAL REPORT

## FAIR ENERGY TRANSITION FOR ALL – HOW TO GET THERE?

**Results of dialogues about energy transition with vulnerable citizens  
and workshops with experts in nine European countries**

**November 2022**

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



# Table of contents

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Foreword .....	3
Executive Summary .....	4
<b>1. About the Project: Fair Energy Transition for All .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>2. Methodology .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Policy recommendations on national level: Similarities and differences .....</b>	<b>8</b>
General Findings .....	8
Mobility .....	10
Housing .....	13
<b>4. Communication .....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>5. EU wide recommendations .....</b>	<b>20</b>
1. Putting fairness and sustainability at the heart of the economy .....	20
2. Spreading the word – and the skills .....	24
3. Moving forward .....	26
4. Homes for the future .....	28
<b>Annex .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Annex 1: National Partners .....	30
Annex 2: Summary of the Focus Groups .....	31
Annex 3: Personas .....	42
Colophon .....	44

# Foreword

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Shifting Europe's energy use onto a sustainable footing, replacing fossil fuels with renewables and cutting waste, is an urgent priority for our planet. Spurred by a fuel supply crisis caused by war in the east, European governments have belatedly stepped up the pace of change.

Haste has not always been a good counsellor, however. Well-meaning policies aimed at promoting cleaner energy and efficiency have, at times, stoked social division and further eroded trust in European democracies, letting populists equate green with mean elitism.

This is the challenge: to further the European Union's energy transition without a public backlash that would not only jeopardise climate goals but risk the cohesion of our societies. It is a challenge taken up by a consortium of philanthropic foundations, moved to act, notably, after chaotic street protests against fuel duty hikes shook France in 2018-19.

The key to providing answers was to get out of the echo chambers of capital cities and into that Europe where tens of millions struggled daily, long before today's Kremlin-powered cost-of-living crisis, to heat their homes, get to work or take their children to school – to ask them what their energy problems are, and to work with them on potential fixes.

In two years of focus group research, involving 900 people from disadvantaged groups living in nine EU member states, the foundations' project – *Fair Energy Transition for All*, or *FETA* – has heard a clear message of understanding for the needs of the planet and a willingness to play their part among some of the poorest communities, urban, rural and in-between, across Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland.

Equally resonant, however, has been a deep note of distrust in politicians' ability – indeed desire – to bring about change in a manner that is just. Yet there is also hope – that the burdens of transition be shouldered by those with greatest means, while its many opportunities, including for better jobs and living conditions, should lift up those in need.

Informed by the listening exercise, carried out in community venues where vulnerable people were at ease to share their experiences using "energy diaries", experts in each country drew up policies to help the disadvantaged through the transition. These proposals then faced a reality check in citizen forums, which led to revisions. To complement these national recommendations, specialists also compiled a set of proposals for action at EU level.

The *FETA* consortium, led by the King Baudouin Foundation, with the Fondazione Cariplo, Deutsche Bundestiftung Umwelt, IKEA Foundation, Stiftung Mercator, the Network of European Foundations and the Open Society Foundations, submits these recommendations to national governments and the EU institutions in the firm belief that they can ensure Europe not only honours its commitment to the environment, not only preserves its social fabric in the face of profound disruption, but in doing so emerges a fairer and safer, more cohesive and more resilient community for the benefit of all who live here.

The King Baudouin Foundation and its partners would like to express their deep gratitude towards all the participants who have shared their experiences and ideas. They also thank all the national partners who have made it possible by preparing and managing the dialogues, in a challenging time of pandemic.

If you are interested in further publications and information on the project such as the methodology, please have a look at the *FETA* website: [www.fair-energy-transition.eu](http://www.fair-energy-transition.eu) ■

# Executive Summary

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The Fair Energy Transition for All (FETA) project is based on two years of listening deeply to the concerns and hopes of Europe's most vulnerable citizens on the transition to green energy. It offers a blueprint for change across the continent that can ensure wide public support and spread the benefits of renewal to those living in or close to poverty. The approval of those least able to absorb the transitional costs of giving up fossil fuels matters profoundly. Without it, we face failure. Enacting such a programme would be difficult at the best of times; in the aftermath of a pandemic, amid a war with Europe's biggest gas supplier that is fuelling a cost-of-living crisis, these are not the best of times. Yet making urgent energy savings, reducing waste and switching to a clean system with efficiency and renewable energy production at its core cannot be further delayed.

The FETA project has shown that there is an understanding of the need to break with coal, oil and gas, and a willingness to play a part, even among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in society. This is contingent, however, on the transition being seen to be fair. Vulnerable citizens are generally confused about how best to have an impact and where to find trustworthy information. Deeply mistrustful of politicians, they are sceptical about leaders' desire and ability to meet climate goals, let alone to do it in a way that is equitable for all. To avoid pushback, Europe's wealthy must not be seen to escape the need to change behaviour.

As vital as it is in itself, the energy transition also offers European society many opportunities – if managed well. Eradicating energy poverty, reducing inequalities, providing jobs, improving EU competitiveness, strengthening our democratic institutions, and improving the resilience and economic security of the Union: with planning, coordination and monitoring, this can be the moment to begin a new, sustainable, resilient and equitable chapter. There is public acceptance of the need for sacrifices. However, to maintain and build this support, fairness and equity must be shown to be as much the ambition of the transition as its other aims.

FETA proposes an array of measures and tools for government at every level:

- > **Fairness** and well-being must be placed visibly at the heart of national and European policy. It should be reinforced by national subsidies as well as EU fiscal rules, financial support and convergence criteria.

Special and well-coordinated efforts should be made to protect those facing energy poverty and to curb conspicuous energy consumption by a privileged few. For policies to actually meet the needs of different vulnerable groups, they should be involved in the decision-making process, e.g. through citizens' assemblies on local, national or European level.

- > **Communication** about energy transition and related policies must be clear and frank. Policies must be communicated in a way that builds trust and understanding, and acknowledges agency and fairness. Advice and training must be easily available to let the most vulnerable share in new opportunities.
- > Many models must be developed to shift **transport** in town and country toward low-emissions options, including electric public transport and cycling, with special attention paid to those in rural hardship. To make public transport more affordable, reliable and accessible for everyone, investments need to be made in fair ticket prices, public transport infrastructure and the collection of mobility. Steps should also be taken to break habits of personal car ownership, even of electric cars.
- > In **housing**, long-term financial support should target those least able to afford insulation and new heating systems. Rules should encourage owners, including landlords, to invest. Citizens should be consulted on how to save energy as this is one of the easiest and most efficient ways to save costs. Residents, including tenants and the most vulnerable, should be helped to take part in collective energy generation.

This final report presents the key learnings from the FETA project on how to design a fair energy transition considering the needs of vulnerable people. To begin with, chapters 1 and 2 explain the goal and structure of the project and the methodology behind it. Chapter 3 outlines the similarities and differences between the policy recommendations that were developed in the different countries on Member State level. Chapter 4 presents the key learnings and concrete suggestions on how to communicate with a vulnerable target group about energy transition. Chapter 5 concludes with an overview of the policy recommendations that were developed for the European level. ■

# 1. ABOUT THE PROJECT:

## FAIR ENERGY TRANSITION FOR ALL

With regards to current challenges – e.g., Russia’s war in Ukraine, ongoing energy and climate crisis, social cleavages – it is **essential to listen to and address the concerns and needs of the most vulnerable and to ensure a socially fair and just energy transition**. Quite often the voices of unemployed people, low-income earners, single parents, young people or elderly citizens as well as workers threatened by the potential loss of their jobs are not present in the energy transition debate and their voices are seldomly heard – they might be there but mostly via representative organizations. At the same time, failure to adopt a comprehensive response to the distributional impacts of climate action may lead to further polarisation and climate-scepticism, potentially leading to policy backlashes detrimental for citizens, investors, and the planet.

We want to go one step further. To face these challenges, a consortium of Foundations composed of the Fondazione Cariplo, the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, the IKEA Foundation, the King Baudouin Foundation, Stiftung Mercator, the Network of European

Foundations and the Open Society Foundations, called into being a pan-European project entitled **Fair Energy Transition for All (FETA)**. The project aimed to explore the concerns, fears, hopes and expectations of economically and socially disadvantaged people with regards to the energy transition. In 2021, Focus Groups with vulnerable people in nine EU countries were organized – Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland to collect their ideas and thoughts on the effects of the energy transition on their everyday lives. The concerns, needs, concerns and ideas of the participants were the basis for expert workshops in each country. Based on the results of the Focus Groups, the experts formulated policy recommendations with a focus on the specific target group. These policy recommendations were then taken back to the citizens to see whether they represent the needs and ideas of vulnerable people. The results of these so called “Fair Energy Forums” were used to revise and comment on the policy recommendations. The whole process was accompanied by an expert group on the European level discussing possible European-wide measures.

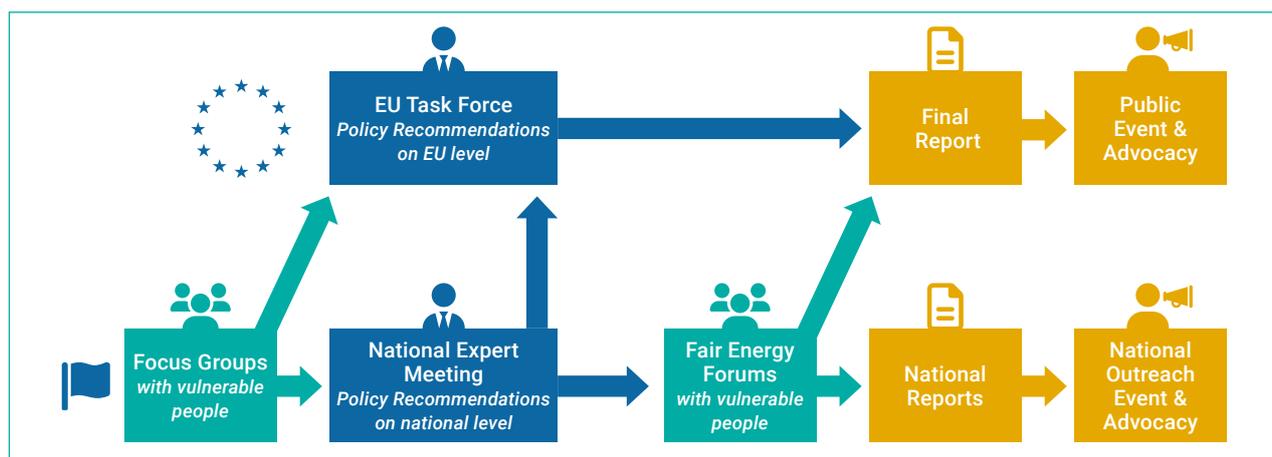


Figure 1 Overall process of FETA

The **overall aim of the FETA process** was to provide input for national and European policymakers to develop fair energy transition policy measures on different levels and enhance the communication with the target group. Whereas civic engagements phases were organized by national facilitation partners, expert meetings were organized by policy

partners in each country (see [Annex 1 National Partners and FETA website](#)). FETA was spearheaded by the King Baudouin Foundation, the process and methodology was designed and implemented by ifok and the European Policy Centre with support by Climate Outreach especially focusing on communication-related issues.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The overall methodology of FETA on national level was based on a **three-step approach**:

1. listening to vulnerable people,
2. developing policy recommendations based on their needs, hopes and fears and
3. getting feedback from the target group on these policy recommendations.

This “sandwich process” ensured that policy recommendations formulated by experts were based on the actual needs of the target group and were peer-reviewed and commented on by the same group in the end. In parallel, a further group of experts worked on policy recommendations for the European level to complement the national findings (see EU policy recommendations).

### FOCUS GROUPS ON NATIONAL LEVEL

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Figure 2 Focus Group in Italy

As a first step of the project, facilitation partners in all nine countries conducted **Focus Groups with over 900 vulnerable people** (from rural, urban and peripheral regions). To recruit the participants, they contacted organisations working with the target group. These were, for example, community welfare associations, family centres or educational institutions. To facilitate the workshops, the facilitators visited the target group in their local environment, i.e. in a surrounding that is familiar to them. The aim of the Focus Groups was to **understand the challenges faced by socially or economically disadvantaged people** in their

#### Involved Actors

- I. Over 900 citizens all over Europe have been involved.
- II. Over 90 Focus Groups in nine countries have been organised.
- III. 150 experts on national and European level were consulted.

everyday lives and to understand what they need from the energy transition. The Focus Groups were centred around an ‘energy diary’ format, taken from the academic literature, where they are used to describe energy scenarios in the future. The energy diaries were adapted by the facilitators to reflect realistic energy policy futures for each country in 2030 (see annex [Energy Diaries](#)). In discussing the future scenarios, one could learn more about the participants’ attitudes, hopes and fears. The two main topics discussed were housing, and transport; in addition, financing came up as cross-cutting topic.

