



Member State Report United Kingdom

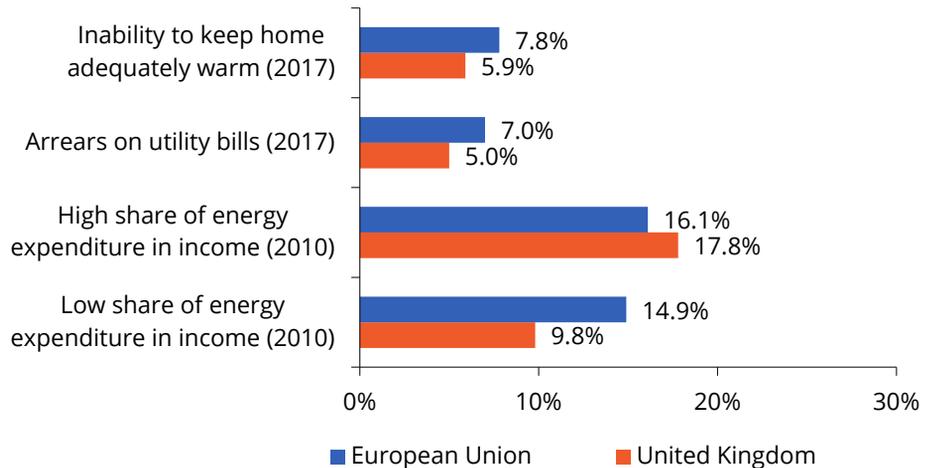
DATA & STATISTICS

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

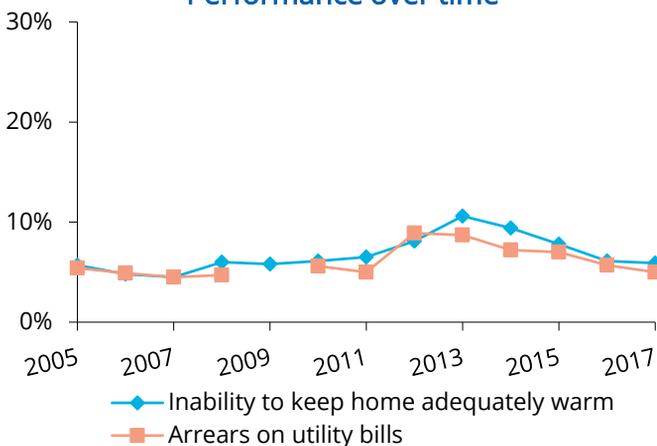
The United Kingdom performs better than the EU average on the household-reported indicators. 5.9% of households were unable to keep the home adequately warm in 2017, and 5.0% were in arrears on utility bills.

The United Kingdom is around the EU average for the expenditure-based indicators. 17.8% of households spend more than twice the median on energy. 9.8% spend less than half the median.

Performance relative to EU average*

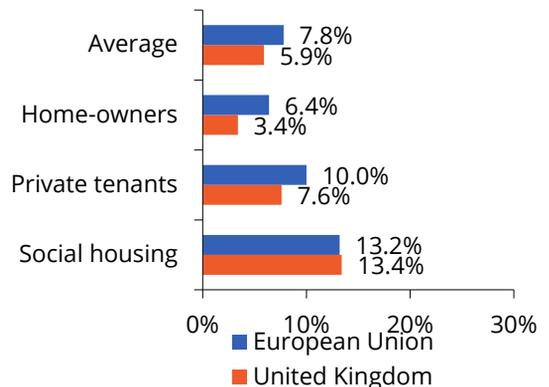


Performance over time*



In the United Kingdom, the percentage of households unable to keep the home adequately warm gradually increased from 5% in 2006 to 11% in 2013. The significant increase since 2010 may be attributable to the financial crisis. It decreased to the 2005 level of 6% in 2017. The number of households with arrears on utility bills followed a similar trend. The 2008 number for the arrears indicator is not shown due to reported unreliability.

