
New mechanisms to tackle fuel poverty: selected proposals from Belgium, Spain, France, Italy and United Kingdom

**EPEE project
WP4 - Deliverable 12**

Legal disclaimer

The sole responsibility for the content of this publication etc. lies with the authors. It does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Communities.

The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

INDEX

INTRODUCTION 4

1. Action Plans on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms as expected “best practices” 5

2. New mechanisms to tackle fuel poverty 9

2.1 Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Belgium 9

2.2 Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in France 10

2.3 Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Italy 11

2.4 Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Spain 12

2.5 Strengthening the Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: a new proposal for the Warm Zone in the United Kingdom 13

APPENDIX..... 14

INTRODUCTION

This Report shows the result of a double work carried out within Work Package 4 to identify proposals of new mechanisms that may allow the definition of an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty.

On one hand results from good practices' survey was deepened (see Deliverable 11) in order to set off practices able to meet the needs of effectiveness and most suitable for the different national contexts.

On the other hand EPEE project produced a lively exchange of experiences, positions and competences within national and european Workshops (see Deliverable 13).

Here the real strategic result of this project's phase is proposed as the final outcome of the different contributions given by the stakeholders and key-actors involved.

EPEE's researchers matched all the different inputs and they articulated a transnational critical review about new mechanisms that can be proposed as the basis of a new approach in tackling fuel poverty.

Appendix includes all the detailed cards on the new mechanisms proposed in each Partner Country.

1. Action Plans on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms as expected “best practices”

The concept of “good practices” EPEE chose to organise survey on relevant experiences and action to tackle fuel poverty at the national level (see Deliverable 11) was considered in relation to the novelty of the theme so that, except for the United Kingdom, EPEE’s partner Countries analysed their policies and measures operating on factors causing fuel poverty (see the national cards in the Appendix).

This approach allowed to identify most promising policy to address to the theme though at the moment they represent interesting elements of a not well structured national (or regional or local) policy concerning the sustainable management of energy (mainly from a social point of view). Anyway some differences have to be highlighted.

In France, for example, good practices express yet a particular attention to the most vulnerable households and people and the positive relationship between energy professionals and social workers is absolutely to consider a peculiarity of the French reality. France appears as the Country most clearly driven to an action planning approach and shows a lot of similarities with the UK’s experienced model.

In Belgium effort was produced in trying to go beyond existing good practices even though they are yet crosswise in relation to the issues of fuel poverty and also concerned to welfare issues (matching of these issues with the ones related to energy efficiency and the rational use of energy are absolutely needed in each Country).

Italy appears strongly engaged in planning energy sustainability at different levels (recent policies showed a great interest and commitment from the national level to the regional one mainly on social housing) and shows a significant interest for crossing energy and social professional competences.

As Belgium and Italy also Spain knew fuel poverty thanks to the EPEE project and showed a particular attention to general actions (see the example of social tariff proposed) without despising more operational tools and mechanisms.

An important common element among EPEE’s partner Countries concerns feasibility in rearranging national systems or schemes for energy efficiency (and related White Certificates) so that they may steer the policies of improvement of energy efficiency towards vulnerable (fuel poor) households. Such a mechanism is yet operating in the United Kingdom within a well opened energy market and it works in a voluntary scheme (so very different from the market system operating in France or in Italy. This mechanism could be very effective because it would allow to promote a cooperation and a common commitment of key-actors (energy suppliers, Government, Energy Regulator, Consumers’ Associations, Local Authorities, ESCO, Social Housing Agencies, ...).

EPEE’s partner Countries share also critical state in operating with a planning holistic approach in tackling fuel poverty: they find always very difficult in interesting about fuel poverty the institutional key-actors at the different level (operating in the different matters as energy, housing, health, social issues). The definition of an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty should matching the different competences and promote coordination and cooperation among them at each level (national, regional and local).

This means that an Observatory on Fuel Poverty is really needed because, as EPEE’s first results have demonstrated, it is absolutely necessary to:

- Evaluate and monitor the problem (causes and consequences);
- Provide reliable data bases about energy consumptions of the households;
- Provide reliable social-economic indicators;
- Cross these and all the other relevant informations providing analysis and Plans (in cooperation and synergy with the other key-actors).

This lively framework implies a definite methodological approach able to provide detailed analysis about national situations concerning opportunities to define an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty. For this purpose a energy planning traditional schemes could be assumed as a reference (see Figures 1 and 2). As for criteria to select and then analyse national good practices, same crucial fuel poverty's issues (energy efficiency, energy prices, low income, information and training) are poles of the compass helping in the definition of an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty.

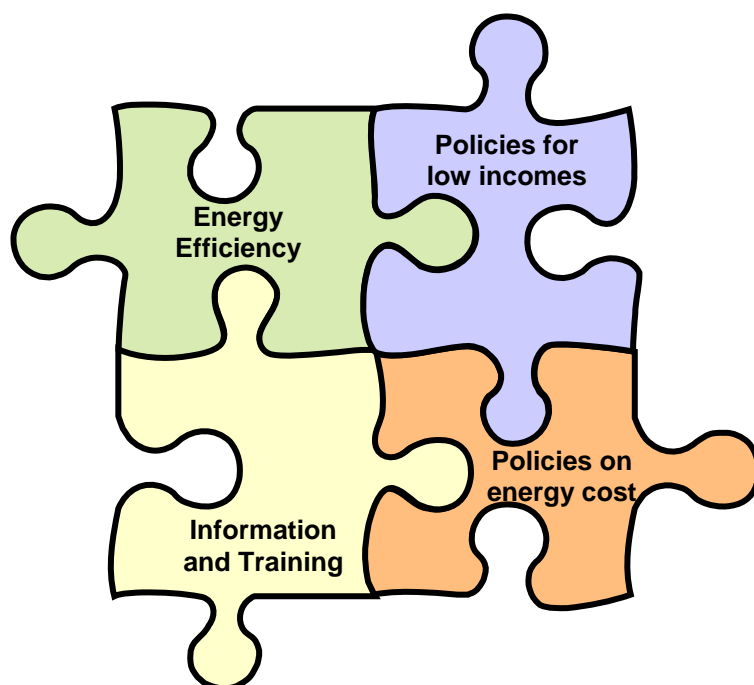


Figure 1 – Fuel Poverty's compass: strategic issues for an Action Plan.

An Action Plan needs also that a new independent infrastructure may be created to improve the knowledge of the problem and the management of necessary competences: this is the main meaning of the proposal included in the new mechanisms of all the EPEE's partner Countries (considering the UK experience as a strategic example) and concerned in the creation of an Observatory on Fuel Poverty in which reliable competences and professional skills may converge. The Observatory should perform a crucial role in addressing policies, promoting operating partnerships among stakeholders (energy suppliers, craftsmen' Associations, Public Authorities, ...), defining and implementing policies.

The Action Plan (see Figure 2) would follow a consolidated approach of energy planning whose main steps are:

- Defining targets;
- Identifying lines of action;
- Laying out suitable Measures (strictly related to the fuel poverty's strategic issues);
- Setting Policies and Actions.

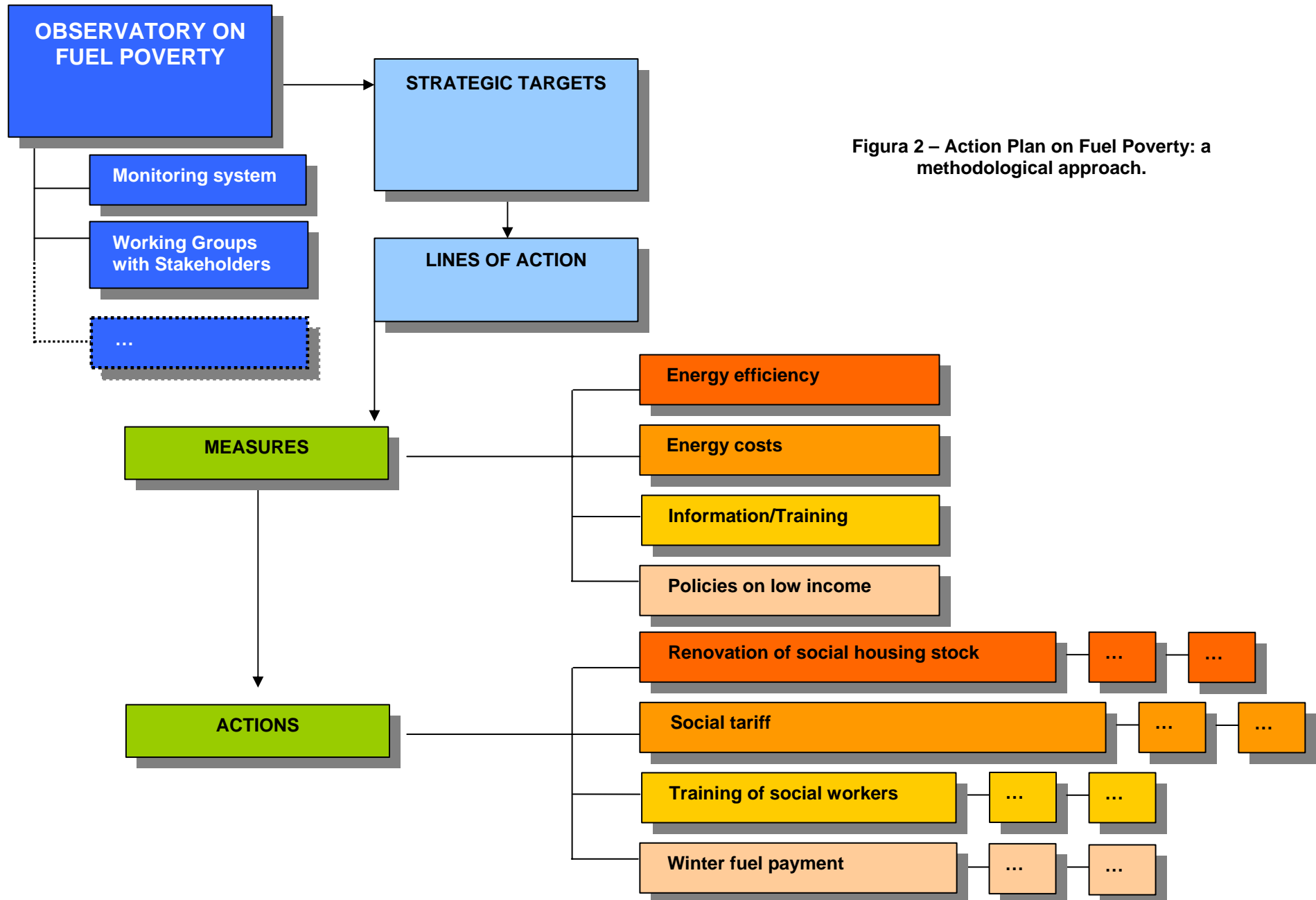


Figura 2 – Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: a methodological approach.

2. New mechanisms to tackle fuel poverty

Here fundamental elements of new mechanisms are provided for each EPEE's partner Country and the analysis considers them as the first embryonic proposal of contents (Policies and Actions) of an expected national Action Plan on Fuel Poverty.

For this purpose four crucial issues of fuel poverty (energy efficiency, energy prices, low income, information and training) were matched to the four essential Measures of a potential Action Plan and each identified mechanisms was assigned to a priority Measure. Each final representation should be matched with the results of survey on good practices (see Deliverable 11).

