

# INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO TACKLE THE ISSUE OF ENERGY POVERTY IN EUROPE

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To innovate future societies, social impact and energy sustainability, [Ashoka](#) and [Schneider Electric Foundation](#) have launched a call for projects to tackle the issue of energy poverty in Europe.

According a study by [BPIE \(Building Performance Institute Europe\)](#), dedicated to improving the energy performance, between 50 and 125 million of people in Europe struggle to pay their energy bills. Fuel poverty also impacts the environment and world economy. Overcoming it has become a major global challenge in mature economies like Europe.

Ashoka has become in 30 years the first international network of Social Entrepreneurs (3.000 in 80 countries), while the Foundation supports professional training programs in energy related trades, thereby contributing to the Schneider Electric Access to Energy program, under the aegis of the Foundation of France.

In November 2015, a committee of experts met to examine social mission and innovative aspects of the projects, their current and potential social impact, viability of the social business, potential and creativity for their development strategy and ethical fiber, all selection criteria of the call for projects. The projects proposed by the participants were mainly focused on user's synergies, innovative financing schemes, inter-operability of data (population data on poverty energy), self-sufficient energy solutions, education, capacity-building and job opportunities.

Within the COP21 Climate Conference hold in Paris on the 4th of December 2015, the winning projects have been announced, as initiatives currently underway and solutions in development to tackle fuel shortages and energy poverty with all the social, economic and environmental related consequences.

[The 14 winning projects](#) are ongoing in Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Italy, Poland and United Kingdom. The winner's entrepreneurial experiences that are ready to be scaled with their organisational business model gained the active support by Ashoka in order to implement their strategies and visibility at European level.



The study about energy poverty in Europe and the call are examples of good practices which could be replicated in order to identify and support innovative initiatives aiming to reverse current unsustainable greenhouse gas emissions trends, to correctly set up renewable and energy efficiency as leading solutions to fight fuel poverty, to enhance energy security, and mitigate climate change while creating jobs and boosting growth and innovation.



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