

Collective energy poverty action in Barcelona



First Engager Training School

06/06/2019

Cut Rights

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VelpStJ8uel>

Energy poverty in numbers in Spain

Público

INICIA SESIÓN

ÚNETE A P

SOCIEDAD SUCESOS EDUCACIÓN SANIDAD IGUALDAD INMIGRACIÓN MEDIO AMBIENTE DERECHOS HUMANOS MÁS

POBREZA ENERGÉTICA

Una de cada diez personas en España no puede calentar su hogar

Tras las bucólicas estampas nevadas de estos días hay personas sufriendo por casas que no aíslan bien del frío y muchas familias que no pueden hacer frente a sus facturas de calefacción, luz o agua caliente.

Legal Framework

Law 24/2013 on the electricity sector

Describes energy as a “service in the general economic interest” and has serve to further desregulate the electricity market

DIRECTIVE 2009/72/EC OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL concerning common rules for the internal market in electricity

Spain did not comply with Directive 2009/72 / EC which states that an effective separation between producing, distributing and commercializing electricity companies must be ensured.

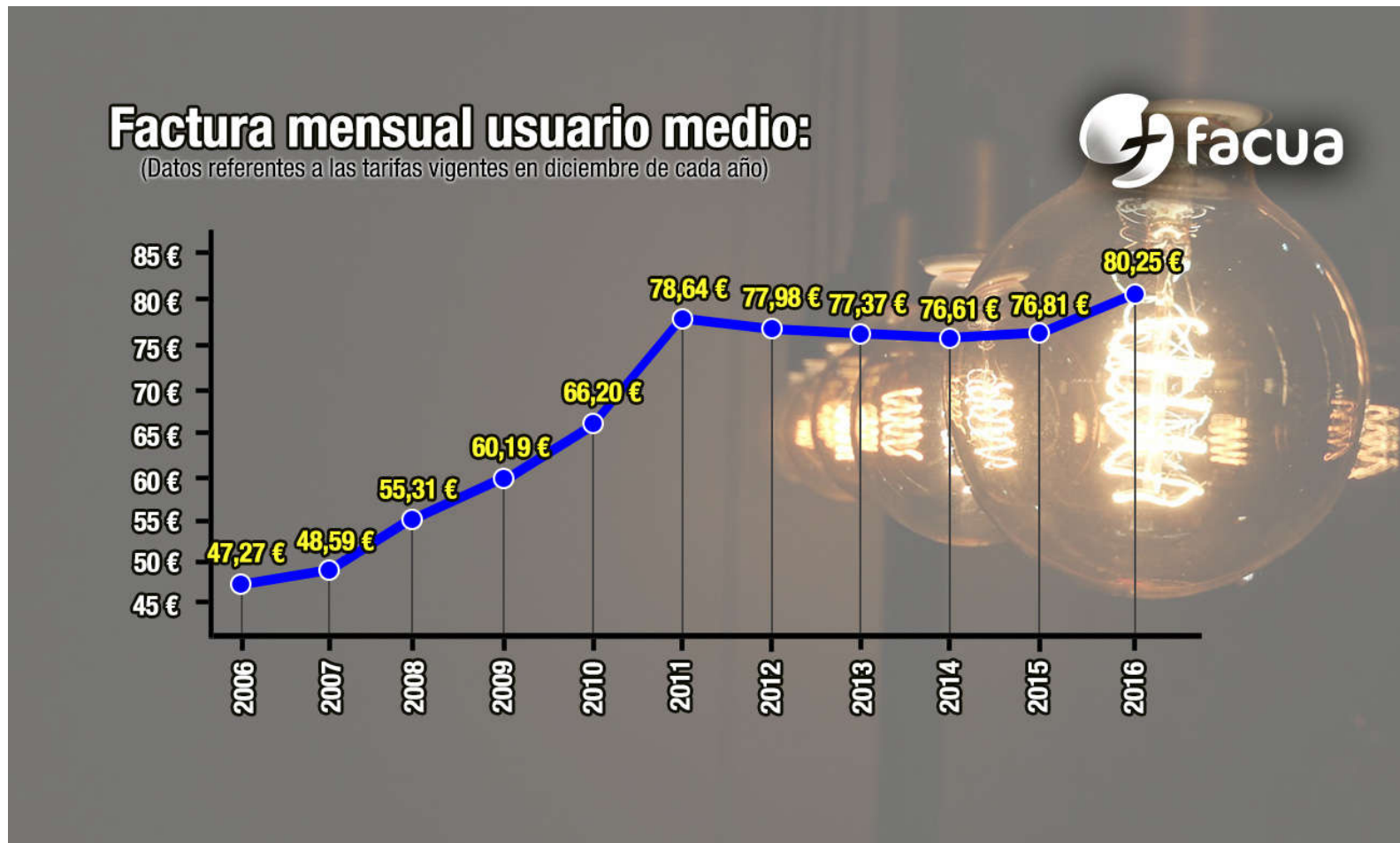
The deadline for transposing the Directive was March 3, 2011.

