



Member State Report Sweden

DATA & STATISTICS

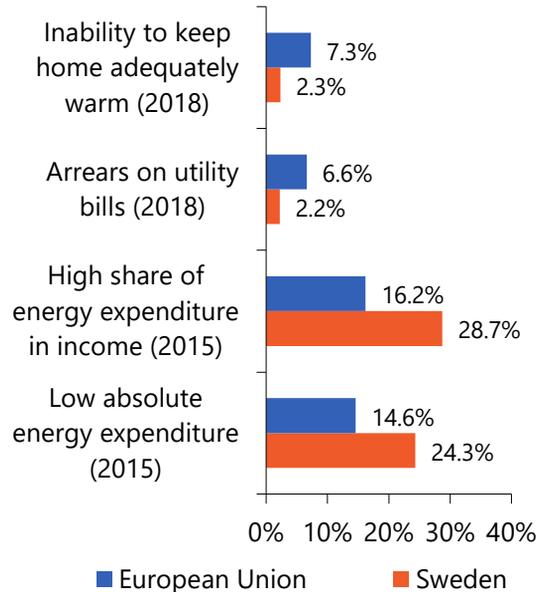
This Member State Report of the EU Energy Poverty Observatory (EPOV) provides an overview of the energy poverty situation in Sweden at a glance. With key indicators, policies, and publications, it offers an understanding of the key aspects of energy poverty in Sweden.

Sweden performs better than the EU average on the population-based indicators. In 2018, 2.3% of the Swedish population reported that they were unable to keep the home adequately warm while the corresponding EU average was 7.3%. Similarly for 2018, 2.2% of the population was unable to pay their utility bills on time due to financial difficulties, while the respective EU average was 6.6%.

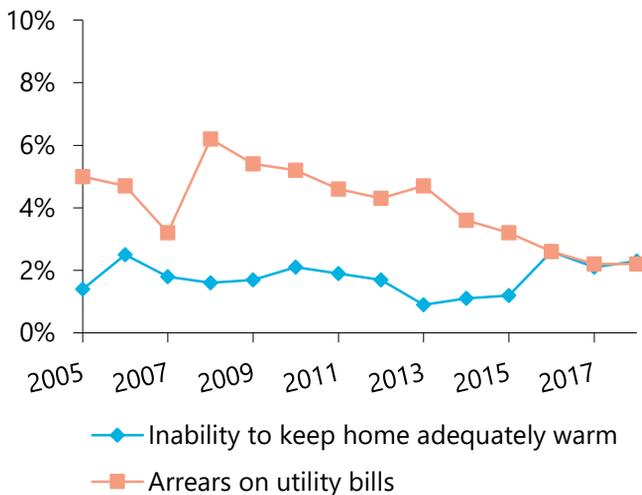
Sweden's performance in the expenditure-based indicators is poorer than the EU average. The likely reason for this is that in Sweden energy costs are usually but not always included in the rental cost. As discussed on the next chapter the ability of the expenditure-based indicators to accurately report the energy poverty situation is therefore limited.

The share of households that spend a high share of their income on energy expenditure is 26.1%. A high energy expenditure may put a strain on the household budget and an indicate a poor energy efficient building. And Sweden has a notably higher number of households that spend a low share of their income on energy expenditure at 26.1%. These households might restrict their energy spending below what is necessary to meet their needs.

Performance relative to EU average*



Performance over time*



In Sweden, the percentage of households that are unable to keep the home adequately warm has been consistently low throughout the past years, and never exceeded the 3% mark.

Meanwhile households with arrears on utility bills follow a similar trajectory although there is a significant increase between 2007 and 2008 with the latter having the highest value across the past 15 years at 6.2%. This increase can also be seen in other member states which points to a changing methodology in the underlying data. However, this indicator gradually decreased since 2008 to the lowest value of 2.2% in 2018.

These indicators show that levels of energy poverty in Sweden are notably low.

About the EU Energy Poverty Observatory

The EU Energy Poverty Observatory (EPOV) is an initiative by the European Commission to help Member States in their efforts to combat energy poverty. It exists to improve the measuring, monitoring and sharing of knowledge and best practice on energy poverty. EPOV has been developed by a consortium of 13 organisations. This report was authored by Navigant.

*Population-reported indicators taken from Eurostat [here](#) and [here](#) on November 19, 2019. Expenditure-based indicators calculated by EPOV based on HBS data. Disaggregated data of population-reported indicators calculated by EPOV based on Eurostat provided data.