2.1 Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Belgium

Action Plan on Fuel Poverty as a strategic target is the main outcome of the Belgian proposal for new mechanisms tackling fuel poverty. Administrative organisation of the Country is similar to Italy and Spain in relation to the key-sectors for fuel poverty (energy, housing, social and health system), where the regional level has a precise role in planning and implementing policies.

Plan must be funded on the four poles of fuel poverty's compass and it should operate in promoting the cooperation among different competences of the institutions and key-actors involved.

Belgium proposes also mechanisms which on one hand combine strategic issues (energy efficiency, housing, tax reduction) strongly addressed to vulnerable customers: energy efficiency becomes concretely the guiding value for improving social, economic, housing and environmental comfort of citizens, as highlighted from EPBD. On the other hand, rational use of energy appears as a structural measure combining the effectiveness of the regulation and the action for informing and training.

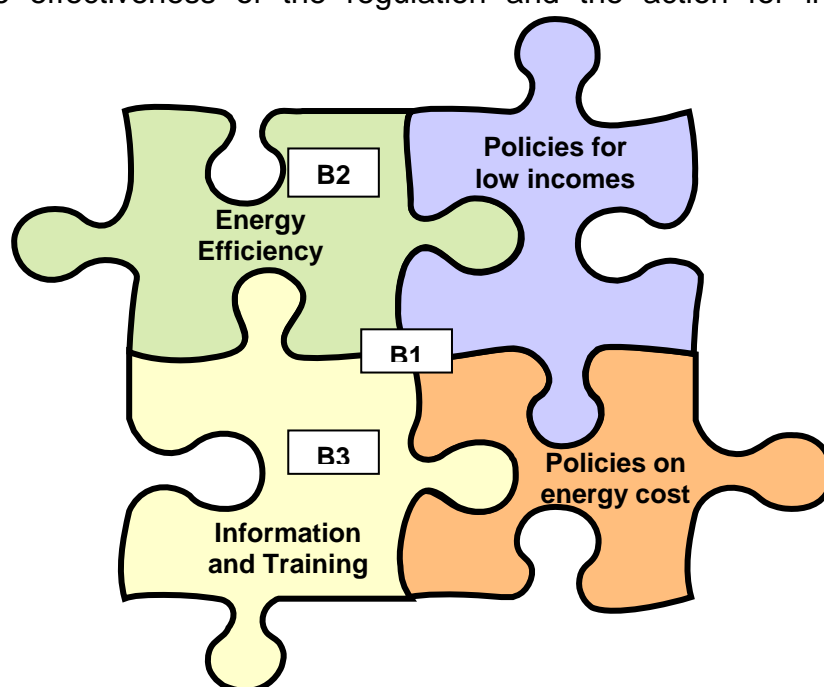


Figure 3 – Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Belgium.

2.2 Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in France

French vision of planning actions to tackle fuel poverty emerges clearly from the review of the proposed new mechanisms that at first pay attention to the need of systematizing a set of actions to face the problem from different points of view.

A new organisation of the national programme for energy efficiency (White Certificates) is suggested. The proposal implies three possible ways:

- setting a “priority group” of action should be implemented addressing to vulnerable households (as it operates in UK);
- increasing the value of White Certificates obtained by implementing actions addressed to vulnerable households;
- standardizing energy savings related to actions addressed to vulnerable households.

Energy efficiency meets social and economic issues of vulnerable households and to the social housing ones: crossing promoting tools and mechanisms with regulating acts may produce a significant impact in tackling fuel poverty. In these terms another interesting proposal emerges: as happens in Italy bonus could be awarded to the programmes for the concrete improvement of energy efficiency in social housing.

Great opportunities to consider fuel poverty in a permanent and effective way producing long term effects may come from the integration of energy skills in the training programmes for social workers. Specific new training packages might be planned in a permanent way in order to consolidate an effective experience carried out in France (see Deliverable 11).

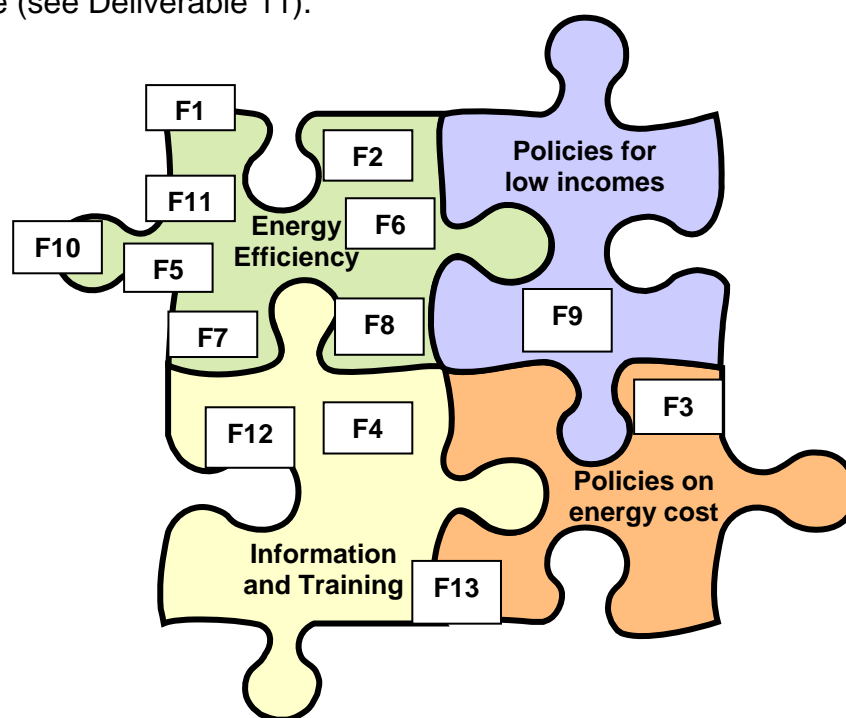


Figure 4 – Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in France.

2.3 Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Italy

Italy confirms a priority for energy efficiency programmes and action to tackle fuel poverty as indicated in the national review of good practices. At the same time a clear will to get a comprehensive approach including transversal tools and mechanisms (but even operating infrastructure) able to satisfy the relevant need of being equipped with the best tools to know and monitor the problem. A path is proposed and it implies two different steps:

- creation of a national Observatory on Fuel Poverty which should allow to analyze fuel poverty and to plan measures and actions;
- increase of the competence of social workers in energy matters (mainly energy efficiency and rational use of energy), even promoting new jobs (a new “Social Energy Mediator” is suggested).

The two steps should be considered as integrated action of a wider Action Plan on Fuel Poverty.

On the energy efficiency side, a new approach in the national system for energy efficiency (White Certificates) is proposed (similar to the UK experience and coherent with the French proposal). New criteria and a new organizational approach strongly fuel poverty oriented. This proposal aims to integrate fuel poverty as a guiding priority in the national programmes for energy efficiency and it can be also meant as an measure to systematize a set of actions for energy efficiency at the local level operating on buildings occupied by vulnerable households.

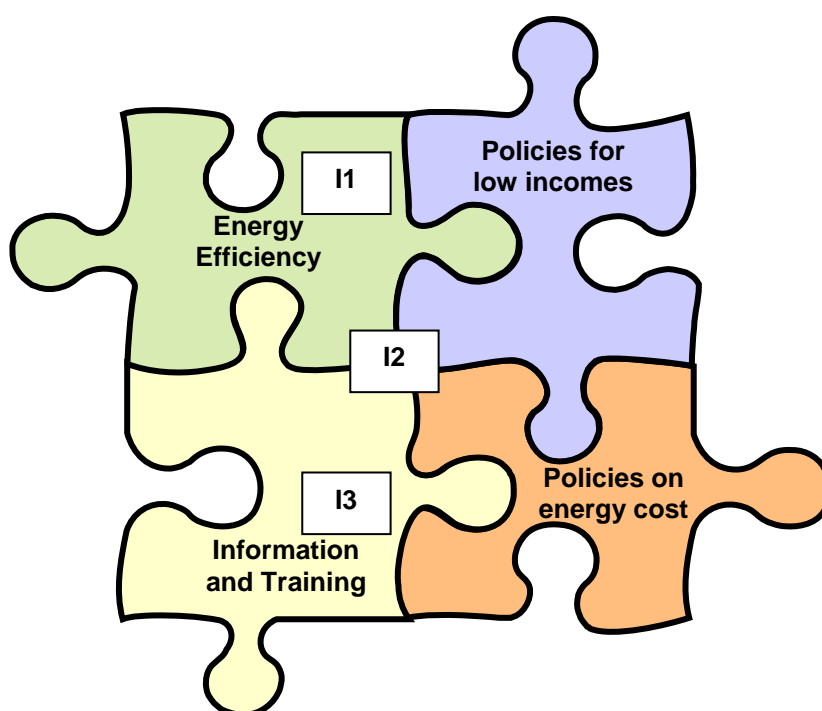


Figure 5 – Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Italy.

2.4 Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Spain

Spain expressed a relevant interest about fuel poverty as a absolutely new problem and this emerged first from the contents and results of the national Workshops where a high attention to the other partner Countries' experiences (mainly UK) was given.

In these terms, on the basis of good practices identified, a set of mechanisms for an ambitious Action Plan are proposed. The Plan appears strongly based on key-actions taken from the UK model with a particular focus on instruments and mechanisms operating for the support to low incomes and the assistance to vulnerable households.

A certain importance is given to information mechanisms in order to guide people within opportunities and odds of the opening of the energy markets. Even Spain proposes the creation of an Observatory on fuel poverty.

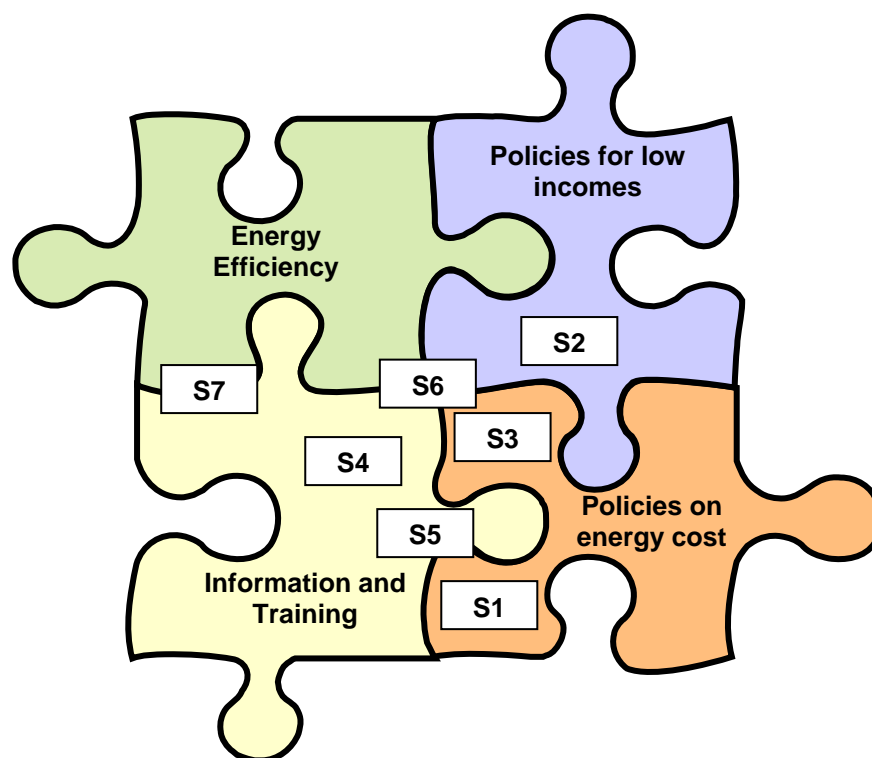


Figure 6 – Towards an Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: new mechanisms in Spain.

