



How to talk about energy saving to energy-poor? – *experiences from home advisory work of a European project ASSIST*

Sustainability Science Days 2021. 18.5.2021 Session #10: Social aspects of the energy transition

Presenter: Sini Numminen, D.Sc. (Tech.), Aalto University and VaasaETT

Contributors: Marina Varvesi (AISFOR, IT); Anna Wierzchołowska-Dziedzic (KAPE, PL); Marta García (ECOSERVEIS, SP); Tom Godefroot (Fluvius, BE); Erika Meynaerts (VITO, BE); Hanna Launonen (University of Jyväskylä, FI)

ASSIST Project Overview



Where?



Project: ASSIST - Support Network for Household Energy Saving'

Call topic: Horizon2020 - EE-06-2016-2017 «Engaging private consumers towards sustainable energy»

Duration: 36 months (1 May 2017 – 30 April 2020)

Consortium: 12 partners: 6 countries + 1 European association

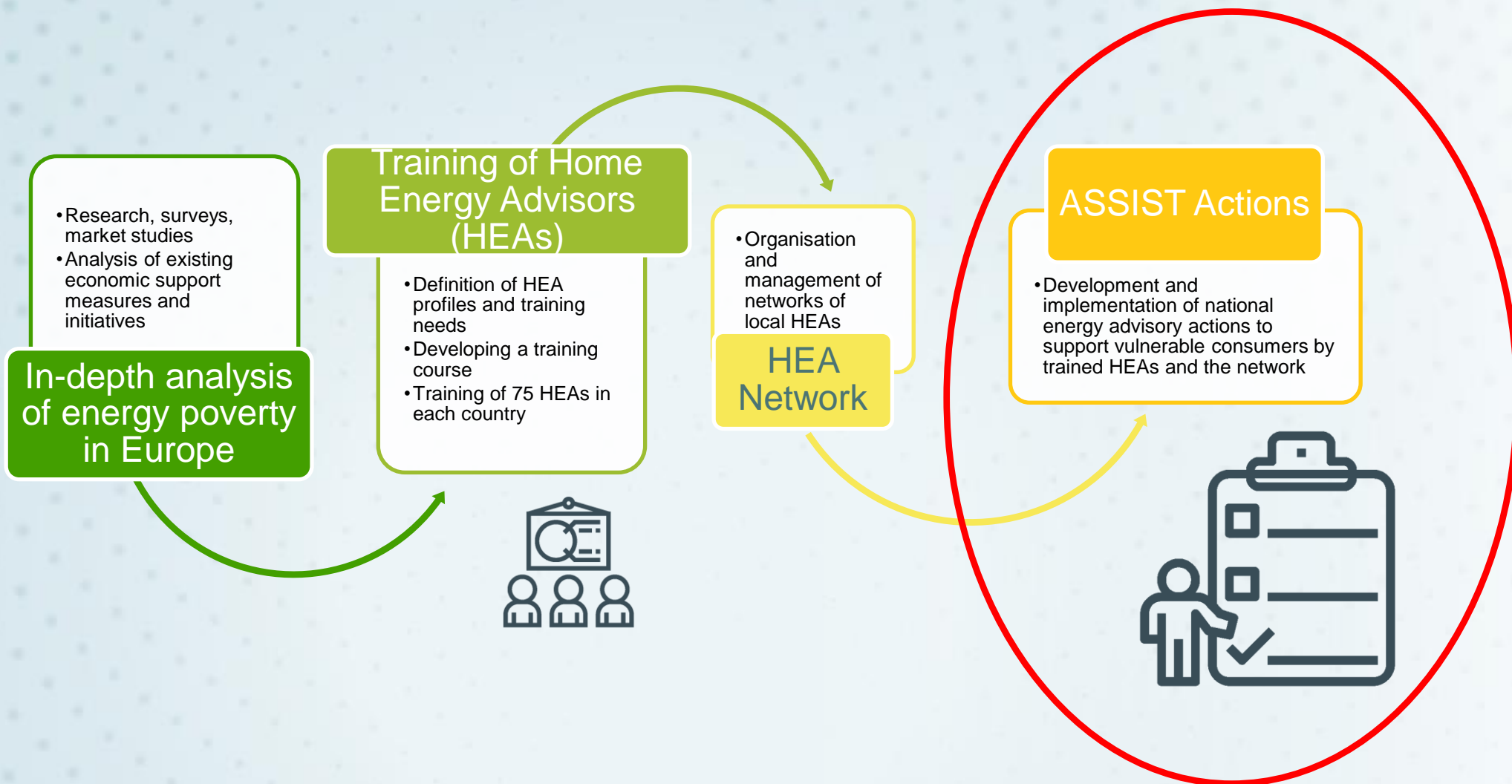
+ Steering committee composed by experts in each country and at European level

