

# Social Energy Advice

A new concept to complement traditional energy advice

Barbara Alexander-Bittner  
Austrian Energy Agency  
Vienna, 2023

## Contents

- A few words about klimaaktiv
- Training of professionals in the Austrian Climate Protection Initiative
- Social Energy Advice: quality standard and training
- Key enablers for the implementation of Social Energy Advice

## klimaaktiv: the Austrian Climate Protection Initiative

- Primary objective: to introduce and promote climate-friendly technologies and services
- focuses on high standards of quality
- gives advice to household, businesses and communities
- cooperates with a large network of partners
- provides education and **training for professionals**

## Training and professional education

- **20 partner** organisations deliver branded training as "klimaaktiv partners"
- Since 2004: over **36.500** participants
- 2022: **7.000** participants in klimaaktiv branded trainings
  - photovoltaics
  - heat pump installation
  - biomass heating installation
  - Energy efficiency in buildings
  - Energy consulting
  - Energy efficiency in production
  - energy management
  - eco-driving
  - e-bike mechanic
  - mobility coach
  - e-mobility
  - cycling trainers

## Our approach to the training of professionals

- we form partnerships with educational institutions
- we increase the visibility of specific education and training (green skills)
- we increase the visibility of specific skills (green skills) of professionals
- we **identify needs for further training**
- we **support new training formats**

## Social Energy Advice

Quality standard

Training programme

New



## Established household energy advice services in Austria

- On-site advice, online advice, phone advice
- usually initiated by the households
- focuses on technical assessment of the building, recommendations on building renovation and heating system exchange, funding and investment advice
- Format is a one-off advice, usually with a written protocol
- Service is provided by a technical expert
- Training of Energy Advisors focusses on technical knowledge/skills

## Needs of households at risk of poverty

- Facing difficult living circumstances
- Struggling with language barriers
- energy bills are only one issue among many others
- options for action are limited
- understanding energy bills, heating and electricity demand is crucial!
- **Advisors need to be aware of needs!**



## Step 1: quality standard

### "Energy advice for households at risk of poverty"

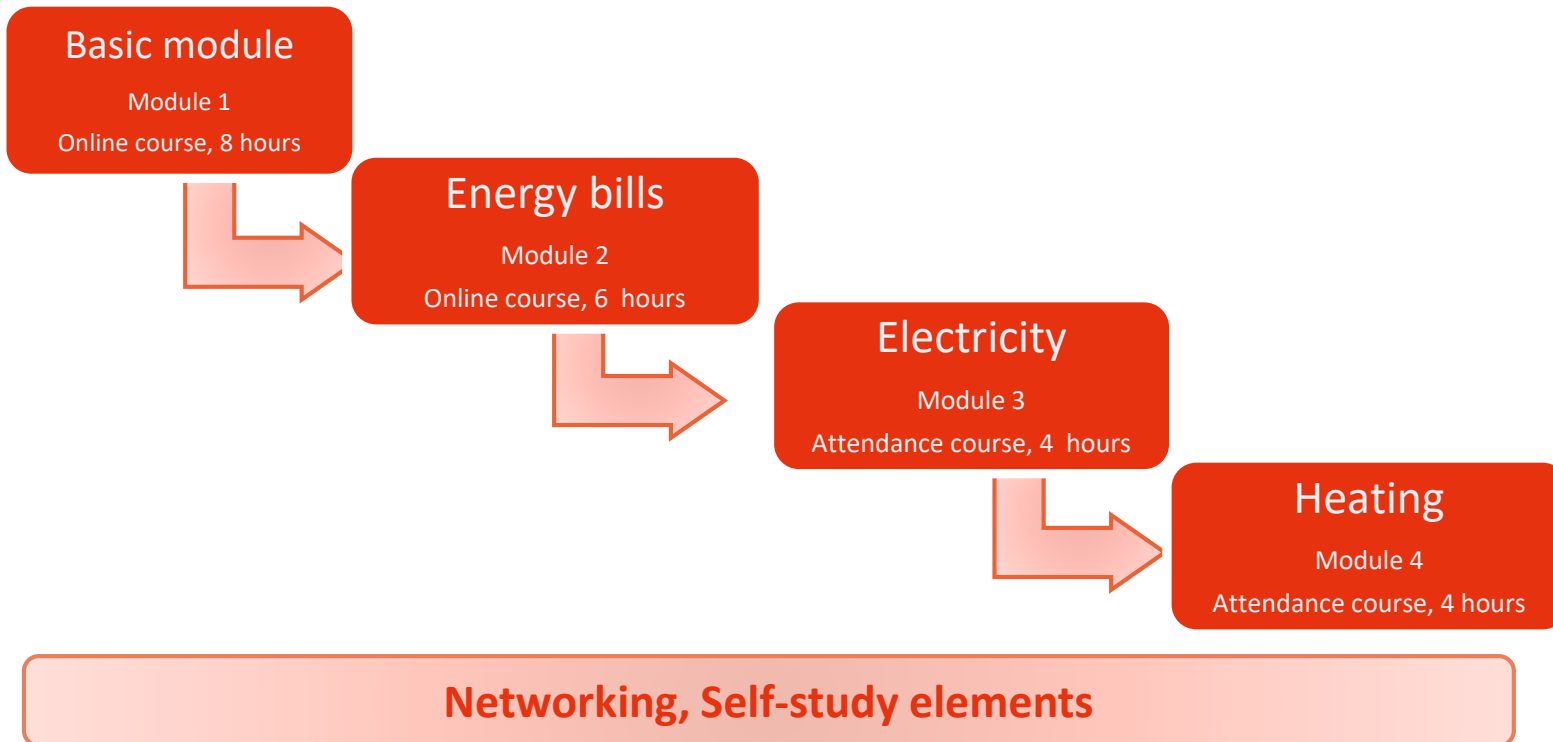
- Advice at the intersection of energy consulting and social work
- Information on
  - appropriate format, duration and venue
  - appropriate methods, materials and equipment
  - qualification of advisors (social and energy advisors, peer advisors)