### EXPERT MEETINGS ON NATIONAL LEVEL

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As a second step of the project, **expert meetings were organised in each country** to discuss measures to face the energy transition, focusing the lens on how vulnerable groups are affected and what they deem important. The discussions were **based on the outcomes of the Focus Groups**, and personas developed to represent the participants feelings and voices. The gathered experts reflected on the issues and struggles vulnerable citizens face in their everyday lives and how these are linked to the energy transition. The aim was to analyse the regulatory status quo and reflect on the necessary changes needed, not only to achieve broader climate targets, but also on how to ensure that vulnerable groups are not left behind in this process. With these aspects in mind, **draft policy recommendations were formulated** by the experts.

The expert meetings brought together a **diverse mix of experts**, with very different academic and professional backgrounds bringing varied points of view and approaches to the issues into the discussion.

## PERSONAS

To constantly link the discussions in the expert meeting to the outcomes of the Focus Groups and to illustrate the needs of different types of people within the target group fictional “**personas**” were used (See Annex 3). They aimed to **represent specific characteristics of the participants of the Focus Groups** in terms of age, residence, employment status as well as specific challenges they are facing in the energy transition. The challenges they are facing were fundamental for the design of the policy recommendations. On the European level this process was mirrored for the EU expert meetings.

Based on national examples, six personas were developed in each country to enrich the discussions.



**Figure 3** Exemplary Persona used in the EU Expert Meetings. Further Personas can be found in the annex Personas.

## NATIONAL FAIR ENERGY FORUM

The **Fair Energy Forum (FEF)**, organised by national facilitation partners, was the last step of the project’s citizen involvement phase. The FEF’s goal was to ensure that the policy recommendations developed in the expert meetings represent the voice of the target group.



**Figure 4** Fair Energy Forum in Denmark

Each forum consisted of around 15-20 participants who took part in the Focus Groups as well as further vulnerable people. During the FEF the participants discussed, commented on, and prioritized the policy recommendations developed in the second step of the project.

## EUROPEAN TASK FORCE



**Figure 5** European Task Force Meeting

The findings on national level fed into a parallel process on European level. The European Task Force was made up of experts with different backgrounds, such as policymakers, administrations, members of the civil society, think tanks and academia. The experts drew up concrete and workable policy recommendations for the European level from the citizens’ input (see chapter on [EU policy recommendations](#)).

Based on the findings and learnings from the process, the King Baudouin Foundation and ifok are currently developing a “**Method Guide**” to inspire other actors to reach out and listen to the unheard. The guide will be published in 2023 and will provide an in-depth overview and evaluation of the methodology including practical hints, best-practices and learnings for organizing similar processes and for working with vulnerable people.

# 3. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON NATIONAL LEVEL: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

The following chapter compares the policy recommendations that were developed on national level and their evaluation by the participants (hereafter referred to as *participants*) of the Fair Energy Forums. As a primary source, this report draws upon the results compiled in the national reports written by all national partners.

The chapter starts with **general findings** that came up across overarching topics and then goes into detail about key similarities and differences in the recommendations on **mobility** and **housing**. More detailed information on the results in the different countries can be found in the National Reports published on the FETA website <https://fair-energy-transition.eu/>

## General Findings

### 1. MAKING ENERGY AFFORDABLE AND AVAILABLE FOR EVERYONE AND ENSURING A FAIR DISTRIBUTION OF SUBSIDIES AND COSTS.

#### What is it about?

The clear message of the policy recommendations in all nine countries is that **energy must be affordable and available to everyone**. In the area of **housing**, it is recommended that renovations be promoted, that rising energy prices be compensated through various mechanisms, that citizens be advised on how to save energy, and that the use of renewable energies be made affordable for vulnerable people. Most of the recommendations in **mobility** relate to promoting public transport, making cycling safer, reducing car traffic, promoting e-mobility and ensuring barrier-free public places.

#### How to get there?

- > **Fair distribution of subsidies:** The participants generally agree that the above-mentioned **measures are important and necessary**. They expressed little doubt about the reasonableness of the recommendations themselves. However, the question of **who should benefit from subsidies** was discussed in different ways. Should all citizens be treated equally, or should the measures primarily target vulnerable groups? This is above all a **question of fairness**, which was assessed differently by the participants – between, and within the countries. The Spanish participants for example welcomed the idea of introducing a social bonus for electricity, based on income criteria. In Spain and Germany, it is also recommended that renovations be promoted primarily for low-income households. In Denmark, by contrast, participants felt stigmatized by measures targeting only vulnerable groups. They preferred measures that improve conditions for all and do not single them out as a particularly deprived group.



Figure 6 Fair Energy Forum in Bulgaria

- > **Fair distribution of costs:** When it comes to the question of cost distribution, most participants in Germany and some in Denmark suggested that **everyone should pay as much as they consume**. From their perspective this is fair and at the same time provides an incentive to save energy. For Italy, an important point was **that energy prices should be the same for everyone across the country** – which is currently not the case.

*“We are not socially weak; we are financially weak.”*

*Participant from Germany*

- > **Consideration of all vulnerable groups:** In Poland and Bulgaria in particular, the participants felt that it is mainly people with high salaries and good political connections, as well as large companies, who currently benefit from the energy transition. For vulnerable groups, access to renewable energies is associated with many difficulties. In general, the participants in all countries were very concerned that **all groups be considered and that no one be left out**. They talked about their own situation, but always considered the needs of other vulnerable groups as well: Pensioners, unemployed people, children, students, people with mental or physical disabilities, people with migration background and more. In addition, they looked at both the tenant and landlord perspective. In France, it was emphasized that the middle class is also facing difficulties in view of the current energy crisis. In general, participants in France and Spain felt it was important to **ensure that everyone could meet their basic needs**.

*“Vulnerability touches on many aspects of human life and goes beyond income.”*

*Participant from Spain*

- > **Accessibility:** This **reflection on the individual challenges of different groups** was very present in all countries and is reflected in the evaluation of the recommendations. It was important to the participants not only to support people financially, but also to break down digital barriers and to improve the access to any kind of services, for example, by deploying energy tutors or improving services for

public transport. When it comes to mobility, participants considered it particularly unfair that **people living in rural areas have poor access to public transport** in terms of frequency and quality. Everyone should be given the same opportunities, regardless of their location, their cultural, economic, or educational backgrounds. In Italy, participants discussed the idea of a social transition that envisages new forms of solidarity and assistance including everyone. In their understanding the term *community* ensures inclusion and accessibility and guarantees a fair energy transition for everyone.

## 2. IDENTIFYING THE NEEDS OF VULNERABLE PEOPLE BY INVOLVING THEM IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.

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### What is it about?

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As described previously, it was important to the participants that the needs of different groups are considered. For this, **vulnerable citizens must be involved in decision-making processes**. Many participants perceive citizen involvement as very important and expressed their wish and demand for more citizen participation in their country.

### How to get there?

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- > **Context of citizen participation:** Various occasions for citizen participation have been proposed. For example, people should be involved when wind farms or solar plants are built in their neighbourhood. In Poland, there were calls for people with disabilities to be more involved in the design of public spaces. And in Belgium, a recommendation was developed to improve communication between different political institutions. The participants supported the recommendation but noted that local initiatives and citizens should also be involved as well.
- > **Suitable formats and incentives:** Several aspects were important to the participants when it comes to citizen engagement. For example, the formats should take place face to face, since online events involve many barriers. In Denmark, it was also discussed that participants should receive financial compensation for their participation.

# Mobility

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## 1. MAKING PUBLIC TRANSPORT MORE AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE AND RELIABLE FOR EVERYONE INCLUDING VULNERABLE PEOPLE.

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### What is it about?

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Most of the recommendations around mobility deal with the question of **how to improve public transport**. They include suggestions for fair ticket prices, investments in public transport infrastructure and the collection of data to improve mobility services. Recommendations were made in Spain, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany, Poland, Italy, and Belgium.

The participants repeatedly pointed out that **no one should be excluded from using public transport**, referring to the situation of various groups: Migrants with language difficulties, a single mother traveling with her children and a lot of luggage, disabled people who encounter various barriers, people living in rural areas, but also people who do not own a smartphone. For everyone to be able to participate in public transport, it must become **more affordable, reliable, and accessible**.

### How to get there?

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- > **Affordability:** The participants in these countries agreed that **public transport currently is too expensive and needs to be affordable for everyone**. In most countries, subsidized tickets are already offered to certain groups (e.g., senior citizen passes). However, participants called for lower prices for everyone. It was particularly important to the people in Denmark that the same conditions apply for everyone. By contrast, participants in Spain and Italy share the opinion that the costs of tickets must be proportionate to the user's income.
- > **Reliability and accessibility:** Next to affordability, it was important to the participants that public transport becomes **more reliable and accessible**, especially in rural areas. To achieve this, transport infrastructure must be significantly improved and expanded. In Belgium it was also proposed to introduce a community taxi system in rural areas where public transport is only available to a limited extent. To make it easier for people to learn about the different mobility offers, it was proposed in Spain that the public administra-

tions set up offices to provide information and facilitate the access to existing public transport passes. These offices should also simplify the access for migrants and people without smartphones.

*“Better public transport would let people from my village get to the city more easily. That would give them the same chances as people in town and help their budgets because they wouldn't have to buy a car.”*

*Participant from Poland*

- > **Shared mobility data:** To meet the people's needs when developing public transport further, public authorities should have access to mobility data. For this purpose, Italy recommends committing companies which manage public transport (e.g. the national rail network and local transport networks) to collect mobility data more systematically.
- > **Intermodal transport:** Belgian participants noted that when improving public transport, interfaces with other forms of sustainable mobility should also be considered. For example, it must be possible to combine trips by bus and e-bikes in the sense of intermodal transport.

## 2. MAKING CYCLING SAFER AND DEVELOPING A HOLISTIC CONCEPT TO DO JUSTICE TO ALL ROAD USERS.

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### What is it about?

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In France, Germany, Poland and Spain, recommendations have been developed to promote cycling. There was a shared belief that **cycling needs to be safer** for everyone, especially for children. This includes the upkeep of bike lanes, a clear separation of lanes for bicycles, cars, and pedestrians but also the implementation of rules for cyclists and scooterists. This requires a holistic concept that includes all road users.

*“It's simply too dangerous for me to cycle in the city.”*

*Participant from Germany*

## How to get there?

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- > **Bicycle and pedestrian advocates:** In Poland it is recommended to implement **bicycle and pedestrian advocates** in municipalities to express the needs of inhabitants. Every municipality should have the chance to hire an ombudsman. It is also relevant that they represent the interests and perspectives of different groups – cyclists, pedestrians as well as car drivers.
- > **Awareness and education:** For the interaction of the different road users to work, the participants believe that **more awareness and education** is needed among the different groups. People need to learn more about safety rules and traffic routes.
- > **Affordability:** Also, **everyone should be able to afford cycling**. The Spanish participants propose making sharing services for bicycles and scooters completely free of charge. According to the French participants, the purchase of bicycles should be promoted, especially e-bikes. This could work via leasing models or by dispensing bicycles to students who have obtained their bicycle riding license.

When implementing these measures, it should still be considered, that **cycling is not suitable for everyone**, e.g. for disabled people, citizens of rural areas or families. This is why these recommendations were ranked lower compared to the measures related to public transport (see above).

### 3. REDUCING THE TRAFFIC OF CARS WITH COMBUSTION ENGINES THROUGH PRICING INSTRUMENTS OR CARPOOLING.

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## What is it about?

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Most participants agreed that the **traffic of cars with combustion engines needs to be reduced**, especially in the cities. This can be achieved through pricing instruments or the promotion of carpooling.