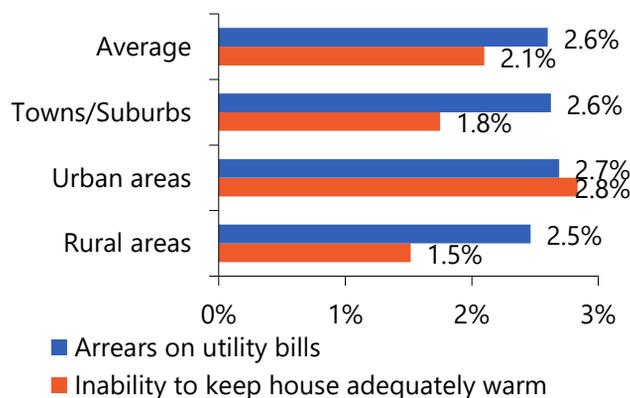
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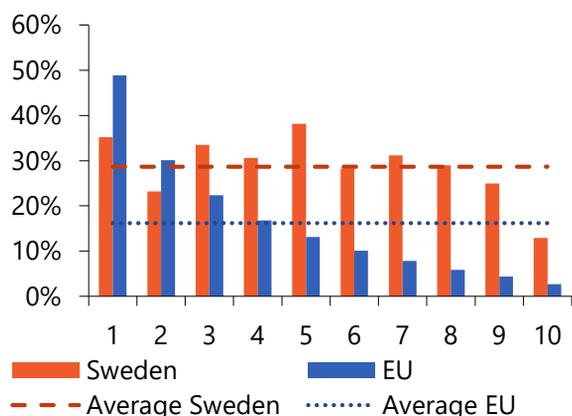
In Sweden no group is very susceptible to energy poverty. However the data shows slight differences between rural and urban areas for the indicator on the inability to keep the house adequately warm. Urban areas have the lowest performance, followed by town/suburb areas. This may be due to the higher costs of living in urban areas and the relatively high proportion of poor populations living in cities. In 2017, urban areas accounted for 40% of the population in Sweden. Similarly, towns/suburb areas also accounted for 40% of the Swedish population.

The data also indicates that apartment type dwellings are most vulnerable to energy poverty.

Inability to keep home warm and Arrears on utility bills in Sweden disaggregated by urban density (2017)*



High share of energy expenditure in income by income deciles (2015)*



In 2015, the energy expenditure of 28.7% of households in Sweden is unusually high compared to the national median. The EU average for this indicator is significantly lower at 16.2%. The distribution amongst income groups gives an insight to the cause of this.

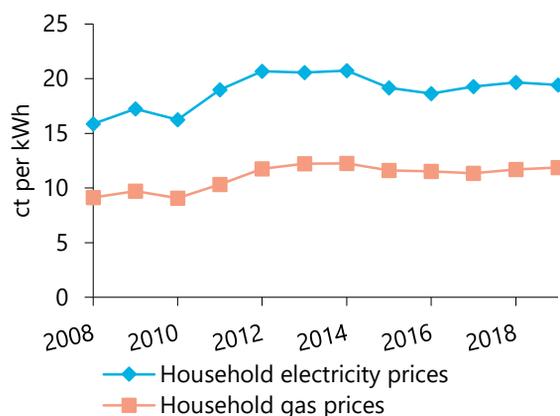
In Sweden the poorer income deciles are not more likely to have a high share of energy expenditure. In fact the peak can be observed by the fifth income group.

This can be explained by the fact that some households do not pay separate energy bills, as they are included in rents, which lowers the median share of energy expenditure. In countries that are in such a situation, the expenditure-based indicators do not appropriately reflect energy poverty.

The household energy cost over time in Sweden have increased gradually between 2009 and 2013, to reach a peak of 20.7 €ct/kWh for electricity and 12.26 €ct/kWh for gas in 2013.

The price per unit saw a small decrease since the peak of 19.4 €ct/kWh for electricity and 11.88 €ct/kWh for gas in 2018. However the price per unit has not reached the low values seen in 2007.

Sweden household energy costs over time



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POLICIES & MEASURES

In Sweden, the research focus has not been specifically on energy poverty, however a number of studies do analyse closely related topics such as energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy transition.