Partners	Country
AISFOR S.R.L. RICERCA SUL SISTEMA ENERGETICO S.P.A. (RSE) ACQUIRENTE UNICO S.P.A.	Italy (3)
ASOCIACIÓN ECOSERVEIS ALGINET DISTRIBUCIÓN ENERGÍA ELÉCTRICA S.I.	Spain (2)
SEVERN WYE ENERGY AGENCY LTD.	UK (1)
FEDERACJA KONSUMENTOW STOWARZYSZENIE KRAJOWA AGENCJA POSZANOWANIA ENERGII SPOLKA AKCYJNA	Poland (2)
VLAAMSE INSTELLING VOOR TECHNOLOGISCH ONDERZOEK N.V. EANDIS CVBA	Belgium (2)
VAASAETT Ltd AB OY	Finland (1)
EUROPEAN ANTI-POVERTY NETWORK – EAPN	European (1)



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 754051

ASSIST activities



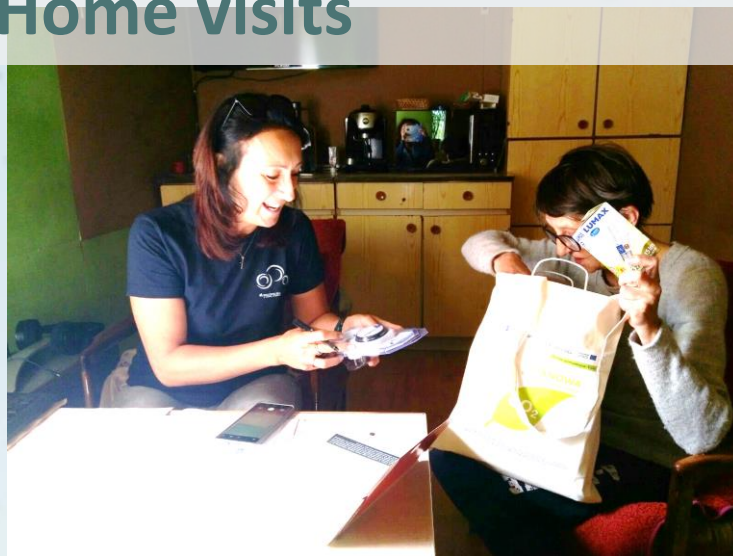
ASSIST Actions

Counselling (helpdesks)



Eco-Manager from Skawina, Małopolska (Poland). Photo credits: Skawina

Home visits



Eco-Manager from Limanowa, Małopolska (Poland). Photo credits: KAPE

Workshops and energy cafés



Photo: Sini Numminen

Public events and campaigns



Energy Bus with helpdesk, Małopolska
Photo credits: KAPE

Actions performed by 385 trained Home Energy Advisors (75/country)

- 2000 citizen reached through energy workshops and campaigns*
- 750 citizen reached through personalized advisory*