## How to get there?

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- > **Special regulations for cities:** The **different conditions in rural and urban areas** were considered. Car traffic is to be reduced primarily in the city, as noise and exhaust fumes are the biggest problems here. In addition, there are enough alternative options in the city to cover the short distances. In rural areas, cars are often the only option for fast and reliable mobility. Therefore, Denmark recommends increasing fees for petrol in the cities only, combined with GPS-based road pricing in the cities.<sup>1</sup> In Spain there is a recommendation to provide grants to low-income people who live in Low Emission Zones (LEZs) and who depend on a private vehicle for their commute or work. The grant shall help them switch from a polluting to a climate neutral car.
- > **Tariffs on fuels:** Another price instrument was discussed in Poland. The idea was to introduce tariffs on fuel from Russia and use the proceeds to support energy-poor groups. However, the recommendation was rejected by the participants as they considered it a mistake to implement mechanisms that burden everyone equally. As the additional tax will be hidden in the fuel prices it will also burden the vulnerable groups it intended to relieve.
- > **Carpooling:** France is the only country that developed a recommendation related to carpooling. Currently carpooling is mainly offered by private platforms that charge high commission amounts. To increase the use of carpooling for commute, it is suggested to **develop inter-company mobility plans**, offering a platform for employees to connect or support them with petrol vouchers. To reach people outside the corporate world as well, carpooling should be offered by communal social action centers or town halls as well.

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<sup>1</sup> The GPS road pricing system makes people pay for each kilometre they drive in the city in certain areas at certain times of the day. People with special needs and supply deliveries are exempt.

#### 4. PROMOTING ELECTRIC CARS AND OTHER GREEN VEHICLES THROUGH COST INCENTIVES.

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##### What is it about?

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In Denmark, Bulgaria, France and Spain there are several recommendations on **e-mobility**. The recommendations mainly focus on financial support for the purchase of an electric vehicle.

##### How to get there?

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**Cost incentives:** France for example suggests an **ecological bonus** for vulnerable households and a conversion premium when buying an e-car as well as attractive leasing models. Also Denmark noted that electric cars need to be cheaper than combustion engine cars in order for people to switch.

**Promotion of various sustainable vehicles:** Some recommendations reveal **local differences** between the countries: In Germany for example, there already is a promotion program for electric cars. Participants noted that there should also be funding for other forms of e-mobility such as e-scooter or e-bikes. In Bulgaria participants were keen to raise awareness not only for e-vehicles, but also for CNG-powered vehicles, as they are still considered “clean” and are currently the cheapest option in Bulgaria. In general, some participants were skeptical about the sustainability of e-cars. In France and Spain, they also feared an explosion in electricity prices if all vehicles went electric. Another aspect to be considered according to the participants is the smart placement of the EV charging stations.

*“We see a risk in going all-electric: electricity is not a public good, so we fear an explosion of its price when most vehicles are electric.”*

*Participant from France*

Although it was recommended to promote e-mobility, it also became clear that participants would like to see a **shift from combustion engine cars to public transport rather than to electric cars.**

#### 5. MAKING PUBLIC SPACES BARRIER-FREE BY INVOLVING VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN THE PLANNING PROCESS.

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##### What is it about?

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Another important topic for the participants was the **design of public places**. There was a common sense that public spaces must be **barrier-free**.

##### How to get there?

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- > **Participation of vulnerable people in the planning process:** Various groups, especially disabled people, must be involved in the planning process of public places. This is the only way to ensure that the people’s needs are actually taken into account. In Poland they even demanded this kind of participation to become part of the law. In Germany there is a recommendation for more green spaces and less traffic.
- > **Standards for climate and animal protection:** The participants remarked that not only the needs of vulnerable people but also matters of climate protection and animal welfare must be considered when designing public spaces. In Belgium, the idea was developed to site social housing near shops and service centers to reduce people’s transportation demand.

# Housing

## 1. PROMOTING THERMAL RENOVATIONS OF BUILDINGS TO SUPPORT BOTH TENANTS AND LANDLORDS.

### What is it about?

To keep energy costs low for the citizens, most countries recommend **promoting the thermal renovation of buildings**.

### How to get there?

- > **Obligations for landlords:** Landlords should be taken into responsibility to renovate if the buildings do not meet the energy standards. If they refuse to do so, Belgium, France and Spain recommend making the landlords pay fines to the tenants who suffer the most from paying high energy bills. However, not all landlords can afford to completely cover the expenses for renovations. Therefore, many participants agree: for the renovations to be successful, **both tenants and landlords should be supported**. France and Spain for example propose to offer financial subsidies to landlords under the condition of not raising rental prices.
- > **Subsidies:** Germany and Spain recommend promoting renovations particularly for low-income households. Participants in Poland on the contrary rejected the idea of investing only in social housing, they insisted that only renovations should be promoted, if the subsidies apply to all types of building. In Poland most people live in their own properties, only few live for rent.

*“We have to put pressure on landlords to insulate buildings that are 30 years old!”*

*Participant from France*

- > **Consulting services for landlords and tenants:** Several countries found that some house owners do not only lack money but also technical knowledge and information on the administrative process of renovations. France and Poland suggest **appointing experts** like project management assistants or energy ombudsmen to support landlords and tenants throughout the reno-

vation process. They can for instance manage administrative issues, explain complex topics, and control energy efficiency. The last point was particularly important to the participants: It should be ensured that renovations are energy efficient and sustainable. This includes a high quality of construction as well as the use of environmentally friendly materials.

- > **Improvement of existing programs:** The recommendations do not only include new measures but also relate to the **improvement of existing programs**. For example, the national renovation program in Bulgaria could be improved by reaching more households and implementing it for a longer period. These aspects were important for Poland as well: Here people lack trust in current programs as rules introduced by the states have been unstable in the past. Therefore, when implementing new public sponsorship, it is important to guarantee long-term support and stable conditions.

## 2. COMPENSATING FOR RISING ENERGY PRICES AND CREATING INCENTIVES TO SAVE ENERGY.

### What is it about?

A particularly important topic for the participants were **the rising energy prices** that go along with the energy transition. In addition, at the time when the Fair Energy Forums took place (spring/summer 2022), the energy crisis in the context of the Ukraine war became apparent. Overall, the participants didn't discuss the war in depth but expressed their concerns regarding rising energy prices and the loss of energy autonomy. Some participants raised a strong sense of urgency to implement measures: in Denmark to reduce energy prices, in Poland to switch from fossil fuels to sustainable energy sources.



Figure 7 Fair Energy Forum in France

Against this background, several recommendations have been developed to provide financial support to the citizens. Recommendations on what this support should look like vary between the countries; they not only reflect local particularities but also the different discussions on fairness in the countries (see above).

## How to get there?

> **Basic energy supply system:** In **Germany** for example, it was proposed to introduce a basic energy supply system, which means that people only pay above a certain level of energy consumption. The participants discussed whether this measure should only involve low-income households or all citizens. Generally, this recommendation was well received by the participants, because people can cover their basic needs and at the same time are encouraged to save energy. However, a similar recommendation on a progressive electricity fee (meaning electricity becomes significantly more expensive above a certain level of energy consumption) has been discarded in **Denmark**. This is due to the participants concerns about possible disadvantages for tenants living in poorly isolated households.

*“When we talk about poverty, we always think of the worst thing, about not having a home. But it’s not just that, it’s also having to decide to pay the bill instead of the rent.”*

*Participant from Italy*

> **Social bonus for electricity:** Participants in **Spain** strongly supported the idea of a social bonus for electricity, based on income criteria, as well as a reduced VAT rate of 4% for electricity. However, it should be clarified whom the latter applies for. According to the participants it does not make sense to lower taxes across the board because then the state cannot provide aid to those who need it the most. The question of who should benefit from support programs and who should not, was widely discussed across the countries (see above).

- > **Uniform prices:** For **Italian** participants it was particularly important to introduce uniform energy prices throughout the country. Currently the energy costs vary from region to region and depend on the energy suppliers. According to the participants, energy is a common good that should not be subject to the rules of the free market but must be equal for all.
- > **Fast action:** A similarity across the countries is the demand for **actions to be taken instantaneously**. Financial support needs to reach people quickly, especially in the light of the looming energy crisis.

*“We can save a lot of money if we simply save energy.”*

*Participant from Germany*

- > **Energy savings:** Many participants also emphasized that a large part of the costs could be saved through energy-saving measures. To support this, people should be informed about their consumption and how to save energy. This can be reached by information campaigns but also by direct energy consulting, which leads to the next recommendation.

### 3. CONSULTING VULNERABLE CITIZENS IN LOCAL OFFICES OR THEIR HOMES IN AN ACCESSIBLE AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND WAY ON HOW TO SAVE ENERGY.

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#### What is it about?

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Many participants agreed that saving energy is one of the easiest and most efficient ways to save costs. This is why all countries have developed recommendations which involve **energy consulting** in some way.

#### How to get there?

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- > **Local energy advice offices:** The recommendation in Spain aimed to establish a **local energy advice office**, managed by local authorities. These offices would act as hubs, providing advisory services, training and information on available funding programmes, as well as acting as a regional knowledge/experience-sharing hub.
- > **Consulting services at home:** Other concepts include an **energy tutor or coach** who visits citizens in their homes (Italy, Germany, Netherlands, and Poland). This form of consulting is considered more accessible than public offices that are associated with long queues, waiting lists and bureaucracy.
- > **Face-to-face contact:** Moreover, participants highlighted the importance of **direct and close contact to citizens**. Door-to-door service is preferred over digital advice. Participants in Poland emphasized that people trust more in a local energy spokesman than in public institutions. The consulting can include information about how to save energy, how to receive financial aid and incentives as well as administrative issues.

*“At the moment, there is a terrible mish-mash [of information]; people are bombarded with information from all sides, they’re losing confidence in this information. We’re being showered with piles of pointless information. So it would be useful to have a specific person [in the municipality] who I know will give me reliable and clear information.”*

*Participant from Poland*

- > **Costs and accessibility:** Overall, the recommendations involving **energy consulting** were well received by most of the participants. When implementing it should be made sure that the **service is free of charge, accessible and available throughout the whole country**. Also, the consulting person should have some specific attributes: Besides being professional, transparent, and well-trained, they should also be empathetic and patient. Moreover, it is important that they use an accessible and easy to understand language and can communicate with migrants in their language as well.
- > **Target group:** As with many of the other recommendations, participants discussed about **who should be the target group for these services**: All citizens, or only low-income households. In Poland and Italy, the participants stated that everyone should have equal chances to benefit from the support from an ombudsman or energy tutor. Danish participants would even feel exposed if only vulnerable groups were targeted. In France, by contrast, participants recommend that only low-income households should have access to energy consulting. In Italy a recommendation emphasizes multidimensional **indicators to define energy poverty**. For the participants it is important that health status and housing situation (tenants suffer from poorly isolated houses) should also be taken into account.

*“We live in social housing, which means, we can’t afford to just go out and invest in a new freezer and fridge, even though we might save money down the line and even though it might reduce our CO2-emissions. So, any kind of governmental arrangement that allows people to change their old electrical devices to new more energy sufficient ones, could get us really far. But then again, we have the problem with nobody wanting to pay for it, so...”*

*Participant from Denmark*

- > **Exchange of old electrical devices:** In Germany one recommendation would allow citizens to **replace and exchange old electrical devices with new, more efficient devices**. The participants appreciated the idea of implementing an exchange program for household devices. This was also a topic of discussion among the Danish participants.

#### 4. INFORMING ABOUT RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MAKING IT AFFORDABLE AND AVAILABLE FOR EVERYONE.

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##### What is it about?

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When it comes to the supply of energy, some countries developed **recommendations aiming to promote renewable energy sources** (e.g., by information campaigns) and to **improve the access** to sustainable energy for tenants.

##### How to get there?

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> **Information:** In the context of renewable energy, some **information deficits** among the participants of Bulgaria and Poland became apparent. This related to technical issues, benefits and effects as well as financing options for renewable energy solutions. This can lead to reservations and restraints to invest in renewable energy. However, in Poland participants liked the idea of increased local energy independence through the development of renewable energies. They considered this type of investment very promising.