15/10/2012 The Commission warned Spain that it was still not complying with the Directive

Energy in private hands



Evolution of the prices of electricity



Billionaire profits

BENEFICIOS DE LAS ELÉCTRICAS

Relación entre los promedios de los beneficios de las empresas y EBITDA (ganancia antes de intereses, impuestos, depreciación y amortización) de las principales empresas eléctricas de España, Alemania, Francia y Reino Unido (2013, 2016)

| | EBITDA / FACTURACIÓN | RESULTADOS / FACTURACIÓN |
|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ESPAÑA | 18% | 8% |
| ALEMANIA | 11% | -4% |
| FRANCIA | 23% | 4% |
| REINO UNIDO | 7% | 1% |

Fuente: Observatorio de la Sostenibilidad.

Spain: 81 year-old woman dies in fire caused by a candle she used as electricity had been cut off

Jorge Martín, 16 November 2016

 Print

Spain



Photo: Public Domain/Pexels.com

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An 81 year-old woman died in a fire in her flat in Reus, Catalonia in the early hours of Tuesday, November 15. The fire was caused by a candle she kept by her bed. Two months ago, the electricity company had cut off her supply as she was unable to pay. This tragic incident reveals the barbarism of a system which puts private profit above the needs of the people and highlights the brutal impact the crisis of capitalism is having on millions of families in Spain.

The company which cut the electricity supply to this woman's house is Gas Natural Fenosa, a

Spanish multinational company operating in over 30 countries and whose main shareholders are La Caixa and Repsol. Gas Natural is the third largest supplier of gas and electricity in Spain and had profits of over €1.5 bn in 2015.

The Spanish electricity market is notoriously dominated by a handful of giant companies which hold consumers to ransom. Electricity prices have gone up by 52%



What is the role of the administration?



Pressure on Catalan government and energy companies





Assemblies for collective advice



Context

- Unpaid bills and energy and water supply cuts
- Other abuses:
 - Excessive collecting (improper fees charging), changes of tariffs, phone harassment, denial of new contracts, etc.
- Lack of information about:
 - Our rights
 - Meaning of our bills
- Companies taking advantage of this opacity

Context

Under this vulnerability situation of families:

- Means of communication and administrations have certain imaginary:
 - Victimization and assistencialism (payment of bills without giving any further tools or solutions)
 - Blaming (“it’s families that consume too much”, “they don’t know how to manage their spending”, “they don’t want to pay”, “they don’t understand bills”...)
- Need of mutual support, empowerment and collective construction of knowledge

Description

APE's collective counselling:

- Welcoming space
- Biweekly sessions
- Continuity between sessions
- Possibility of territorial replication
- Breaks with unidirectionality and expert logic (everybody has something to share about their experience and case)
- Finding solutions to cases + learning together
- Accompaniment visits

Results

- Empowerment
- Transformation of roles
- Collective construction of knowledge
- Responsibility is shared
- Creation of a network of mutual support, that stays in time (continuity), that transforms at the same time than the changing context (breaks with a static view of the matter).

Limitations

- Changing and complex context
- Infinite cases
- Difficulty of arriving beyond most common cases and collectives (not everybody knows APE) → flyers
- We don't have solutions for everything!
- Certain intermittence of participants
 - Depending on personal situation,
 - Depending on motivation,

Strengths

- Affected people are now “experts”
 - Immediacy, link with reality on real time, ability to react (telegram, twitter actions, direct actions)
 - Thinking together solutions and strategies
 - “What works for me can work for somebody else”, “we tried this and didn’t work, so we have to try something new”, historical accumulation of knowledge, etc.
 - Feeling of belonging to a network, to a family
 - Emotional support, feeling of collective strength
- vs.
- Isolated and assistencial counselling

Our demands:

Short term:

- Enforcement of the Law: sanctions, inspections
- Solve the issue of debt
- Regularize the access to water and energy services (irregular connections)

Long Term:

- Change the model to energy sovereignty
- Change the management of these services to public and/or community hands



ALIANÇA CONTRA
LA POBRESA ENERGÈTICA

Català

INICI

QUI SOM

TENS DRETS!

ACCIONS

CRÒNIQUES

DOCUMENTS

PARTICIPA!

**Volen tallar-te
l'aigua, la llum o el gas?
Segueix els nostres consells!**

Últime entrades

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