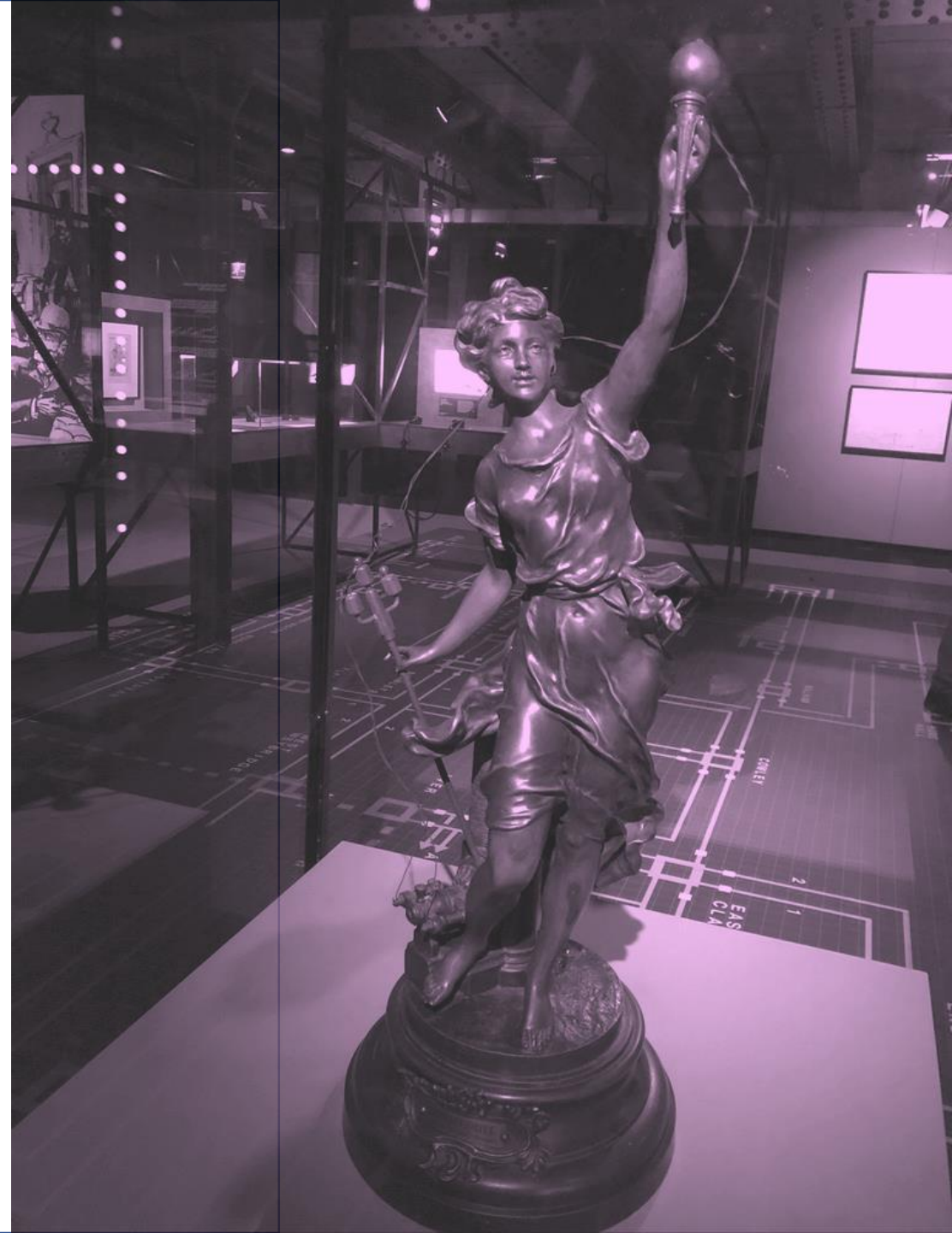


Gendered energy injustices

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The energy-poverty-gender nexus

- Energy poverty is one form of energy injustice
- Growing research on the energy-gender nexus
- [ENERGIA network](#) - an international network of female researchers working on energy related issues was formed in 1995
- Research on energy poverty in the Global South has long recognised gendered inequalities (Modi et al 2005); In the Global North more work has been done recently
- Still little systematic research into gender and lived experience of energy poverty

Persistent gendered inequalities

Background

The energy sector is influenced by a set of persistent gender inequalities, which can be summarised as follows (EIGE, 2016):

- gender gaps in energy access;
- gender gaps in the energy labour market: women represented on average 35% of the European workforce in the renewable energy (RE) sector in 2016;
- gender gaps in energy-related education: within the European Union, in 2012, 11 % of women compared to 22 % of men in the 22-29 age group have graduated in science and technology (Eurostat data 2012 cited in EIGE, 2016); [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608867/IPOL_STU\(2019\)608867_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2019/608867/IPOL_STU(2019)608867_EN.pdf)
- gender gaps in decision-making.