*“Energy is a ‘common good’ that should not be subject to the laws of the free market: its cost must be equal for everyone in the country.”*

*Participant from Italy*

> **Energy communities:** Bulgaria, Belgium and Spain support the idea of energy communities.<sup>2</sup> While in Spain publicly owned energy communities are supposed to provide free energy to vulnerable groups, Belgium recommendations aim to create local energy communities to raise awareness about the energy transition.

*“Renewable energy is important, but it must be affordable.”*

*Participants from Germany*

> **Accessibility and affordability:** Overall, the recommendations were well received by the participants (Poland, Germany, Denmark, Bulgaria, Belgium, and Spain). In order to raise awareness for the energy transition, it is important to **involve citizens at an early stage and make renewable energy affordable and accessible for everyone** – this involves low-income households, tenants and homeowners as well as all kind of communities. In the perception of the participants, it is particularly the rich people and big business who currently benefit from renewable energies.

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<sup>2</sup> Energy communities are citizen-driven energy actions which contribute to the energy transition by advancing renewable energy projects within local communities. They increase the acceptance of energy efficient solutions and attract private investments in the energy transition by supporting citizen participation and organizing collective energy actions.

## 5. ENABLING SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND MAKING LOCAL AND HEALTHY FOOD ACCESSIBLE TO VULNERABLE PEOPLE.

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### What is it about?

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During the discussions on housing, the topic of sustainable consumption came up as well. Recommendations on this topic were developed in France, Spain and Denmark. **Access to healthy, sustainable food was seen as an important asset.**

### How to get there?

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- > **Communication:** The topic was particularly important in Denmark, where five recommendations were developed that relate primarily to communication. For example, **marketing strategies** should be developed to avoid overconsumption. Various **sustainability labels** were discussed critically, as participants feared that these would lead to an increase in food prices.
- > **Accessibility:** In France there is a recommendation to facilitate **access to local and better-quality products** for low-income households by supporting education and the development of urban agriculture in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Spanish participants highly prioritized a recommendation that includes the implementation of a social voucher system to ensure the basis of a healthy diet for everyone.

*Everyone has the right to live with dignity; having to choose between basic necessities, having to choose what to do without, is not OK. We know that what we do is terrible for the climate, but we're not accepting our responsibility to cut down. We need to stop our bad behaviour and move towards a more sustainable society, otherwise it'll be bad for the next generations. "I'm on benefits. What can I do about climate change? And the other question is: Why should I do it, while those big companies are polluting the environment without paying a penny?"*

*German participant*

# 4. COMMUNICATION

Marginalised people and communities need to feel represented in energy transition policies, and they need information to understand how these policies drive climate action.

Policies must be communicated in a way that builds **trust** and **understanding**, and acknowledges **agency** and **fairness**. This will ensure buy-in and inclusion, and prevent backlash and marginalisation.

## 1. USE A 'TRUSTED MESSENGER' TO PROVIDE CLIMATE AND ENERGY INFORMATION. WHERE POSSIBLE, MAKE THIS A LOCAL PERSON.

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**Evidence:** Participants lack **trust** in the information given to them, especially by governments and businesses, and they doubt the feasibility of some of the policy recommendations. Information must come from someone they trust, who shows **understanding** of their circumstances and their best interests. This will often be a local person (e.g. Danish participants would support a 'local citizens' council') who will use language that appeals to personal, local experiences of energy use and climate impacts (suggested in Spain).

## 2. SHOW THAT DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE COLLABORATIVELY BY 'PASSING THE MIC': GIVE MARGINALISED PEOPLE A MEANINGFUL SAY IN CLIMATE COMMUNICATIONS.

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**Evidence:** Participants do not **trust** decisions made in isolation from communities (e.g. by landlords) as this often leads to a lack of community **agency** in climate action. People from different groups and backgrounds need to have a meaningful say when energy policies are decided on and communicated, so that people **trust** that collaborative decision-making has taken place (e.g. it was suggested in Poland that cyclists be involved in decisions *and* communications about cycling infrastructure).

## 3. REGULARLY DISSEMINATE LOCAL-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS IN 'EVERYDAY' LANGUAGE. WHERE POSSIBLE, ENGAGE IN PERSON.

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**Evidence:** Participants need energy information that is less technical (an issue seen across all 9 countries, e.g. German participants suggested technical messages be explained better) and more relatable to the everyday experiences of 'ordinary people', including examples of local good practices (requested in Bulgaria). Materials should use language that everyone can **understand** and that explains the reasons behind particular measures (suggested in Belgium). Where possible, **trusted** messengers should go out to accessible community hubs (suggested in France, among other countries), and if not, there should be digital skills support to help people access online information.

## 4. COMMUNICATE HOW POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE PAID FOR, HOW THEY WILL HELP MARGINALISED PEOPLE, AND WHY THESE DECISIONS WERE MADE. IN ALL COMMUNICATIONS, DEMONSTRATE MINDFULNESS OF THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS, AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE ALREADY DOING ALL THEY CAN TO SAVE ENERGY.

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**Evidence:** Many participants are already reducing energy use as far as their financial capacity and **agency** allow, in order to reduce energy costs. They expressed concerns that there is no adequate statutory approach to dealing with fuel poverty (especially in the Netherlands), and they are confused about what grants and incentives are available, and who will ultimately pay for energy efficiency measures.

**5. CLEARLY COMMUNICATE HOW ENERGY POLICIES APPLY TO EVERYONE AND HOW THE CHANGES RECOMMENDED ARE ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYONE. BUT AVOID CREATING STIGMA TOWARDS MARGINALISED GROUPS IN THE PROCESS.**

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**Evidence:** For groups to engage with climate policies, they need to perceive them as **fair**. To many participants, **fairness** means ‘accessible for everyone’, so communicators must show *how* policy recommendations are accessible and therefore **fair**. For example, participants in Italy made clear that if a domestic energy tutor were employed, the tutor would need to be available to social housing residents. Communicators should avoid stigmatising marginalised groups by spotlighting disadvantages without permission. For example, describing groups as ‘low-income’ might increase stigma towards them (a concern in Denmark).

**6. COMMUNICATORS SHOULD DEVELOP MESSAGES ON FAIRNESS ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS.**

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**Evidence:** Participants’ understanding of what is ‘**fair**’ differs according to their particular circumstances. For example, consider an archetypal persona (inspired by participants in France): a single parent who needs a car to combine the school run with her commute. This lifestyle need will influence what kind of low-carbon transport policy this person sees as **fair**. Communicators should remember that there is no universal concept of climate ‘justice’, and messages on **fairness** should be tailored case by case.

# 5. EU WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

While the last chapters provided a synthesis of the results on national level, comparing the countries with each other on supranational level, the following chapter is about the **results that were produced on European level.**

The recommendations which now follow build on the discussions of the EU Task Force. They aim to ensure that not only are all EU citizens effectively supported through the energy transition and that it does not exacerbate already difficult living situations, but that the energy transition is also used as an opportunity to tackle the underlying causes of vulnerability and inequality in our society.

## 1. Putting fairness and sustainability at the heart of the economy

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The European Union must break with a cycle of permacrisis. Our economic model is fundamentally flawed. It is widening inequalities and damaging the climate and biodiversity. Redistributive policies are insufficient to maintain societal well-being and stability. Instead, governments at all levels across the EU should commit to a well-being economy – one where policymaking targets the well-being and resilience of people, today and in future generations, and of their environment.

*“We’re asking people and the government to make an effort, but no one’s making any effort to change how the whole system works – and I think that’s the real issue...”*

As the FETA research shows, **fairness** – and the ability to integrate it fully into energy transition strategies – **will be the key determinant of the success or failure of Europe’s green transition.**

EU leaders must communicate clearly and honestly about the benefits, trade-offs and temporary costs of the transition. Citizens must accept that getting through these exceptional times will require exceptional measures but that these are vital to avoid devastating consequences

for our society and economy. Strengthening social safety nets now will underscore that support is available to all.

Continual efforts to measure the social impacts of the transition, especially on the most vulnerable, must be made. Where necessary, policymakers must act swiftly to alleviate these impacts. The European Commission should introduce the **Transitions Performance Index** into the European Semester process by monitoring member states’ progress in meeting social development targets.

### A. TO CHANGE CONSUMPTION, FINANCIAL CARROTS – AND STICKS

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1. **Targeted income support** should help the most vulnerable through periods of high energy prices – **not general price caps**, rebates, duty cuts and similar measures that many governments have put in place this year. These effectively subsidise fossil fuel use.
2. **Raise VAT on fossil fuels, carbon-intensive products and other damaging goods and services. Cut VAT on public transport, renewable energy, sustainably produced food and other beneficial goods and services.** Longer term, all EU member states should ensure that consumption-based emissions are accounted for in national climate targets.

*“The energy transition is unfair; most of us who’ve got less money are trying to save on energy – to do our bit but also to save money. But at the same time the government lets big companies get away with massive pollution.”*

3. **Protect low-income households from carbon taxes**, which are highly regressive. The less well-off spend a greater proportion of their income on energy. If carbon pricing is broadened (eg by the proposed ETS extension to buildings and transport), it must be accompanied by **carve-outs** or significant financial support for those likely to be hardest hit and most unable to pay. **The Social Climate Fund should be used to support the poorest, through targeted** green investments in housing and mobility. This must begin immediately and will need considerably higher resources than are currently foreseen.

*“I think you might say that poor folk are better climate activists than rich people – because they can’t afford to buy much stuff. Mind you, they can’t afford to be healthy either.”*

4. **Reduce the extremely high CO<sub>2</sub> output of the very rich**; the richest 1% are by far the fastest-growing source of emissions, emitting around 70 times as much carbon as the poorest 50%. If those unaffected by standard price signals continue, while those already struggling to pay bills adjust their own behaviour, it may undermine support for the energy transition – and trust in our political system. We should consider expanding the ETS to private jets or requiring them to be zero-emissions by 2030, or even an outright ban. To fund support for the most vulnerable, taxation should be progressive, with a high rate on luxury items, especially high-carbon goods like yachts, jets and high-end vehicles.

*“Everyone should benefit, but those with broad shoulders should carry more.”*

5. **Tax excessive profits at energy providers**; the revenue cap on the sale of “inframarginal” electricity technologies and the “solidarity contribution” by fossil-fuel firms, announced by the Commission president in September 2022 are welcome first steps.
6. **Grants, soft loans and tax relief** should encourage citizens to get involved with the energy transition. Member states should develop overarching strategies to encourage citizens to become active participants, with a specific focus on vulnerable people. Local investment funds, revolving grant funds, soft loan schemes, tax relief on renewable energy and energy efficiency costs should be established, as well as support for the acquisition of consumer shares in energy generating installations. This support must be accessible to all.

*“Cash support, yes, but it has to be serious and set up in a way that works for ordinary people. Because at the moment only those who have the money can benefit from subsidies. On top of that, there’s a lot of bureaucracy – people who aren’t in the know, who’re not so able, are completely shut out of the process.”*

#### **French transition “kitty”**

Modelled on France’s already popular Personal Training Account (CPF), FETA’s French panel recommends the creation of a **Personal Energy Transition Account** into which the state could channel amounts to lower-income households that could accumulate and be used to make sustainable purchases such as electric bicycles or vehicles, home insulation or a heat pump. Up to 24 million households, which pay no income tax, could be eligible for up to 1,000 euros a year, with the “kitty” capped, perhaps like the CPF at 5,000 euros.

