

October 24, 2025



# CINEA INFO Session – Energy poverty: solutions, services and tools

## Enabling Community Action for Energy Sufficiency in Bulgaria, Hungary and Lithuania – ComActivate project

Zuzana Matusova, Habitat for Humanity International



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.



# About ComActivate

- EU LIFE project
- 10 project partners, HFHI as project lead
- Four locations:



ComActivate develops, demonstrates and advocates solutions for MFABs that reduce energy poverty, enhance energy security, and bring building emissions through:

Institutionalizing  
Resource Centres  
(RCs)

Developing  
Neighbourhood  
Energy Sufficiency  
Roadmaps (NESR)

Establishing  
policy and  
investment  
dialogues

Building capacity  
and awareness-  
raising



# ComActivate approach

- Focus on **energy-poor buildings** lacking renovation
- **Boosting the renovation process** through Resource Center services
- Understanding the localities and barriers
- Engaging local representatives in the renovation process



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.



# Identification of target buildings / neighborhoods on country level

## BULGARIA

- Energy poverty is less visible because previous subsidy schemes covered 100% of renovation costs
- Newly introduced 80% subsidy
- The RC plays a key role in informing and engaging residents of unrenovated buildings

## HUNGARY

- The RC mainly serves municipal tenants, who are among the least affluent and live in the most deteriorated housing
- The focus is on enabling these communities to access available programs despite limited public funding

## LITHUANIA

- Vulnerable households are identifiable through the national heating compensation system granting them full coverage of renovation costs
- This provides a clear starting point for identifying energy-poor households



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.



**ComActivate**  
Enabling community action for energy sufficiency

# Bulgarian example

## Identification of vulnerable households and data sources

- So far, measures (100% financed by grants) applied universally to all households in the approved building, without social criteria
- Data collected by **Agency for Social Assistance and National Statistical Institute**
- **Sustainable Energy Development Agency** published first official statistics on energy-poor households (2024)
- New research paper on **the Geographical Approach for the Elaboration of a National Map of the Energy Vulnerability of Households (2025)**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.

## The Index of Energy Vulnerability by Region and District

1. Energy needs
2. Social vulnerability
3. Energy poverty (SILC)

## Action in vulnerable areas

- Currently limited to heating subsidies
- National EE programs lack social targeting criteria



**ComActivate**  
Enabling community action for energy sufficiency

# Resource Centers (RCs)

RCs reduce energy poverty by bridging the gap between people and the complexity of energy building renovation.



**Providing  
access to  
information  
and support**

**Enabling  
energy  
efficiency  
renovations**

**Promoting  
sustainable  
and long-term  
change**

**Supporting  
structurally  
disadvantage  
d groups**

**Strengthening  
community  
capacity**



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.



# Resource Centers (RCs)

- Usually set up as part of the municipality office, in the city center for easy access
- **Financing the RCs:** own resources, project support (unsustainable), support from the municipality/state
- **Monthly operation costs:** 900 € (HU) – 1500 € (BG)
- **Staffing:** several part-time employees / full-time employee
- **Communication:** in-person, via phone/email, online (website, online campaigns)



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.



# Resource Centers (RCs)

- Services offered to **homeowners of MFABs**, including structurally disadvantaged groups, **HOAs**, **building managers/companies**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.





# Capacity building for HOA / building managers

HOA and building managers are the gatekeepers of MFAB renovations, whose engagement unlocks access to residents, funding, and decision-making. They:

Help reaching the consensus among the homeowners

Build the trust and increase the motivation of the homeowners to make a common decision and investment in their building

Oversee the technical and financial operations, explain these to homeowners with limited understanding

Ensuring long-term maintenance and sustainability, guaranteeing lasting impact and energy savings



**Co-funded by  
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.





# Capacity building for HOA / building managers

Series of workshops with professionals on selected topics selected based on training needs assessment


**Training modules include topics on:**

- **Technical knowledge** about the building envelope and renovation measures
- **Financial aspects** of EE/RES renovation
- **Legal aspects** of EE/RES renovation
- **Project management**
- **Skillsets** on facilitation, management, leadership, communication, soft skills
- The use of standard **maintenance tools and equipment**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor CINEA can be held responsible for them.





# ComActivate

Enabling community action for energy sufficiency



Habitat  
for Humanity



ΕΚΟINVEST



Vartotojų  
aljansas  
Lithuanian Consumers Alliance



Józsefváros Municipality



BURGAS



KAŠIADORYS