A renewed focus upon the relationship between gender and poverty in times of crisis, such as the Covid-19 pandemic

2010-20 cumulative individual impact of changes in taxes and benefits (real-term £ per annum by 2020) by household income groups, gender and ethnicity (selected)

		Men	Women
Poorest 33%	White	-£1,159	-£1,459
	Black	-£1,152	-£2,030
	Asian	-£1,528	-£2,247
Middle 33%	White	-£720	-£977
	Black	-£818	-£1,689
	Asian	-£575	-£1,006
Richest 33%	White	-£410	-£658
	Black	-£315	-£1,255
	Asian	-£570	-£1,060



In the UK, **20% of women** are in poverty compared to **18% of men**



that's **5.1 million women** to **4.4 million men**



Source: Households Below Average Income



Source: Household Below Average Income, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

News > UK > Home News

British women left in 'precarious position' by near decade of austerity, says Amnesty

Women are 'at the forefront of the battle of human rights', report says

Zamira Rahim | @ZamiraRahim | Monday 10 December 2018 18:01 | 1.8K shares |



Women act as the 'shock absorbers of poverty', trying to shield their children from its worst effects.⁴⁶ This may involve skipping meals, or going without adequate outdoor clothing in order to ensure children are fed and bills are paid. A 2019 study by the Young Women's Trust, for example found that one in four young mothers were skipping meals every day in order to manage their family budget.⁴⁷ The stress and stigma associated with poverty has an impact on women's physical and mental health.⁴⁸

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Women

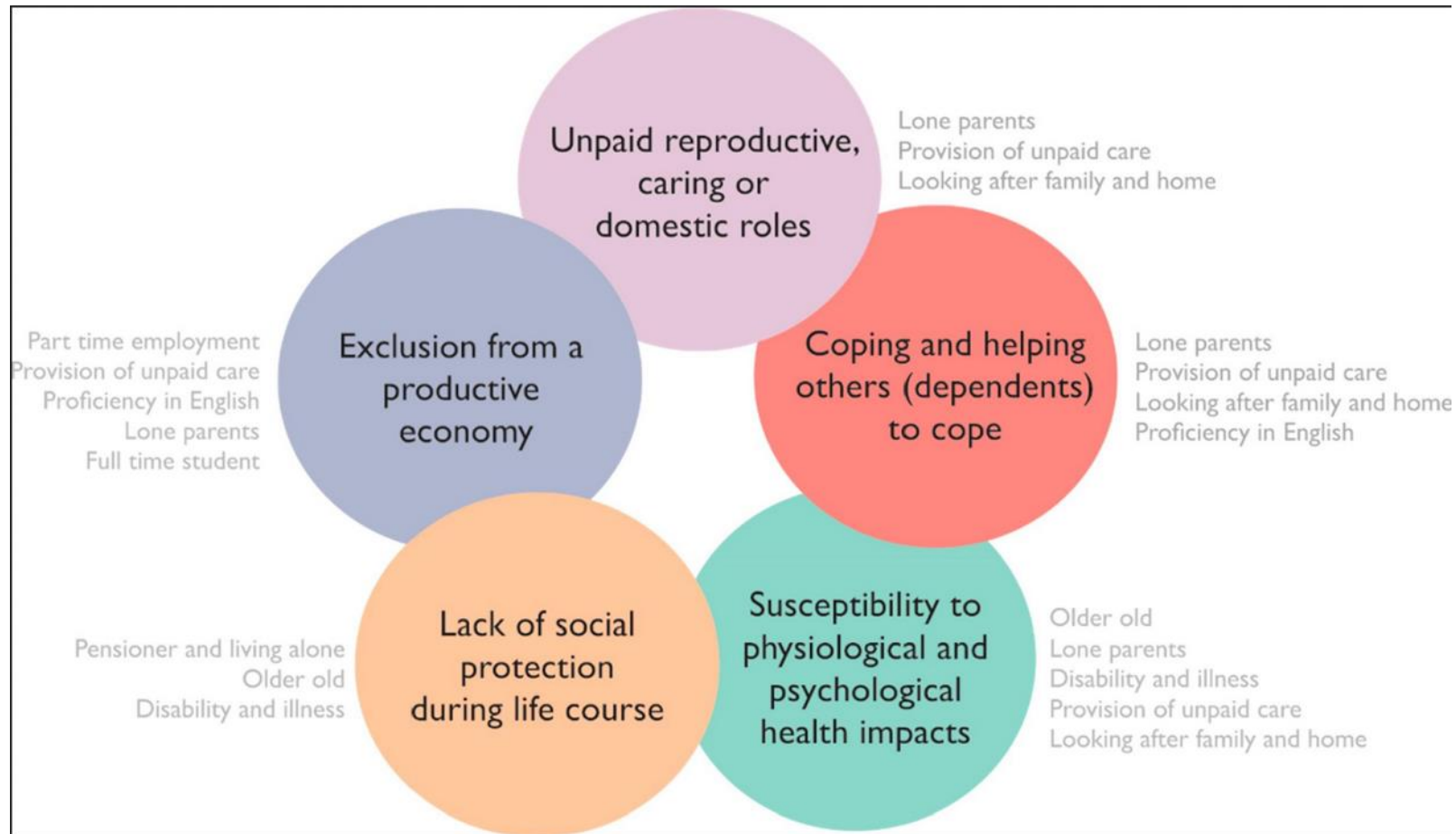
Compared to White women and White men, Black, Asian and minority ethnic women earn less, are less likely to be in paid work,⁴⁹ and more likely to be living in poverty,⁵⁰ which means they are disproportionately impacted by the increase in the cost of living.