## B. A NEW FOCUS ON ENERGY POVERTY

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1. **Agree a European definition of energy poverty** to formally recognise the problem and allow better data collection and analysis. With the recent surge in energy prices, more countries are adding the idea of energy poverty to law or policy, but the EU picture is hazy, with each member state using Commission guidance to build its own national criteria.
2. **Agree a common set of indicators for energy poverty** and use these to assess the impacts of measures taken. The multidimensionality of energy poverty may need composite metrics to capture all its aspects. Impacts of policies on energy poverty, especially on the most vulnerable, need to be assessed before, during and after they are put in place.
3. **Energy Ombudsman** posts should be established at national and local level to improve collaboration across sectors (energy, health, transport etc) against energy poverty. Its multi-faceted nature means responsibility can get lost among officials. A national or regional Energy Ombudsman can foster collaborative approaches, offer policymakers a holistic view of the market, address consumers and help coordinate local advice offices.
4. **Just Transition Commissions**, based on the model in Scotland, should be set up across the EU to improve public engagement with the wide variety of energy transition policies. The Scottish Commission features a dozen experts, including from business, unions and science, to advise ministers. It considers regional cohesion, economic development, quality of work, young people and social inclusion among other aspects of the transition.
5. **Consider energy a basic public service**, like water, healthcare or education, and ensure free or low-cost **energy quotas** to provide a minimal service to all households. The EU should ban disconnection for vulnerable people. The more energy households consume, the higher the unit price should be – with exemptions for special cases of need.
6. **Improve coordination among energy providers and public authorities** to avoid costly and unnecessary legal disputes over bills with vulnerable households. This could also help social services act earlier to help those facing energy poverty, avoiding greater problems.
7. **Direct, automated payments** should be the rule for social assistance to ensure help reaches the most vulnerable. This must also reach those working informally and often overlooked for aid. Lack of awareness, complexity, embarrassment or co-financing demands all hinder access. If automatic payments are not possible, it is a priority to make people aware of support and help them to ask for it, without internet access if need be.
8. **Regular, independent reviews of EU and national policies** should be conducted to assess whether they are working in the interests of the most vulnerable – taking account of the **European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan**. This can make the costs and trade-offs of choices clear to citizens and identify where policies may be working against each other.

## C. BETTER COORDINATION ACROSS EU, NATIONAL AND LOCAL LEVELS

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1. **Reform EU fiscal rules** to support national government investment in social infrastructure, universal public services and human capital. Social investment should be excluded from structural deficits so that debt can finance net public investment.
2. **The SURE instrument should be a model** for EU support to states helping households with energy costs, in the way SURE financed employment support during the pandemic. The Commission should approve national **Social Climate Plans** as an equitable mechanism that does not distort the internal market and enhances the EU's image. Temporary income support and green investment should be targeted at the most vulnerable citizens for swift replacement of old windows and installation of insulation, heat pumps and solar panels. Renovating and constructing energy-efficient social housing should also take priority.

3. **National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs)** should follow the Dutch model, which engages regional social partners. This could improve their relevance and effectiveness. Some member states are not taking ownership of NECPs nor providing leadership for local government. The Dutch national plan is based on annual strategies from the regions.
4. **Improve awareness of EU funding** for the energy transition to local authorities. Their ability to access support from the RRF, Cohesion Funds, and the EIB's ELENA fund of the EIB, could be improved by using the EU's Technical Support Instrument.
5. **Stronger EU public procurement rules** could promote investment in green initiatives and in enterprises which encourage social inclusion. Binding requirements for low-emission public transport, energy efficient building renovation or a living wage could strengthen stimulate eco-innovation and social and professional inclusion, create job opportunities and improve working conditions for disabled and disadvantaged people.

*“You’d have to start with support from the government. We, the consumers, are a bit helpless in all this; we don’t have that support, but I know we should be moving in that direction. Active government support would certainly be a big incentive.”*

## D. BEYOND ENERGY

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Energy transition can help reduce inequalities and strengthen social cohesion but cannot solve all social ills. It must be accompanied by:

- > **Accessible, good quality education and training.**
- > **Active support for employment.**
- > **Good social services.**
- > **A guaranteed minimum income.**

*“It seems to me that the only way to improve things is to keep educating everyone, across the whole of society. Changing people’s mindset will be the hardest part.”*

## 2. Spreading the word – and the skills

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An EU-wide communication campaign must be undertaken with member states to promote better understanding of why the energy transition is unavoidable. It should focus on the benefits, such as cost savings from energy efficiency, better public transport and an end to dependence on Russia, and also show why current high prices are not caused by the move away from carbon. The report, “Playing my part”, by the European Commission and the International Energy Agency is a good starting point.

*“I bought a low-energy fridge that was twice the price and I know it’s a good investment, but not everyone is aware of this or they don’t know what the labels mean. People should be informed and educated about all this.”*

### A. COMMUNICATING THE CHANGE

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1. **Use plain, everyday language** to underscore the urgency and that help is available, especially to the vulnerable but avoid stigmatising them with terms such as “low-income”.
2. **Focus on messages about community and social cohesion**, not individual behaviour. Communications centred around the need for individuals to cut energy use may be counterproductive; vulnerable people are already underheating homes or avoiding travel to save money. Messages should centre on broader issues such as inequality and also highlight opportunities from the transition while recognising risks.

#### Dutch jobs target

In the Netherlands, there are tens of thousands of vacancies related to the energy transition. FETA’s Dutch panel recommends that the government set up a **free training and retraining programme for energy transition skills, aimed at the unemployed** and people waiting for residence permits that would allow them to find work in new specialties such as equipment installers or energy advisers.

*“At the moment, there is a terrible mish-mash [of information]; people are bombarded with information from all sides, they’re losing confidence in this information. We’re being showered with piles of pointless information. So it would be useful to have a specific person [in the municipality] who I know will give me reliable and clear information.”*

3. **Local initiatives such as car-free weekends, free public transport days** or ways to save money by maintaining household appliances can build commitments to change habits.
4. **Switching to electric cars is not enough** – there needs to be a clear message that people will have to forgo personal cars and cycle, walk, carpool, take public transport etc.
5. **Energy Advice Offices** should be opened by local authorities to provide advice and training, with special attention on reaching vulnerable and hard-to-reach people. Existing networks which reach such citizens (civil society organisations, job centres, social security offices, churches, etc) should have training to act as energy tutors to spread the word.

### B. TRAINING FOR THE CHANGE

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1. A **“green upgrade”** for schools and, especially, vocational training courses, to ensure understanding of climate change and ways of achieving sustainability. Targeted training for people from vulnerable groups should help them learn skills for jobs in **green trades**, including relatively low-skilled tasks in building renovation (eg roof insulation).
2. **Use the European Social Fund Plus** to expand digital skills training for the most disadvantaged to ensure access to information and help available.

## C. ENGAGING EUROPEAN CITIZENS

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1. **National citizens' assemblies**, involving small groups of randomly selected citizens, can strengthen policy ambitions and trust and increase public acceptance of major change.

*“Ideas are better when more people are involved.”*

2. **Citizen assemblies' findings should be binding** on governments. Not every proposal needs to be implemented but people want to see how all their input has been treated in the political process. Institutions may need to build capacity in implementing such steps.

*“I think it's important in our society to learn and to listen to each other better and to be able to make proposals to change things. I think it's important that we are more involved in decisions!”*

3. **EU citizens' deliberations** should be held on key EU-level legislation. These need to ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable people can participate effectively at all levels, notably in new, multilevel citizens' deliberations, involving local, national and transnational citizens' panels which should be established to inform the green transition.

*“Of course, you need to give people financial incentives to create change, but I also think that involving ordinary people in the process is vital.”*

### 3. Moving forward

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It will be essential to show people that the necessary infrastructure is in place for them to lead their lives without a private vehicle before households will willingly give up their cars.

#### A. CHANGING THE OPTIONS

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1. **Invest in public transport and car-sharing schemes** as well as better walking and cycling provision, engaging women, older and disabled people in their design.
2. **15-minute cities** should be the basis for urban planning, with work, school and amenities within 15 minutes of every home without the need for a private car. Redesigning towns, in particular car parking areas, to prioritise walking, cycling, car-sharing and public transport over private cars improves public health and social cohesion and lightens household budgets for those for whom owning a car is a heavy and growing expense.
3. **Investment in low-emission public transport** must be a priority for EU, national and local governments, improving accessibility, sustainability and quality.
4. **Promoting cross-border long-distance trains and integrated international ticketing** is a role where the European Union can have a major positive impact.
5. **Free or low-cost public transport and car-sharing should be available to low-income groups**, where free public transport for all is not viable. This can improve social cohesion and is vital if new low-emission zones create barriers to jobs and services for those unable to afford a new vehicle.
6. **Digitise public transport**, making it easier to check journey times in real-time, buy tickets, choose green options – and provide data to improve efficiency. This must be done while enhancing the inclusivity of public transport.
7. **Car-sharing, carpooling and ride-sharing apps** can provide the advantages of cars without owning a vehicle. Those without access to digital technology must not be overlooked.
8. **EU standards for inclusive and sustainable transport** could promote investment in suitable projects, especially if public funds were conditional on compliance.
9. **Regional integrated networks**, coordinating different forms of transport, can build awareness of options and bridge rural-urban divides, as in Catalonia.

*“We need to differentiate more between the situation in the city and in the countryside... In rural areas, where we cannot organise public transport everywhere, we could, for example, develop collective taxi services.”*

*“Better public transport would let people from my village get to the city more easily. That would give them the same chances as people in town and help their budgets because they wouldn’t have to buy a car.”*

*“Where we live, the buses rarely run. It’s really inconvenient; you’d have to invest massively in expanding public transport.”*

10. **Target help for vulnerable rural residents** who lack clear alternatives to private cars: eg integrated networks, carpooling, car-sharing, on-demand bus services.

11. **Grants and soft loans for swapping fossil-fuel vehicles for electric** should be targeted at the most vulnerable living in places with few transport choices but owning a car.

*“It isn’t a solution for all of us to have an electric car because we just can’t make that many.”*

*“Electric cars cost an arm and a leg!”*

12. **Electric car charging networks** should be expanded, especially in rural areas where car use will remain higher; charging points should be standard in new or renovated homes.

#### Free transport in Germany?

FETA’s German panel recommends that vulnerable groups be given free or almost free access to **public transport**, with pricing set at zero or **a euro a day**. Eligibility would be mainly restricted to those in receipt of welfare benefits or with household income under a certain level. There would have to be discretionary flexibility for some others. Germany should look at Austria, where the 1,095-euro a year **KlimaTicket** offers everyone national and regional rail travel, helping the mobility of people in the countryside.

#### Custom cars in Spain

Even with financial assistance targeted at those on low incomes, buying an electric vehicle to replace one running on fossil fuel can be expensive. Spanish experts working with FETA recommend that vulnerable groups be given priority in having batteries retrofitted to existing vehicles, converting them from combustion engines to electric power at much lower cost than that of purchasing an entirely new car.

## B. CHANGING THE CULTURE

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Cultural attitudes related to the perceived sense of autonomy and status that comes with individual car ownership remain a key obstacle. It remains hard for many people to imagine a life without their own vehicle, even for those who do not currently own one but wish to. Nevertheless, the desire for our towns and cities to be designed without the car at the centre was strongly supported by focus group participants, who would also stand to profit most from cleaner air in cities as vulnerable groups tend to live in the most polluted areas.

*“Even though I don’t use it [a car] a lot, it’s reassuring to know that it’s there.”*

1. **A ban on advertising cars** should be considered to support cultural change.
2. **Political leaders should use bikes or buses** where possible, to set an example.

## 4. Homes for the future

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The focus groups showed that existing support to encourage homes to be adapted is not always reaching the most vulnerable, who have the most to gain from energy efficiency. In the rush to respond to the recent energy price spike, many governments have taken measures that are not targeted, climate-friendly or economically sustainable. A longer-term strategy is now needed.

*“The houses they’re putting up now should already be built in an environmentally friendly way, with solar panels and insulation, and they should be earthquake-proof. These things should already be the law. Don’t wait until 2030. The problem is that, to build them like this now, you pay a fortune!”*

### A. DRIVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS

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1. **Subsidies for energy efficiency improvements** must target the most vulnerable, with co-financing required for those who can afford it; investment in improving social housing stock should be a priority for governments.

*“We have solar panels; we produce all our energy ourselves. They [the government] were so smart; they gave us a lollipop for setting up the panels, which they took away again afterwards. Now we pay by the hour, so the solar panels aren’t worth anything. They were when we got them, but they aren’t now. We produce all our energy ourselves, but we don’t get a cent. It’s not fun any more. It shows they don’t care about us. They say one thing and then change it.”*

2. **Interest-free renovation loans** should be established or expanded. Repayments can be attached to local taxes, energy bills and secured, if necessary, by lifetime mortgages. Loan schemes must protect borrowers from unforeseen increases in repayment costs.
3. **Renovation voucher schemes** for homes and offices have worked well in Britain and Austria and should be expanded. They have also provided good investment returns.
4. **Free smart meters** should be installed everywhere to permit accurate measurement of energy usage, and the impact of renovation – and hence better reward efficiency efforts.
5. **Encourage landlords to invest** by: eg banning rental of inefficient homes or obliging compensation to tenants; raising taxes on empty homes to dissuade landlords from avoiding renovation; cap rent increases where landlords receive renovation subsidies to curb ‘renoviction’ and ‘green gentrification’. Tenants should be included in planning.