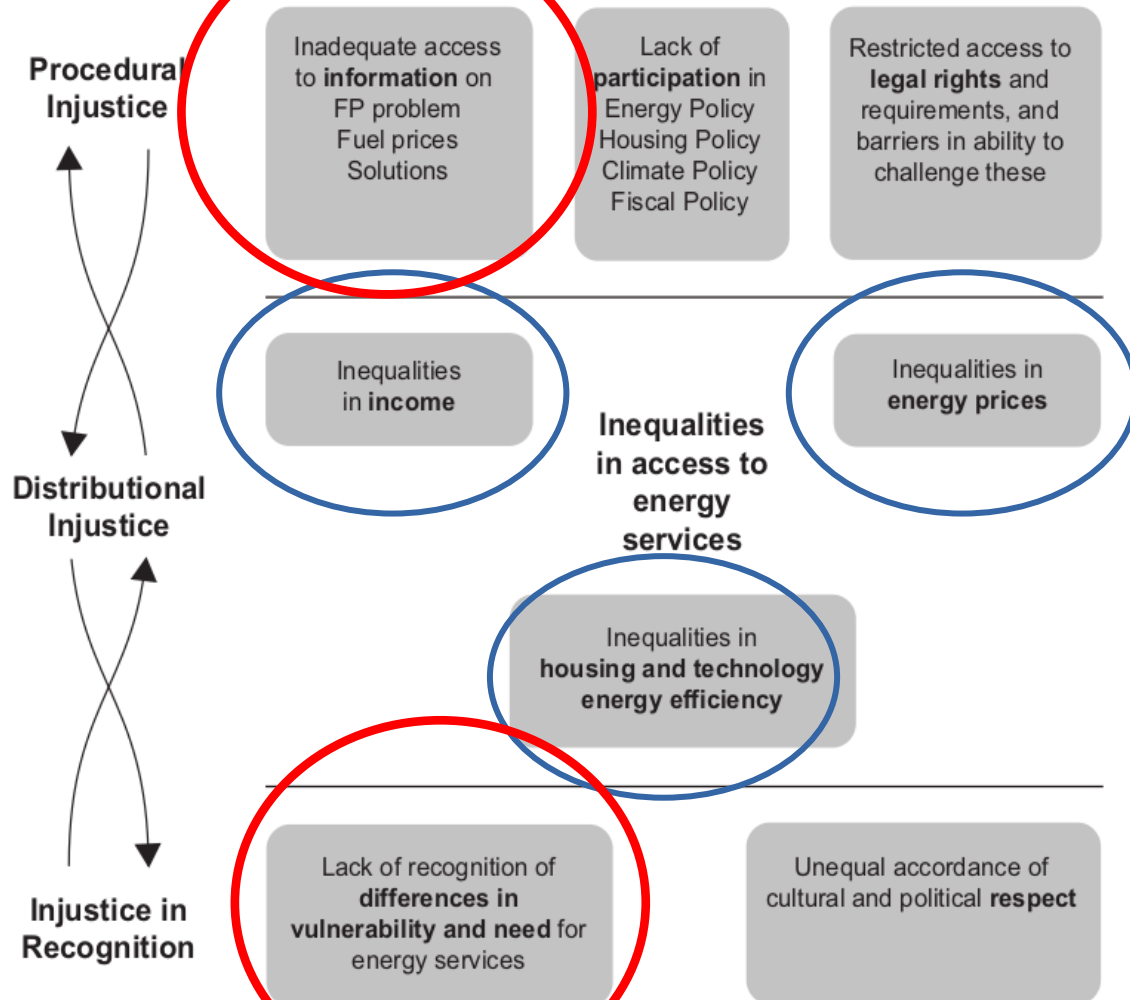


Fig. 2. Three forms of injustice and their component parts in fuel poverty.

Indicator	Arrears of utility bills - %	Low absolute energy expenditure- %	High share of energy expenditure in income -- %	Inability to keep home adequately warm- - %	
Year	2018	2015	2015	2015	2018
Belgium	4.5	9.8	13.0	5.2	5.2
Finland	7.7	29.9	22.3	1.7	1.7
Italy	n.a.	13.6	n.a.	16.1	14.0
Poland	6.3	19.5	16.3	7.1	5.1
Spain	7.2	13.0	14.2	10.1	9.1
UK	n.a.	9.2	18.8	7.8	5.5

[1] „Arrears on utility bills - Share of (sub)population having arrears on utility bills, based on question "In the last twelve months, has the household been in arrears, i.e. has been unable to pay on time due to financial difficulties for utility bills (heating, electricity, gas, water, etc.) for the main dwelling?"