2.5 Strengthening the Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: a new proposal for the Warm Zone in the United Kingdom

United Kingdom has an absolute European leadership in the knowledge of fuel poverty and in managing action plans, measures, networks of stakeholders. Causes and impacts of the phenomenon are well known at each level. Several actions at the national and the local level were implemented through the years and fuel poverty is a permanent matter of interest for Government, Local Authorities, Agencies, etc.

Many new mechanisms could be proposed because they may be based on a very complex set of effective measures and actions. Anyway the British experience showed how a structured approach on fuel poverty should focus on a few complex programmes well coordinated by central network of key-actors in their local development. In fact too many actions or mechanisms may represent a problem in allocating economic resources and decrease their effectiveness.

In these terms, the Warm Zone appears as a climax to be developed all across the Country emphasizing its capacity to develop a structure package of activities holding the three main issues of fuel poverty (energy efficiency standards in buildings, energy prices, low incomes). The Programme has a European value and it seems repeatable in each Country due to the fact of the basis of participation and endorsement of different key-actors (National Agencies, Government, Local Authorities, Energy suppliers,...). This is a real comprehensive model for Action Plans on Fuel Poverty.

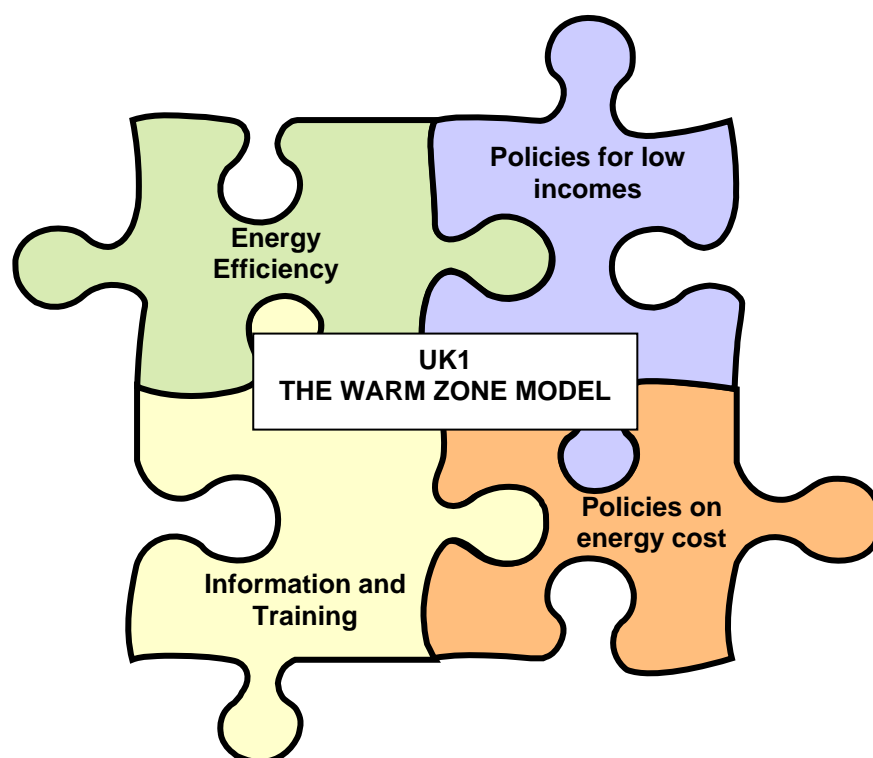


Figure 6 – Strengthening the Action Plan on Fuel Poverty: the Warm Zone model.

APPENDIX

NEW MECHANISMS TO TACKLE FUEL POVERTY: SELECTED PROPOSALS FROM BELGIUM, SPAIN, FRANCE, ITALY AND UNITED KINGDOM

Belgium

B1 GLOBAL PLAN TO FIGHT PRECARIOUSNESS	16
B2 FINANCIAL ADVANTAGES FOR ‘SOCIAL- HOUSING OWNERS’	18
B3 TRAINING IN R.U.E.....	19

France

F1 RECOGNITION OF COMPANY FUNDS TO SUPPORT ALTERATION WORK AS STANDARDISED ACTIONS THROUGH WHICH ENERGY SAVINGS CERTIFICATES (ECS) CAN BE OBTAINED	20
F2 RAISING THE VALUE OF ENERGY SAVING CERTIFICATES (ESC*) ACHIEVED IN HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN FUEL POVERTY	21
F3 ENERGY PRICES.....	22
F4 AWARENESS AND PREVENTION ON MARKET OPENING	23
F5 DIRECTING THE ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE OWNERS OF OLD ACCOMODATIONS TOWARDS ENERGY IMPROVEMENT	24
F6 CONDITIONING PUBLIC HOUSING SUPPORT TO ENERGY IMPROVEMENT	25
F7 COMPULSARY ENERGY-IMPROVEMENT ALTERATIONS FOR CLASS G BUILDINGS OF THE DPE*, AT SELLING OR RENTAL TIME	26
F8 ADDING AN INDICATOR TO THE RULES OF DECENT HOUSING.....	27
F9 ENABLING ACCESS TO MICROCREDIT FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS	28
F10 FINANCING SUPPORT FUNDS FOR ENERGY CONTROL WORK CARRIED OUT IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES WHO RESPECT THE 20% COUNCIL FLATS RATE	29
F11 ENCOURAGING SUPPORTED OR SUPERVISED SELF-REHABILITATION VIA THE TAX SYSTEM.....	30
F12 SYSTEMATICALLY INCLUDING A MODULE ON ENERGY CONTROL AND EVERGY SAVINGS IN SOCIAL WORKERS' TRAININGS.....	31
F13 DONATION OF EQUIPMENT UNSUITABLE FOR SALE TO USE IN IMPOVERISHED HOUSEHOLDS	33

Italy

I1 ENERGY EFFICIENCY CERTIFICATES: VALORIZATION OF ACTION AND PROGRAMMES ADDRESSED TO VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS.....	41
I2 OBSERVATORY ON FUEL POVERTY	43
I3 FAMILY SOCIAL ENERGY MEDIATOR	44

Spain

S1 SOCIAL TARIFF	45
S2 SUBSIDIES FOR LOW INCOME PEOPLE	45
S3 WINTER FUEL PAYMENT	46
S4 INVOLVEMENT OF ENERGY SUPPLIERS IN PROVIDE ADVICE TO VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS	46
S5 CREATION OF AN ENERGYWATCH	47
S6 INDEPENDENT EXPERT FUEL POVERTY GROUP	47
S7 PILOT PROGRAMME: ERADICATE FUEL POVERTY LOCALLY	48

United Kingdom

UK1 MODIFYING AND IMPROVING WARM ZONE MODEL.....	49
--	----

B1	GLOBAL PLAN TO FIGHT PRECARIOUSNESS
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Federal level	
Target group	
All people concerned with precariousness (at any level)	
Short description of the mechanism	
<p>Currently, in Belgium, precariousness is approached in a piecemeal manner. First, at the political level, there is no overall, long-term view of precariousness. The following issues are actually dealt with by different ministries: health, housing, over-indebtedness, environment, energy, social matters.... In some cases, these various matters are the responsibilities of certain federal, regional or community, while in other circumstances they may be dealt with by all three levels at the same time.</p> <p>This approach thus generates, inter alia, inconsistencies, a multiplication of stakeholders, complex and non-standardized procedures, excessive costs, communication problems, administrative delays, etc.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease the rate of poverty risk; • Have a comprehensive view of the causes and consequences of precariousness; • Establish coherent, long-term policies for battling precariousness; • Reduce the number of stakeholders; • Control prices to the consumer; • Consider all options of heating modes (fuel-oil, wood, coal...) from the social measures. <p>A Global plan to fight precariousness would thus make it possible to mitigate many of the problems mentioned above, while also creating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single administration to treat all of the problems encountered by people living in a precarious situation; • Bring together a task force of professionals in these fields: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social; • Housing; • Energy - telephone – water; • Consumption; • Health; • Over indebtedness; • Environment. • Work groups, with the participation of people living in precarious situations, could be organized to treat such topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the real impact of existing social measures; • Study of the consumption of vulnerable people; • Simplification of the administrative aspects of social measures; • Adaptation of social measures to reality encountered in the field; • Protection and information for vulnerable consumers; • Single procedure for debt mediation; • Restoration of social housing; • Etc... 	

Expected effects on
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The rate of poverty risk• Coherence of policies covering the fight against precariousness• Wellbeing of people• Quality of housing• Reduced energy costs• Indebtedness• Health• Regulation of prices to the consumer
Key actors to involve
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Vulnerable people• Welfare workers• A single administration responsible for the fight against precariousness• Regulators of electricity and gas• Federation of oil-products providers• Consumer protection associations• Associations that fight poverty, precariousness and social exclusion• CPAS• Debt mediation services

B2	FINANCIAL ADVANTAGES FOR 'SOCIAL- HOUSING OWNERS'
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
Institutional	
Target group	
Any owner renting a home, or part of it, to persons living in precariousness	
Short Description of the mechanism	
<p>Currently in Belgium, the tax on housing (précompte immobilier) is based on its cadastral valuation (officially-assigned hypothetical rental income) and not on rents actually collected. Consequently, housing owners do not see any advantage in renting to vulnerable people. There is also a noticeable tendency to raise rents after a building has been renovated, and a lack of interest in the R.U.E. by owners who are not the final recipients of any investments made.</p> <p>The measure would make it possible to grant financial and/or tax advantages to owners who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rent housing to vulnerable people • improve the energy efficiency of their housing without increasing rent or excluding tenants <p>CPASs could make a list of social-housing owners available to vulnerable people.</p> <p>Objectives :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage owners to improve the energy quality of their real estate, and to rent to vulnerable people. • Eradicate 'slum landlords' • Improve the quality of residences occupied by people in precarity, and therefore contribute to their wellbeing • Improve, indirectly, the relationship between owners and tenants • Reduce the mobility of tenants 	
Expected effects on	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wellbeing of tenants • Quality of housing • Reduction of energy costs • Indebtedness • Health • Relations between owners and tenants • The mobility of tenants 	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Ministry of Finance • Regional Ministries of Housing • Associations of housing owners • Associations of tenants • C.P.A.S. • Social-housing owners 	

B3	TRAINING IN R.U.E.
Instruments typology	
Technical	
Level	
Operational	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Architects • Construction engineers • Contractors • Construction-trades associations • Social workers responsible for issues related to energy. 	
Short description of the mechanism	
<p>Currently in Belgium, important gaps can be seen in training programmes for architects and construction engineers and technicians in matters related to the efficient use of energy, R.U.E. One also notes a complete absence of these principles in training programmes for social workers. Consequently, on one hand, architects and other building-trades people include few concepts of R.U.E in their price quotations; and on the other hand, social workers find it difficult to advise about energy saving.</p> <p>Therefore, it would be necessary to integrate courses on R.U.E. in training programmes for architects and other people in the building trades, and also envisage continued training that takes account of advances in various technologies. In addition, it would be necessary to envisage optional courses of specialization in R.U.E. in the training of social workers.</p> <p><u>Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Energy performance of housing in Belgium • Improve social workers' knowledge of R.U.E., and so optimize their interventions with precarious households, and the follow-up of such cases • Renovate or create highly energy-efficient housing 	
Expected effects on	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Energy performance of Buildings • The competence of social workers • The competence of architects and other construction-industry professionals • Follow-up of households and actions by social workers in the field • Respect of building specifications • Energy costs 	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social workers • C.P.A.S. • Training centres • Universities, high schools, technical and professional secondary schools • Linguistic and cultural communities • Architects and construction-trades associations 	

