

SOCIAL TARIFFS AS A TOOL AGAINST ENERGY POVERTY: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM SPAIN

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Extended Abstract

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Abstract Summary

This study analyses the impact of the *Bono Social Eléctrico* (BSE) on energy poverty in Spain during the period 2021–2023, using microdata from the Spanish Living Conditions Survey (ECV by its Spanish acronym) and applying the Propensity Score Matching (PSM) methodology. Unlike previous research, the treated group is defined as households that actually received the bonus, while the control group consists of eligible households that did not apply for it, allowing a more precise evaluation of the true effect of the subsidy. Four indicators of energy poverty are examined: inability to maintain an adequate indoor temperature, arrears in bill payments, excessive energy expenditure (2M), and insufficient energy expenditure (M/2). Results show that the BSE has a positive and significant effect only on reducing excessive energy expenditure, particularly among eligible households, but it does not improve thermal comfort nor reduce payment arrears. In addition, the study identifies access barriers for the most vulnerable households, especially those with low income and low educational attainment. The findings suggest that the social tariff functions more as a monetary transfer than as an effective tool against energy poverty. The paper proposes reforms to improve its design and accessibility.

Presenting Author Biography

Dr. Leticia Blázquez Gómez holds a PhD in Economics from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (Spain) and she is currently an Associated Professor at the Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha. Her research focuses on two main areas: 1. **Energy Economics**, including the analysis of regulatory impacts on productivity and efficiency in the Spanish electricity sector, energy efficiency and energy poverty. 2. **International Trade**, with contributions on the structure, functioning, and evolution of international production

networks. In recent years, has expanded her work to **Environmental Sustainability**. Her work has been **published in intrnational indexed, peer reviewed journals**.