EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	4C – Cooperate Communicate Create Change Virage Énergie DECO – Associação Portuguesa para a Defesa do Consumidor Assoutenti APS Idee in Fuga
PIC number:	897684270 880838862 950511149 898166651 890419940
Project name and acronym:	No one left behind - Student Energy Poverty – Uniting for Progress / STEP UP

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	T1.6 | Presentation of the research of STEP UP (WP1)		
Event name:	STEP UP online local event		
Type:	Awareness-raising		
In situ/online:	Online for the event in Greece, France and Portugal In Situ in Italy		
Location:	Zoom for the event in Greece, France and Portugal Gazometro Roma for the event in italy		
Date(s):	23/09/2026 (Greece) 25/09/2026 (France) 09/10/2026 (Portugal) 23/10/2026 (Italy)		
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.step-up-project.eu		
Participants			
Female:	155		
Male:	100		
Non-binary:	7		
From country 1 GREECE	54		
From country 2 FRANCE	80		
From country 3 PORTUGAL	65		
From country 4 ITALY	63		
Total number of participants:	262	From total number of countries:	4

Description

Provide a short description of the event and its activities.

In the framework of "WP1 - Research, Regulatory Analysis, Best Practices and Students' perception of EP", each project partner organized a local event to present the research results to disseminate the research findings and foster discussions among key stakeholders, including policymakers, university administrators, students, and energy experts.

EVENT IN GREECE

Event Overview

On 23 September, 4C – Cooperate Communicate Create Change organised the STEP UP Online Event via Zoom as part of the European STEP UP programme, which addresses energy poverty among students and young people aged 18–25. The event combined awareness raising, presentation of research findings, exchange of experiences, networking, practical information, youth engagement and career opportunities, in order to try to support financially young people. Two online sessions were offered on the same day: a morning session from 12:00 to 14:00 and an evening session from 18:30 to 20:30. The morning session had more than 36 participants and the evening session was attended by 18 participants

Background and Rationale

Energy poverty refers to the difficulty of meeting essential household energy needs, including adequate heating in winter, cooling in summer, hot water and the ability to pay energy bills without persistent financial pressure. For students and young adults, these challenges can be intensified by limited income, housing conditions, insecure employment and the wider cost of living. A central finding presented from the STEP UP research in Greece provided a strong basis for discussion about how energy costs affect student life, housing, everyday choices and well-being.

Objectives

- Raise awareness of energy poverty among students and young people.
- Present the STEP UP research, including its objectives, methodology and key findings.
- Discuss the impact of energy poverty on student life, housing and everyday routines.
- Share practical solutions, support mechanisms and information on available services.
- Give young people space to share experiences, concerns and ideas.
- Introduce organisations, professionals and initiatives active in relevant fields.
- Encourage networking and possible future cooperation.
- Introduce the role of the Energy Mentor and opportunities for active youth participation.
- Connect participants with employment and career opportunities through STEP UP in Your Career!
- Inform participants about future 4C, partner and European opportunities, including the planned training in Italy in November.

Morning Session: 12:00–14:00

The morning session opened with a welcome and introduction to 4C and the STEP UP programme. Participants were introduced to the purpose of the project, the research findings of STEP UP, the national findings from the Energy Poverty Alleviation Office of the Municipality of Athens and to the broader discussion on energy poverty among young people.

STEP UP research and energy poverty

The presentation helped frame energy poverty as a practical and social issue affecting everyday student life.

Services, initiatives and good practices

The event included contributions from organisations and initiatives working across energy poverty, consumer support, renewable energy, youth engagement, social inclusion and employment. The participating/presenting organisations included Randstad Hellas, Athena

Elpis, YouthMakers Hub, EKPIZO, the Energy Poverty Office of the Municipality of Athens, Wheeling2help, Collective Energy, Athens ReShape, Γήωση ΚΑΕ (Community of Renewable Energy) and Hellenic Youth Participation.
The Energy Poverty Office of the Municipality of Athens presented relevant services, actions and support possibilities. The organisational presentations broadened the discussion by showing how consumer rights, community initiatives, renewable energy, youth participation and social support can contribute to responses to energy poverty.