F1	RECOGNITION OF COMPANY FUNDS TO SUPPORT ALTERATION WORK AS STANDARDISED ACTIONS THROUGH WHICH ENERGY SAVINGS CERTIFICATES (ECS) CAN BE OBTAINED
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
Political level (authorities, State, regulation)	
Target group	
The “Obligated*” (energy suppliers) and the “eligible*” in the Energy Saving Certificates system*.	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>In France, in the context of enforcement of the Kyoto protocol, the Economy Saving Certificates system (ESC or White Certificates) was implemented with the Law laying down the basic principle for governmental action in the energy field (July 13, 2005, N°2005-781), which sets France’s energy orientations (articles 14, 15, 16, and 17). Those ESCs must enable the standardisation, regulation and validation of energy savings.</p> <p>The idea is to compel some of the key players to save energy and to encourage some others to do that, in their own offices or in their costumers’ homes, such savings being validated by obtaining a certificate.</p> <p>Key players</p> <p>Articles 14 and 15 stipulate that “Legal entities selling electricity, gas, heat or cold to final consumers, and whose annual sales exceed a certain level, as well as legal entities and natural persons selling heating oil to final consumers, are bound by duties of energy saving”. They are “the obliged”. The system is also open to “any other legal entity whose action, additional as regards to their usual activity, enables the achievement of energy savings, in a volume superior to a set amount...”. They are “the eligible”.</p> <p>The obliged can either carry out their own energy savings measures or buy certificates from the eligible, or else pay a fine to the state if they fail to meet their obligations.</p> <p>Actions eligible for ESC</p> <p>Two types of eligible action are included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Standardised operations", whose value in ESC can be known using the calculation sheets available on the Government's Industry Department's website; • “Specific operations” which need to go through a more complex process. <p>The greatest part of the standardised operations (80%) are related to energy consumption in existing buildings.</p> <p>The mechanism proposed offers a new possibility to get Energy saving certificates for companies that would provide support funding for improvement work in people living in fuel poverty’s homes.</p>	
Expected results on	
Energy efficiency of buildings	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The State (that must integrate this system to the standardised actions that entitle to ESCs and define the amount of energy savings awarded according to the amount of the funds provided). • “Obligated” or “eligible” companies 	

F2	RAISING THE VALUE OF ENERGY SAVING CERTIFICATES (ESC*) ACHIEVED IN HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN FUEL POVERTY
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
Political	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “obliged” and the “eligible” of the ESC system (mainly energy suppliers) • Local Authorities 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>The system aims at valorising ESCs when energy improvement work is carried out in the homes of households living in fuel poverty. This way, the value of the savings defined for standardised actions would be increased, when such actions are aimed at households. This valorisation can also be achieved under the form of a part of work to be carried out for this public, as it happens in the UK.</p>	
<p><i>IMPORTANT</i> <i>This implies that defining a “situation of fuel poverty” is necessary, like in the United Kingdom. The question of possibly extending this measure to impoverished households who might not be in a situation of fuel poverty has been raised.</i></p>	
Expected results on	
Energy efficiency of buildings	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State (that must integrate this system to the standardised actions that entitle to ESCs and define the amount of improvement in energy savings, overall or for each standardised operation). • “Obliged” or “eligible” Companies 	

F3	ENERGY PRICES
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political • Local 	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy suppliers • State • Local Authorities 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>In France there is a public price for electricity, which enable people to benefit from a discount on the standing charge or on the kWh rate, under conditions of resources. Only the historic operator and non-nationalised providers must apply it.</p> <p>Gas public prices will soon come into force and will concern all natural gas suppliers.</p> <p>Out of a million people being potentially entitled to the basic needs price, only 500.000 benefit from it.</p> <p>The objective of this mechanism is to guarantee a lower energy price for people living in fuel poverty.</p> <p>This aim can be achieved either on a national scale by setting a regulated “public price” to all operators. For example, a price without service charge with a rate by kWh and conditions of attribution supervised by the Government. The loss of earnings for suppliers could be compensated by financing the equivalent of the repurchase of photovoltaic energy (Electricity public utility charges – CSPE).</p> <p>A variation of this system can be imagined on a local scale. Within the scope of their delegation public utility services, local Authorities could claim a “public price” attributed by their own social services.</p>	
Expected results on	
Energy price	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy suppliers • State • Local Authorities 	

F4	AWARENESS AND PREVENTION ON MARKET OPENING
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Operational	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupying owners • Tenants • Tenant and landowner Associations 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>Since the opening of the energy market in France, Authorities and consumers' Associations informed consumers on the new changes and their rights before suppliers. Impoverished people are more vulnerable to the consequences of market opening (ability and time available to find the "optimum price", lack of "public prices" from new supplies, abusive practices in energy selling matters).</p> <p>The objective of the mechanism is to prevent this risk by creating a toll-free number for information on market opening, which would be very widely advertised to people who benefit from allowances or basic income support. Suppliers would have to communicate this toll-free number along with all their contract offers. It could be transmitted by an information campaign broadcasted in national and local media: TV, radio, press.</p> <p>A second way to broadcast information towards this public is through information meetings targeted to households living in fuel poverty.</p>	
Expected results on	
Energy prices	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consumer Associations • Social workers • County councils* • Local authorities' Social Services • Commission for the regulation of Energy (CRE) 	

F5	DIRECTING THE ASSISTANCE TO PRIVATE OWNERS OF OLD ACCOMODATIONS TOWARDS ENERGY IMPROVEMENT
Instruments typology	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional • Financial 	
Level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational • Political 	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private owners of old accommodations 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>It would be recommended to reinforce and adapt of the ANAH* support system by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising resource ceilings for owners-occupiers and the corresponding budget; • Taking into account tax savings for a possible removal of the upper limit on officially agreed rent prices (owners renting their property); • Bringing down energy control work prices; • Increasing support to engineering; • Acting more in favour of joint ownerships in difficulty; • Valorising OPAHs* and GIPs*, especially regarding the technical assistance and follow-up that they are likely to mobilise and optimise on a perimeter of intervention, as a special location for the development of partnerships. <p>Therefore, ANAH has decided to launch “fuel poverty” experimental GIPs. It will finance at a 100%, on an experimental basis, missions that will locate situations of fuel poverty, carry out thermal evaluations, elaborate projects of alterations and assistance to financial arrangement for local animation of the professional environment. Diagnosis costs will have to be reduced, local partners’ awareness will have to be increased and work profitability as well as necessary support will have to be better quantified. Geographically limited at first, this action is to be generalised thanks to the additional contribution of a specific budgetary reserve.</p> <p>The second part of this mechanism is to condition government housing support in order to achieve a minimum energy performance. For example, all renovations must bring the house over threshold D of the Energy Performance Diagnosis (DPE*).</p> <p>The level targeted must be the subject of a specific later decision.</p>	
Expected results on	
Energy efficiency of accommodations	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owners-occupiers • Private rental owners 	

F6	CONDITIONING PUBLIC HOUSING SUPPORT TO ENERGY IMPROVEMENT
Instruments typology	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional • Financial 	
Level	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational • Political 	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council flats Organisations 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>The objective of this mechanism is to modify the rules of attribution of financial support for council housing (ANRU or PALULOS), by conditioning them in order to achieve a minimum level of energy performance.</p> <p>For example, all renovations must bring the house over threshold D of the Energy performance diagnosis (the level of performance required must be the subject of a later decision).</p> <p>The National Agency for Urban Renewal (ANRU) coordinates the National Programme for Urban Renewal by simplifying procedures and gathering funds. The Agency brings financial support to local Authorities, public Institutions, and private or public Organisations which carry out operations of urban renewal in disadvantaged urban areas.</p> <p>The PALULOS* is a State subsidy dedicated to the improvement of rental council flats and elderly people's homes. Council flats Organisations (HLM*) and SEMs* can also benefit from it, as well as approved Organisations that contribute to underprivileged people's housing.</p>	
Expected results on	
Energy efficiency	
Key actors to involve	
Public financial backers	

F7	COMPULSARY ENERGY-IMPROVEMENT ALTERATIONS FOR CLASS G BUILDINGS OF THE DPE*, AT SELLING OR RENTAL TIME
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Political level	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants • Homeowners • Financial backers (private/public) 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>The objective of this mechanism is to compel individuals and financial backers to carry out the work necessary to the improvement of energy efficiency in their home.</p> <p>A new regulation regarding accommodation transfer (rental or sale) must be implemented. For any building diagnosed in category G of the DPE* (> 450 kWh/m²/y), the transfer will be subjected to alterations of energy performance improvement, in order to achieve a minimum level of energy performance (class D for example).</p> <p>In some cases, such as inheritance, this measure could not be applied so as not to force impoverished people, inheriting dilapidated houses/flats, into selling the property.</p> <p>This measure raises two problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reliability of DPEs and their non-opposable nature; • Owners' capacity of investment to go from G to a superior level. 	
Expected results on	
Energy efficiency	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council flats (HLM) Organisations • Financial backers 	

F8	ADDING AN INDICATOR TO THE RULES OF DECENT HOUSING
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Political	
Target group	
Key players of the fight against indecent, undignified, unhealthy, uncomfortable and dilapidated housing (Ministry for Housing, CLCV*, Child benefit office (CAF*), Fondation Abbé Pierre...)	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p><i>The notion of decent housing in French law</i></p> <p>Since the law related to solidarity and urban renewal (law SRU) all homeowners are bound to deliver a decent accommodation to their tenant, or they will run the risk of sanctions.</p> <p>Terms of the law.</p> <p>An accommodation is decent when it does not present any obvious risk that could damage health or physical safety, and when it complies with the elements that make it suitable for residential use.</p> <p>The requirement of decency applies to every lease of residential use, and the law of 07/6/1989 plans 2 sanctions against indecency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first one consists in allowing the tenant to ask amicably, if not, judicially, that the accommodation should be altered to comply with norms, without this questioning the validity of the lease.; • The second one allows the tenant to get the judge to reduce their rent. <p>Decree 01/30/02 says more about the notion of decent housing (see the following Glossary).</p> <p><i>The new mechanism: a modification of indicators that define a indecent accommodation</i></p> <p>The objective of this mechanism is to change the rules of indecent housing in order to include an additional requirement concerning heating. The article 3 – paragraph 1 in the 01/30/2002 Decree mentions that a decent accommodation has « an equipment that enables normal heating ». This description seems rather vague. Do oil stoves enable normal heating if they can heat one room?</p> <p>The new mechanism offers to go further in the definition of decent housing and therefore to indicate an acceptable energy consumption ceiling by m². <i>The threshold recommended is 550 kWh/m²/y.</i></p> <p>Above this limit, the accommodation would be considered as indecent and legal obligations related to the indecency of the accommodation would follow to make it conform to norms.</p> <p>Therefore, this new mechanism would make energy improvement alterations compulsory in highly-energy-consuming buildings, which are very often occupied by impoverished households.</p>	
Expected results on	
Energy efficiency of accommodations	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant Associations (in France : CLCV, CNL*...) • Backers (HLM*, private rental owners) • Charities (Fondation Abbé Pierre, Secours catholique, ...) • Associations fighting against unhealthy, indecent and dilapidated housing, (UNAF*, Mouvement Pact Arim, Habitat et Développement...) • Institutions acting in the housing sector (in France the Child benefit office, town communities, towns and villages). 	

