

		Currently being developed by <i>Wien Energie</i>
Inefficient appliances	Replace them with new, more efficient appliances	Part of <i>Wiener Energieunterstützung</i>
Broken, draughty windows	Replace or repair	Part of <i>Wiener Energieunterstützung</i>
Badly insulated buildings	Renovation or energy-efficient Construction of new buildings	Renovation Strategy by the Government, this requires a more structural approach
Availability of affordable and energy-efficient housing	Building more affordable housing Linking subsidies for renovation to affordability	Suggestion by experts
Predatory contracts	Regulation, strengthening consumer protection	Suggestion by experts
Climate mitigation measures, such as Carbon tax, affects the poorest the most	Poverty Check of all Laws Subsidies directly targeted at the poorest	Demand by <i>Caritas</i> Suggestion by experts

4.6. Sustainability of the programme and the measures

“Are these measures necessary? Yes! Will we solve the problem if we do more of the same? No“!¹² With this statement, one interviewee succinctly summed up the impression that all interview participants conveyed when asked about the sufficiency and sustainability of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung*.

There has been no formal evaluation of the programme or the energy audits. Therefore it is currently not possible to (quantitatively) assess how successful the programme is. As a proxy, interviewees were asked if clients or customers come back often. However, it was pointed out that clients not coming back may also have other reasons, such as not believing that there could get any more help from a certain organisation.

Nevertheless, the interviewed experts were all confident that the programme overall was working for individual households. One interviewee highlighted a major success factor as looking at each case individually, assessing needs and capabilities and tailoring the help to the clients directly. The aim of all organisations involved is making long-term changes and avoiding quick fixes, such as covering a bill without addressing the situation that caused the financial difficulties. For example, at *Caritas*, social workers assess whether the client has a prospect of improving the situation. When there are uncertainties about residency in Austria, for example, or extraordinarily high indebtedness, the social workers recommend other services. In order to sustainably address the overall situation, *Wien Energie* might sometimes demand that an energy audit is conducted, as it is clear that the issue will persist if consumption is not decreased. However, the interviewee at *Wien Energie* pointed out, that the capacities of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* are limited. According to her, when the energy bill amounts to

¹² Original Quote in German: Reichen die Maßnahmen? Sind sie notwendig? Ja! Würden wir das Problem lösen, wenn wir noch mehr von demselben machen? Nein!

a third of all expenses of a particular household, energy efficiency measures might not be enough to solve the situation. Other issues need to be addressed, such as indebtedness or distraint. While some sort of a solution is usually found, it might still mean that the customer has to limit his or her energy use to a level that impacts day-to-day quality of life. The capacities of this particular programme are limited and need to go hand in hand with other support measures.

The social worker at the MA40 pointed out that clients may only feel the financial benefits of some of the structural changes (exchanging appliances or repairing windows) in the long term. She criticised the fact that the programme was too focused on individual households. There should be a more holistic approach towards solving the issue structurally. This would also have ecological benefits.

Both the interviewees from MA40 and the *Caritas* mentioned the ecological benefits of energy efficient measures. They stressed that the measures offered by Wiener Energieunterstützung do not only help individual households but also reduce the overall emissions and resource use by the city. Therefore, a more universal approach and outlook should be applied to the programme. If this aspect is acknowledged it is also easier for social workers to justify the more expensive measures, such as installing district heating. The MA20 has an instrument through which they were able to calculate that many tons of CO₂ have been saved through the programme, by infrastructural improvements and through exchanging appliances. It is important to keep in mind the synergies and that energy poverty and resource waste and CO₂ emissions can be addressed at the same time.