[2] "Low absolute energy expenditure (M/2) - The M/2 indicator presents the share of households whose absolute energy expenditure is below half the national median, or in other words abnormally low. This could be due to high energy efficiency standards, but may also be indicative of households dangerously under-consuming energy. M/2 is a relatively new indicator that has been used in Belgium to complement other expenditure and self-reported indicators. Note: this indicator is influenced by the underlying distribution of absolute energy expenses in the lower half of households. If the median is relatively high and the distribution below very unequal, the M/2 indicator is high."

[3] "High share of energy expenditure in income (2M) - The 2M indicator presents the proportion of households whose share of energy expenditure in income is more than twice the national median share. Note: where income distributions are more equal, variance in energy expenditure translates to higher 2M shares. High variance in energy/income shares can occur due to structural differences in energy expenditure between household groups, as well as in situations where energy is often, but not exclusively, included in rent."

[4] "Inability to keep home adequately warm - Share of (sub)population not able to keep their home adequately warm, based on question "Can your household afford to keep its home adequately warm?"

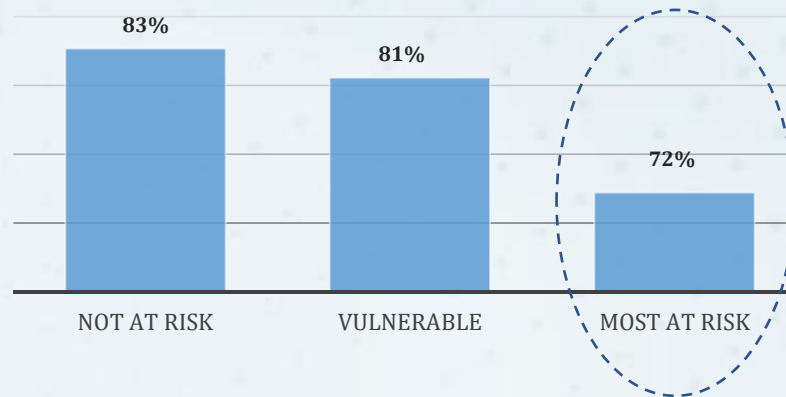
Source of data: EPOV, Extracted on 27.02.2020

Consumers most at risk don't believe they would benefit much from (official) energy advisorsy

BELIEVES TO BENEFIT FROM ENERGY ADVISORY (Q35)



AIMS TO USE ELECTRICITY AND HEATING IN A WAY THAT WOULD REDUCE ENERGY BILLS (Q29)



Q35: Would you believe to benefit from information and advice offered by an energy advisor, aimed to better govern/master your energy use? – Kokisitteko hyötyvänne energianeuvojan tarjoamista tiedoista ja neuvoista, joiden avulla voisitte paremmin hallita energiankäyttöänne?

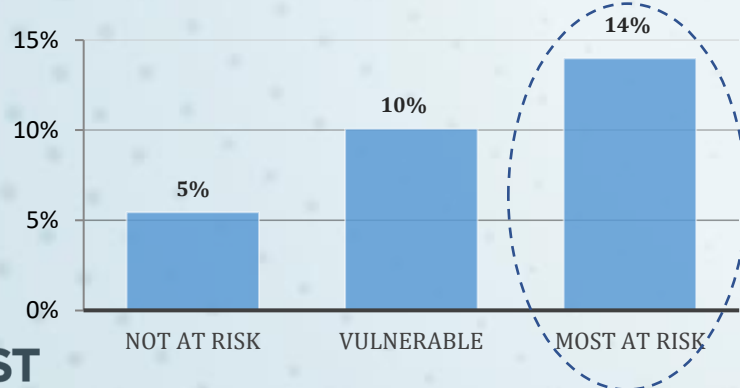
Q29: Do you attempt to use electricity and heating in a way, that would reduce your energy bills? – Pyrittekö käyttämään sähköä ja lämmitystä tavalla, joka säästää energialaskuissa?

Q24: Are able to maintain adequate temperature in your whole apartment? – Pystyttekö ylläpitämään riittävän lämpötilan koko asunnossa?

Survey among 4600 detached house owners and elderly in Finland (survey in collaboration with two Finnish NGOs in 2018). Source: D5.1 Vulnerable consumers market segmentation report 2018. ASSIST: https://www.assist2gether.eu/documenti/risultati/d2_5_vulnerable_consumers_and_fuel_poverty_report1.pdf

Energy poverty indicators

SPENDS SHARE OF INCOME (%) ON ELECTRICITY AND HEATING COSTS



HAS THE ABILITY TO MAINTAIN ADEQUATE INDOOR TEMPERATURE



ASSIST
2GETHER

vaasa ETT



ASSIST advisory activity examples.