STEP UP in Your Career! – Online Career Fair

The event also included a short online career fair under the title “STEP UP in Your Career!”. This component linked energy poverty with employment, income and economic independence.
Participants looking for work or taking their first professional steps were able to learn about employment-related opportunities and support. Randstad was among the organisations contributing to the career-oriented part of the event.
This approach highlighted that energy poverty is not only a question of household energy use. It is
closely connected to wider socioeconomic factors such as income, employment, housing, financial independence and access to support.

Dialogue, Networking and the Energy Mentor

The event created space for questions, discussion and exchange of experiences. Participants were encouraged to reflect on how energy poverty affects young people's daily lives, what practical responses are available and how individuals can contribute to addressing the problem.
Participants also learned more about the role of the Energy Mentor, designed to support greater awareness and engagement around energy consumption and energy poverty. Networking between young people, organisations and professionals was an important element of the event, creating possibilities for future collaboration and continued involvement.

Evening Session: 18:30–20:30

A second online session took place in the evening on the same day, from 18:30 to 20:30, with 18 participants. The session provided an additional opportunity to engage with the topic of energy poverty, the research of STEP UP exchanging perspectives and discuss practical responses and future involvement. Its more participatory format supported dialogue among participants and reinforced the networking and youth engagement objectives of STEP UP.

Future Opportunities and European Dimension

Participants were informed about further opportunities to engage in programmes and activities of 4C and other organisations, as well as about the European training planned in Italy in November. Also, we informed the participants about the future local activities about the STEP UP.

Main Results and Impact

- Greater awareness of energy poverty and its relevance to student and youth life.
- Dissemination of evidence from the STEP UP research in Greece.
- Improved knowledge of available organisations, services and support mechanisms.
- Exchange of experiences and perspectives among young participants and stakeholders.
- Networking across organisations working in energy, consumer support, youth engagement and employment.
- Connection of the energy-poverty discussion with employability and economic independence.
- Introduction of the Energy Mentor role and pathways for continued participation.
- Promotion of future national and European learning, training and cooperation opportunities.

Overall Assessment and Conclusion

The STEP UP Online Event provided a multidisciplinary platform for awareness raising, information, dialogue and networking around energy poverty among students and young people. By combining research findings with contributions from organisations, practical support information, career opportunities and open discussion, the event addressed energy poverty as both an energy issue and a wider social and economic challenge. At the same time, the event positioned young people not only as recipients of support but as active

participants who can share knowledge, connect with relevant actors and contribute to solutions.
Overall, the event supported the STEP UP objectives by informing, connecting and empowering young people while strengthening cooperation among stakeholders. Through the Energy Mentor concept, networking opportunities, the career fair and information on future European activities, the event also created pathways for continued engagement beyond the day itself.

EVENT IN FRANCE
As part of the STEP UP project, Virage Énergie and its European partners (Assoutenti, Idee in fuga, DECO, and 4C) conducted a desk research on student energy poverty in housing. What is the current state of student energy poverty in France today? What forms of assistance are available, and how effective are they? Are there any inspiring best practices in Europe? How can we move forward?
The webinar mainly aimed at:

- Understanding and identifying the specific characteristics of student energy poverty, as well as the wide range of existing support programs and good practices in France, Italia, Greece and Portugal.
- Working together to develop new approaches and introduce the “energy mentors” call for application (young professionals trained at addressing energy poverty in student individuals, that will participate in organizing collective assembly in Hauts-de-France region, France, in 2027.

A time of Q&R was dedicated to participant sharing their own experiences related to students’ energy poverty. Useful documentation, interesting practices were shared.
The recording is available at the following address: https://youtu.be/3t1_q9Er0-c

EVENT IN PORTUGAL
The online event **“**Student Energy Poverty: Uniting for Progress” aimed to present the European STEP-U**P** project, disseminate the results achieved during its initial implementation phase, and engage new partners and audiences in a coordinated effort to tackle energy poverty among higher education students. The initiative brought together students, university representatives, energy-sector organizations, public authorities, and civil society, providing a platform for awareness-raising, knowledge sharing, and discussion of the challenges faced by young people in accessing adequate energy conditions.