5. Discussion

5.1. Definition of Energy Poverty

The literature generally refers to energy poverty as a symptom of income poverty. Usually, a condition for being defined as energy poor is to be below the at-risk-of-poverty line of 60% of median income (see for example Matzinger et al., 2018; Statistik Austria, 2019). Not all of those who are below the poverty line are also energy poor. Yet, all of the interviewees agreed that poverty was one of the underlying conditions of energy poverty. Receiving social benefits that provide a minimum standard of living (*Mindestsicherung*) is also usually a condition to receive financial support in the framework of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung*. They stressed that in order to tackle the issue of energy poverty at the core, income poverty needs to be addressed more generally. Yet, energy poverty is fuelled by additional challenges, such as chronic illness in the household or single parenthood. Often, as argued by the interviewees, households may be coping with income poverty or low income, but one event may push them over the line to being energy poor. One interviewee argued that someone with an average income, but who lives in a poorly insulated building and is faced with an extremely high energy bill may also be in need of assistance. This is similar to Brunner et al. (2012) who establish different types of energy poor, inter alia those who are not objectively fuel poor but live in badly insulated flats, so that they are at risk of slipping into objective energy poverty. Brunner et al. (2012) also define the modest fuel poor, who are able to cope with their daily lives most of the time, but are at risk to slip into energy poverty due to one adverse life event. One interviewee warned that strict quantitative measurements can be used to exclude these types of households, who are still in need of assistance. The

organisations involved in the programme take a more individual approach to establish who is in need of assistance, even though poverty is usually an issue.

The more individual approach to assessing who is in need of assistance is also an attempt to be inclusive of the different manifestations of energy poverty. As is frequently mentioned in the literature (see for example Matzinger et al., 2018; Pye et al., 2015; Ürge-Vorsatz & Tirado Herrero, 2012) energy poverty can have two forms. On the one hand, there are households who cannot pay their bills, but on the other hand some are disconnected from heating or electricity or do not adequately heat their homes to prevent not being able to afford the bill. Most quantitative definitions leave out this second dimension, while most of the interviewees mentioned examples of those affected by this second form of energy poverty, for example the family who lived without hot water for over half a year. While this might be an extreme example, Brunner et al. (2012) mention several coping strategies that include heating only one room, sitting in front of the radiator or spending most of the time in bed in order to save energy. A recent study in Graz, which surveyed low-income households on their living situation and energy habits. Over 60% of the low-income households indicated that they did not always heat their homes to an adequate level to save money („sometimes“, „often“, or „always“) (*Energiearmut Und Wohnsituation von Haushalten Mit Geringem Einkommen in Graz, 2020*).

The EU SILC survey (Statistik Austria, 2019) asked in 2016 if respondents were able to adequately heat their homes. 3% of all respondents claimed that they were not able to do so, but 9% of those that fall below the poverty line. While this is a subjective definition, it gives an indicator of how many people's life quality might be impacted by the second manifestation of energy poverty.

While the two dimensions of energy poverty are frequently mentioned in the literature, they are not yet reflected in statistical measures of energy poverty. Statistik Austria (2019) acknowledges the need for a more inclusive definition that takes into account subjective perceptions of energy poverty, however, no statistical measure has been developed to date. For the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* an individual approach has proven most useful to reach the highest possible number of households in need. Yet, not all households who qualify for assistance reach out to one of the institutions that are part of the programme. Furthermore, the scope of action for the social institutions and the Ombudsteam is limited as long as income poverty persists.

5.2. Reasons for Energy Poverty and Policy Solutions

The relationship between rental conditions and energy poverty does not emerge from existing literature. However, all of the interviewees suggested that a competitive rental market and limited term rental contracts are strongly connected to energy markets.

According to the interviewees, in the current conditions of the rental market in Vienna, vulnerable households are forced to live in precarious conditions. While this is a challenge related to income poverty and competitive housing markets, the frequency with which all interviewees mentioned rent as a substantial challenge indicates that there is a strong relationship to energy poverty, too. Limited term rental contracts lower a household's bargaining power vis-à-vis their landlord and decreases incentives to make structural improvements to the flat.

For policy makers this means that providing and creating affordable and energy efficient housing can be a key strategy to combatting energy poverty. It needs to be considered that for renovations and energy efficiency standards to make a difference, they need to be state of the art (Ürge-Vorsatz & Tirado Herrero, 2012). One interviewee specifically suggested linking subsidies for building and renovation to providing affordable housing. In the long-run, this might be cheaper than providing financial assistance as housing renovation tackles one of the root causes of energy poverty, rather than addressing the symptoms (Boltz & Pichler, 2014).