F9	ENABLING ACCESS TO MICROCREDIT FOR LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
Operational	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banks • Financial bodies • County councils • Charitable organisations 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>Households living in fuel poverty seldom have access to bank credit, and therefore cannot put up the money for improvement work in their home. Besides, these households cannot do the advance for the tax credit awarded by the Government for sustainable development-related work, as it is paid only 6 to 18 months after the invoice date.</p> <p>The current objective of the existing Social microcredit in France is not to pay for work to be carried out but more to simplify activity. This measure is managed by the Deposit and Consignment Office, which is in charge of the Cohesion Fund (which guarantees microcredit up to 50%).</p> <p>The aim of the mechanism is to implement the social microcredit easier, in the sector of energy improvement in accommodations, in order to accelerate alteration work. The rules of functioning of microcredit should be modified to enable people who have a ban on writing cheques to benefit from those microcredit. A social follow-up could be set up by county councils or local authorities in order to help people obtain the credit and make relationships easier between the bank and the beneficiaries.</p>	
Expected results on	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency and energy-consuming equipment • Incomes of people living in fuel poverty (possible discounts for water and energy bills) 	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft workers • Banks • Local Authorities • Cohesion Fund* 	

F10	FINANCING SUPPORT FUNDS FOR ENERGY CONTROL WORK CARRIED OUT IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES WHO RESPECT THE 20% COUNCIL FLATS RATE
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
Political	
Target group	
Local Authorities	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>French context</p> <p>The SRU law (Solidarity and Urban Renewal) reasserts the place rental council housing, and the role of council housing Organisations, devoted to housing rights and mixity. The law reforms the procedures to fight against insalubrity and danger, introduces the right to decent housing, reinforces the capacities of intervention in run-down jointly-owned properties, and gathers public modes of intervention in favour of private housing.</p> <p>Since the 1st of January 2002, towns and villages that do not reach a threshold of 20% of rental council flats must pay an extra contribution and commit to an adjustment plan, in order to aim at social mixity.</p> <p>New system</p> <p>The aim of this project is to allow the use of the annual tax owed by local governments that do not respect the 20% council flats quota to finance a social support fund for energy improvement work in the homes of people living in fuel poverty.</p> <p>This system must not, in any case, encourage communities to evade their duty, but enable communities with a high rate of class G accommodations of the “energy” DPE label to dispose of additional funds to improve their least efficient housing stock, housing people living in fuel poverty.</p> <p>This mechanism could be joined to the ESC system by entitling to certificates in proportion to the amount paid to the alteration work support fund.</p>	
Expected results on	
Energy efficiency of social housing stock	
Key actors to involve	
Local Authorities	

F11	ENCOURAGING SUPPORTED OR SUPERVISED SELF-REHABILITATION VIA THE TAX SYSTEM
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Operational	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households • Craft workers • Craft worker Unions • Self-rehabilitation Association 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>Context</p> <p>The first objective of supported self-rehabilitation is a social one. The participation of beneficiaries must favour their attaining autonomy and dynamism, but the work must also aim at energy performance improvement in their home.</p> <p>Many people are badly housed, living in very damaged or unsuitable accommodations, and they cannot afford to improve it. Insufficient financial resources, technical incompetence, social isolation, relational difficulties, loss of motivation and dynamism, physical disabilities: such factors contribute to enhance the risks of exclusion.</p> <p>Some Associations offer to help destitute people to conceive and carry out a project of improvement. They help them to gather financial aids and get in touch with Companies in order to carry out work that needs too much skill. To ensure that the project is realistic and that the work about to be done complies with quality and safety regulation, Associations provide the beneficiaries with qualified, personalised and motivating social and technical assistance. These procedures, often badly known, enable destitute people to appropriate their home. They help to restore social links, change this culture of dependence that so often regretted by council housing users.</p> <p>The National agency for housing improvement (ANAH) grants funds for rehabilitation work carried out by owners-occupiers themselves, provided that this self-rehabilitation is supervised by an Organisation that subscribed to the commitments of the Anah Chart.</p> <p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make it easier for impoverished households to carry out work in their home: craft workers are discouraged to travel for very small jobs and intervene in impoverished households' homes because of difficulties and payment delays; • Enable small jobs to be done quickly; • Give a chance to modest households to do the work themselves and all the same, to benefit from a VAT of 5,5% on materials, from tax credit, and possibly from energy saving certificates, within the scope of supported self-rehabilitation. <p>Content</p> <p>The new mechanism would consist in changing current rules for impoverished households who would be willing to do the work themselves: decreased VAT and tax credit without any obligation of professional intervention.</p>	
Expected results on	
Energy efficiency of accommodations	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Authorities • Professional Organisations • Associations of assistance for supported self-rehabilitation 	

F12	SYSTEMATICALLY INCLUDING A MODULE ON ENERGY CONTROL AND EVERGY SAVINGS IN SOCIAL WORKERS' TRAININGS
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Operational	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social workers • Advisers in social and family economy 	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p>Current training for advisers in social and family economy (CESF*) and social workers (AS*) does not include a part on energy even though those two trainings are interested in households' behaviour inside their home, as well as in households' budget. Therefore, it would be possible and useful for them to have the ability to notice problems related to energy management or to the state of the construction.</p> <p><i>Social service assistant training (previously social worker)</i> Social worker gives assistance and they work with people having difficulties (immigrant families, unstable families...) so they must learn to respond to those problems supporting, listening and advising people according to their situation. For that reason, their skills are especially developed in administrative, legal and psychosocial matters. There are around 38,000 of them in France (approximately one man for ten women).</p> <p>Frame of reference for the social service assistant training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory and practice of Social service intervention (460 hours); • Action philosophy, ethics (120 h); • Law (120 h); • Legislation and social policies (160 h); • Sociology, anthropology, ethnology (120 h); • Psychology, education sciences, information sciences, communication (120 h); • Economy, demography (120 h); • Health (120 h). <div style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px;"> <p>To consult the detailed training's frame of reference: http://anasinfo.ifrance.com/deass3.doc http://anas.travail-social.com/</p> </div> <p>Her/his mission: the social service assistant helps the most destitute people improve their social, economic, psychological and cultural situation. Integrate, help: two ways in which social service assistants act for children, teenagers, or elderly people. This double mission can take different forms: the social service assistant informs on the entitlement to social and medical benefits, directs towards special institutions and takes an active part in the social development of districts or communities. Those social workers' tasks are divers and depend intimately on the organisation who employs them. Nevertheless, all those social workers eventually have to carry out important field work, as well as many social surveys.</p> <p><i>Social and family economy adviser training</i> The social and family economy adviser helps to solve social, administrative and socioeconomic problems. They provide information and training in four important areas of daily life: health-food, housing, clothing and budget-consumption.</p>	

They receive a public in search of a better social integration, for individual advice. They suggest the best-adapted systems of support possible. They can also initiate interventions of mediation between users and concerned organisations (via mail, report, phone intervention...). They take part, with various organisations, in the social development of districts. They collaborate to the training of home help training.

The CESF training is done in three stages: first they must prepare the advanced vocational training certificates (BTS) in social and family economy, and then do one year of study specialised in social and family economy.

The degree in social and family economy goes more thoroughly into what is learnt in the BTS, especially psychological, sociological aspects and survey procedures. Three hundred and sixty hours of internship are planned. It is possible to prepare this degree while working; the training includes 300 hours of teaching and a 160-hours (minimum) internship.

The CESF training includes the following modules:

- Module of sociology;
- Module of psychology and pedagogy;
- Module of social action and institutions;
- Module of social economy applied to daily-life situations (where the themes of food, housing and equipment, clothing, health, housing and social environment and social life are treated);
- Module of “ESF adviser’s mode of action”.

To consult the CESF professional frame of reference:

http://www.isfp.net/cces/ref_conseiller-esf.asp

Content of the new mechanism

The new mechanism would consist in integrating a module on energy control and energy savings in ASs’ and CESFs’ initial programmes.

During their house visits, CESFs or ASs sometimes feel powerless regarding construction improvements they could recommend. They need better technical training on the basis of construction quality in order to know what to look at during a house visit and tell where the problem comes from.

This new mechanism could take the form of a new module in the Ass’ and CEFSs’ initial training. This new training module would focus on technical basics and energy management.

Expected results on

- Energy efficiency of accommodations
- Households’ behaviour

Key actors to involve

- National social worker association
- Ministry of national education

F13	DONATION OF EQUIPMENT UNSUITABLE FOR SALE TO USE IN IMPOVERISHED HOUSEHOLDS
Instruments typology	
Operational	
Level	
Operational	
Target group	
Building companies	
Short description of the new mechanism	
<p><u>Context</u> In order to comply with the ISO norms, companies must discard equipment that is unsuitable for sale, that is to say equipment presenting imperfections (scratch, different colour, stain...).</p> <p><u>Objective</u> Make cheap equipment accessible for renovations in low-income households, for example during followed self-rehabilitation renovations.</p> <p><u>Content of the new mechanism</u> Implement an institutionalised system of donations in order to recover this equipment unsuitable for sale and use it for other actions, a little bit like the way the Restos du cœur work, using companies' donations to redistribute them.</p> <div data-bbox="172 1014 1422 1086" style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px;"> <p>To know the Restos du cœur's procedure of equipment donation: http://www.restosducoeur.org/dons_materiels.php</p> </div> <p>Equipment that is unsuitable for sale because of minors defects can be used again in actions of technical or house-rehabilitation training in impoverished households. Introduce a well-structured procedure of donation in order to avoid abuses and reassure the companies who made the donations.</p>	
Expected results on	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency improvement • Reduction of renovation costs 	
Key actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft worker Federations • Building Companies • Social workers • Technical professionals 	

Glossary and further information

ANAH National housing agency

State-owned institution, funded by budgetary and tax resources. “The ANAH's mission (...) is to promote the development and quality of the existing private housing stock” (article L 321-1 of the building and housing code), especially through measures of alteration work support.

Intervention budget is more than 500 million Euros.

Site : <http://www.anah.fr>

AS Social worker (or Social service assistant)

Required academic standard: A-levels

Duration of studies: three years

Social worker Training frame of reference:

- Theory and practice of Social service intervention (460 hours)
- Action philosophy, ethics (120 h)
- Law (120 h)
- Legislation and social policies (160 h)
- Sociology, anthropology, ethnology (120 h)
- Psychology, education sciences, information sciences, communication (120 h)
- Economy, demography (120 h)
- Health (120 h)

To consult the detailed training's frame of reference:

<http://anasinfo.ifrance.com/deass3.doc>

<http://anas.travail-social.com/>

CAF Child benefit office

As family branches of Social Security, there are some in each department. Child benefit offices are in charge of legal family benefit and develop a social family action on their territories.

CESF Social and family economy adviser

The CESF's training is done in three stages: first they must prepare the advanced vocational training certificates (BTS) in social and family economy, and then do one year of study specialised in social and family economy.

The degree in social and family economy goes more thoroughly into what is learnt in the BTS, especially psychological, sociological aspects and survey procedures. Three hundred and sixty hours of internship are planned. It is possible to prepare this degree while working; the training includes 300 hours of teaching and a 160-hours (minimum) internship.