#### Italy’s personal trainers

In Italy, FETA experts propose the introduction of **domestic energy tutors** to help people save energy by improving the efficiency of their homes and appliances. Not just online but also making house calls, tutors could also seek out vulnerable people to offer help without waiting to be asked so that no one is left behind. Establishing relationships of trust at local level will be key. And the service offers a way to create new “green jobs”.

## B. COLLECTIVE REMEDIES

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1. **Cooperative energy communities**, where citizens invest jointly in energy assets, should be encouraged and permit awards speeded up. Vulnerable groups need better access.
2. **Share best practices** among communities and local authorities through the new Energy Communities Repository and the Rural Energy Community Advisory Hub. Regional and local governments can also compare notes via the Heat Roadmap Europe project.
3. **Support cooperatives through public procurement, taxation, state aid rules, long-term investment support and public-private partnerships.** These social enterprises can produce affordable energy, help vulnerable groups save energy and gain new skills. Their principles such as worker ownership, democratic governance, profit reinvestment and community links are in line with preferences voiced in FETA's focus groups.
4. **Tenant electricity models**, as developed in Germany, where people can buy electricity from nearby solar panels, often on their building's roof, should be expanded. Cut red tape and add incentives for small-scale renewable installations, which can also ease pressure on grids by bringing nearby solar power into densely populated areas.
5. **District heating systems**, channelling renewable and waste heat around a neighbourhood, should be preferred in dense urban areas over individual solutions like heat pumps. Heat pumps can help in rural areas – though better insulation must be the priority.

*“It is from the grassroots that things start to move: what works are small, local ideas and ordinary people helping each other. We have to give those ideas more support and spread the word about them.”*

# ANNEX

## Annex 1: National Partners

The implementation of the project is ensured by the following 16 National Partners:

COUNTRY	NATIONAL PARTNER
<b>Belgium</b>	Atanor Levuur Sia Partners
<b>Bulgaria</b>	Center for Energy Efficiency EnEffect
<b>Denmark</b>	Danish Board of Technology (DBT)
<b>France</b>	Missions Publiques Institut Montaigne
<b>Germany</b>	ifok GmbH adelphi
<b>Italy</b>	Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia Leonardo da Vinci Fondazione Giannino Bassetti
<b>Netherlands</b>	Berenschot University of Groningen Clingendael Institute
<b>Poland</b>	Polish Foundation for Energy Efficiency (FEWE)
<b>Spain</b>	Instituto Sindical de Trabajo, Ambiente y Salud (ISTAS)

# Annex 2: Summary of the Focus Groups

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*Dr Christopher Shaw and Emma James, Climate Outreach*

## BACKGROUND

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This section summarises the results from the first 'listening' phase of the [Fair Energy For All](#) project. The focus taken here is on the values that define a fair energy transition for the workshop participants. Partners in the nine participating countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland and Spain) each facilitated up to 10 workshops, using a common script, with minor adjustments as required by the needs of the participants. The results from each country's workshops were condensed into a 10-page synthesis report by the partners. This section summarises the insights from those nine synthesis reports. Its structure mirrors that of the workshop scripts. Results from each synthesis note were summarised initially by topic – values and attitudes to fairness; energy use (how people currently use energy in the home and for mobility); responses to energy diaries (what energy use might look like in 2030); and fixing the problem (who is responsible for taking the action needed?). That summary has been condensed into **four categories**:

- > Energy use and climate change (with an emphasis on understanding, fairness, trust and agency),
- > Housing,
- > Mobility,
- > Fixing the problem.

## ENERGY USE AND CLIMATE CHANGE

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### Understanding

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In most groups, awareness of climate change was high, along with widespread agreement for the need to do something about it. However, some participants were sceptical of humans' role in accelerating climate change. For example, although Polish participants saw climate change as a major issue, they did not all agree that this was caused by industrial activity – indicating some denial of links between climate change and anthropogenic activity. In contrast, French participants did note the ability of the energy transition to help tackle climate change and acknowledged the positive effects this will have – but the means to achieve this transition were questioned in all French groups. Sometimes this knowledge was expressed as a questioning of the sustainability of technologies such as wind turbines, battery production and lab-grown meat. For example, Italian participants wondered if scrapping a recently bought combustion engine car was better than producing and buying a new electric vehicle.

Overall there were low levels of understanding about the relationship between climate change, the way people use energy and a fair energy transition. For example, Spanish participants were confused about climate change causes and impacts and, along with participants in the Netherlands, were unaware of the term 'energy transition'. Participants were broadly aware of the need to change behaviour to benefit the environment but they did not relate this to climate change or energy. For Bulgarian participants, there was a lack of awareness and understanding about the impacts of the energy transition on daily lives, and across the majority of the 93 workshops there was limited knowledge about how to participate in the energy transition. Participants across all countries seemed to want answers and access to information necessary to make decisions. It became apparent that information from trusted sources was lacking and this was something that many desired.

## Fairness

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Climate change was identified as a major concern by workshop participants, but concerns around cost of living, income and employment were much more significant. Though energy transitions were presented in the scripts as technical processes, participants were inclined to discuss the issues in terms of the relationships between people and the themes of inclusivity, social cohesion and inequality. Participants emphasised significant concern over social inequality, which often came above any other issues, including climate change. This was most notable in Germany and Spain. Participants in Bulgaria and the Netherlands thought the energy transition may lead to even greater poverty and increasing inequality. There was an emphasis in all of the focus groups on the need for the energy transition to minimise existing inequalities and ensure that marginalised and disadvantaged groups are not excluded, though there was scepticism about the ability of governments to achieve this.

The theme of 'cost' dominated discussions of a fair energy transition. The most economically vulnerable participants found it particularly difficult to engage with the workshop discussions on their role in a long term energy transition. For these participants, the main priority was ensuring energy costs did not rise, to avoid making it harder to get by each month. In that sense, many participants were already taking action to reduce energy, not for the climate, but to save money. Belgian participants stated that energy price increases seem unfair, and Roma groups in Bulgaria noted their basic needs for access to affordable water and energy services were not currently being met.

In light of these concerns, many participants felt they did not personally have the capacity to drive the energy transition and that it was unfair that they should be asked to shoulder the burden. Larger institutions, such as governments and corporations, alongside wealthy individuals, were perceived to have the greatest capacity and responsibility to act to reduce emissions. In Denmark, Germany and Belgium there was a notable emphasis given to the perceived injustice of large corporations, governments and the EU being able to pollute and exploit nature while the poorest are doing everything they can to limit their use of energy in order to save money. Participants felt it was unfair that these corporations and larger countries do not have to face any consequences for their actions and yet they were considered to have the greatest capacity to make the changes needed. In addition, participants did not think it fair (or worthwhile?) that the people of Europe should be asked to make these changes if countries such as the US and China are not taking action to reduce their emissions.

## Trust

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Distrust in businesses and governments was high, but participants also viewed these actors as bearing the greatest responsibility for delivering a fair energy transition. This tradeoff led to low confidence in the possibility of the energy transition being either fair or successful. Participants did not seem to trust information being given to them. Trust was also often linked to allegations of corruption within national governments and the EU; notably in Germany, Italy and Bulgaria. Bulgarian participants believed there to be corruption in how EU funds are used by politicians. Spanish participants expressed more trust in local government and, above all, NGOs – when compared to the low trust they had in the central government.

## Agency

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Centralised and technocratic responses were not supported by the majority of participants. Top-down approaches were viewed as conflicting with a desire for autonomy and individual liberty. This wish for autonomy was stronger in some countries (Poland) than others (e.g. France and Denmark). Where individual liberty was desirable, in some circumstances collective community-centred solutions were seen as acceptable, though in some workshops participants doubted people would respect and look after communal property. Thus, a tension became apparent between individualistic and communal values. For a country such as Poland, any imposition on the individualism of free-market liberalism was treated with suspicion. In Bulgaria, participants suggested that decentralising the energy system and instead using local sources to reach energy independence was a fair transition. Roma participants in Bulgaria did not want their 'free' lifestyle to change.

## HOUSING

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Participants discussed use and cost of energy predominantly in relation to use in the home. While energy saving was a major concern, the technologies needed for greater energy efficiency were often viewed as unaffordable, and for those in rented housing, there was anxiety over what such retrofits would do to rent prices. Danish participants highlighted the risk that the new 'unaffordable' energy efficient houses being built or retrofitted as part of the energy transition would invite gentrification, displacing lower income people who have lived in the city for longer.

Living in rented accommodation was an additional constraint for many participants' ability to adopt energy efficiency measures such as insulation. This lack of agency seemed to undermine willingness to participate in the energy transition for a number of participants. For example, one Spanish participant described this as being held 'hostage' by her landlord, and this problem was also mentioned by participants in Denmark, Belgium and France. Several Dutch participants spoke of lack of communication between landlords, housing associations and tenants, and any information available often did not reach them because of language barriers.

The lack of access to decent quality housing was often cited as a barrier to improved energy efficiency, notably in Belgium and Spain. Danish participants complained of leaky houses; those in Belgium and the Netherlands mentioned poor quality insulation; and Italian participants saw housing improvements as key to a fair and accessible energy transition, with government incentives seen as desirable.

Communal living was brought up as a barrier to increasing energy efficiency at home by participants in the Belgian and Polish groups. Some living in social housing were experiencing a collective, flat-rate system for energy charges. This meant those who did take care to save energy were paying for others' wastage. Participants suggested that the district heating system did not motivate them to reduce heat consumption, whereas those using individual heat sources were strongly motivated to save.

## MOBILITY

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There were contrasts in views between rural and urban participants in most of the countries when discussing changes to the transport system. Several urban participants, notably in Spain, Italy and Germany, did not own a car. In contrast, for many rural participants their car was seen as a necessity. They could not modify their usage of the car and so often reduced spending in other areas to afford fuel costs. It was felt that any potential limits to freedom of travel as a result of the energy transition would be unfair. Rural participants in the Netherlands were also in favour of the ability to be flexible with what mode of travel they use. Many participants, both urban and rural, were in favour of improvements to public transport, and the vision of a future with fewer cars on the road was received positively, especially by those living in urban areas. The possibility of bans on more polluting vehicles leading to exclusion in society was discussed, with participants noting it is the poorest who are least able to afford a new, cleaner car.

In the Netherlands, participants emphasised the need for electric vehicles to be affordable and accessible. In Belgium, it was suggested that grants would need to be available for electric vehicles to ensure the most disadvantaged citizens also have access. Danish participants mentioned the increased danger to visually impaired citizens as electric vehicles are harder to hear. The idea of car and e-car sharing was viewed positively for some, but participants stressed the need for this to be available in rural areas as well as urban, and to be affordable.

Concerns about the cost and accessibility of both private and public transport were raised in several groups. The desire for cheaper public transport seemed to be weighed up against the need for greater investment to improve public transport services. It was acknowledged that public transport improvements needed to meet everyone's needs, otherwise any improvements would be seen as unfair. For example, German participants felt that financial aid for using public transport needed to apply to all vulnerable groups, not just a few. Italian participants were aware that public transport did not meet everyone's needs. Danish and Belgian rural participants spoke of unfair vehicle costs. Roma participants in Bulgaria viewed public transport as unaffordable and were often met with discrimination on buses.

Spanish participants spoke of the financial barriers to obtaining a driver's licence. Polish participants raised unique concerns about changes to the transport system bringing about profound and unwelcome changes to Polish society. Participants stressed that the 'work-shopping model' of modern life requires independent mobility. It was suggested that the positive environmental benefits of limiting the use of personal cars would be outweighed by the losses this would bring to the professional and social lives of Polish citizens.

## **FIXING THE PROBLEM**

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Participants from France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain specifically raised the idea of taxing 'the rich' and using this money for environmental protection. Bulgarian participants were split on how the costs of the energy transition should be shared out, with many thinking each sector should pay their fair share but with businesses and the EU paying a larger part. Others thought everyone should pay according to their income. Some of the Roma participants thought the state should pay entirely. Several participants seemed willing to pay small additional taxes as long as their money was invested well and in something they can benefit from. For example, investing in beneficial new technologies to make sure society was equal and accessible was seen as a good opportunity to build stronger communities.

