

# Member State Report Bulgaria

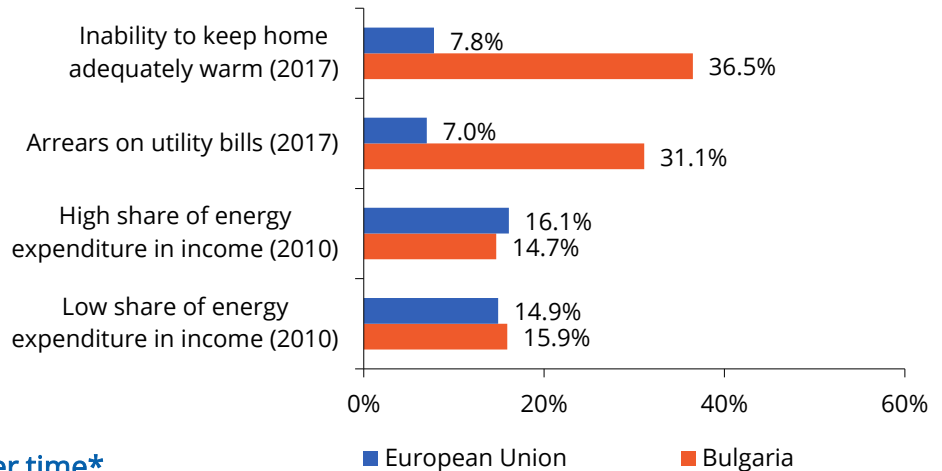
## DATA & STATISTICS

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

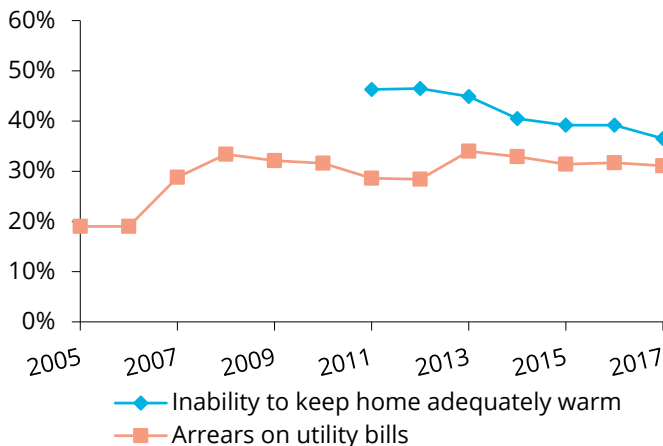
Bulgaria performs worse than the EU average on the household-reported indicators. 36.5% of households were unable to keep the home adequately warm in 2017, while 31.1% were in arrears on utility bills.

Bulgaria is comparable to the EU average for the expenditure-based indicators. 14.7% of households spend more than twice the median on energy, and 15.9% spend less than half the median.

### Performance relative to EU average\*

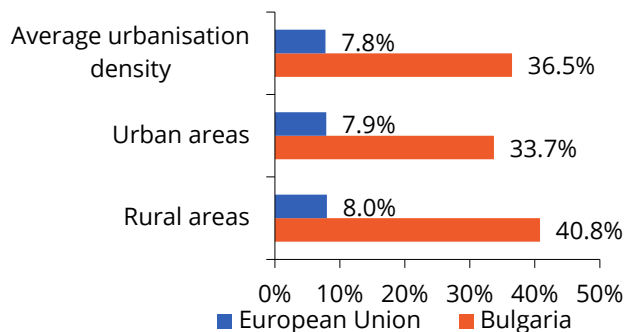


### Performance over time\*



Energy poverty has been fairly stable in Bulgaria but shows some signs of improvement. The percentage of households in arrears on utility bills has been around 28–34 percent from 2007 to 2017. The number of households unable to keep the home adequately warm has steadily decreased since 2011. The years 2005–2010 have been removed as this data shows a structural break, which might be due to changes in the data collection methodology.