The CESF training includes the following modules:

- Module of sociology
- Module of psychology and pedagogy
- Module of social action and institutions
- Module of social economy applied to daily-life situations (where the themes of food, housing and equipment, clothing, health, housing and social environment, social life are approached)
- Module of « ESF adviser's mode of action »

To consult the CESF's professional frame of reference: http://www.isfp.net/cces/ref_conseiller-esf.asp

CG County council

Departmental deliberative assembly, as local authority, formed by a gathering of regional councillors. Since the 1982 law on decentralisation, the county council « rules departmental affairs through its deliberations » especially the development of departmental public utility, the management of its assets and its budget. Social action represents an important part of County councils' policy.

CLCV Consumption, Housing and Living environment

Consumer and user association, acknowledged to represent tenants and co-owners, it acts in every sector of daily life and living environment.

<http://www.clcv.org>

CNL National Housing confederation

Tenant and new-home owner Association that aims at promoting housing rights. It is the first organisation by the number of its members and by its results at the election of tenants' representative in Council flats.

Council flats (HLM) office, public buildings, public limited companies or non profitable cooperatives

These organisations have a rental activity (building and management), of promotion of accommodations intended for modest people to acquire them. Their main mission is to find accommodations in the best conditions for all those who have difficulties finding one in the conditions of the market. In 2007, 10 million people lived in 4 million accommodations managed by council flats organisations.

CSPE Electricity public utility charges (or contribution)

Contribution to electricity public utility enables electricity providers (EDF and local providing companies) to be compensated for possible overcharges related to the mission of public utility they are attributed. Electricity public utility charges, as defined in Article 5 of the law N°2000-108, February 10, 2000, concern:

- Over costs resulting from purchase obligation, by EDF or non-nationalised providers, of electricity produced by a certain type of installations (wind turbines, photovoltaic, co-generation...);
- Production overcharges in non-interconnected areas such as French overseas departments;
- For electricity providers, costs resulting from the implementation of the « basic needs product » electricity price, planned by the law of February 10, 2000, Article 4;
- A part of the costs that electricity suppliers are subject to because of their financial participation to the system set up in favour of impoverished people;
- A part of the charges applied to providers who supply consumers at a regulated temporary price of market adjustment: financing of these charges is ensured by the CSPE *in the limit of 0.55€/MWh (based on the foundation of the CSPE)*;
- The National energy arbitrator's budget, appointed by the minister in charge of energy, on the Commission of energy regulation's (CRE) recommendation.

On the account of the mission it is entrusted with, the deposit and consignment office is in charge of collecting contributors' payments and those of people who are liable to payments, and to make the arranged payments to electricity suppliers.

Every year, on the CRE's recommendation, the government fixes the amount of charges to compensate.

[Info](#)

Decent housing

Since **the law related to solidarity and urban renewal SRU of 12/13/2000** all property owners are bound to deliver a decent accommodation to their tenant, and if not, they lay themselves open to sanctions.

Sanctions provided by the law:

- Standardisation of accommodations

The public character of the 07/6/1989 law compels homeowners to deliver a decent accommodation, and the parties cannot in any case agree, by a clause of the lease, to rent an accommodation that does not meet the required norms for a reduced price. The requirement of decency applies to every current lease, which results in compelling homeowners to respect it, and they cannot refer to the fact that the lease was signed before the new legal dispositions were implemented to evade their obligations.

- Legal reduction of the rent

The aim of the law being to oblige the homeowner to deliver a decent accommodation, standardisation is imposed to the owner as long as the tenant asks for it, and it is only supposing it is refused by the owner or is technically impossible that a legal reduction of the rent can be considered. Nevertheless, the judge always has a power of appreciation in the matter, which explains that the reduction is not systematic. The owner cannot refuse either to do the work prescribed by the judge for the reason that it would be expensive, inasmuch as the requirement of decency must be the rule.

Other possible sanctions:

- Rehousing of the tenant

Even though it is not provided by the law of 07/6/1989, rehousing must only be done in the gravest cases of indecency, but especially when the accommodation becomes unhealthy or even dangerous for the occupiers' health or safety. To put on the owner this obligation of rehousing, an order complemented with a temporary or final interdiction to live in the place must be signed by the mayor or the prefect. Rehousing can be only accepted as an alternative or complementary sanction to standardisation, since the latter must be carried out as long as it is possible.

In the current state of the texts, rehousing must be refused and be limited to the most extreme situations. However, such a solution could turn out to be useful when the work is technically impossible or very expensive. But this still implies that the owner has other comparable and decent accommodations available, which is very often not the case.

- Cancellation of a lease

This sanction is not mentioned in the law of 07/6/1989, article 20-1, but can always be required by a tenant who would rather leave an accommodation that does not meet the required norms of decency than keep on living in uncomfortable and unsafe conditions. However, the accommodation does not have to be judged unhealthy or dangerous for the tenant to be allowed to claim the cancellation of their lease.

Of course, such a sanction will be taken in case of total loss of the rented item, which provides article 1722 of the civil code. This implies that the tenant is in total and non partial incapacity to

enjoy the rented item and therefore that the loss of the good is due in case of absolute necessity.

Acknowledging them the right to cancel the lease, when standardisation is technically or economically impossible, would be another means, instead of reducing the rent or leaving things in the same state, to have decency respected, and to remove from the market accommodations that can harm tenants' health or safety.

Main articles of the 01/30/2002decree:

Article 1- A decent accommodation is an accommodation that complies with the characteristics defined by the present decree.

Article 2- The accommodation must meet the following conditions, regarding tenants' health and physical safety:

1. It is closed and protected from outside. The fabric of the accommodation and its access facilities is in good maintenance and solidity condition, and protects the place against drainage water and upwelling water. External woodwork as well as the roof and its joins and accessories ensure the protection against water infiltration in the accommodation. For accommodations located in overseas departments, specific weather conditions can be taken into account to appreciate the conditions related to the protection against water infiltrations;

2. Devices to keep people inside the accommodation and its access facilities, such as windows', staircases', loggias' and balconies' handrails, are in a state conform to their use;

3. The nature and state of conservation and maintenance of building materials, pipework, and flooring of the accommodation do not present any obvious risk for tenants' health and physical safety;

4. Electricity and gas network branches as well as heating and hot-water production systems respect safety norms defined by law and regulations, and are in good condition of use and functioning;

5. Accommodations' aeration and ventilation systems enable the air renewal adapted to the need of normal occupation of the place and to the functioning of equipments;

6. The main rooms, according to the third paragraph of article R. 111-1 of the building and housing code, benefit from sufficient natural lighting and from an opening showing outside or on a glass volume out in the open.

Article 3- The accommodation includes the following elements of equipment and comfort:

1. A system enabling normal heating, provided with a system of energy supply evacuation of combustion products, adapted to the accommodation's characteristics. For accommodations located in overseas departments, those conditions might not be applied when weather conditions justify it;

2. A water supply installation ensuring, inside the accommodation, distribution with sufficient flow and pressure for the tenants' normal use;

3. A system of waste and sewage water evacuation preventing bad smells and effluents from lingering, and equipped with a trap;

4. A kitchen or kitchen recess equipped to hold a cooking device and including a sink related to a system of hot and cold water supply and a sewage evacuation system;

5. A sanitation system inside the accommodation including a WC, separated from the kitchen and the room where meals are taken, and an equipment for body washing, including a bath or a shower, built so as to ensure personal privacy, supplied by hot and cold water, and provided with sewage evacuation. Sanitation systems in one-room accommodations can be limited to an exterior WC, provided that this WC is located in the same building and easily accessible;

6. A grid enabling sufficient lighting for all the rooms and access facilities, and enable the functioning of current household appliances indispensable to daily life.

In accommodations located in overseas departments, measures related to hot-water supply provided in paragraphs 4 and 5 above cannot apply.

Article 4- The accommodation has at least one main room having either a living space of at least 9 square metres and a ceiling height of at least 2.20 metres, i.e. a living volume of at least 20 cube metres. The living space and the living volume are determined in accordance with the measures of paragraphs 2 and 3 of article R. 111-2 of the building and housing code.

Click [here](#) for more informations.

DPE Energy performance diagnosis

Carried out by professionals, it enables the estimation of energy consumption in accommodations and buildings that are rented or offered for sale.

Click [here](#) for more informations.

ESC Energy saving certificates or white certificates

This measure consists in setting energy saving objectives to suppliers and creating an exchange market of intangible certificates that justify the reality of the savings achieved. Those certificates will be delivered by the State and written down in the National register of ESCs. Within this framework, France's objective is to save 54,000 accumulated-updated (cumac) GWh for the period of July 1st, 2006 to July 30, 2009.

Firstly, only energy producers/suppliers, such as EDF or GDF, that go over a certain amount of sales must apply this regulation.

For the moment, all other key players are « eligible » to energy saving certificates. Therefore, any legal entity can apply for a ESC after an energy saving action or the substitution of a source of non-renewable energy by a source of renewable energy that generates heat. In practice, among the eligible, it is especially local authorities and companies who apply for ESCs.

The market

Energy saving certificates will enable the validation of energy savings due to additional actions regarding current regulations on the one hand, and usual activity on the other hand. The unit of ESCs is the kWh of final cumac energy (accumulated and updated over the products' shelf-life). In order to limit the number of applications to deal with, each file will have to go over the threshold value of 1 million kWhc, i.e. 1 GWhc. To reach this minimum, gatherings of legal entities are conceivable.

Like what has been implemented for « black certificates » (see Emissions trading) ESCs are negotiable movable assets. Therefore, it is a system of supply and demand, in which the state will not intervene and that will have to be self-regulated. The national register of ESCs' bookkeeper will regularly publish the selling average price, in order to give an account of the state of the market. Analysis taking into account experiments made in Great Britain enable the estimation of a 0.01 € per kWhc average price.

The length of validity of an ESC will include the period at which it has been registered and will expand on the next two three-year-long periods. People who will not have managed to get energy saving certificates in order to respect the law at the end of a period will have to pay a fine of 0.02 € per kWh of final cumac non certified energy to the Treasury. The follow-up of the functioning and transactions of ESCs will be officially done every three years under the form of a report published by the State. The aim on the first period, from July 1st 2006 until June 30, 2009, was to save 54 TWhc. It was announced in the Climate Plan, in November 2006, that this volume would then at least be doubled.

Information on ESCs: <http://www.industrie.gouv.fr/energie/certificats.htm>

Information on standardised operations: <http://www.atee.fr>

FCS Social cohesion fund

Created by the law of social cohesion planning (LPCS) promulgated on January 18th, 2005, its vocation is to « guarantee loans for social use, to natural persons or legal entities and loans to unemployed people or receiving basic income support who create their own business » (Article 80 of the LPCS).

The fund, provided by the State with 73 million Euros over five years, is aimed at increasing microcredit guarantee means. Its management has been entrusted to the deposit office.

OPAH Planned operation for better housing

An OPAH is a joint action between the State, the National housing agency, and a town or public institution of joint local cooperation (community of communes). The objective of an OPAH is to renovate building assets and to improve housing comfort with the help of subsidies, as well as rehabilitate a district, a town, or a rural area in its entirety. The operation is preceded by a pre-operational study, which defines its quantitative and qualitative objectives and the means to be put into action; it is the object of a convention that gives details on the geographical perimeter of the operation, the objectives and the amount of financial support awarded; finally, an operator is entrusted by local authorities with the running of the operation.

This procedure aims at creating favorable conditions for building rehabilitation work.

The OPAH responds mainly to a local project, carried out by the concerned local authorities and supported by the state as regards to national solidarity objectives and as regards to the fight against exclusion through housing.