A majority of the literature names inefficient buildings as a main cause for energy poverty, in addition to income poverty (e.g. Bouzarovski & Thomson, 2019; Chester, 2014; Ürge-Vorsatz & Tirado Herrero, 2012). Similarly, interviewees confirmed that most of their clients live in old buildings that are often badly insulated, have inefficient appliances, broken windows and old wiring. Additionally, through the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* clients can also get gas heating replaced by district heating, which is more energy efficient. The importance of building renovation and energy efficiency is reflected in the number of policies that already exists at the European and national level, such as the *Energy Performance of Buildings Directive* (2019), the European Green Deal (2019) or the Austrian Long Term Renovation Strategy (2019).

High energy prices contribute to energy poverty, according to, inter alia, Boardman, (2010); Chester (2014) and Thomson et al. (2017). One interviewee stated that energy poverty is often the combination of low income, high consumption (due to energy inefficiency) and high prices. Another interviewee argued that certain taxes and fees should be lower for vulnerable consumers. However, energy prices did not come up as frequently as other issues. Furthermore, interviewees agreed that low-income households living in well insulated flats could usually cope with their energy bills. Ürge-Vorsatz & Tirado Herrero (2012) warn from lowering energy prices as a policy. They argue that low energy prices can lead to energy inefficient buildings, as can be witnessed in former Eastern European states such as Hungary. Similar to the issue of prices, several interviewees mentioned predatory contracts that start with a bonus and seem cheaper at first glance but are actually more expensive than the existing contract of the household. If the person in the household dealing with energy provision is not fluent in German, she might be especially susceptible to overpriced or inadequate contracts. This issue is not mentioned in the literature and the evidence by the interview participants is rather anecdotal. In order to assess the magnitude of the issue, more research is necessary.

One of the main instruments of the *Wien Energie* Ombudsteam is agreeing to instalments and deferrals. Interviewees at *Wien Energie* and the *Caritas* agreed that this was a good way to take the immediate pressure off their clients and customers. Often it gives vulnerable households the time to apply for further assistance, wait for a bonus payment or to spread out the cost over a very long time. Brunner et al. (2012), on the other hand, argue that instalments are useful to avert disconnection but often present a high financial burden. This is reflected in the interviewees' statements that for some households instalments can still mean that their quality of life is impacted as they save money somewhere else to afford the instalments. The social worker at *Caritas* suspects that some clients accept instalments of any amount that he suggests because they are happy that there seems to be any kind of solution. Also, as a consequence of a high energy bill, some households limit their energy consumption drastically. Thus, while instalments are sufficient for some who can subsequently cope with

their payments, others need more assistance. They can only be a first measure to avoid disconnection or indebtedness, but need to be complemented by other measures, such as energy audits.

Social and personal challenges that come on top of income poverty are frequently mentioned in the literature (see, for example, Boardman, 2010; Thomson et al., 2017). This is confirmed by all interviewees as a contributing factor to energy poverty. Challenges include separation from a partner, long-term unemployment or chronic illness of a household member.

In their study on energy poor households in Vienna, Brunner et al. (2012) found that the scope of action to improve the situation through behavioural changes is very limited. On the other hand, Boltz & Pichler (2014) argue that behavioural changes can substantially lower a household's energy consumption. In line with the latter, assessing and improving energy consumption behaviour is a crucial part of energy audits by the *Umweltberatung*. All interviewees argued that, to some extent, behavioural changes can reduce a household's energy consumption. Some of the strategies that households use to cope with energy poverty can actually have the opposite effect, for example taking long, hot showers instead of using central heating.

A crucial factor in encouraging and monitoring behavioural changes is to give a household control over its energy consumption is a key component of helping a household coming out of energy poverty. Existing literature does not deal with the issue of providing information and empowering consumers by explaining energy bills, teaching them how to read meters and providing counsel about the best contracts. Yet, this was a recurring theme in all interviews and deemed as crucial by all interviewees.

