

## **European Energy Poverty Observatory leads the way in coordinating action to tackle energy poverty**

A groundbreaking initiative by the European Commission to help member states combat energy poverty has concluded its first phase.

The European Union Energy Poverty Observatory (EPOV) was initiated to help improve knowledge and drive action to tackle energy poverty across EU Member States and beyond.

Around 50 million households in the European Union are estimated to be living in energy poverty, unable to afford the energy needed to adequately heat or cool their homes. It's caused by a combination of factors including high energy costs, low household incomes and energy inefficient buildings, and can have severe impacts on health and wellbeing.

With awareness of the problem growing and increasingly acknowledged within the activities of the European Union, the European Commission instigated the formation of EPOV to help Member States in their efforts to combat energy poverty and achieve a just and sustainable transition to a low carbon future.

Led by the University of Manchester and a consortium of twelve expert agencies, it has been at the forefront of knowledge-gathering, information sharing and co-production among Member States. Central to this has been the creation of a new web portal, which now hosts the world's largest database of energy poverty-related publications, policy measures and training resources. This includes

- a catalogue of over 300 policies and measures
- 800 members from 60 countries worldwide
- more than 500 research publications

Assistance was also provided to a huge range of different parties from 19 different EU Member States to enable them to better understand and tackle energy poverty, with a further eight non-EU countries also seeking support.

Professor Stefan Bouzarovski, Chair of the project Steering Committee comments: "Energy poverty can make people vulnerable to a range of health conditions including the worst effects of Covid-19. As the current

crisis deepens it's more important than ever that we're able to collaborate across EU-nations to tackle this issue.

Through our work developing the Observatory the EC now has the knowledge and networks needed to drive action and support Member States to build a better future. I'm incredibly proud of what we have achieved and I would like to thank everyone who has helped contribute to EPOV's success. "

The initial phase of the project has now concluded, however the portal will be maintained as a resource to continue to support action on energy poverty. It can be accessed at <https://www.energypoverty.eu/>

END

Notes

For further information contact Michael Potter, Communications and Campaigns Officer, National Energy Action (NEA) (Michael.potter@nea.org.uk/07595410756).