The main method to address energy poverty in Sweden is implicitly through well developed social policies which strongly assist in keeping energy poverty at low levels. A strong social support system is available that helps low-income households cover their living expenses, including costs for accommodation and electricity. This is called the *Social assistance* measure. Meanwhile, the *housing allowance* provides financial assistance to households to cover housing costs, which incorporate costs for heating based on the temperature zone and floor area of the house. It targets not just low income households but also other vulnerable groups, such as chronically diseased or disabled persons and households with children. There is also the *Disconnection safeguards measure* that targets indebted households and prohibits disconnection if it would result in personal injuries.

A number of information and awareness measures are also available to assist and advise vulnerable households. Through *energy and climate advisors*, municipalities provide free advice on energy efficiency and renewable energy to households. A *Price comparison website* is also available from the Swedish regulator where electricity prices can be compared. Questions can also be asked through phone and email. Regulation via the *Transparent billing free of charge* measure also ensures that energy suppliers provide residents with clear and transparent energy bills free of charge, which helps households to assess their energy consumption and the need to change suppliers.

Other subsidies for energy efficiency and renewable energy are available but do not target vulnerable households specifically. *Support for energy efficiency improvements in specific residential areas* aims to overcome the landlord-tenant dilemma by providing landlords with financial support to improve the energy efficiency of rental housing. A portion of this is allocated to a rent reduction for the tenants. Other measures are also available that provide tax cuts on labour costs associated with household energy renovations.

Selected measures	Type of measure	Organisation	Target groups	Start year	Result
Support for energy efficiency improvements in specific residential areas	Building insulation, Heating system	National government	Landlords		
Disconnection safeguards	Disconnection protection	National government	Indebted households		
Transparent billing free of charge	Information and awareness	Energy suppliers	No specific target group		
Energy and climate advisors	Information and awareness	Local government	No specific target group		
Subsidies for solar systems	Renewable energy	National government, Local government	No specific target group		
Housing allowance	Social support	National government, Local government	Chronically/severely diseased, Disabled, Low-income households, Households with children		
Social assistance	Social support	National government, Local government	Low-income households		
Price comparison website	Information and awareness	Regulator	No specific housing situation	2008	
Subsidies for energy storage	Energy storage	National government	No specific housing situation		

Contact us:

www.energypoverty.eu
contact@energypoverty.eu
Twitter at @EPOV_EU



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PUBLICATIONS & ORGANISATIONS

This page gives an overview of the most relevant organisations working on energy poverty in Sweden and presents publications and training resource on energy poverty in Sweden.

Organisation

Name: European Anti-Poverty Network

Organisation type: NGO

Description:

The European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) is the largest European network of national, regional and local networks, involving anti-poverty NGOs and grassroots groups as well as European Organisations, active in the fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Organisation

Name: Energy Vulnerability and Urban Transitions in Europe (EVALUATE)

Organisation type: Research & Consultancy

Description: This is a European Research Council funded project underway since March 2013. It aims to investigate the manner in which urban institutional structures, built tissues and everyday practices shape energy vulnerability at a variety of geographical scales.

Publication

Title: [Indoor air quality, thermal comfort and daylight](#)

Authors: Buildings Performance Institute Europe (BPIE)

Year: 2015

Description: The aim of the report is to provide an overview of the regulatory framework for IAQ, thermal comfort and daylight, and to highlight the importance of having appropriate requirements on these aspects. The report provides concluding recommendations for further policy development relevant for indoor climate.

Training Resource

Title: The SMERGYmeter

Authors: SMERGY

Year: 2017

Description: A web-based and user-friendly consumer guide for young adults. This online guide allows the users to compare their own energy use with those of their peers and to simultaneously measure the energy and money savings they have achieved. It provides simple and personalized recommendations. SMERGY provides other resources relating to energy saving among young adults on their website.

Other selected publications

- Kočenda, E. and Čábelka, Š. (1999) [Liberalization in the Energy Sector: Transition and Growth](#)
- Nässén, J. and Holmberg, J. (2009) [Quantifying the rebound effects of energy efficiency improvements and energy conserving behaviour in Sweden](#)
- Clancy, J.S., Daskalova, V., Feenstra, M.H. (2017) [Gender perspective on access to energy in the EU](#)
- Recalde, M. et al. (2019) [Structural energy poverty vulnerability and excess winter mortality in the European Union: Exploring the association between structural determinants and health](#)

For definitions of the terms used in this report [click here](#). The EPOV website provides an extensive collection of Knowledge & Resources. [Click here](#) for more information and to contribute additional policies, publications and other resources.

This report was completed in February 2020.

Contact us:

www.energypoverty.eu
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Twitter at @EPOV_EU