PALULOS Subsidies for rental council flats improvement

Main reference texts:

Building and housing code art. R 323-1 to R.323-12-1 and Decree N°2004-1005 of September 24, 2004 (French government publication of September, 25 2005)

The list of subsidised work is set-up by the decree of December 30, 2007.

Info: www.logement.gouv.fr
www.legifrance.gouv.fr

GIP General Interest Programme

The GIP is an action programme enabling the rehabilitation of building conglomerates or accommodations in urban and rural areas (towns, housing areas, counties, etc.). Its objective is to promote general interest actions in order to solve problems in existing housing, of social or technical nature.

The department Prefect is responsible for managing the running of a GIP, when the GIP's problematic is related to national considerations. However, it is more often aimed at being shared by the State and the concerned local authorities (County council and/or group of communes).

SEM Gouvernement-controlled corporations

They are public limited companies whose capital is mainly owned by the State or by local authorities such as villages or towns, departments, regions. For example, SEMs manage council housing, water and heating networks.

UNAF national union of family associations

National institution responsible for promoting, defending and representing the interests of all the families living on the French territory. As an association union, it enables families to express themselves, in all their diversity, for a general family policy. It runs a network of 22 Regional Unions of Family Associations (URAF) and of 100 Departmental unions of Family Associations (UDAF), and support them in their institutional family support missions.

I1	ENERGY EFFICIENCY CERTIFICATES: VALORIZATION OF ACTION AND PROGRAMMES ADDRESSED TO VULNERABLE HOUSEHOLDS
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Institutional and operating level	
Target group	
Households living in fuel poverty	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>National system of “Energy Efficiency Certificates” (White Certificates) was introduced in Italy in 2001 and at present it is regulated by Ministerial Decrees 24 July 2004 (modified by Ministerial Decree 21 December 2007). All energy suppliers (both natural gas and electricity) with more than 50.000 final customers must reach compulsory yearly target of primary energy saving.</p> <p>Suppliers to reach these targets and to get the related energy savings may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realize projects or standardised actions in favour of final customers to improve energy efficiency of applied technologies and their uses. Projects may be directly implemented or they may be realized by Energy Services Companies (ESCO); • Buy “Energy Efficiency Certificates” joining they reach required energy savings. <p>National Energy Regulator (Authority for Electricity and Gas) rules and manage the mechanism.</p> <p>Eligible projects and actions is quite varied and it holds several sector of energy uses with different level. Monitoring Report regularly carried out by the Energy Regulator highlight how the system is strongly oriented to buildings (more than 70% of certified energy savings).</p> <p>The value and the effectiveness of this system and the significant results reached in the building sector allow to suggest a new organisation to increase the attention to the vulnerable households.</p> <p>Proposal works on two different operational levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voluntary level (bonus): a valorisation of White Certificates is to be developed in relation to programmes and actions carried out in favour of vulnerable consumers. The mechanism foresees that, within evaluation and quantification of energy savings from projects addressed to vulnerable households, the Energy Regulator awards a bonus value to the corresponding White Certificates. This solution aims to promote and support interventions on households in fuel poverty. • Compulsory level: A minimum priority share of compulsory energy savings related to projects and actions implemented in favour of households in fuel poverty should be established. This way intends to introduce a binding obligation for suppliers to work in improving energy efficiency of buildings occupied by households in fuel poverty. <p>The effectiveness of the mechanism depends on a precise identification of households living in fuel poverty. As Energy regulator did in the definition of the social tariff for electricity, criteria and evaluation tools to identify target households must be provided.</p>	
Expected effects on	
Energy efficiency	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Energy regulator (AEEG) 	

- Energy suppliers
- ESCO
- Consumers' Associations

The new organisation could be designed by a working group led by the Energy Regulator and participated by the relevant stakeholders (Government, Energy suppliers, ESCO, Consumers' Associations).

Working group's main priority should be the clear definition of the people that projects and actions should be addressed to. Energy Regulator should define criteria and indicators to use in the definition of people living in fuel poverty.

I2	OBSERVATORY ON FUEL POVERTY
Tipology	
Institutional	
Level	
Political and institutional level	
Target group	
Households living in fuel poverty	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>Defining an Action Programme to tackle fuel poverty needs a strong knowledge of the problem both on quantitative aspects (number of households living in fuel poverty) and on qualitative ones (typology of family, needs, etc.). In these terms the creation of an infrastructure operating as an Observatory on Fuel Poverty is really needed. Specific statistics and indicators on fuel poverty don't exist so the main aim is to improve the knowledge and the awareness of the problem by ...</p> <p>Observatory should work and operate in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering and analysing statistics and informations provided by energy suppliers (consumptions, bill arrears, etc.); • Making studies on specific matters (e.g. survey on energy efficiency in social housing stock); • Selecting and updating tools to monitor the problem at the different level; • Monitoring policies and programmes' effectiveness; • Preparing annual survey on fuel poverty; • Setting Action Plan in cooperation with stakeholders (Government, Local Authorities, Energy suppliers, Consumers' Associations, etc.). 	
Expected effects on	
Information (improvement of quantification, definition, analysis of fuel poverty)	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNCU (National Council of Consumers' Association) • Minister for Economic Development • Minister for Welfare • Energy Regulator • Local Authorities • Energy suppliers 	

I3	FAMILY SOCIAL ENERGY MEDIATOR
Tipology	
Institutional	
Level	
operating level	
Target group	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Workers and operators • Educational Organisations (Schools, Universities, etc.) 	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>The mechanism intends to promote the creation of a new professional figure who may joint social, economic, energy issues in order to have a transversal competence in assist households in fuel poverty</p> <p>In these terms the traditional welfare approach of social workers may be enriched providing all the technical knowledges related to the rational use of energy and energy efficiency. This knowledge would make action in tackling fuel poverty stronger and more effective in the long term.</p> <p>For instance some fundamental matters may be indicated as the basis of the educational path :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy precariousness (fuel poverty's definition, european and national framework, etc.); • Essential notions on energy markets (tariff system and options, protection mechanism, etc.); • Simplified methodologies to analyse energy consumptions in buildings and to identify potentials of energy saving and the related most effective actions to implement (actions on the building, plants – rational use of energy and personal behaviour in consuming energy); • European and national good practices review; • Definition of "Family Plan for Energy Efficiency and Energy Saving". <p>Educational path needs the creation of new specialized training courses post lauream. Anyway refresher courses for social workers are to be considered a priority.</p>	
Expected effects on	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency • Income • Energy prices • Information and training 	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Workers • Minister for Education • Local Authorities • Energy Agencies • Universities 	

S1	SOCIAL TARIFF
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Political or institutional level	
Target group	
Domestic level. People with less energy consumption	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>Although it exists what is called “social tariff”, it is not a real social tariff because it is based on a very low power installed, not enough for a decent comfort in a house.</p> <p>In 2009 tariffs system will be modified as established in the European Directive so this proposal could be not valid after 2009. What it is proposed is to have a similar social tariff as France has. They offer those people with less than 7kW (installed power) a discount of 30-50% of the power rate and another discount on the first 100kWh per month. Obviously in Spain this figures would be different but it would be interesting to offer the same kind of social tariff.</p>	
Expected effects on	
Energy prices	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Energy regulator (Comisión Nacional Energía) • Entities 	

S2	SUBSIDIES FOR LOW INCOME PEOPLE
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
Political or institutional level	
Target group	
Low income people from regions with extreme temperatures (very cold in winter or very warm in summer)	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>This mechanism is proposed after distributing regions with more energy requirements. Spanish regions don't have the same energy needs.</p> <p>From National Statistics Institute (INE) data, a Spanish house spends 800€ a year in energy. For those living in extreme regions who receive any other social subsidy it would be possible to receive an energy subsidy.</p>	
Expected effects on	
Income	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and regional Governments • Entities 	

S3	WINTER FUEL PAYMENT
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
Institutional	
Target group	
Old people (>65)	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>Half of the population aged 65 or over are considered poor so it is necessary to give this group of people financial help.</p> <p>The same mechanism as in Great Britain is proposed. An annual Winter Fuel Payment (approximately 200€) is made to all households with an occupant aged 65 or over.</p>	
Expected effects on	
Income	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional governments Social Workers 	

S4	INVOLVEMENT OF ENERGY SUPPLIERS IN PROVIDE ADVICE TO VULNERABLE CUSTOMERS
Instruments typology	
Financial	
Level	
Operating level	
Target group	
Vulnerable customers	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>There is not enough information to vulnerable customers and it would be interesting to copy the English or the French model.</p> <p>Involvement of energy suppliers in delivering fuel poverty schemes via Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives and in working together to provide advice, guidance and practical assistant to vulnerable customers.</p> <p>It is necessary to give enough information to this target group. Energy suppliers have to offer a range of suitable payment options; good practice in dealing with customers in debt; good practice in avoiding disconnection.</p>	
Expected effects on	
Income	
Key-Actors to involve	
Energy suppliers	

S5	CREATION OF AN ENERGYWATCH
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Operating level	
Target group	
Energy consumers	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>In Spain there is not a consumer protection agency focused on energy and it is necessary an agency with power to act on behalf of all gas and electricity consumers.</p> <p>It should be an independent gas and electricity watchdog. It should give free and impartial advice. Next years will be very complex in energy terms and it is necessary to protect domestic sector. It would be interesting to copy Great Britain's model.</p>	
Expected effects on	
Energy prices	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy suppliers • Entities • Consumers 	

S6	INDEPENDENT EXPERT FUEL POVERTY GROUP
Instruments typology	
Institutional	
Level	
Operating level	
Target group	
Government	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>As Spain has not yet recognised this issue it is necessary that a fuel poverty group lead this issue.</p> <p>An independent expert Fuel Poverty Advisory Group can provide advice and guidance to Government on the need to recognize fuel poverty and to establish measures and resources.</p>	
Expected effects on	
Fuel Poverty as a legally recognised issue	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Entities 	

S7	PILOT PROGRAMME: ERADICATE FUEL POVERTY LOCALLY
Instruments typology	
Technical and Institutional	
Level	
Operating level	
Target group	
A concrete affected area to convince authorities that a lot can be done in Fuel Poverty issue	
Short Description of the Mechanism	
<p>To convince authorities that fuel poverty exists and that energy efficiency improvements could solve part of the problem it is necessary an area-based application to prove it.</p> <p>Taking the example of France and its social local funds for housing. The idea is to act in a small area using different funding sources to deliver energy efficiency improvements and affordable warmth to communities. Acting in a concrete area with many funds would be interesting to evaluate in a small scale the success or the failure of different mechanisms to deal with Fuel Poverty. This pilot programme would be a key to show authorities how to eradicate Fuel Poverty and a guidance to extrapolate it around the country.</p>	
Expected effects on	
Energy efficiency but Fuel Poverty in general	
Key-Actors to involve	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments • Companies • Suppliers • Vulnerable Customers 	

