



Training Programme:

Communication With Vulnerable Households

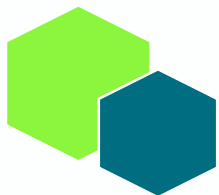
Topic V



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Definition



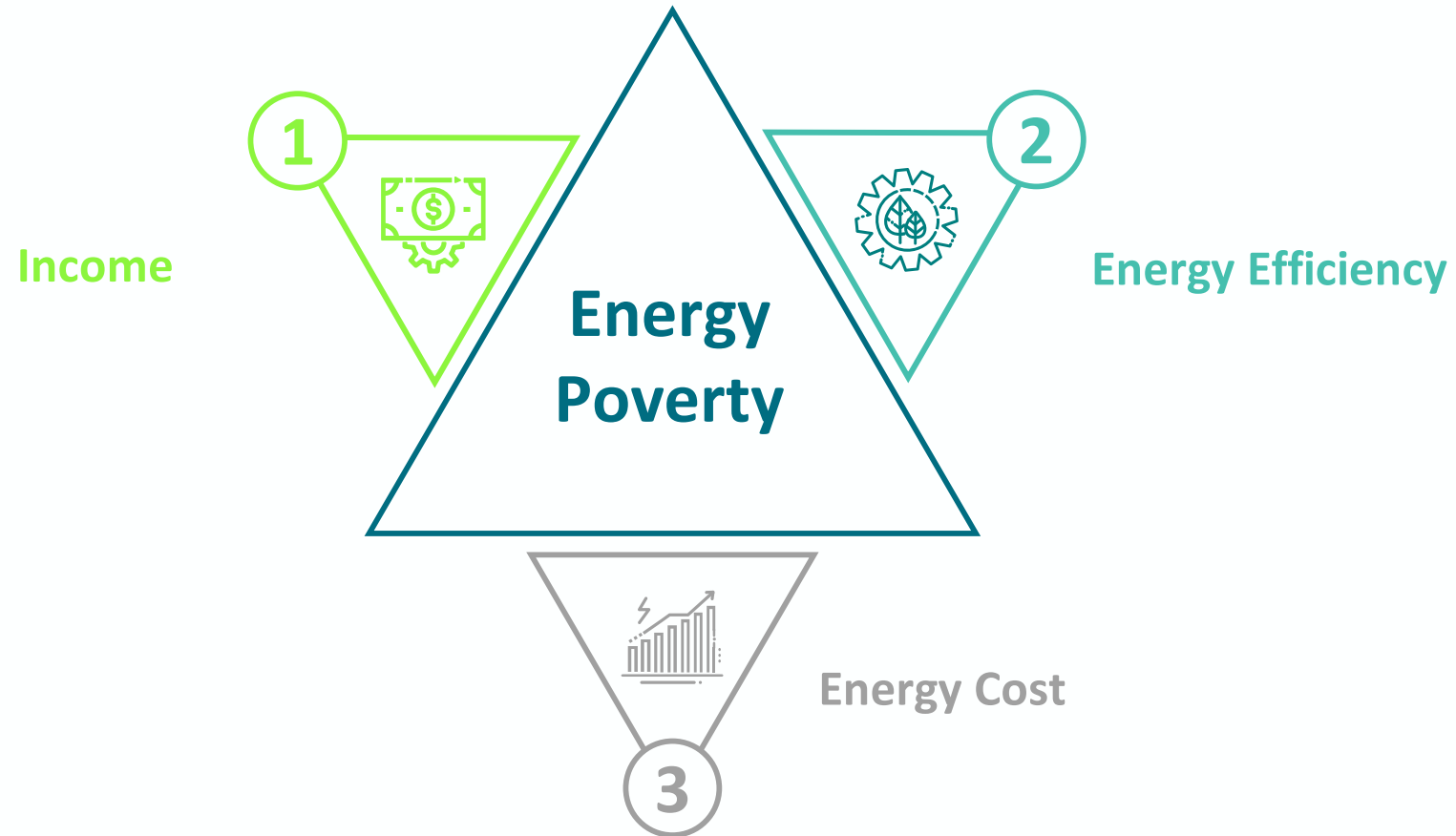
Energy poverty: a household's lack of access to essential energy services that provide basic levels and decent standards of living and health, including adequate heating, hot water, cooling, lighting, and energy to power electrical appliances.



REVERTER

Deep renovation roadmaps
to decrease households
vulnerability to energy poverty

Energy Poverty



But we must not forget the energy needs!

Energy Poverty Indicators (EPI)

Indicators comparing energy expenditure with income

Comparing the amount households spend on energy with a measure of income.

