

Chapter 2. A Civil Society Perspective of Sustainable Energy Policy and Green Jobs in Malta as a Small EU State

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Abstract

Sustainable energy policy and its potential to create green jobs in Malta, as seen from the point of view of Maltese civil society, provides the basis for a critical analysis of the development of environmental policies in Malta. The discussion is based on data emanating from a qualitative type of survey conducted among the key persons involved in the main organisations representing the Maltese civil society. What emerged from this data is that there is a high level of awareness among members of Maltese civil society about the need to create more green jobs and the formulation of an effective policy of sustainable development. Respondents stressed the challenges inherent in a small island sovereign state suffering from peripherality and insularity. However while acknowledging these constraints, respondents expressed a high degree of optimism about the implementation of an effective green policy. They maintain that part of the solution lies in devising innovative practices by means of which Maltese policy makers would exploit Malta's geographical position and harness all possible material and human resources. However to achieve such a goal the process has been consultative and participative.

SMALL STATES, GREEN JOBS AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY: THE NEED FOR A GREEN NEW DEAL

Small States: Definition and Challenges

There is no single all-encompassing definition of a small state. However, various researchers use population size as an indicator to define a state as small, medium or large (Bernal, 1998 as cited in The World Bank, 2000, p. 3). For example, the Commonwealth Secretariat defines small states as "countries with a population of 1.5 million or less" (<http://www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/180407/>). Hence, as per definition, EU small member states include: Malta with a population of 0.4 million, followed by Luxembourg (0.5 million inhabitants), Cyprus (0.8 million) and Estonia (1.3 million) (http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm).

Small states share characteristics that present special development challenges (The World Bank, 2000, p. 1). These include the presence of small local niche markets, insularity, indivisibility and diseconomies of scale (ibid.). Furthermore, remoteness, susceptibility to natural disasters, limited institutional capacity, limited diversification and openness, access to external capital and poverty are also listed as major threats to small states (The World Bank, 2000, pp. 2-3).

The fate of these small states is often tied to their role as platforms for the needs of international capital. However much they try to exploit the powers and jurisdiction which they possess in order to attain self reliance, they might still be forced to play this role. The models which act as reference point for their development are the large nation states on which they depend for investment, consultancy and the specialisation needed for infrastructural and economic projects. This culture of dependency is also visible in initiatives aimed at sustainable development in a small island sovereign state such as Malta.

The provision of sustainable energy is a major challenge for Malta, the smallest EU member state. Malta has the highest energy dependency rate in the EU and one of the highest rates of tonnes of oil consumption equivalent per inhabitant in the EU (Eurostat, 2010, p. 560-2). It occupies the last position in the EU rating as regards share of renewable energy within final energy consumption (ibid p. 575). This paper aims at providing a critical appraisal of policy making in Malta in the field of sustainable energy and its potential to create green jobs.

Defining green jobs

Angelov and Vredin Johansson (2011) compare various official and academic definitions of green jobs. These range from jobs within industries that aim to minimise environmental impact through a range of environmental policies to a more restrictive definition that comprises jobs within the green sectors of the economy. Hence, there may be varying interpretations of the contribution of green jobs to the economy. Angelov

and Vredin Johansson suggest that the green jobs definition of the United Nations Environment Programme (as cited in *ibid.*) is more appropriate than that of others such as Eurostat, as the former “also focuses on industries and jobs that aim at mitigating a specific environmental problem, like de-carbonising the economy” (Angelov & Vredin Johansson, 2011 p. 247). This definition includes all “work in agricultural, manufacturing, research and development (R&D), administrative, and service activities that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality”. (UNEP, 2008, p. 3).

Green jobs in relation to the wider economic, political and social contexts

In Malta, a 2007 study was conducted by the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) which analysed employment figures in a restricted manner, namely in the “environmental goods and services industry” (such as waste management). Its conclusion was that this growing sector employs around 3% of the labour force and contributes around 2% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (<http://www.greenjobsmalta.com/downloads/ETC%20Report.pdf>). More recently, the draft National Environment Policy of Malta calls for the creation of green jobs. Without providing specific details, it calls for the increase of such jobs by 50% by 2015, for the preparation of a Green Jobs strategy (and a corresponding training strategy) by 2012, and for the setting up of an incubator for green industries by 2014. The Policy says that relevant stakeholders will be consulted in this regard. (OPM, 2011, p. 30).