UK1	MODIFYING AND IMPROVING WARM ZONE MODEL
Introduction	
<p>NEA has been involved in fuel poverty issues since 1981. Over this period NEA has worked on all aspects of remedial interventions to address fuel poverty. As a consequence, NEA has considerable knowledge and experience of the problems and solutions encountered in attempting to provide affordable warmth for vulnerable and disadvantaged households. Based on this experience NEA takes the view that the optimal fuel poverty programme must address the three key factors in fuel poverty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor heating and insulation standards; • Low household incomes; • Unaffordable energy prices. <p>But these factors should not be addressed in isolation, rather they require a holistic approach that can allow a single intervention from a single agency to provide the best possible package of assistance tailored to the circumstances and needs of the individual household. Clearly there is also merit in delivering assistance in the most efficient and cost-effective manner and in prioritising this assistance where it is most needed.</p> <p>The Warm Zone model represents one manifestation of the area-based approach to fuel poverty. A geographical area is identified linked to the level of perceived need in that community and a structure developed with the resources and expertise to provide the requisite services to all households within that area. NEA must declare an interest in this issue since Warm Zones is a wholly owned subsidiary of NEA and, whilst any agency or combination of agencies can combine to develop an area-based fuel poverty initiative, NEA offers advice, guidance and consultancy services to prospective Warm Zones developments in England. Information and news on the development of Warm Zones can be accessed via the dedicated website (http://www.warmzones.co.uk/).</p> <p>This comprehensive approach to fuel poverty has been tested on an ad hoc basis in a number of communities in England since establishment of the first five pilot zones in 2001. In his pre-Budget Statement in November 2006 the Chancellor of the Exchequer set out proposals to build on the existing Warm Zones infrastructure.</p> <div> <div> <p>Helping vulnerable households heat their homes</p> </div> <div> <p>5.60 The Warm Front programme aims to help low income households, including the poorest pensioners, heat their homes to an adequate standard of warmth by providing heating, energy efficiency measures, and benefit entitlement checks. Through the Energy Efficiency Commitment, energy suppliers also play an active role in helping keep the homes of the fuel poor warm, by offering a range of energy efficiency measures, like insulation, free of charge. They also offer discounted energy efficiency measures to all other households. Last year, the Chancellor announced a further £300 million to expand the Warm Front programme to enable pensioners on Pension Credit to have central heating systems installed free of charge and to provide £300 discounts for central heating systems for all pensioners without it. Efficient and effective coordination and delivery of these policies will be important if we are to achieve our fuel poverty goals. Evaluation of Warm Zone pilots earlier this year highlighted their potential role in facilitating this. To build on this work, the Government today announces new investment of £7.5 million to improve the effectiveness of Warm Front and Energy Efficiency Commitment. This will fund projects aimed at using an area-based approach to identify households and provide the right coordinated set of advice and measures to them.</p> </div> </div>	

Following this announcement, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs allocated £6.3 million to fund development work on a range of area-based initiatives. A bidding mechanism was put in place to select the best candidates for financial support and this resulted in 50 projects across England receiving funding for area-based initiatives.

Financial Support

The Warm Zone model is effective because of its emphasis on a partnership involving a wide range of agencies with a commitment to tackle fuel poverty. A typical partnership will involve a local authority, a major energy supplier and other funding sources such as European Union agencies. It should be noted that Warm Zones bring benefits additional to those related to social and environmental factors associated with energy efficiency. There is also considerable economic advantage from Warm Zone activity, the energy saving work releases household resources to be spent in the local community and also creates a significant number of employment opportunities in a range of practical and customer service posts. Clearly this is an issue of particular concern to the local authority.

Energy supplier support benefits both the Warm Zone and the utility. The energy supplier demonstrates its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility and acquires an efficient and effective partner to help organise energy saving works required under its Energy Efficiency Commitment generally and, more specifically, to the Priority Group of vulnerable and disadvantaged households.

Warm Zones are also well placed to maximise the use of funding from Government energy efficiency programmes such as Warm Front and this source can be integrated with Energy Efficiency Commitment resources to optimise the potential benefits of both programmes. Generation of quality referrals is important to both programmes and the Warm Zone street-by-street approach can be of immense value in identifying households to be assisted by these statutory schemes.

Energy Efficiency Standards

The only statutory energy efficiency standard for existing housing forms part of the Decent Homes Standard. The Standard requires that a dwelling should not pose any threat to the health and welfare of the occupant(s) and is framed in such a way as to allow assessment of a potential hazard. The most common hazard associated with the English housing stock is excess cold resulting from poor heating and insulation standards. The Decent Homes Standard also features a requirement that a dwelling should meet minimum standards for heating and insulation and co-ordinated work through Warm Front and/or the Energy Efficiency Commitment can contribute to the central Government objective of ensuring that all dwellings should be equipped with effective insulation and efficient heating systems.

Warm Zones assessors do carry out an embryonic energy audit to identify heating and insulation measures to be installed in the dwelling although these do not involve a formal analysis of the type required for the Energy Performance Certificate under the EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive. However, work carried out under the Warm Front programme does require a before and after SAP rating and also incorporates an energy efficiency target of SAP 65 which is intended to serve as a proxy for affordable warmth.

Information derived from Warm Zone activity can be communicated to local authorities to help them assess progress across a number of existing or imminent targets including:

- Progress in compliance with the Decent Homes Standard;
- Progress on meeting Home Energy Conservation Act objectives;
- Progress towards meeting fuel poverty targets as part of their local government responsibilities;
- Progress towards meeting environmental objectives.

Administrative Level

Central Government

As noted above, the concept of Warm Zones, or other area-based initiatives, received support and endorsement from central Government in the form of £6.3 million initial funding for 50 organisations in England. Clearly there is a degree of hypothesis and testing in this programme but it does reflect the view based on decades of smaller discrete projects that fuel poverty is best addressed through a model that offers support to minimise energy consumption, maximise household income and access the most favourable available tariffs.

Operational level

A major benefit of the Warm Zones approach is that there are few preconceptions as to the optimum framework for a zone. The original five zones sought to test the model across a range of urban and rural communities from a single London Borough to a rural county in the north of England. A crucial factor is the involvement and support of the local authority; this is also important in conferring 'legitimacy' on the project in the eyes of residents.

Within the local authority area it is essential to identify some hierarchy of need which means that the most deprived parts of the community can receive priority assistance.

Target group

Since a primary objective of Warm Zones is to deliver affordable warmth to disadvantaged households the essential starting point is to identify the most deprived communities. However no community is totally homogeneous and all area will contain pockets of affluence and deprivation. Warm Zones are not exclusive. The concept of Warm Zones means that all households who wish to benefit can benefit. In the case of low-income vulnerable households the intention is that all beneficial assistance is provided free of charge including practical measures, energy advice and benefits health checks. Those households who do not qualify for free assistance can benefit from Warm Zone services in the form of energy advice and discounted energy efficiency measures. These discounted measures will be provided through the Energy Efficiency Commitment programmes funded by the energy supplier partner.

The Government's Warm Front programme defines vulnerable households as those:

- Aged 60 or over and in receipt of a means-tested benefit
- Families in receipt of a means-tested benefit and with a child aged under 16
- Where the householder, spouse or partner receives a disability-related benefit

Warm Front is only available to private sector households (owner occupiers and private sector tenants).

Energy suppliers' Energy Efficiency Commitment programmes are available to all households regardless of tenure group. However a certain proportion of energy savings are to be achieved in properties occupied by 'Priority Group' customers. The Priority Group comprises:

- Householder, spouse or partner receives a means-tested benefit;
- Householder, spouse or partner receives a disability-related benefit.

Short Description of a Warm Zone

London Warm Zone (LWZ) evolved from the Newham Warm Zone pilot scheme launched in 2001 and has been highly effective in helping householders improve the energy performance of their homes. The not-for-profit structure means that the LWZ approach is consistently based upon the best solution available, rather than maximising income at the expense of customer satisfaction.

The past year has seen an enormous growth in the spread of LWZ's operations and its turnover is now in excess of £5 million per annum. LWZ is now working with 18 London local authorities, delivering a comprehensive set of programmes to improve the decency and energy efficiency of people's homes. Alongside this, LWZ addresses fuel poverty by increasing household income through a highly successful income maximisation programme which to date has raised more than £1 million.

EDF Energy supports much of the work of LWZ with its Energy Efficiency Commitment (EEC) funding for vulnerable homes, and also finances the bulk of the organisation's core costs. LWZ also uses EDF Energy's substantial EEC funding to offer homeowners, regardless of their income, loft and cavity insulation at discounts of up to 75%. The work is installed by LWZ approved contractors.

Innovative action

The concept of a Warm Zone involves a comprehensive package of assistance to address low household income, poor heating and insulation standards and affordable energy costs. In practice, this third element is not a significant feature of Warm Zones work and yet there is an urgent need for a service that incorporates advice and guidance to vulnerable energy consumers on getting the best deal from the competitive market and assistance in negotiating with the supplier in cases of debt and imminent disconnection.

NEA is currently involved in a number of projects that address one or more of these key issues:

- Negotiation with energy supply companies in cases of consumer debt
- Advice to domestic energy consumers on the most advantageous tariff for their circumstances
- Advice and guidance on switching supplier to gain the best deal from the competitive market

NEA will evaluate these projects to determine their potential value as an add-on service to Warm Zones and seek to incorporate a comprehensive advice and guidance service within an existing zone.

Outcomes

Income

Benefits health checks, in which a welfare benefits adviser assesses household entitlement to unclaimed benefits are integral to fuel poverty programmes in England. The assessment has a dual purpose (i) to identify an underlying entitlement to a benefit that will qualify a household for practical assistance through an energy efficiency programme (ii) to maximise household income. The Warm Front Annual Report 2006-2007 published illustrative data relating to the Benefit Entitlement Checks (BECs) carried out over that period, the analysis revealed:

Number of BECs carried out this year	22,761
% subsequently eligible for Warm Front	39%
Average weekly increase in benefits per client	£26.51
Average annual increase in benefits per client	£1,378.52

Energy prices

The involvement of energy supplier partners in Warm Zones militates against supplier switching where the participating supplier is the original (pre-privatisation) regional supplier and clearly does not see consumer switching as a priority. Whilst switching from the incumbent supplier still provides the greatest potential saving for many customers there is also considerable scope to reduce cost through tariff switching, for example from prepayment

meter charges to direct debit payment. This has not been a significant element of Warm Zone activity possibly because many low-income households are locked in to their existing payment method by their financial circumstances.

The lack of switching advice relating to both cheaper suppliers and advantageous tariffs is a significant omission from Warm Zone provision. NEA sees this as an inevitable addition to Warm Zone services unless the Government is prepared to mandate social tariffs across all energy suppliers. Such an initiative from Government would minimise any disadvantage associated with a particular supplier or particular payment method. However the Government is reluctant to intervene in the competitive market and sees discretionary supplier assistance in terms of eligible customers and the degree of assistance provided as the way forward.

Energy efficiency

Warm Zones assessments concentrate on the installation of a range of cost-effective energy efficiency measures similar to those installed under the Government's Warm Front programme. This latter programme provides a greater level of detail on the energy saving and CO₂ reductions from heating and insulation improvements than Warm Zones data.

In terms of individual households Warm Front claims the following achievements:

- An average SAP improvement per household of 16 points from SAP 40 to SAP 56
- An average annual CO₂ reduction per household from 6.97 tonnes to 6.16 tonnes
- An average potential reduction in energy running costs of £194 per year

Key-Actors to involve

The Warm Zones model has always been based on partnerships involving local government, energy suppliers, the voluntary sector and other relevant agencies. It is a truism that fuel poverty is a multi-faceted problem that requires the involvement and co-operation of the widest range of possible partners. This is particularly true in establishing contact with vulnerable and disadvantaged households who are often excluded from conventional referral networks and, consequently, are excluded from sources of assistance. However the pro-active, property-by-property approach of Warm Zones can overcome this social exclusion issue, particularly where trusted third parties can be involved in endorsing the scheme.