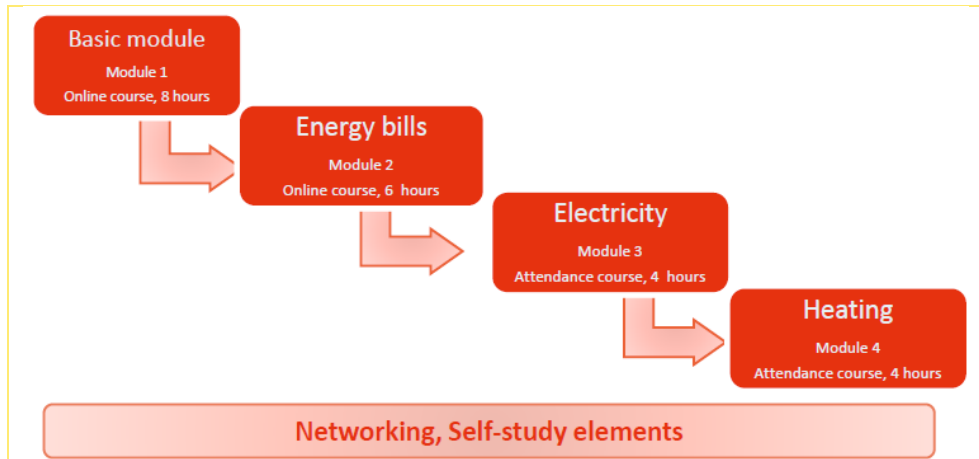


## SOCIAL ENERGY ADVISORS

Creating Links between Energy Consultants and Social Workers

<p><b>Social Energy Advisors</b></p>	<p>Energy poverty may pose a significant problem across the participating EXCITE countries. According to the Energy Efficiency Directive 2023, energy poverty means a household's lack of access to essential energy services, where such services provide basic levels and decent standards of living and health, including adequate heating, hot water, cooling, lighting, and energy to power appliances, in the respective national context. The social energy advisor programme is an innovative example of best practice, introduced in order to tackle energy poverty by directly reaching out to those affected. The concept was presented to EXCITE stakeholders in an online workshop on 17 May 2023.</p>
<p><b>Tackling Energy Poverty in Austria</b></p>	<p>Energy poverty exists throughout various European countries, including Austria. Therefore, klimaaktiv, the federal climate protection initiative run by the Austrian Energy Agency, has launched a tailor-made programme to tackle this issue. Through the approach of combining energy consultancy and social work, this training programme creates links between social workers, energy counsellors and energy providers.</p>
<p><b>klimaaktiv</b></p>	<p>Further information on klimaaktiv's mission statement can be viewed online at: <a href="https://www.klimaaktiv.at/english/">https://www.klimaaktiv.at/english/</a>.</p>
<p><b>Challenges</b></p>	<p>Circumstances characteristic of lower-income households in Austria, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language barrier</li> <li>• Precarious financial situation</li> <li>• Reduced options for action against energy poverty</li> </ul>
<p><b>Approaching the Issue</b></p>	<p>In addition to already established household energy advice services in Austria, the so-called 'Social Energy Advice' was introduced as a service particularly perceptive of the various socioeconomic challenges of lower-income households. The establishment of this service was supported by a guideline and a training programme for social workers.</p>
<p><b>Training Programme</b></p>	<p>The resulting training is divided into four modules: the introductory course 'Basic module' and Module 2 'Energy bills', both held online, totalling 14 hours. Modules 3 and 4, 'Electricity' and 'Heating', take place in person, amounting to 8 hours. Altogether, the four training modules comprise 22 hours. Throughout the entirety of the training modules, monthly networking sessions are held where participants of the programme can ask questions and receive feedback.</p>





Participants of the programme are familiarised with materials and equipment provided by klimaaktiv. These resources include electricity meters for household appliances, room thermometers as well as information leaflets on the topics of heating, cooling and electricity in Arabic, Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, English, Farsi, German and Turkish.

**Materials**



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**Success Story**

Over 200 participants have taken part in the training programme in Austria so far. Furthermore, on-site consultations convey trustworthiness to benefitting persons and open up prospects for positive change to affected low-income households.