Several of the interviewed social workers from different institutions argued that often the first step in assisting a client is to help them get an overview of their energy bills and debts. As part of the energy audit, counsellors instruct clients on how they can monitor their own consumption, as they are often unaware of the amount of energy they consume and do not know how to read a meter. Several of the interviewees criticised the fact that energy bills only come once a year and therefore clients have no overview about their consumption. One suggested a prepaid system, which will allow low-income households to monitor more closely how much money is spent on energy. *Wien Energie* do offer prepaid meters, but they are rarely used. The Court of Auditors suggests that this is because the costs of installing and running these meters that fall onto the consumers. With the upcoming introduction of smart meters, closer monitoring of energy consumption will be made easier (Rechnungshof Österreich, 2020). However, the energy consultant warned that for some customers the smart meter is too complicated.

It is important to empower customers to be in control of their consumption and their spending on energy. Further research should investigate how to best structure the payment system and what information is crucial to empower consumers to monitor their own habits.

Overall, interviewees stressed that the key to the programme's success was the fact that it combined a mix of different measures, namely behavioural changes in addition to long-term changes in the housing infrastructure.

5.3. Sustainability of the Wiener Energieunterstützung and the Ombudsteam at *Wien Energie*

The Ombudsteam at *Wien Energie* is the company's strategy to accommodate for the needs of its most vulnerable customers. However, the measures at the disposal of the Ombudsteam on their own would not be sufficient to end energy poverty sustainably. The scope of action is limited to agreeing to instalments or deferring payments by a limited period of time. These measures can only provide short-term financial relief and serve prevent disconnection or indebtedness for the customers.

Pye et al. (2015) argue that this can be an important short-term measure for low-income households, especially as structural measures can take longer to be implemented and even longer until they become evident in lower energy bills. Similarly, an interview participant argued that clients only feel the financial benefits of some of the measures that the Wiener Energieunterstützung pays for, such as installing district heating, after a few years.

A key component of the success of the Ombudsteam's work in helping its customers in a more holistic way is the cooperation with the MA40 through the *Wiener Energieunterstützung*, which arranges the energy audits, infrastructure improvements and appliance replacement. Therefore, this thesis has focused on the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* in its entirety and included all the organisations that are involved in it. Interviewees from all organisations emphasised that the cooperation between the different organisations is effective and valuable for their work. The cooperation does not only include finding solutions for clients but also exchanging experiences and knowledge. For example, the Ombudsteam updates the other organisations on new developments in the energy sector or in the billing processes of *Wien Energie*. This is crucial for everyone in the programme to be able to most effectively assist their clients. This cooperation happens on an institutionalised basis and does not depend on personal connections between employees of the different organisations, which adds to its effectiveness.

The measures of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* intend to address the root causes of energy poverty at the individual level. When a household seeks assistance at any of the involved organisations, its individual need is assessed and the necessary measures are taken to prevent the household to struggle with energy poverty in the future. This is achieved through behavioural changes, which are described as having the potential to reduce energy consumption to a certain extent (Boltz & Pichler, 2014). These are complemented by the exchange of appliances, of heating systems or broken windows. According to the literature, these are key strategies to reduce energy consumption and combat energy poverty (Thomson et al., 2017; Üрге-Vorsatz & Tirado Herrero, 2012). The combination of both is a key factor in achieving long-term improvements in the household's situation.

Yet, as one of the interview participants argued, ideally these individualised measures would not be necessary in the first place. The energy consultant expressed that it was the "goal that the poorest no longer have to live in the most desolate flats".¹³ As of now, the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* can only be reactive. It works with households that are already struggling. All interviewees called for more preventative measures, which would require a more macro and structural approach.

As income poverty is often a precondition to energy poverty, working towards raising incomes in general would allow households to invest into energy efficient appliances or prevent them

¹³ Original Quote in German: „...unser höheres Ziel wäre schon, dass die, die eh am wenigsten haben, nicht in den schlechtesten Objekten leben müssen.“

from having to move into low quality flats. Yet, Ürge-Vorsatz & Tirado Herrero (2012) argue that financial measures alone are often expensive and not very effective. Extra income might be spent on other needs than energy bills or on improving energy-efficiency. Thus, on its own minor income improvements or one-off payments to assist with energy bills will not be sufficient to address the root causes of the issue.