Inability to keep home adequately warm (2017)*



Disaggregated data of the household-reported indicators suggest that energy poverty in the United Kingdom is particularly a problem for households that live in rented apartments. Data also points to households living in apartments as being more vulnerable. These statistics suggest that energy poverty has an important urban component. However, it should be noted that these results might be different to analyses using the official UK government statistics that use other metrics.

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. The United Kingdom also reports its own [energy poverty statistics](#) that might suggest different results than the EPOV indicators.

Contact us:
www.energypoverty.eu
contact@energypoverty.eu
Twitter at @EPOV_EU



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KNOWLEDGE & RESOURCES

Research on energy poverty in Europe began in the United Kingdom, where it is often referred to as ‘fuel poverty’. After the first mention of the term in the 1980’s, Boardman’s publication ‘Fuel Poverty: from cold homes to affordable warmth’ is considered the seminal publication on the topic. Research on energy poverty has continued to develop and expand in the United Kingdom, evidenced by the almost 200 publications on the EPOV website linked to the [United Kingdom](#).

National policy on energy poverty was first formulated in the UK Fuel Poverty Strategy in 2001. Important elements of this policy include the *Winter Fuel Payment*, the *Cold Weather Payment* and the *Warm Home Discount (WHD)*, which cover energy bills of certain vulnerable households in the winter. The Winter Fuel Payment reached roughly 12 million people (winter of 2015/2016), the Cold Weather Payment issued around 130,000 payments (winter of 2016/2017), and the WHD provided rebates to nearly 2.2 million vulnerable consumers (winter of 2015/2016). In January 2019 an Energy Price Cap was introduced which protects 11 million households from the highest tariffs.

In addition, multiple energy efficiency programmes have been implemented. The *Energy Company Obligation* requires energy suppliers to support the delivery of energy efficiency measures amongst low income and vulnerable households. The *Decent Homes Programme* aims to ensure that social housing achieves a minimum standard including a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

Regional governments have implemented additional policies to address energy poverty, as well as their own framework for measurement. There are also many civil society organisations active in the field of energy poverty in the [United Kingdom](#), including advocacy organisations and NGOs.

Selected measures	Type of measure	Organisation	Target groups
Warm Homes Nest Scheme	Building insulation, Energy audits, Heating system, Household appliances	Regional government	Low-income households Vulnerable households
Energy Company Obligation	Building insulation, Heating system	National government, Energy suppliers	Low-income households Vulnerable households
Decent Homes Programme	Building insulation, Heating system	National government	Social housing
Scotland's Energy Efficiency Programme	Building insulation, Heating system, Energy audits, Energy bill support, Information and awareness	Regional government	Vulnerable households
Winter Fuel Payment	Energy bill support	National government	Pensioners
Cold Weather Payment	Energy bill support	National government	Households on social benefits, Low-income households
Warm Home Discount	Energy bill support, Information and awareness	National government, Energy suppliers	Households on social benefits, Low-income households
Energy Price Cap	Social tariff	National government	Vulnerable households
Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards	Building insulation, Heating system	National government	Private rented housing

Selected Publications

- Bradshaw, J. and Hutton, S. (1983) [Social Policy Options and Fuel Poverty](#)
- Boardman, B. (1991) [Fuel Poverty: from cold homes to affordable warmth](#)
- Department of Trade and Industry (2001) [UK Fuel Poverty Strategy](#)
- Boardman, B. (2010) [Fixing Fuel Poverty: Challenges and Solutions](#)
- Hills, J. (2012) [Getting the measure of fuel poverty: Finale Report of the Fuel Poverty Review](#)
- Bramley, G., Fitzpatrick, S., Liddell, C., & Webb, J. (2017) [A new definition of fuel poverty in Scotland: A review of recent evidence.](#)
- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2018) [Committee on Fuel Poverty third annual report: 2018](#)
- National Energy Action (NEA) (2018) [UK Fuel Poverty Monitor 2017-18](#)
- Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (2018) [Annual fuel poverty statistics report, 2018 \(2016 data\)](#)

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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