**including the perspective of energy and social advisors and affected households**

## Step 2: Training programme for social workers

- Requirement for participation: working as a social advisor
- Training is carried out by energy advisors **and** social workers
- focus on simple recommendations for action and awareness raising
- Reducing energy consumption is secondary
- Technical content mainly on heating, electricity, energy bills

## Training modules



## Fenster, Zugluft und Lüften

- Für ein Fenster gilt: Ein Blatt Papier lässt sich mühelos in geschlossenem Zustand durchziehen oder es gibt sichtbare Spalten
- Für zwei oder mehr Fenster gilt: Ein Blatt Papier lässt sich mühelos in geschlossenem Zustand durchziehen oder es gibt sichtbare Spalten



Foto: Jozwiak/EB Plus



## Heizung und Warmwasser: Einstellungen und Handhabung

Heizkörper haben Thermostatventile?  ja  nein  nicht anwendbar, keine wasserführenden Radiatoren



Drehregler ohne  
Thermostatventil



Foto: Jozwiak/EB Plus



### **Nachteilig**

- Im Erdgeschoss, Souterrain oder über einem Durchgang
- Unter dem Dach und (vermutlich) ohne Geschossdeckendämmung
- Mehr als zwei Außenwände
- In einer Gebäudeecke

## Materials and equipment

- Electricity meters
- Room thermometers
- low-threshold information leaflets on the topics heating, cooling, electricity in Farsi, English, Turkish, German, Arabic, Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian

**100.000 leaflets** have already been ordered!



## Key enablers

- Network building between social and energy advisors (and energy providers)
- Sufficient funding for on-site consultancy and for simple saving measures (exchange of electrical appliances) --> conveys reliability and is giving perspective
- Provision of materials and equipment for advisors
- Allow learning loops, keep close contact to advisors

Over **200 social workers** have had training **in the last six months!**



Thank you  
for your attention!

**[www.klimaaktiv.at](https://www.klimaaktiv.at)**

Barbara Alexander-Bittner  
Senior Expert Renewables  
[Barbara.alexander-bittner@energyagency.at](mailto:Barbara.alexander-bittner@energyagency.at)