Self-assessment-based indicators

Households are asked directly to what extent they consider their needs to be met (e.g., whether they can keep their home warm enough in winter and cool enough in summer).

Indirect indicators

Measure energy poverty using related factors, such as utility bill arrears, the number of disconnections, and the quality of housing

Direct measures-based indicators

Measure physical variables to determine the adequacy of energy services (e.g., room temperature).

Can you keep your home sufficiently warm in winter?



Do you have utility bill
payments in arrears?



What percentage of your income
do you spend on energy needs?



Official EP Indicator

Examples: Official Greek EP Indicators

Condition I

The total final energy consumption of the household is less than 80% of the minimum final energy consumption theoretically required to meet its thermal needs.

Condition II

The total normalised income of the household, based on the number of its members, is lower than 60% of the median normalised income of all households in Greece.

"Signs" of energy poverty

A. Socio-economic characteristics

The programme's goal is to strengthen the **security of digital products and services** in Europe, through activities that ensure:

- Vulnerable persons or households (based on national or local definition).
- Delays in utility bills.
- Low income.
- Difficulties in coping with energy costs.
- Inability to keep the house sufficiently warm.
- Inability to keep the house sufficiently cool.
- High rate of energy costs relative to income.

"Signs" of energy poverty

B. Facilities / Housing characteristics

- Old building that has not been renovated.
- Inadequate heating, due to a lack of heating, lack of insulation, and/or an inadequate heating system.
- Single room/room heating.
- Signs of dampness or mould.
- Prolonged presence in the house causes higher consumption.
- Old and inefficient electrical appliances.

Impact of energy poverty

Financial: need for support from the state, spending money that is usually used for other important needs such as housing, food, education, etc., limiting other expenses.

Health: To maintain its internal temperature in a cold environment, the body has to work harder, leading to exhaustion, sneezing, and a runny nose, which can contribute to the transmission of pathogens, respiratory diseases, cardiovascular diseases, and depression.

Techniques: humidity and mould growth, which lead to unhygienic conditions.



Communication forms



Communication forms

There are three forms of communication



Verbal communication



Paralinguistic communication



Non-verbal communication

Verbal communication

Verbal communication refers to all elements of speech: words, letters, sentences, and numbers.

Purely verbal communication is very difficult. What we say is often understood very differently by the person we are talking to, because the other person has a different understanding of the words we choose.

Speech creates images that the person speaking and the person being spoken to do not always perceive in the same way, often being a source and cause of misunderstandings.



Paralinguistic communication

Paralinguistic communication refers to the phonetic elements of communication that are not covered by the literal meaning of what is said. It includes things like tone, pitch, volume, and rhythm.

Paralinguistic communication

- can be used to convey emotion, emphasize a point, or lighten the mood,
- can be used to enhance what we say or to subtly affect the way our words are interpreted.



Non-verbal communication

Non-verbal communication is the process of sending and receiving messages without the use of words and is also called behavioural communication or body language.

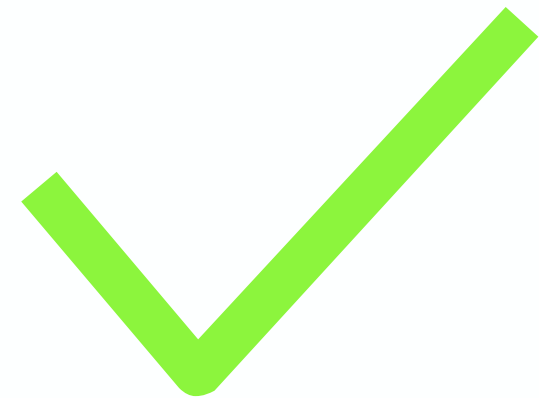
Non-verbal communication includes

- body language: posture, gestures, and facial expressions
- gaze, which is an important means of establishing and maintaining contact
- gestures, such as shaking the head, patting the back, shaking hands, and other gestures, are not understood in the same way in all cultural groups
- external features, such as clothing, jewellery, etc., which create impressions that are transmitted and form a kind of code that characterises a particular image of a person



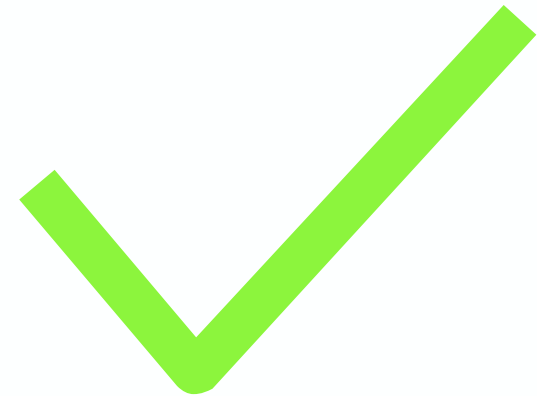
What should we do (I)

- Show empathy and actively listen.
- Be patient and give them time.
- Use simple and clear language.
- Respect their autonomy and choices.
- Maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- Provide the requested information if you can.



