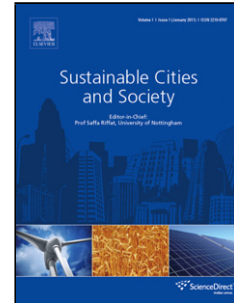


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## MANAGING THE ENERGY TRANSITION IN A TOURISM-DRIVEN ECONOMY THE CASE OF MALTA

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### Highlights

- This research discusses Malta's government capacity to manage the implementation of its renewable policy.
- The article highlights the main policy challenges for the transition to renewable energy production in a small, tourism-driven economy.
- The article points to the importance of innovative participatory mechanisms to manage socio-economic conflicts.
- A new approach to "energy aesthetics" is needed to facilitate the energy transition in heritage-rich nations.

### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to assess Malta's government capacity to manage the possible environmental and social conflicts arising from the implementation of its renewable energy agenda to comply with EU's 20-20-20 strategy. The country has targeted photovoltaic technologies to achieve a 10% renewable energy share in the final consumption of energy by 2020. Malta is a popular tourist destination and hosts three UNESCO world heritage sites, and it is one of the smallest, although densely populated, countries in the European Union. From the encroachment of PV parks with the existing urban and rural landscape, we found a number of issues worth to be investigated such as the location of solar power plants, participatory planning mechanisms, and aesthetic-design considerations for integrating photovoltaic into the existing urban fabric. The study is based on semi-structured interviews with institutional stakeholders and document analysis.

**Keywords:** Renewable Energy, Landscape Quality, Government Capacity, Tourism Industry, Malta.

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