The limited sense of responsibility for fixing the problem among participants may be grounded in the fact that they have little control over many aspects of their lives. Living in – sometimes poor quality – rented accommodation, combined with day to day economic pressures, undermines workshop participants' capacity to act. Even where there was a willingness in some cases to do more, participants simply felt unable to act because of financial constraints. It costs money to improve energy efficiency by buying low energy appliances, which many participants simply do not have.

Participants from Denmark, France, Germany and the Netherlands noted that a collaborative approach would be needed to deliver the energy transition; including the government working with local municipalities, housing associations, NGOs and citizens. This would allow local contexts to be taken into account and for there to be more communication within decision-making.

## DETAILED INFORMATION ON FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

*Carolin Piras, Richard Steinberg and Jennifer Rübél, ifok*

### Format: Focus Groups in Nine European Countries

In all of the nine European countries up to ten focus groups were organized and facilitated. The goal of these workshops was to understand how marginalised and economically disadvantaged groups in Europe feel about the proposed energy transitions in their respective country and whether or not they feel those changes are fair.

In sum 93 focus groups with a total of 917 participants took place from October 2020 to January 2022. Taking into account local Covid-19 regulations and other requirements, workshops were either held remotely or in person. The number of participants at each workshop varied between 4-17 attendees.



**Figure 8** Number of Participants

### Recruitment: Participants in their Local Contexts

Since we wanted to engage with a **hard-to-reach target group** that is not used to taking part in dialogue formats, our aim was to reduce the barriers to participation as much as possible. To recruit the participants, we contacted organisations that work with the target group. These were, for example, community welfare associations, educational institutions or support groups. To facilitate the workshops, we visited the target group in their local environment, i.e. in a surrounding that is familiar to them.



**Figure 9** Focus Group in Poland

As most of the focus groups were embedded in existing course structures (e.g. language courses or resettlement programmes for unemployed), the participants usually knew each other and felt comfortable speaking openly in front of each other. The contact persons in the organisations were also central to peoples' participation – they were able to motivate them to take part and convince them to trust in the format.

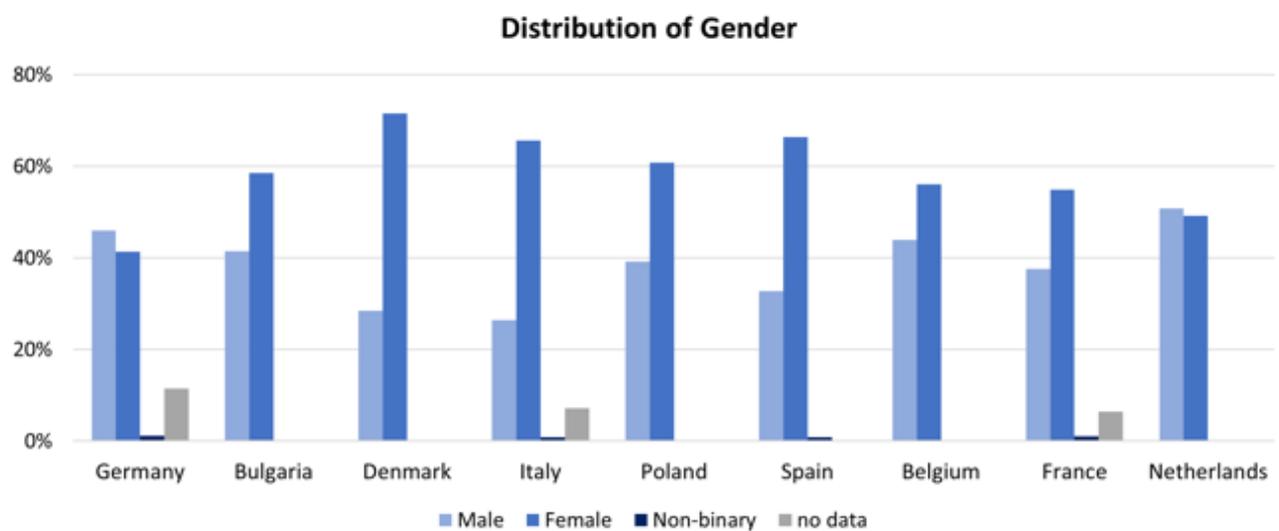
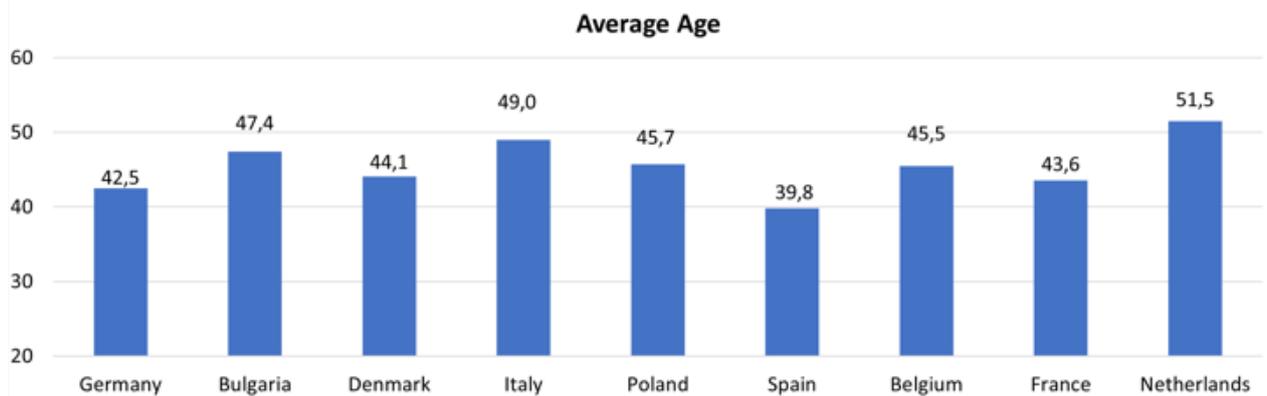
Female participants outnumbered males (with Germany the exception, where there was an even balance). This imbalance was particularly high in Denmark, with 73% female participants and 28% male participants. The average age of participants was 45 years, and participants across each country fell into the age range of approximately 18-73 years, with a relatively low number being younger than 25 or older than 65.



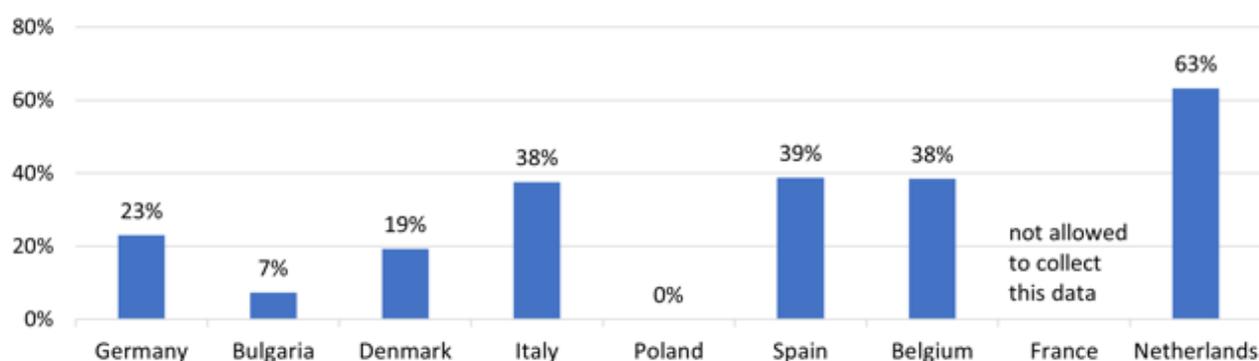
**Figure 10** Focus Group in Italy

Around 70% of participants were from urban or suburban areas, including large cities such as Brussels, Sofia and Milan. The majority of participants were not educated beyond secondary school level. The ethnicity of participants was highly diverse.

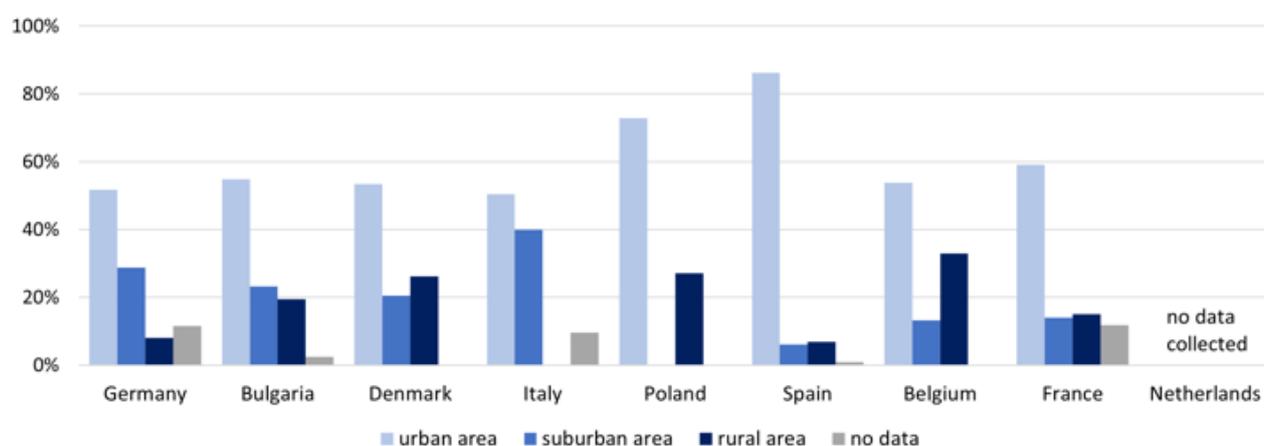
Further information about the participants and their socio-economic backgrounds can be found in the graphics below:



