

Energy Poverty and Vulnerability Trends in Southern and Western Europe during Crisis Years

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Abstract-

The recent COVID-19 and energy crises have intensified energy poverty (EP) in Europe, driven by skyrocketing energy prices and worsening financial pressures. This paper measures the different EP dimensions in three different EU Member States, namely Spain, Italy, and France, and carries out a comparative analysis of the EP situation in these countries between 2017 and 2022. This study reveals that, despite some disparities, the Member States share similar EP trends, with an alarming increase in the population living in dwellings with the presence of leaks, dampness, and rot. Also, the EP situation seemed to improve in all three countries until 2019, but it has since worsened. This reinforces that harmonized metrics and policies to address EP at the EU level could be relevant, especially in neighboring countries. This article also proposes an econometric analysis applied to the French case study to unpack the characteristics of households vulnerable to EP. Although the results are not univocal, some energy vulnerability drivers have been identified, such as a low level of education, being inactive or unemployed, or having a large family to support. These factors might help EU decision-makers in designing policies to tackle EP adequately.

Index Terms- Energy Poverty; Indicators; Vulnerable households; Econometric analysis; Spain; France; Italy

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