### Inability to keep home adequately warm (2017)\*



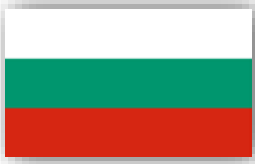
Disaggregated data of the household-reported indicators does not suggest that any one socio-economic group is more at risk of energy poverty. Energy poverty is a large problem in both urban and rural areas. With 37% of the households reporting difficulties obtaining sufficient warmth, the issue of energy poverty is widespread in most regions and demographic groups.

### 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.

\*Household-reported indicators taken from Eurostat [here](#) and [here](#) on April 16, 2019. Expenditure-based indicators calculated by EPOV based on HBS data. Disaggregated data of household-reported indicators calculated by EPOV based on Eurostat provided data.

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KNOWLEDGE &  
RESOURCES

Energy poverty in Bulgaria continues to be large issue even though research and policies on the topic are under development. Regional studies of energy poverty in (South) Eastern Europe have included analyses of Bulgaria (Buzar 2007, and Bouzarovski et al. 2011), and a separate report on the national energy poverty situation in Bulgaria was produced in the *REACH project (Reduced Energy use and Change Habits)* in 2014 (Kisyov 2014).

Policies on energy poverty in Bulgaria have mainly focussed on financial assistance or renovation. Within the category of financial assistance, general income support is provided to households with an income below a certain threshold. In addition, *heating aid* is provided to vulnerable households to cover their heating expenditures during winter (1 November–31 March). Moreover, *one time support* may be granted in exceptional circumstances in case of extra costs, which could include higher heating costs in winter or repairs/replacements for broken heating equipment. There were also discussions on the introduction of a *social tariff for electricity*.

In addition, multiple programmes exist that target the renovation of buildings, particularly apartment buildings, often funded through European programmes. The *REECL Programme* is a joint project of the Bulgarian national government, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the European Commission to provide loans and investment incentives for renovation through local banks. The *National programme for energy renovation* also relies on European structural funds.

A number of European Union projects linked to energy poverty have been partially carried out in Bulgaria. Within the REACH project, energy advisors carried out home visits to energy poor households. A similar service was also provided in the [ACHIEVE project](#). Other projects include [FIESTA](#) (for families with children) and [SAVES2](#) (for students).

Selected measures	Type of measure	Organisation	Target groups
<a href="#">REECL Programme</a>	Building insulation, Heating system	National government, Business/Industry	Apartment buildings
<a href="#">National programme for energy renovation</a>	Building insulation, Heating system	National government	Apartment buildings
<a href="#">Social tariff for electricity</a>	Energy bill support	National government	Vulnerable households
<a href="#">Heating aid in winter</a>	Energy bill support	National government	Low-income households
<a href="#">Reduced Energy use And Change Habits (REACH)</a>	Information and awareness, Energy audits	European Union	Vulnerable households
<a href="#">Monthly allowance</a>	Social support	National government	Vulnerable households, Low-income households
<a href="#">One time support</a>	Social support	National government	Vulnerable households, Low-income households

## Selected Publications

- Buzar, S. (2007) [Energy Poverty in Eastern Europe: Hidden Geographies of Deprivation](#)
- Carper, M. and Staddon, C. (2009) [Alternating currents: EU expansion, Bulgarian capitulation and disruptions in the electricity sector of South-east Europe](#)
- Waddams Price, C. and Pham, K. (2009) [The impact of electricity market reform on consumers](#)
- Bouzarovski, S., Sarlamanov, R. and Petrova, S. (2011) [The Governance of Energy Poverty in Southeastern Europe](#)
- Hiteva, R. (2013) [Fuel poverty and vulnerability in the EU low-carbon transition: the case of renewable electricity](#)
- Kisyov, P. (2014) [Report on national situation in the field of energy poverty – Bulgaria](#)
- Schumacher, K. et al (2015) [How to end Energy Poverty? Scrutiny of Current EU and Member States Instruments](#)

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.

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