



THE 19TH EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
EUROPEAN INTEGRATION
REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES

The Social Policy of Granting Aid for Heating Homes

Cosmin Oprea¹, Cornelia Elena Tureac²

Abstract: Public policies represent a border area between several fundamental sciences, such as: political science, sociological economics, social psychology. Through public policies, the state intervenes in the economic and social activity of citizens. It modifies the identified reality, in a direction dictated by the needs of civil society. Social policy consists in pursuing the improvement of living conditions and providing opportunities for disadvantaged people or those who belong to vulnerable categories. The objectives of the social policy are: strengthening economic and social cohesion; employment; development of social services. The used research method is the investigation carried out for the correct application of the procedures regarding the acquisitions, evaluation and provision of housing heating aid. This research provides an in-depth analysis of the administration of heating subsidy applications and highlights both the advantages and difficulties associated with the implementation of these significant social initiatives. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of these issues it enables us to actively participate in the continuous advancement and improvement of policies and practices designed to help the most vulnerable people in the society.

Keywords: public policy; social policy; people with disabilities; vulnerable categories; procedures

1. Introduction

Every year, as temperatures drop and winter sets in, more localities experience heating difficulties. Ensuring sufficient heat throughout the winter season is a significant economic and logistical hurdle for many people. Therefore, several welfare public policy initiatives were created to help those facing difficult circumstances, which led to their creation. The management of applications for heating subsidies is a crucial aspect of social policies and services provided by municipalities and non-governmental organizations. These programs aim to meet people's basic needs and protect them from cold and discomfort. We have analyzed the response of local authorities and other responsible organizations to these requests and the effect these programs have on communities and people in difficulty. We have investigated the procurement, assessment and provision of heating aid. We have evaluated the skill requirements, the needed resources, and the effectiveness of these programs in helping those in need. In addition, we analyze the societal and economic consequences of these programs, assessing their role in alleviating fuel poverty, increasing quality of life and protecting the well-being of vulnerable demographics. This research provides a thorough analysis of the administration

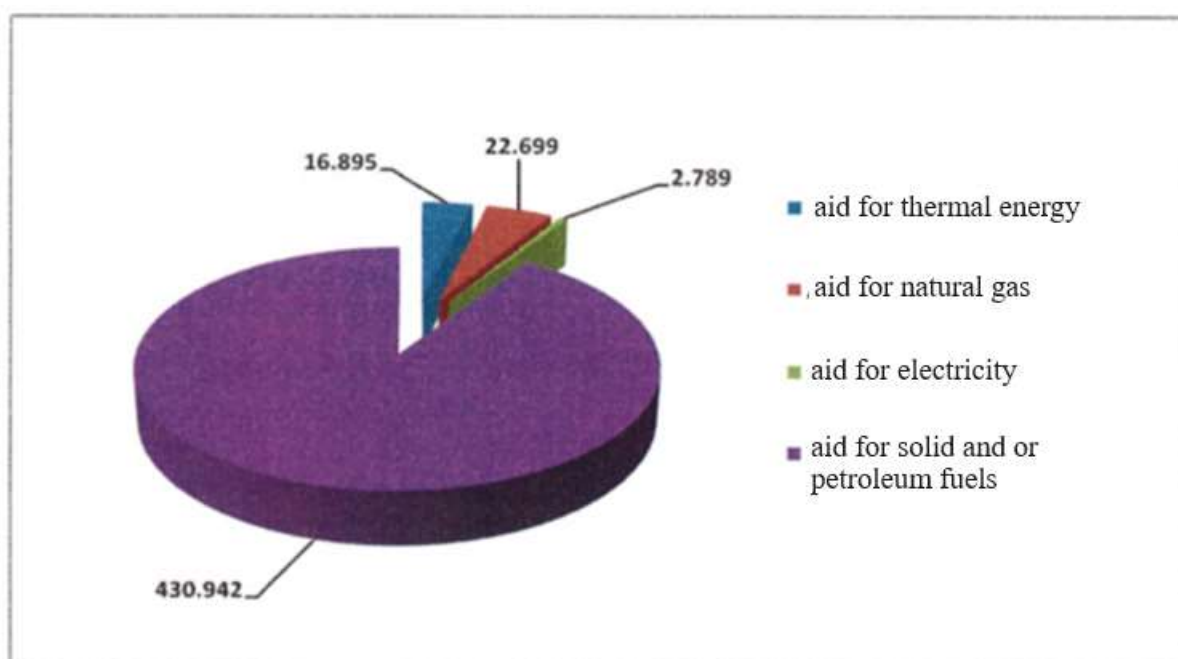
¹ Student, IInd Year, School of Behavioral and Applied Sciences - Social Assistance, Danubius International University, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd., Galati 800654, Romania.

