

# **POWERTY PROJECT**

## **TRANSCRIPTION OF THE RADIO INTERVIEW**

11/01/ 2021 – Ángel Saéz – EMA-RTV

Interview en EMA-RTV about POWERTY project, 8 minutes ([Spanish](#))

Thank you very much for inviting us to briefly present the European project POWERTY on energy poverty and renewable energies.

- **What are the perspectives of the European project POWERTY, led by the Andalusian Energy Agency?**

POWERTY is a project funded by the European Commission, which we lead and coordinate in Andalusia, through the Andalusian Energy Agency, a public agency of the Andalusian Regional Government.

The aim of POWERTY is that vulnerable groups, i.e. people suffering from energy poverty, can also use renewable energies.

Vulnerable groups are the most disadvantaged people, those with fewer resources, who have many difficulties to pay their electricity bills, and who are not able to keep their homes warm in winter. These are people who suffer from so-called energy poverty. In short, people with very low incomes, elderly people living alone, families with all their members unemployed, etc.

In addition, this situation is worsening in recent times, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the cold temperatures of the last few days and the increase in energy prices that we are suffering these days.

And we must not forget that energy poverty negatively affects people's health.

Well, as I was saying, POWERTY aims to tackle this situation of energy poverty through renewable energy.

Under the coordination of the Andalusian Energy Agency, other European countries are also participating in this project. Let us not lose sight of the fact that energy poverty is a global problem, throughout the EU. As the European Commission itself points out, there are more than 30 million people suffering from energy poverty

throughout Europe. And that is why the European Observatory on Energy Poverty, an entity of the European Commission, is also part of the POWERITY consortium.

- **The first seminar has already been held virtually... No less than 120 European experts from six countries have taken part. What can you tell us about the presence of Andalusian companies and entities?**

This is an EU-wide event, in which people from many countries have been able to participate. It was planned to be held in Lithuania, but we have had to hold it virtually due to the limitations of the pandemic.

We are satisfied because the initiatives that have been presented by the Andalusian entities have been the best valued by those attending the seminar. These entities are the University of Huelva, the Andalusian company Quantum Energía, and the company PylonData.

I would like to highlight that we have created a working group of entities and experts in Andalusia who are collaborating in the project. This group is formed by entities of diverse nature:

- Consumer associations
- Energy sector companies
- Citizen energy cooperatives
- Entities and professional experts on energy poverty and renewable energies
- Entities of the financing sector, in particular, what is called "ethical financing"
- And, of course, public administrations, both from the Andalusian Regional Government and from the municipal level.

In fact, we will have a new working session of this group (it will be the third) at the end of the month.

- **What solutions and tools have been put on the table to tackle energy poverty?**

In this first international seminar we analysed technological and financial solutions. In the coming months we will hold two new seminars to address legislative and regulatory aspects, as well as the participation and empowerment of citizens in the energy field.

Today, there is no doubt that solar energy, especially photovoltaic (self-consumption), is one of the most appropriate technologies to tackle energy poverty - but as long as it is shared or collective. I think that, little by little, we are becoming familiar with this

type of installation (the shiny panels that we see on the roofs of buildings). And they are getting cheaper all the time.

In Spain, regulations already allow individuals to install collective solar installations. For example, in a neighbourhood community (in a block of apartments/houses), solar panels can be installed on the roof or the rooftop, supplying electricity to all the apartments/houses. Solar panels are also mounted on the roofs of educational centres to supply electricity to the neighbours living in the vicinity of the centre.

Any individual, like you, like me, like any listener, can promote installations of this type in their environment, in their neighborhood community, etc. In the coming years, this will be commonplace, and the so-called citizen energy communities will be created, something very new and still little known. I invite everyone who is listening to us to take an interest and ask for information on these issues.

The Pylon Data company, which participated in the seminar, presented technological solutions to facilitate this shared use of photovoltaic installations.

But there are other technologies that could also help tackle energy poverty, such as solar cookers and ovens. The University of Huelva presented this technology at the seminar, and we found it quite interesting. It is a mature technology, but still little known.

- **During this virtual meeting four financing formulas to facilitate the use of clean sources by the most vulnerable groups were also analysed. What would they consist of?**

It is clear that when targeting vulnerable people, the economic and financial factor is crucial. Therefore, partners of the POWERTY project are evaluating different financial solutions.

I would like to highlight an innovative initiative of an Andalusian company called Quantum Energía, which consists of offering solar installations for rent to private individuals. In this way, by paying a small monthly fee, it is possible to have a solar installation without having to make a high initial payout (which can be 3,000, 4,000, 5,000 euros). This investment will pay for itself over the years (8 or 9 years more or less, but not everyone can afford to pay these amounts all at once).



Project partners from Lithuania, Poland and France also presented other financing formulas.

**Closing:**

Thank you very much for this interview and for giving us the opportunity to briefly present the POWERTY project. I encourage all listeners to contact us at the Andalusian Energy Agency about these issues.