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# 1 in 8 households affected by energy poverty

## Low-income households, single-parent households and households living in older buildings are disproportionately affected

Vienna, 2026-03-20 – In 2024, 1 in 8 households in Austria was affected by energy poverty (12.5%). Among households at risk of poverty, the share was over 40%. These findings come from an analysis conducted by Statistics Austria on behalf of the Vienna Chamber of Labour, which examined households' risk of energy poverty based on socioeconomic, demographic, energy-consumption-related and regional characteristics.

“In 2024, 12.5% of households in Austria either faced above-average energy costs relative to their low income or were forced to significantly reduce their energy consumption for financial reasons. Among households at risk of poverty and those with low work intensity, more than 40% were affected by energy poverty. One-parent households were energy poor in 1 out of 4 cases, making them another strongly affected group. A less pronounced, yet still clearly above-average, influence on the risk of energy poverty was observed for households living in energy-inefficient buildings,” says Manuela Lenk, Director General Statistics at Statistics Austria.

### High correlation between energy poverty and income poverty

Energy poverty and income poverty are closely interconnected. Households at risk of poverty face a significantly higher likelihood of also experiencing energy poverty, while energy-poor households generally have incomes below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold. In 2024, 12.5% of all households in Austria were affected by energy poverty. This means they either faced above-average energy costs relative to their low income or were unable to afford an adequate level of energy consumption (see definition below). Among households at risk of poverty, the rate of energy poverty was 45.8%. In contrast, only 5.9% of households not at risk of poverty were affected.

### Low labour market participation and low educational levels increase the risk of energy poverty

Households with existing risk factors are in some cases significantly more affected by energy poverty: 42.7% of households with no or almost no labour market participation, 42.1% of households with at least one person experiencing long-term unemployment, 41.0% of working-poor households, and 38.8% of those whose main source of income comes from social or insurance benefits (such as childcare benefits, unemployment benefits, or long-term care allowances) are affected. In addition, 31.1% of households with a low level of educational attainment experience energy poverty.

### Single-parent households and single-person households are strongly affected

Household composition also makes a difference. Single-parent households (25.0%), households with 3 or more children (21.9%), and single-person households (17.3%) are all disproportionately affected by energy poverty. When looking at households by the gender of the main earner, those with a female main earner are markedly more affected (15.5%) than those with a male main earner (10.5%). By contrast, there are no substantial differences when households are grouped by the age of the oldest household member.

## Housing conditions increase the risk of energy poverty

Various energy-relevant characteristics related to housing conditions can have a substantial impact on energy consumption and the likelihood of experiencing energy poverty. Households living in older buildings constructed before 1960 (18.8%), in rental apartments (17.3%), in small dwellings of up to 80 square metres (16.8%), or in large buildings with at least 10 units (16.1%) are all affected at above-average rates. Across Austria, energy poverty is more prevalent in densely populated areas dominated by multi-storey housing, where the rate of 17.3% exceeds the national average of 12.5%. Correspondingly, the risk of energy poverty is significantly higher in eastern Austria (16.8%) than in southern Austria (11.0%) or western Austria (7.7%), where population density is lower.

For detailed results and further information please refer to our [website](#).

### Population groups with above-average levels of energy poverty (selection, in %)

Households	In percent
Households at risk of poverty	45.8
Households with no or almost no labour market participation	42.7
Households with at least one person in long-term unemployment ( $\geq 6$ months)	42.1
Working-poor households (employed persons at risk of poverty)	41.0
Households whose main source of income comes from social or insurance benefits (e.g., childcare benefits, unemployment benefits, long-term care allowances)	38.8
Households with a low level of education (at most compulsory schooling)	31.1
Households living in overcrowded dwellings	30.8
Single-parent households	25.0
Households with 3 or more children	21.9
Households living in dwellings with single-room heating systems	21.6
Households with at least one person in short-term unemployment ( $> 6$ months)	21.1
Households living in Vienna	20.9
Households living in buildings constructed up to 1960	18.8
Single-person households	17.3
Households in rental housing (non-owner-occupied)	17.3
Households in areas with high population density	17.3
Households living in small dwellings (up to 80 m <sup>2</sup> )	16.8
Households in buildings with 10 or more residential units	16.1
Households with a female main earner	15.5
<b>Average across all households</b>	<b>12.5</b>

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, EU-SILC 2024, Energy Poverty.

#### Information on methodology, definitions:

As part of the project “Indicators for Measuring Energy Poverty 2025”, Statistics Austria—commissioned by the Coordination Office for Combating Energy Poverty (Koordinierungsstelle zur Bekämpfung von Energiearmut, kea)—developed the combined energy poverty indicator used in the current study. In doing so, the indicator proposals set out in the EU Energy Efficiency Directive EED III 2023/1791 were considered. The overall indicator is based on the 4 sub-indicators listed below and provides a broad representation of the phenomenon of energy poverty. It is defined in the Energy Poverty Definitions Act and will be used as the comprehensive overall indicator for the official monitoring of energy poverty in Austria.

**Energy poverty** is defined as follows: Households are considered energy poor if they 1) face above-average, equalised energy costs and are at risk of poverty; and/or 2) households that report being unable to keep their home adequately warm; and/or 3) households that experience payment arrears for energy bills due to financial constraints; and/or 4) households at risk of poverty living in poor housing conditions (such as a leaking roof, rot or dampness). The data source is the [EU-SILC](#) survey on income and living conditions.

According to EU definitions, individuals are considered **at risk of poverty** if their equivalised disposable household income is below 60% of the national median income. The equivalisation is calculated using the so-called EU scale: the first adult in the household is assigned a weight of 1, each additional adult a weight of 0.5, and each child under 14 a weight of 0.3. The available household income is divided by the sum of these weights to determine the equivalised income.

For the definition of **working poor**, the EU-SILC indicator “in-work at-risk-of-poverty rate” is used. This indicator includes persons of working age (18 to 64 years) who were employed—either full-time or part-time—for more than 6 months in the previous calendar year.

To determine the **educational level** of households, the highest completed level of education among all persons aged 16 and over living in the household is considered.

**Statistics Austria** is the central organisation for official data and statistics on society, the economy, the state and the environment. As a national statistical institute, it is committed to the statutory principles of independence, impartiality and objectivity. Statistics Austria is headed by Manuela Lenk, Director General Statistics, and Franz Haslauer, Director General Finance.

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