Through the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* the measures recommended after energy audits are paid for directly. While this might initially cost more than giving financial support for paying energy bills, it is likely that in the long term this will substantially reduce a household's energy consumption and therefore energy bills. Usually, structural measures reduce energy consumption overall. Even if consumers increase the temperature for heating or use certain appliances more, the rebound effect tends to be lower than the effect of energy efficiency measures (Ürge-Vorsatz & Tirado Herrero, 2012).

A more macro-level and structural approach to fighting and preventing energy poverty would provide the opportunity to fight poverty, energy poverty and emissions and resource waste at the same time, as argued by an interviewee. The poorest and most vulnerable households should not have to live in the most precarious living conditions. A broader approach will also be needed in order to ensure that the transition to a carbon neutral economy is socially just. As one interviewee argued, if there is a carbon tax that includes emissions from heating, vulnerable households with old heating systems might be more affected than households that have the means to install district heating or use renewable energy sources. On the other hand combatting energy poverty offers high synergy effects with efforts to reduce CO₂-emissions. Retro-fitting buildings can lead to a reduction in energy needs for heating of 2-3 and up to then, while for new buildings it can be substantially more (Harvey, 2010).

As one interview participant put it, ideally their services would not be needed because the conditions that put vulnerable households into energy poverty would not exist in the first place. Another argued that the measures are necessary and effective at the individual level but will not end the problem of energy poverty. Through government regulation, renovation and building of new, energy-efficient housing stock energy inefficient housing could be eliminated. The City should especially focus on public housing (Gemeindebau) and increasing its renovation rate. The effect on infrastructure energy efficiency of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* is limited as the measures do not include building insulation.

6. Conclusion

The conclusions reached in this thesis are based on purely qualitative research. The success, sustainability and impact of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* were assessed based on the findings from interviews and the literature on energy poverty. In order to gain a better understanding of the scale of the impact of the programme, a broader study including quantitative measures would be necessary.

Thanks to an approach that includes financial, social, and infrastructural measures, the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* and all participating organisations are successful at alleviating energy poverty of many individual households in Vienna. The key factors for the success of the programme are the individual approach to defining energy poverty, the variety of possibilities to access help, and the institutionalisation of the programme and the cooperation between

the different organisations. However, it needs to be noted that all of the interviewees stressed that the programme is not sufficient to prevent energy poverty from occurring in the first place.

A key success factor of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* is its holistic approach to defining energy poverty and the commitment to finding solutions that fit the specific needs of each household or person. The programme assists households whose situation can be attributed to both dimensions of energy poverty, those who cannot pay their bills and those who struggle to satisfy their energy needs. For this, none of the organisations involved subscribe to strictly quantitative definitions in order to avoid excluding households in need. However, a precondition for financing of the measures by the City is to be a recipient of social benefits or an income that does not or only slightly exceed the minimum standard provided by the benefits (Mindestsicherung). Thus, being at risk of poverty is a condition to receiving help. The MA 40, *Caritas* and Ombudsteam individually assess each client's need and decide on the most adequate measures to assist them. For some, instalments or deferment can be sufficient while for others more long-term changes are needed. This approach is also beneficial for *Wien Energie* as a company, because outstanding bills are usually paid eventually, without the need to involve lawyers and collection offices.

An individual approach also ensures that a high amount of vulnerable households is reached. The multitude of issues leading to energy poverty and the different life situations of vulnerable people is accounted for by the fact that there are many entry points to receiving assistance through the *Wiener Energieunterstützung*.

Households that struggle to pay their energy bills or to comfortably satisfy their energy needs may come to the MA 40, the *Caritas* or directly approach the Ombudsteam to work out a payment plan and potentially other kinds of solution. In addition, all social workers at these institutions are trained to recognise signs of energy poverty even if the individual comes seeking help for a different problem. Similarly, employees at the customer service and the technical field service of *Wien Energie* are skilled in recognising certain issues and can forward customers to the Ombudsteam. In other words, clients of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* can reach the programme through many different avenues. This reflects the complexity and multi-layered nature of the issue. Through creating many ways of reaching potentially vulnerable households, the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* ensures that it reaches the largest possible amount of people.