This situation was exacerbated by Covid-19. In September 2020, unemployment rates for BAME workers were 26 times higher than for White workers.⁵¹ The unemployment rate for BAME people in January 2021 was 8.5% (compared with 4.9% overall and 4.5% for White workers).⁵²

Research during the pandemic showed high levels of concerns about debt among BAME women. 42.9% BAME women said they believed they would be in more debt than before the pandemic, compared to 37.1% of White women, and 34.2% of White men. The same polling reported that nearly a quarter of BAME mothers reported that they were struggling to feed their children (23.7%, compared to 19% of White mothers).⁵³

Dimensions of gendered, socio-spatial vulnerability to fuel poverty in England

based on Robinson 2019



The intersection of gender with age, able-ness and ethnicity gives rise to energy poverty

Living with fuel poverty: gendered household practices

Masculine energy efficiency measures

‘The old boiler did not work all the time and sometimes it was below 15 degrees in the flat. I made some calculations and convinced our landlord that a new boiler would be better for all of us’.

Feminisation of energy saving strategies

“I always turn-off the radiators – I get up, turn-off the radiator because in this room we do not sleep, so we twist it here. Here in the bedroom we turn all radiators off [. . .] The radiators always turned on in the bathroom [. . .] I do all these steps, because our residential block is calculated by all residents’ consumption of heating”

Energy savings interpreted more positively as a form of domestic power

Conflation of 'gender' and 'sex' in some existing energy studies:

Existing gender and energy studies are often inadequate in that they only address energy and a biological conception of sex, or else simplistically equate gender with a masculine/feminine binary that may actually reinforce essentializing gender myths (Fathallah and Pyakurel 2020:n.p.), especially with regards to their bodies, mental and physical health

Just energy transitions

- Nobody should be left out from the transitioning society.
- Energy justice to encompass justice issues across energy access, use and policy (Feenstra and Özerol 2021)

Beyond the supply-demand gender divide

Equality platform for the energy sector

Promoting equality and inclusion in the energy sector, from energy professionals and decision-makers to consumers.

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[Objective of the platform](#)

[Equality and energy in the EU](#)

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The European Union is committed to strengthening equality and inclusion in all fields of EU activity. As one of the ways to promote it in the energy sector, the European Commission established in 2021 an 'Equality platform for the energy sector' aimed at offering a space for discussion of issues relating to equality, facilitating exchanges of experiences and highlighting best practices.

A call for energy stakeholders from all EU countries was launched in August 2021 to inform the European Commission of any actions they were already doing to promote equality and inclusion. The platform launch event took place at the EU Sustainable Energy Week on 25 October 2021, and further events and actions will take place as of 2022.

Increased focus on gendered energy inequalities

Beyond binary representation and more inclusive language

RESCOOP.EU

The Gender Power working group |

Equality and energy in the EU

Equality and inclusion in all its dimensions - including gender, sex, race, religion, disability, age and sexual orientation - is a core principle of the EU and a fundamental right. It is also a driver of economic growth and social well-being.

take all **appropriate measures**, including specific policies, to **modify or abolish** existing regulations, customs, structures and practices which constitute **discrimination against women and non-binary people**;

bring out and **recognise the voices, faces, needs and interests** of women and **people of all genders** in the community energy sector;

<https://www.rescoop.eu/news-and-events/news/ambition-statement-of-our-gender-power-wor>

Recent policy developments - focus on representation

Press release | 7 June 2022 | Brussels

Commission welcomes political agreement on Gender Balance on Corporate Boards

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Press contact

The European Commission welcomes the political agreement reached today between the European Parliament and the Council on the Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of listed companies [proposed by the Commission](#) in 2012.

Intersectional research

Intersectional approaches to energy poverty can demonstrate how this specific form of injustice is differentially experienced along gender, age, race, ethnicity, class and disability

Summary

- Just energy transitions can resolve or reproduce existing energy vulnerabilities and inequalities.
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) sensitive data collection methodologies are needed
- Gendered energy injustices depend on energy and non-energy policies and societal norms

**Thank you for your
attention!**

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