How (and where, when, why, by whom and what) to talk about energy issues with vulnerable consumers?

All various ASSIST advisory activities in six partner countries are described at the Project deliverable D5.3 "ASSIST Action National Reports". Available at https://www.assist2gether.eu/documenti/risultati/d5_3_assist_action_national_reports.pdf

Success factor 1/4: Choose local collaboration partners who know vulnerable consumers. And the ways how to help them.

SWOT – ASSIST Energy Advisory Activities (WP5)



Strength

- Actions are carried out by **actors who are strongly rooted in the local context and thus are able to identify the consumer** who are more in needs to receive support and the most suitable way to engage them by getting directly in contact with consumers.

Weakness

- A long time might be required to carry out the planned actions due to difficulties in the interaction with vulnerable families, **beyond the project three-years duration.**

Opportunity

- The planned ASSIST actions allow the involvement of people who otherwise would have never been engaged in such activities devoted to fight energy poverty.

Threat

- Some people who could not be involved in the actions, might come to know about them at a later stage and thus complain about the fact that they have not been involved, thus giving a negative publicity of ASSIST.
- On the other hand, some consumers might give up after the first activities.

Source: ASSIST D7.4 “Vulnerable consumers protection framework paper”
https://www.assist2gether.eu/documenti/risultati/assist_policy_framework_paper.pdf

Success factor 2/4: The right setting (time&place&format)

- Examples

- Belgium: “Energyfit” workshops in collaboration with the social office (Public Centers for Social Welfare OCMW), and a company specialized with energy workshop organisation
- Finland: Energy cafés organised in cooperation with an NGO supporting the well-being of elderly

Workshops and energy cafés



- Cozy and friendly atmosphere
- Content tailored for each workshop audience
- Practice-oriented examples from participants’ own lives activated discussion
- Motivation to join



The Woonmeter. Photo credit: Fluvius

Success factor 3/4: Meaningful examples (know your audience)

Bespaar vele €

Deze slimme tips zetten je op het juiste spoor!

Understandable way of
talking about energy costs:
€/ activity (instead of kWh)

80 euro per jaar

Goedkoop isoleren

- ☐ Radiatorfolie achter chauffage plaatsen.
- ☐ Chauffagebuizen isoleren.
- ☐ Kieren en spleten dichtten.



170 euro per jaar

Slim verlichten

- ☐ Zoveel mogelijk LED lampen.
- ☐ Kies lichte kleuren in huis.
- ☐ Werktafel bij raam.
- ☐ Stof lampen af.

230 euro per jaar

Slim verwarmen

- ☐ Graadje lager overdag = 7% besparing. 20° overdag is standaard.
- ☐ 's nachts 16°C.
- ☐ Deuren sluiten.
- ☐ Verlucht elke dag je woning. Zet je raam 1 kwartier volledig open.



80-90 euro per jaar

Stand-by-lampjes

- ☐ Stand-by-lampjes uit.
- ☐ Gebruik een aan-uit schakelaar voor je toestellen. Als je gaat slapen, zet alles uit.

25-50 euro per jaar

Wassen

- ☐ Was op lage temperaturen (30 of 40 °C).
- ☐ Was met volle trommel.

Gebruik de Fluvius-kortingsbon van 150 euro voor je aankoop. Meer info op www.fluvius.be/kortingsbon.



160 euro per jaar

Verwarmen

- ☐ Laat je verwarmingsketel regelmatig onderhouden.



50-100 euro per jaar

Drogen

- ☐ Goed weer? Droog je was buiten.
- ☐ Slecht weer? Kies voor een droogrekje.
- ☐ Verlucht je wasplaats. Zet je raam 1 kwartier volledig open.
- ☐ Toch de droogkast? Laat je wasmachine zwieren op een hoog toerental (1600/min).



60 tot 70% van je energiefactuur gaat naar je verwarming. Als je de tips voor je verwarming gebruikt, bespaar je meteen heel wat euro's!