Yet, as was pointed out both by interviewees as well as the Austrian Court of Auditors, an early warning system would enable the company to recognise the issue even earlier. Such a system is currently in the process of being established at *Wien Energie*.

Another key factor that contributes to the success of the *Wiener Energieunterstützung* is the institutionalisation of the programme. Firstly, there is an official cooperation between all the participating organisations, i.e. the MA 20, MA 40, *Caritas*, *Umweltberatung* and the Ombudsteam at *Wien Energie*. They cooperate on finding the most appropriate solution for each client, with each organisation filling a different role. In addition, there is an exchange of information and experiences. Once a year, participating organisations meet up formally. This way, social workers at the social institutions are always up to date with newest developments on the energy market or billing practices of *Wien Energie*. This enables the social workers to advise their clients more adequately. Another remarkable feature is the standing of the Ombudsteam within the company *Wien Energie* and the parent company *Wiener Stadtwerke*.

Firstly, social workers at the Ombudsteam have the permission to interfere in the billing and payment process of the company, by deferring payments or agreeing on instalments, without having to consult with a higher authority. According to the interviewee, there has never been a measure that they have not been allowed to implement (as long as debts were paid eventually). Other branches of the company that deal with customers, namely customer service and technical field service are trained to recognise signs of energy poverty and can recommend vulnerable households to contact the Ombudsteam. Furthermore, the interviewee from *Wien Energie* stated that vulnerable consumers are considered when changes in the operational part of energy provision are planned. The Ombudsteam is consulted on how these changes, for example in the billing process, may impact their clients and how they can be included.

The *Wiener Energieunterstützung* is also an official feature of the *Hilfe in besonderen Lebenslagen* programme by the City of Vienna. As such, all expenses for energy audits, replacement of appliances and repair and installation of new heating systems are covered by the City. This is a unique approach, but beneficial for low-income households. Even covering parts of the installation of new infrastructure or purchasing costs of new appliances.

While the programme is successful in alleviating the hardships associated with energy poverty for numerous individual households in Vienna, it is not able to prevent energy poverty from occurring. On the individual level it combines a variety of measures, for example changes in consumption behaviour, providing information for households to understand their consumption patterns and their bills, and long-term changes to equipment and, to some extent, infrastructure. Its nature is reactive rather than preventative and proactive. It can only work with households that already suffer from energy poverty. Furthermore, the scope of action is limited. Households that face high debts or whose infrastructural conditions are too dire will not be completely be lifted out of energy poverty if their financial and living situation does not substantially change. In line with this, all interviewees stressed the importance of a more holistic, macro level approach. There are three key areas, in which structural changes can work towards preventing energy poverty from occurring:

- A) Energy poverty is a consequence of overall income poverty. Most interviewees emphasised the fact without raising the living standard of the most vulnerable in Vienna, it will be difficult to prevent energy poverty from occurring. Even when households receive assistance, it cannot be guaranteed that they can access an adequate amount of energy.
- B) The availability of affordable housing that is also energy-efficient needs to be increased. As long as poor households are forced to move into precarious flats, they will face challenges related to disproportionately high energy consumption. This can be prevented through two main avenues: firstly, the City can more strictly regulate and monitor the conditions of dwellings that are permitted to be on the market. This includes strengthening the situation of limited-term renters vis-à-vis their landlords.
Secondly, the City can provide affordable housing either through its own programmes or by linking subsidies for new buildings to providing affordable housing.
- C) A renovation programme should prioritise low-income households, which comes at no additional costs to those households. This programme should include insulation, but also installing efficient and climate-friendly heating systems. This would not only improve the living situation for the most vulnerable citizens of Vienna, but also significantly reduce CO₂-emissions in the city. This way, the City can capitalise on the synergy effects of ending energy poverty and mitigating climate change.