² Coordinator, Associate Professor, PhD, Danubius International University, Romania, Address: 3 Galati Blvd., Galati 800654, Romania, Corresponding author: tureaccornelia@univ-danubius.ro.

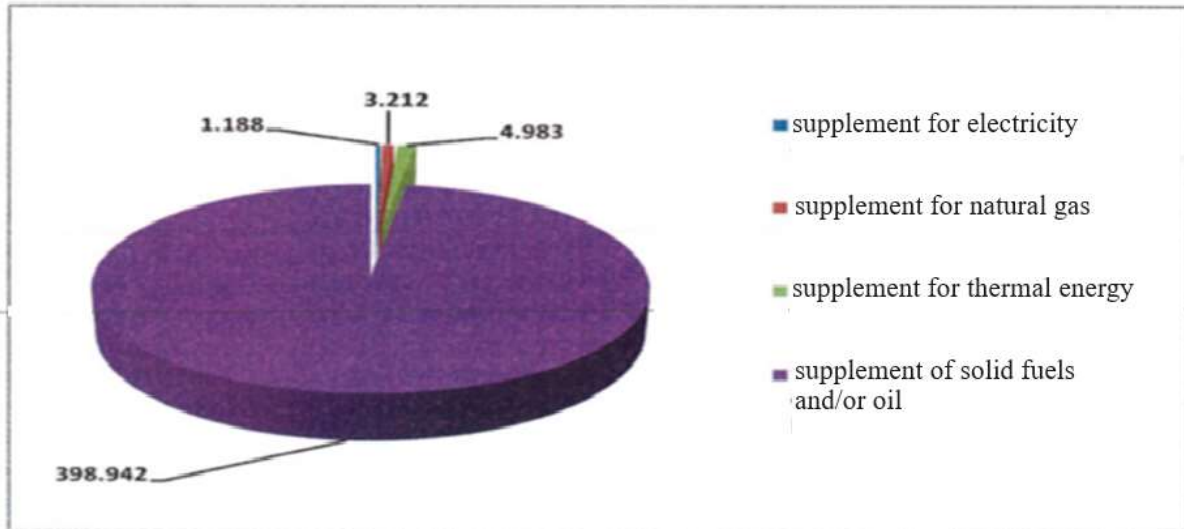


of heating subsidy applications and highlights both the advantages, as well as the difficulties associated with the implementation of these significant social initiatives. Gaining a comprehensive understanding of these issues enables us to actively participate in the advancement and continuous improvement of policies and practices designed to help the most vulnerable people in the society.

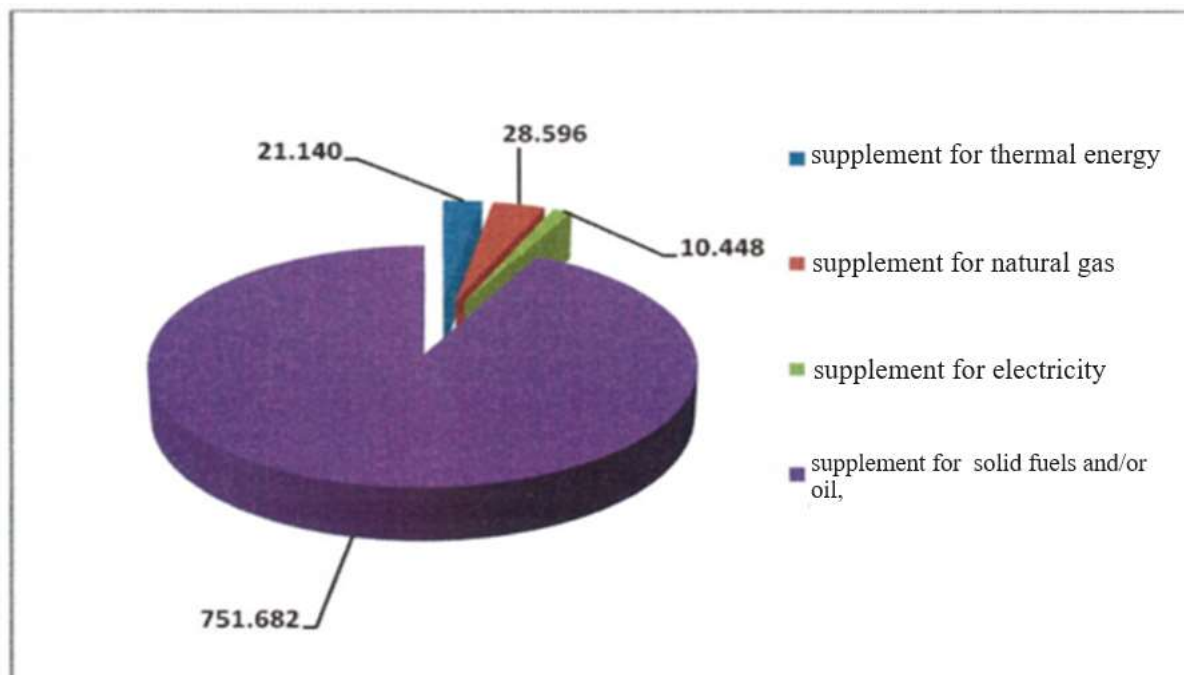
According to the statistics collected by the specialized department of the National Agency for Payments and Social Inspection, the average number of people who benefit from housing benefits for the period November-December 2021 is 473,325. The position of the 473,325 beneficiaries varies depending on the source consulted. The breakdown of energy sources is as follows: 430,942 units of solid and/or petroleum fuels, representing 91.04% of the total; 22,699 natural gas units, representing 4.79%; 2,789 units of electricity, representing 0.60%; and 16,895 kW of thermal energy supplied in the centralized system, representing 3.57%. The graphic representation of the above data can be found in the following figure:



The data clearly show that the largest share of heating aid, amounting to 91%, is allocated to heating with solid and/or oil fuels. The energy supplement granted by local public bodies had an average of 408,325 beneficiaries for the period November-December 2021. If it is classified according to the energy source used, the situation can be described as follows: The consumption of solid and/or petroleum fuels represented 97.70% of the total energy consumption, adding up 398,942 units; Natural gas consumption represented 0.80% of total energy consumption, amounting to 3,212 units. Electricity consumption represented 0.29% of total energy consumption, amounting to 1,188 units. The centralized system provided 1.21% of the total energy consumption, totaling 4,983 thermal energy units. The data is represented visually in the image below:



Compared to the previous period, November-December 2021, the average monthly number of people using energy supplements in the period January-March 2022 registered a substantial increase, reaching approximately double the number from the previous period, namely 811,866. Their position can be summarized according to the energy source they use, as follows: 751,682 units of solid fuels and/or oil, representing 92.58% of the total; 28,596 natural gas units, representing 3.52% of the total; 10,448 units of electricity, representing 1.30% of the total; 21,140 units of thermal energy supplied in the centralized system, representing 2.60% of the total. The data is represented visually in the figure below:



The variation in the amount of solid fuel and/or heating fuel supplements distributed over this period can be explained by the method of distribution of home heating aid. This is granted only at the beginning of the cold season. Only recently registered claims will receive payment in the coming months. Instead, the energy supplement is paid monthly to both beneficiaries registered at the start of the season and new applicants who have unpaid dues. This explains the pay disparity between representatives. It is important to emphasize that a key objective of the ongoing campaign was to identify the factors that contribute to

the simultaneous rejection of both benefits, as provided for in Law 226/2021. Due to the diligent work of the social inspectors, there has been an increase in the number of people benefiting from the energy supplement during the last part of the cold season. This can be attributed to the measures used by social inspectors to address the problems indicated in their inspection reports and to correct any deviations.

2. Conclusion

The paper analyzes the administration of heating subsidy applications and points out that in the latter part of the cold season, there is a prevalence of solid and oil fuel use and a substantial increase in the number of people benefiting from energy subsidies. The system gives priority in the allocation of resources to certain groups of beneficiaries, the system also analyzes and controls the lag between providing immediate support and restoring energy levels. In addition, the system identifies and addresses the reasons why people are denied their rights and continuously monitors the effectiveness of assistance programs. Supervision is recommended. These measures will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of social programs aimed at supporting needy people for home heating.

References

Ciubotaru, Vasile G. & Avram, Eugen (2009). *Neurostiinta dizabilitatii/Neuroscience of disability*. Bucharest: Universitara Publishing House

Cornea, Alina, Mihaela (2020). *Politicile Uniunii Europene 2019/European Union Policies 2019*. Bucharest: Universul Juridic.

Otovescu, Cristina (2021). *Realitati sociale si politici publice in Romania/Social realities and public policies in Romania*. Bucharest: Editura Academiei Române.

Online Sources

<https://renasterea.ro/ajutoare-pentru-incalzirea-locuintei-in-sezonul-rece-2023-2024-categorii-de-beneficiari-unde-se-pot-depune-cererile-acte-necesare-anexa-la-norme-metodologice/>.

https://www.avocatnet.ro/articol_62734/Cererile-pentru-ajutorul-de-incalzire-se-pot-depune-dup-15-octombrie-dar-acesta-va-acoperi-o-perioada-mai-scurta.html.

<https://www.crisana.ro/stiri/social-9/sezonul-2023-2024-distribuirea-si-preluarea-cererilor-ajutorul-de-incalzire-197849.html>.