During the event, preliminary results from a survey conducted among Portuguese students were presented, revealing significant levels of economic and energy vulnerability. The data showed that 85% of students reduce their energy consumption to control expenses, 20% live in homes without any heating system, and 45% have postponed or avoided paying energy bills due to associated costs. Regarding thermal comfort, 77.5% of participants described their housing conditions during winter as uncomfortable or very uncomfortable, highlighting the impact that energy poverty has on their well-being, health, and quality of life.

The event also included interactive participation activities designed to assess participants’ level of awareness regarding both the project and the issue of energy poverty among students. The results demonstrated that STEP-UP still has considerable potential for outreach, as the majority of participants indicated that they were previously unfamiliar with the project. Concerning energy poverty, a range of knowledge levels was observed, with most responses indicating either moderate or limited understanding. This reinforces the need for continued investment in awareness-raising, information, and capacity-building initiatives.

The programme also featured four guest speakers who enriched the discussion through different perspectives and experiences. The session included a presentation by Jorge Barata Marques, Director of Training, Information and Education at ADENE, who provided an overview of the national energy poverty landscape and highlighted ongoing efforts to raise awareness and build young people’s capacity on this issue. This was followed by Inês Valente, researcher at CENSE NOVA-FCT, whose work focuses on the vulnerability of children and young people to energy poverty. She shared recent findings and reflections on the realities faced by university students. Thaynara Leal, representative of Future Energy Leaders, spoke about the role of young people in promoting energy literacy and the energy

transition, highlighting initiatives developed within universities and academic communities. Finally, Susana Camacho, from S.ENERGIA, presented the EduLUX 2.3+ project and other community-based initiatives, demonstrating how energy efficiency projects can help reduce consumption, improve building comfort, and engage educational communities in developing sustainable solutions.

As part of the participatory discussion, attendees identified several measures that could help address energy poverty among students. Key proposals included strengthening education and awareness programmes on the topic, providing greater access to information about existing support schemes and funding mechanisms, creating targeted financial assistance for students, increasing the availability of energy-efficient and renovated student residences, encouraging participation in national and European projects, and developing simple and affordable strategies to improve the thermal insulation of homes. Knowledge, energy literacy, and access to information emerged as cross-cutting and essential factors in strengthening students' ability to respond to this challenge.

Under the slogan **"**From Ideas to Action**"**, the event sought to demonstrate that knowledge, projects, organizations, and good practices dedicated to mitigating energy poverty already exist. The challenge now is to transform this knowledge into concrete, accessible, and tailored interventions that address the realities of higher education students, a group that is often difficult to reach yet particularly vulnerable to the consequences of energy poverty.

EVENT IN ITALY
On Friday 23 October, as part of Expo Consumatori, hosted within Maker Faire Rome, a public conference was held on STEP UP, the European project investigating energy poverty among university students in Italy, France, Portugal and Greece.
The event offered a first presentation of the project's objectives and of the results of WP1, the work package dedicated to research. The survey involved a large number of university students aged 18 to 25, who responded to the online questionnaire, and gathered the input of 27 experts from the four countries.

The conference opened with a speech by President Melluso. This was followed by contributions from Edison S.p.A., representing the energy sector, and Intesa Sanpaolo S.p.A., representing the banking sector. Both companies brought their sector's perspective on an issue that increasingly affects young people and families.

The management of the event, together with the presentation of the project and its results, was entrusted to Matteo Vecciarelli of Assoutenti. He guided the audience through the central question of the research: a problem that can remain invisible, because a student may pay their bills regularly and still live in a room that is too cold or too hot, or use less energy than they need.

Among the main results presented:

- the widespread practice of limiting energy consumption; unpaid bills reveal only part of the hardship;
- thermal discomfort is a distinct signal in its own right; awareness is still partial;
- structural barriers hinder access to support: contracts not in the students' names, family or tax criteria unsuited to their circumstances, and fragmented information on rights and bonuses.

Three lines of action emerged from the day: recognising the phenomenon, by measuring it and adapting eligibility criteria; supporting students with concrete tools such as vouchers, subsidies and efficient, accessible student housing; and assisting them through university help desks, guidance and energy literacy. Finally, it was noted that a large share of the students surveyed indicated direct financial aid, such as vouchers, as their preferred measure.

The conference's closing message was that energy poverty is not measured solely in unpaid bills: it also shows in the energy people give up.