What should we do (II)

- Treat them with respect and dignity.
- Offer reassurance and emotional support.
- Ask open-ended questions to encourage dialogue
 - Use open-ended questions: “Tell me about ...”.
 - Use probing questions: “I want to understand a little more, can you give me some examples of ...”.
- Be friendly.



What should we not do (I)

- Pressure respondents.
- Make assumptions about their experiences.
- Use language that stigmatises.
- Downplay or dismiss their concerns.
- Overwhelm them with too much information at once.
- Violate their boundaries.
- Assume they need saving or rescuing.
- Show impatience or frustration.



What should we not do (II)

- Make distinctions based on their situation.
- Use the words "energy poor" or "vulnerable".
- Avoid asking misleading questions if someone does not wish to answer, e.g., "Suppose...".
- Making promises you can't keep.
- Being "aggressive" and disrespecting boundaries set, e.g., going into a place without permission.
- Ignoring consent conditions, e.g., for taking photos.



Preparation for the visit (I)

01. Be sure of your goals

Clarify that the purpose of the visit is to:

- reduce energy costs,
- improve energy efficiency, or
- address specific problems (e.g., heating, cooling, insulation).

02. Set an appointment

Set an appointment with the household to ensure their availability and cooperation during the visit.

03. Gather the necessary materials

Prepare materials that may be needed during the visit, such as energy efficiency brochures, questionnaires, and information leaflets.

Preparation for the visit (II)

04. Equipment

Bring any equipment needed for the assessments, such as a thermal camera, power meter, or notebook to record information.

05. Appearance

Wear comfortable and suitable clothing, especially if you will be inspecting areas such as attics or hidden spaces. Dress professionally and respectfully to convey seriousness and credibility.

06. Prepare your material

Prepare a checklist of areas to assess, questions to ask, and common energy efficiency issues to look for during the visit.

Implementation of the visit (I)

Suggested protocol



- Present yourself. Present your ID, hand over a business card, and/or a training certificate.
- Explain the purpose of the visit and how the visit will take place, your tasks, and how you can help. Clarify any misunderstandings and provide transparency in your role.
- Tell your participant exactly what the procedure will be.
- Present, read, and ask him/her to sign the consent form.
- Complete the questionnaire.

Implementation of the visit (II)

Suggested protocol

- Carry out a simple energy assessment of the home. Walk around the house to assess its energy efficiency. Check the quality of insulation, the performance of appliances, and the condition of heating and cooling systems.
- Identify energy-saving opportunities. Based on your assessment, identify specific areas where energy efficiency improvements can be made. Prioritise recommendations based on household needs and budget.
- Provide practical, actionable advice to reduce energy consumption and improve comfort. Explain the benefits and potential cost savings of each recommendation.
- Give any material you may provide for energy-saving tips (e.g., a brochure).

Material Example (II)

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Energy saving tips

Here are some practical tips simple changes you can make to not only reduce your energy bills but also improve your family's well-being.

Start with small changes today


These are the changes you can make today with no additional investment.

	Investment	Difficulty	Impact




Unplug Devices

Unplug chargers, electronics, and appliances when they are not in use. Many devices consume a small amount of electricity even when turned off, known as standby power or phantom load.




Set temperature of your refrigerator wisely

Keep your fridge at around 6-8°C and the freezer at -18°C (0°F) for optimal efficiency. Avoid colder settings, as they increase energy usage without significant benefits.



Use your washing machine wisely

Choose to wash clothes with cool (or cooled) water possible. It will reduce energy consumption by avoiding the need to heat water. Maximizing the load size reduces the number of cycles to save energy.




Use night tariff

Use a night tariff when possible, this will not save electricity but will reduce the cost (bill).




Lower temperature of hot water

Reduce the water heater thermostat to 49-52°C. This is typically sufficient for most household needs and helps prevent overheating and energy waste. Heat to 55 °C only once a month to kill bacteria.




Don't decrease temperature below 18 degrees

Reduce heating temperature when going away for a weekend (not below 18 degrees), the air in the room becomes too humid and the risk of mold increases and you need to ventilate the room more often. Also, the home is too cold it will take more time and energy to heat it up.