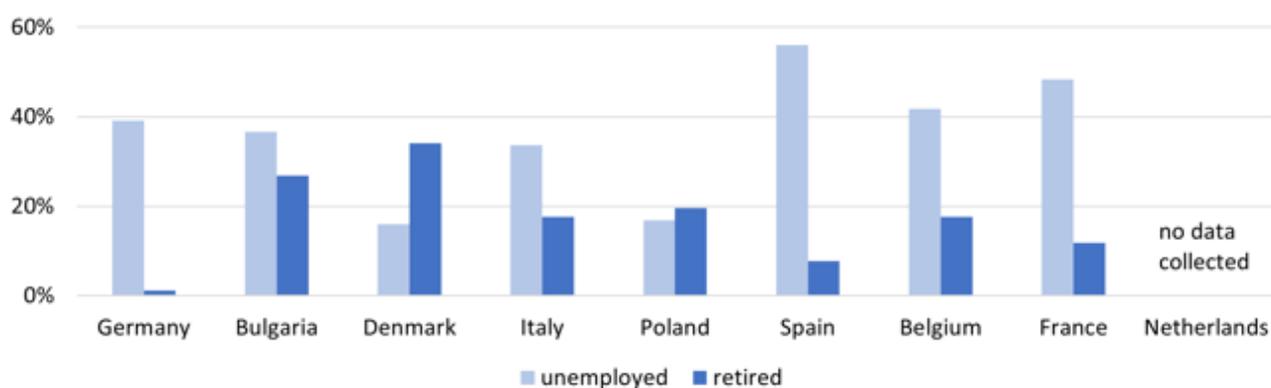
### Migrational Background



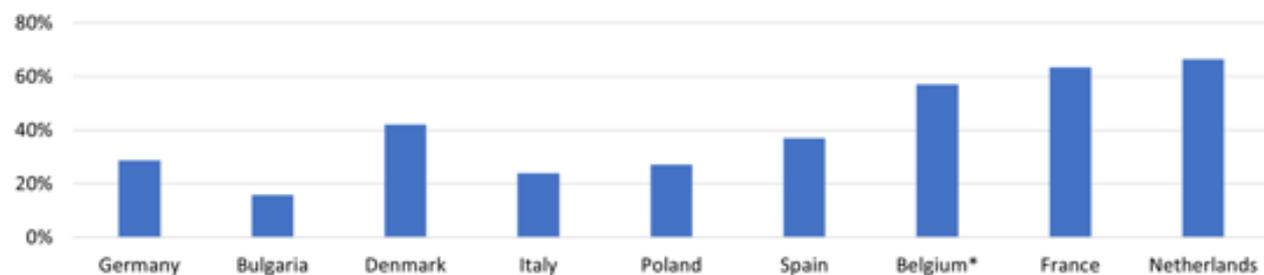
### Area of Residence

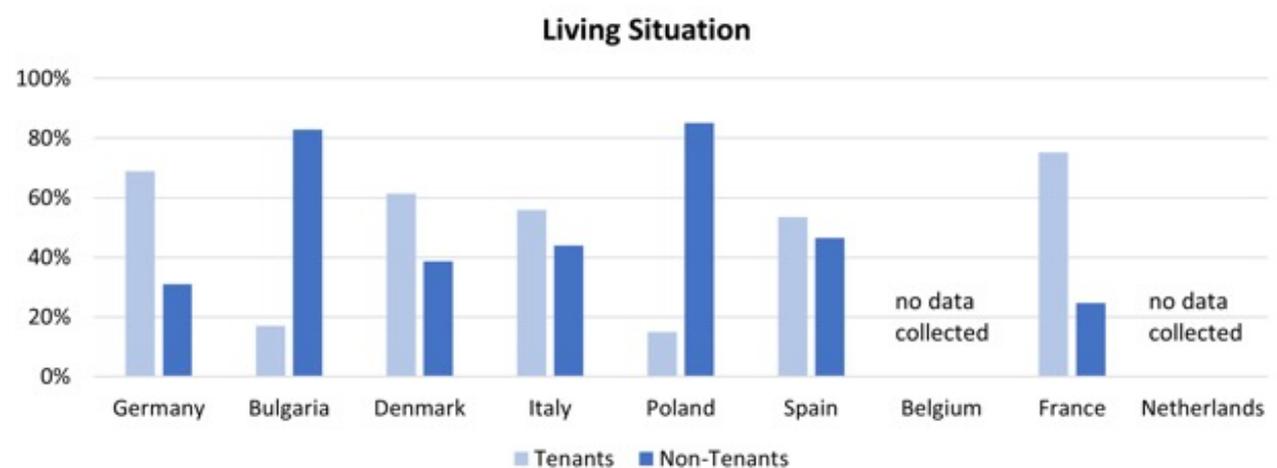
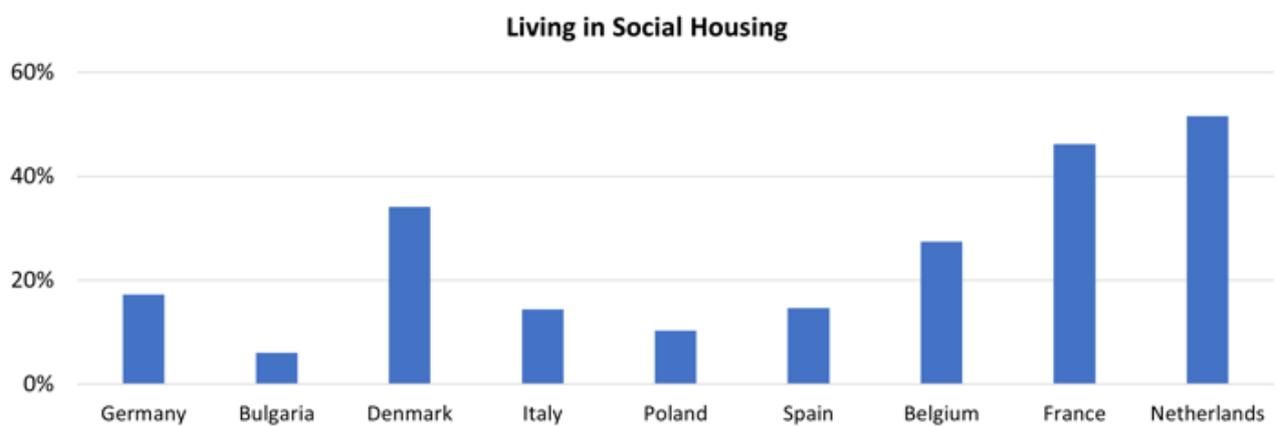
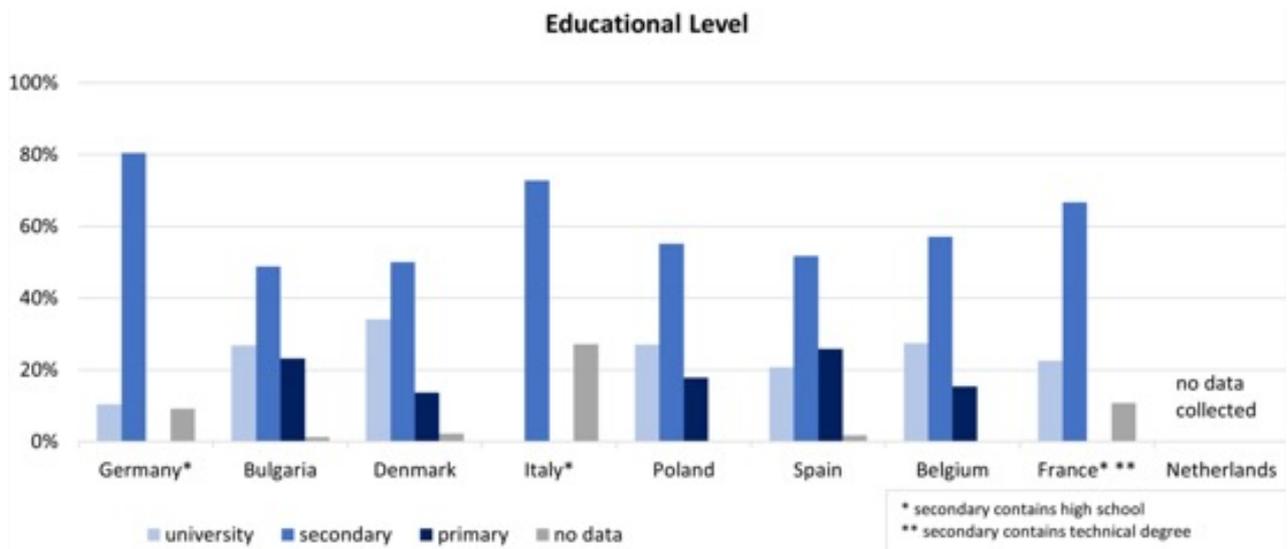


### Employment Status



### Receiving Social Aid





## Energy Diaries

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The following energy diaries were used during the focus groups to reflect realistic energy policy futures in 2030 both in rural and urban areas. The following version was adopted to the national contexts in each country.

### Housing (rural)

8: 00 am	Woke up. Ate breakfast with my partner before she left for work. It's cold outside so I'm grateful that the house has good insulation and that it was installed for free by the government- makes the house cheap and easy to heat.
9: 00 am	Started work at home. My team at work meet up in person occasionally but it's normal to do lots of work online now to reduce pollution from cars.
10: 15 am	Made a hot drink and realised I've run out of some food I need for dinner tonight. Ordered the food online to arrive later today.
01: 20 pm	Ate lunch.
04: 00 pm	Starting to feel a little bit cold. Heating and lighting came on automatically – landlord installed 'smart heating' for us so it just comes on when it senses that it's dark or cold. Helpful to have the smart meter too which shows how much money we spend on energy.
04: 40 pm	Food shopping arrived by electric drone. Live miles away from the nearest shop so it's great that it can deliver my shopping from far away on the same day of ordering.
06: 15 pm	Finished work
07.00 pm	Attended energy community meeting. Our local community generates its own energy with our own mini solar farm which we use to run our homes and charge our electric cars and sell the excess to the grid. Glad that it's community-owned so if something goes wrong, we can fix it ourselves

## Mobility (rural)

9: 05 am	Woke up, ate breakfast.
10: 50 am	Walked down the road to catch the bus. Public transport is free for people of retirement age and is very fast and easy to use. Very few of my friends have driving licences as public transport is so easy to use. If we do need a car, we can always travel together and use the local car-sharing scheme.
11: 30 am	Got off the bus and met a couple of friends to play sport and have lunch together. Even though I'm 65, most people my age play sport – it is paid for by the government and keeps us healthy, so why not?
03: 00 pm	Arrived back home.
04: 30 pm	My wife and I have planned our holiday this year – a one-month trip by train. 'Slow travel', such as traveling by train, is given financial support by the government to make it cheaper for people to use, which is great for me as I couldn't afford it otherwise.

## Housing (urban)

9: 10 am	Had a long lie-in after a busy week. Got up and had a shower. Hot water is limited to save energy so there's only 4 minutes of hot water per person for the shower. Makes it quicker to get ready in the mornings and I don't have to wait for ages for my flatmates to get out of the bathroom.
9: 30 am	Ate breakfast.
10: 45 am	Put a clothes wash on. Energy is free to use at particular times of the day so everyone in our flat tries to do things that use lots of energy during these times, such as using the washing machine or cooking. It's quite expensive outside of these times.
02: 00 pm	Made soup for lunch with vegetables from our local community farm which supplies us and our neighbours with a lot of our vegetable needs.
03: 05 pm	I only moved in recently so me and a flatmate went to check out the new community owned 3D printer that I hadn't seen yet. My flatmate showed me how to use it. What we can't buy, we can make ourselves using the printer.
7: 30 pm	Decided to order a takeaway from a local restaurant that my flatmates recommended: Larry's Luscious Lab Meat. I would've been sceptical about it years ago but it tasted great and you wouldn't know the meatballs have been grown in their own micro-lab at the restaurant.

## Mobility (urban)

6: 30 am	Early start as usual to make lunch for the kids to take to school.
7: 25 am	Waved the kids off to school. They all either get the electric school bus or cycle there. Years ago, it would have been normal to drive children to school but that seems strange now, as there's no private car ownership in cities anymore.
08: 50 am	Today I need to travel out of the city to buy a few things for the kids. I booked a self-driving electric car with a friend who can share the cost. Self-driving cars are great as you can get other things done while you're traveling.
11: 45 am	Finished the shopping and now on the way home. Arriving back into the city centre is so much nicer than it used to be. The air is cleaner, the streets are quieter and wildlife has returned to the city. Now there are no more private cars; all the car parks have been turned into urban forests.
12: 55 pm	Ate lunch.
14: 25 pm	Cleaned the house. Need to buy a few essentials so walked to the shops. Our family lives in a '20-minute suburb' where everything you need is within a 20-minute walk from the flat, so less need for travel.

## Annex 3: Personas

The following personas were developed on basis of the national personas, they aim to give an impression of the target group for the European level.

### ARLETTE



#### A SIMPLE LIFE

"We should get back to the simple life we lived before. You can live simply and be happy. Learn from the past without nostalgia."

### AIDA



#### THE TRUSTER

"We live in social housing, which means, we can't afford to just go out and invest in a new freezer and fridge, even though we might save money down the line and even though it might reduce our CO2 emissions. So, if you want to make some sort of government policy, where people could swap their old electrical appliances for new, more energy-efficient ones, that could take us a long, long way. But, then again, we have the problem that nobody wants to pay for it. So..."

## NORA

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### THE PEOPLE PERSON

"If even just one person is left behind, there is no justice."

## ZOFIA

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### THE THREATENED

"Industry, technology, more cars... More electricity is being used and there didn't use to be as much industry as there is now. We buy more stuff, so there is more rubbish. Always new, always different. It's a disease of humanity."

## OSMAN

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### THE POWERLESS

"We are very much on the outside: it's very hard to rent a home or find work. They give us crumbs, but not enough to live an independent life."

## AYOUB

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### THE NEXT GENERATION

"Saving energy is a good thing, but I don't want to limit my kids by cooking less or telling them to take a cold shower."

# Colophon

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**Title** Fair Energy Transition For All – How to get there?  
Results of dialogues about energy transition with vulnerable citizens and workshops with experts in nine European countries

A publication of the King Baudouin Foundation  
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This publication can be ordered or downloaded free of charge from [www.kbs-frb.be](http://www.kbs-frb.be) or [www.fair-energy-transition.eu](http://www.fair-energy-transition.eu)

**Legal deposit** D/2893/2022/26

**Order number** 3881

November 2022

With the support of the (Belgian) National Lottery, Fondazione Cariplo, Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt, IKEA Foundation, Stiftung Mercator, the Network of European Foundations, the Open Society Foundations.



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