The proposed measures are not unique to Vienna. While the situation in the more rural federal states (Bundesländer) of Austria may be different, the key principles of an individualised approach still apply. Furthermore, the need to initiate structural changes to poverty, rent, and renovations is likely the same in other federal states and independent of rural or urban areas. According to the Austrian Energy Efficiency Law, all energy providers above a certain size should have an Ombudsteam like that at *Wien Energie*. According to the interviewees, however, the approach by the Ombudsteam in Vienna is quite unique. The Austrian Court of Auditors also presents the examples of Energie Graz (Styria) that has several approaches to assisting energy poor households and Energie Wels (Upper Austria) that is not legally required to have an Ombudsteam due to its small size but offers comprehensive customer service. It would be beneficial if more energy providers offered services like *Wien Energie*. However, it only works in combination with a strong cooperation of all social institutions involved and more preventative measures need to be initiated.

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Annex A – Questionnaire for Interview Study

A: Allgemein: für alle

Kurze persönliche Vorstellung, kurzer beruflicher Hintergrund, welche Position in der Organisation, wie lange schon dort tätig.

1. Bitte erzählen Sie mir von Ihrer Organisation und Ihren Aufgaben: In welchem Zusammenhang hat Ihre Organisation mit energiearmen Menschen zu tun? Wie arbeiten Sie selbst mit diesen Menschen zusammen: was ist dabei Ihre Aufgabe (Information, Beratung, Hilfestellungen, ...)?
2. Wie definieren Sie in Ihrer Organisation Energiearmut?
 - a) Welche Kriterien wenden Sie an um potentiell Betroffene zu identifizieren?
3. Wie erhalten Ihre KundInnen / KlientInnen Zugang zu Ihrer Einrichtung?
 - a) Erreichen Sie mehr die Menschen die ihre Rechnung nicht bezahlen können oder auch solche die nicht ausreichend heizen und Strom benutzen können?
 - b) Versuchen Sie, aktiv Betroffene ausfindig zu machen? Wenn ja, wie?
4. Welche Menschen kommen zu Ihnen? Können Sie mir mehr über die demographischen Merkmale erzählen (Familienstand, ethnischer/Migrationshintergrund, Alter, Ausbildung etc.)?
 - a) Was sind die Hauptgründe für Energiearmut (Einkommen, Gebäude, Geräte etc.)

B: Wien Energie

1. Können Sie einen „typischen“ (durchschnittlichen) Beratungs-/Informations-/Hilfestellungsverlauf beschreiben, damit ich mir Ihre Arbeit besser vorstellen können? Was sind die einzelnen Beratungsschritte während des Gesprächs?
2. Welche Maßnahmen stehen Ihnen zur Verfügung um den Menschen zu helfen?
3. Wie weit können Sie individuell auf die Bedürfnisse der einzelnen KlientInnen eingehen?
4. Wie lange arbeiten Sie mit den KlientInnen durchschnittlich zusammen?
5. Kommen KlientInnen wieder? Wie oft passiert das? Nach welchem Zeitraum?
6. Wie funktioniert die Zusammenarbeit mit anderen sozialen Einrichtungen?
 - a. Leiten Sie die Menschen an die Einrichtungen weiter? Werden Menschen an Sie weitergeleitet?
 - b. Inwiefern tauschen Sie sich mit den einzelnen Organisationen aus?
 - c. Sprechen Sie sich auch mit Hinsicht auf die Maßnahmen ab?
7. Haben Sie das Gefühl dass Ihre Maßnahmen langfristig wirken?
 - a. Die wissenschaftliche Literatur ist sich relativ einig, dass finanzielle Mittel nicht ausreichen, um Energiearmut nachhaltig zu bekämpfen. Haben Sie das Gefühl, dass Ihre Maßnahmen wirken?
 - b. Was sind die größten Hindernisse bei der Bekämpfung von Energiearmut in Wien?
8. Das Energieeffizienzgesetz verpflichtet österreichische Energieversorger dazu, den Energiebedarf bei den Verbrauchern zu senken. Was unternimmt Wien Energie in dieser Hinsicht? (mehr für Öffentlichkeitsarbeit)

9. Wenn Sie könnten, welche Maßnahmen und Gesetze würden Sie zur Eindämmung der Energiearmut in Wien und Österreich einführen?