50 euro per jaar

Elektrische boiler

- ☐ Isoleer je elektrische boiler en leidingen.
- ☐ Niet hoger dan 60°C.
- ☐ Enkel 's nachts opwarmen (nachttarief).

55 euro per jaar

Douchen

- ☐ Korte douche, maximum 5 minuten.
- ☐ Gebruik een spaardouchekop.
- ☐ Verlucht je badkamer. Zet je raam 1 kwartier volledig open.



20-50 euro per jaar

Diepvries

- ☐ Zorg voor een gevulde diepvriezer, bijvoorbeeld met lege dozen.
- ☐ IJslaag ontdooien vanaf 0,2 tot 0,5 centimeter.
- ☐ Plaats je diepvriezer in een koele ruimte (berging, garage,...) op minstens 10 centimeter van de muur.

Kies voor een diepvriezer met een A++ label en bespaar 50 tot 75 euro per jaar.

50 euro per jaar

Koelkast

- ☐ Plaats je koelkast niet bij een warmtebron. Hou ook 10 cm afstand van de muur.
- ☐ Koelkastdeur altijd dicht. Controleer regelmatig de rubber.
- ☐ IJslaag? Ontdooien!

Gebruik de Fluvius-kortingsbon van 150 euro voor je aankoop. Meer info op www.fluvius.be/kortingsbon.

40 euro per jaar

Slim koken

- ☐ Plaats een deksel op je kookpot.
- ☐ Gebruik een snelkookpan.
- ☐ Kleine hoeveelheden warm je op in de microgolf.
- ☐ Gebruik je oven niet te vaak.

Home Energy Advisors (HEAs) typically offered these 4 types of relatively simple, but often impactful advice depending on customers' situation

- How to choose more affordable energy or fuel contract or supplier
- Discussion on available financial and practical assistance e.g. to heating costs or energy efficiency renovations
- Advices on (simple) technical fixes
 - Electrical devices: Identification of vampire consumption, broken devices, energy efficiency rankings
 - Heating, insulation and humidity: Small checkups of windows and doors, ventilation channels, shower rooms etc.
- Hints on more energy efficient energy use and behaviour: (how to heat, ventilate, use water etc.)



Success factor 4/4: build trust

- Home visits were typically made by social or technical sector professional people, already visiting people needing help. Thus, ASSIST Energy advisory could be given in parallel. Exemplary HEA profiles:
 - Poland: Eco-managers, see picture
 - Finland: Repair advisors (technical housing professionals of VTKL) visiting elderly on their renovation needs
 - Italy: Social workers from many fields
 - Spain: Professionals from the Home Care Assistance service who visit regularly the same people needing help with household chores
- Privacy and trust: when meeting at home with a trusted advisor, people felt more confident to discuss personal issues (including energy use!) and invoices (including energy) or other confidential documents

Home visits



Eco-Manager from Limanowa, Małopolska (Poland). Photo credits: KAPE

Personalized home advisory activities were time-consuming but had the greatest impact.

More about achieved energy savings (in € and kWh terms) through personalized home advisory from ASSIST D4.7 “Final report on HEA Network Activity, Saved Energy and Increased Comfort Level”, URL: https://www.assist2gether.eu/documenti/risultati/d4_7_final_report_on_hea_network_activity_saved_energy_and_increased_comfort_level_final.pdf

Summary

ASSIST project taught important lessons on how to connect with vulnerable and hard-to-reach consumers, and how to discuss energy matters with them. Some recommendations:

- Work with trusted organisations and professionals
 - Having abilities to connect with vulnerable customers
- Plan advisory activities well! Choose the right space and time. Ensure good atmosphere. It also matters who is doing advisory. Often a peer-advisor can speak the right language.
- Make your homework. What are the housing contexts people are living in? Choose relevant energy-saving tips and understandable examples
- Build trust
- Emphasize similarities and collective problems, beyond social groups
 - We all need basic energy and comfortable housing
 - Most of us want to save money spent on energy
 - Most of us want to reduce fossil fuels consumption

Questions?

www.assist2gether.com

  @assist2gether

#ASSIST2gether



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 754051