Don't switch off the heating during the night

In the colder days, it is recommended not to switch off the heating during the hours when you are away from home, only to reduce it. When it is turned off, your home will cool down too quickly, which will lead to overheating to reach a favourable temperature.



Keep track of your consumption


Monitor, record and analyze your monthly energy consumption. This will give you a clear idea of where you can optimize your energy consumption.

www.reverterhub.eu

Continue with improvements


These changes you can make step by step starting from one room or area in your house as they require some investment that can be made step by step.

	Investment	Difficulty	Impact




Seal leaks

Inspect doors, windows, and other openings for drafts. Seal any gaps and use weather-stripping to prevent heat from escaping.




Switch to LED bulbs

LED bulbs are energy-efficient and last longer than traditional incandescent bulbs. They use significantly less electricity and can result in substantial savings over time.



Buy energy-efficient electronic appliances

When it is time to change your hair dryer, washing machine or any other electronic appliance check their energy consumption. Try to opt for D – A level.




Energy audit

Consider getting a professional energy audit for your home. This can help identify areas where energy is being wasted and provide recommendations for improvements. Address to Brezovo OSS to be advised.

Consider important improvements


These improvements will have the biggest impact on your energy savings and well-being. They will increase the value of your property as well as quality of life of your family.

	Investment	Difficulty	Impact




Energy-efficient windows

Replacing old, single-pane windows with energy-efficient double- or triple-pane windows with low-emissivity coatings can improve insulation and reduce heat transfer and thus heating bills and comfort.




High-efficiency heating systems

Upgrading heating systems to high-efficiency models can reduce energy consumption for heating and/or cooling. Switch to modern and highly efficient heating equipment.



Smart thermostats

Install a programmable or smart thermostat to optimize heating and cooling based on your family's schedule.



Insulation of building

Proper insulation in walls, ceilings, and floors helps prevent heat loss in the winter and keeps the home cooler in the summer. Adequate insulation can make a significant difference in your heating costs.

Thermal insulation of your building can result in a 60% reduction in heating costs.

One-Stop-Shop
Search for more information about energy savings, efficiency and renovation on www.reverterhub.eu

Implementation of the visit (III)

- Address concerns and questions, be prepared to answer questions, and address any concerns of household members. Provide clear explanations and options.
- Take notes during the visit to document your findings and recommendations. This will help you in the discussions and reports that follow.
- Leave your contact information (preferably your phone number) in case the respondent has questions.
- Invite the interviewee to visit the one-stop office or any other facilities for more information.
- Thank the person politely when you leave

Psychological preparation

01. Active listening

Practice active listening. Understanding that you are dealing with people who may be going through difficult times will help you show compassion and respect. Listen without judgment.

02. Be prepared

Be prepared to deal with situations that will not always be easy to see or hear. Keep an open mind and avoid judging people based on their situations.

03. Emotional boundaries

Recognise your emotional boundaries and make sure you have access to emotional support and supervision if necessary. It can be emotionally challenging to be in contact with vulnerable households.

Avoiding difficult situations (I)

01. Announce your visit

Always announce your visit in advance and schedule a convenient time. Confirm the visit the day before. Surprise can be unpleasant and cause resistance.

02. Paired visits

Paired visits to be conducted during daytime hours in areas identified as high-risk neighbourhoods.

03. Report to authorities

If you encounter situations of abuse or imminent danger, you must inform the appropriate authorities to ensure the safety of those involved.

Avoiding difficult situations (II)

04. Prioritise your safety

Your safety is the most important thing. If you perceive an immediate threat to yourself or others, find a safe place.

05. Stay calm

Try to remain calm in potentially dangerous situations. Panic can make it difficult to make good decisions.

06. Share your concern

If you are accompanied by others, immediately communicate your concerns and any signs of danger you perceive.

Avoiding difficult situations (III)

07. Call the authorities

If there is a clear and serious threat, call the police and give the location and a description of the situation.

08. Get out of the situation

If you can, safely remove yourself from the dangerous situation. Leave the house or area as soon as possible.

09. Do not become a "middleman" in cases of violence

If you become aware of domestic violence or dangerous conflict, do not become a mediator. Instead, call the authorities and alert trained professionals.

Avoiding difficult situations (IV)

10. Do not intervene in dangerous situations

Do not attempt to intervene in violent or dangerous situations if you are not trained to do so. Your safety is of paramount importance.

11. Inform your supervisors or contacts

After ensuring your safety, tell your supervisors, employers, or relevant contacts about the situation you experienced.

12. Seek emotional support

After a potentially dangerous experience, seek emotional support. Talking to colleagues, friends, or mental health professionals can help.

Thank you!



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