C: Caritas, Umweltberatung

1. Können Sie einen „typischen“ (durchschnittlichen) Beratungs-/Informations-/Hilfestellungsverlauf beschreiben, damit wir uns Ihre Arbeit besser vorstellen können?
 - a. Schritt für Schritt: Sie merken ein Klient hat Probleme mit der Energieversorgung. Was passiert?
2. Welche Maßnahmen stehen Ihnen zur Verfügung um den Menschen zu helfen?
3. Wie weit können Sie individuell auf die Bedürfnisse der einzelnen KlientInnen eingehen?
4. Wie lange arbeiten Sie mit den KlientInnen durchschnittlich zusammen?
5. Kommen KlientInnen wieder? Wie oft passiert das? Nach welchem Zeitraum?
6. Wie funktioniert die Zusammenarbeit mit Wien Energie?
 - a. Leiten Sie die Menschen an Wien Energie weiter? Werden Menschen an Sie weitergeleitet?
 - b. Inwiefern tauschen Sie sich mit den einzelnen Organisationen aus?
 - c. Sprechen Sie sich auch mit Hinsicht auf die Maßnahmen ab?
7. Arbeiten Sie auch mit anderen Energieversorgern zusammen?
 - a. Ist das Problem bei allen Energieversorgern ähnlich groß?
8. Haben Sie das Gefühl, dass mit den aktuellen Maßnahmen Energiearmut effektiv eingedämmt werden kann?
 - a. Maßnahmen der Caritas
 - b. Maßnahmen allgemein
9. Wenn Sie könnten, welche Gesetze oder Maßnahmen zu Bekämpfung der Energiearmut würden Sie einführen?

D: MA40

1. Wie groß schätzen Sie das Problem der Energiearmut in Wien ein?
2. Welche Maßnahmen haben Sie zur Verfügung um Energiearmut einzudämmen?
3. Welche Maßnahmen trifft die Stadt noch, um Energiearmut einzudämmen?
4. Wo wohnen die meisten Menschen die von Energiearmut betroffen sind? In Sozialwohnungen oder in privaten Wohnungen?
5. Gibt es Pläne in Wien, Wohnhäuser thermisch zu sanieren?
6. Wenn Sie könnten, welche Maßnahmen und Gesetze würden Sie in Wien und Österreich einführen, um Energiearmut einzudämmen?

Annex B – Categories in Quantitative Content Analysis

These categories were established during the process of analysing the expert interviews. They are listed in alphabetical order.

- Cooperation between Organisations
 - Exchange and Networking
 - Assisting Clients

- Definition of Energy Poverty
 - Criticism of existing definitions
 - General

- Dimensions of Poverty
 - How it affects people's daily lives

- Energy Market in Austria and Vienna

- Funding

- Outreach

- Processes of *Wiener Energieunterstützung*
 - 1. Caritas
 - Cooperation with Verbund
 - Solutions offered by the organisation
 - Financial support
 - Information and empowerment
 - Types of issues
 - 2. MA 40
 - Solutions offered by the organisation
 - Audits
 - Financial
 - 3. *Umweltberatung*
 - Solutions offered by the organisation
 - Information and empowerment
 - Infrastructure improvements
 - 4. Wien Energie
 - Approach to Energy Poverty
 - Solutions offered by the organisations
 - Deferral
 - Information
 - Installments
 - Outlook on working with clients

- Reasons for Energy Poverty
 - Consumer behaviour

- Difficult circumstances in life
- Energy price
- Income Poverty
- Knowledge and access to information
- Living conditions
 - Appliances
 - Buildings and insulation
 - Knowledge about energy efficiency etc.
 - Rent contracts and limited rent contracts
- Migration

- Solutions in General
 - Building Stock
 - City-wide approach
 - Financial, just transition
 - Information and empowerment
 - Installments and deferrals
 - Policy and laws
 - Structural
 - General
 - Poverty

- Sustainability of the measures
 - General
 - Ecological considerations

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