The backcloth of this Maltese policy making is the projection made by the United Nations Environment Programme (cited by the GEF, 2009, p. 32), which estimates that wind and solar energy will create around 8 million jobs in a 20-year period. Ernst & Young (*ibid.*) estimate the existence of 3.4 million full-time direct and indirect jobs in Europe in 2004, 2.3 million of which are in pollution management and 1 million of which are in resource management.

These projections and their fulfilment have of course to be viewed with cautious optimism since the creation of green jobs is uneven and has to be seen in wider economic, political and social contexts. For example, strict environmental policy may lead to the shifting of employment opportunities to less developed countries with more lax regula-

tions. We therefore need to analyse the quality of green jobs, and not simply the quantity (Angelov and Vredin Johansson, 2011, p. 252). This view emphasised by the European Green Party (Pierini, 2010, p. 12), was endorsed by the European Parliament (2010), following the adoption of the report by Green MEP Elisabeth Schroedter (<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+REPORT+A7-2010-0234+0+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN>). What the foregoing implies is that a green policy has to strike the ideal balance between the social, environmental and economic development. The basis of this balance should be a sustainable and socially just organisation of the entire economy that optimises employment potential, creates gender equality and faces skill requirements through appropriate education and training.

Angelov and Johansson (2011, p. 264) conclude that:

“Greening the economy will unequivocally have three effects on employment: jobs will be created, substituted and eliminated. It is important to know, therefore, what types of jobs will be lost and created in order to help people adapt and to determine what sort of (re)training is necessary.”

The creation of jobs in the sustainable energy sector is one of the objectives that the EU has set in order to address the global financial crisis, climate change and the rise in oil prices. Sustainable energy refers to a number of approaches to and features of energy consumption such as “efficiency of the use of resources” (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 7); supporting citizens in their energy consumption practices (*ibid.*) such as increasing equal distribution of energy sources (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 16) and fulfilling the “bulk of energy demands” through renewable energy sources (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 7), particularly as a contribution to the local climate (*ibid.*).

Green jobs and the sustainable energy sector

The sustainable energy sector includes all jobs related to all renewable energy industries; construction of energy efficient buildings (Schepelmann, Stock, Koska, Schüle & Reutter, 2009, pp. 24-35) and retro-fitting of existing buildings to improve their energy efficiency (Barbier, 2009, p. 9). It has been argued that job-creation potential of the

sustainable energy sector is difficult to estimate accurately and that many studies overlook additional costs, such as tax (Schepelmann *et al.*, 2009, p. 22). It is also predicted that “as renewable industries mature, they will increasingly be marked by difficult issues of competitiveness, trade rules, and wage differentials that are already familiar topics in other industries” (UNEP, 2008, p. 9).

The point that is often made and has already been emphasised in this text is that a sustainable energy policy is a tool to fight climate change (*ibid.*, p. 15; Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 9). This rallying cry is relevant to the European Union, as it has declared its intention of decreasing its reliance on oil, gas, uranium and their market prices (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 9) and lowering energy sources import-dependency (*ibid.*). Moreover, the 2007-2008 global recession was identified as a clear sign that the production methods of the twentieth century have become passé (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 16). Indeed, “a knowledge economy and a green economy” feature amongst recommendations to overcome the recession and unemployment. Thus, a policy on sustainable energy that embraces the growth of green jobs does not imply falling back on the last resort but rather being at the forefront of economic and social development through a cutting-edge industry (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 9) given that “the microeconomic development of eco-industries is positive and promising” (Schepelmann *et al.*, 2009, p. 32). For instance “renewable energy generates more jobs per unit of installed capacity, per unit of power generated and per dollar invested” (UNEP, 2008, p. 6).

A sustainable energy policy in the EU

Like the industrial revolution and the accompanying radical changes that have occurred (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 7) the Green / Third / Efficiency Industrial Revolution can be the cause of “a comprehensive upheaval” (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 14). Hence, the need for a well-educated and computer literate workforce; new technologies that can support EU 2020 targets; common action and transnational research involving pilot projects and common research institutions; locating decentralised renewable energy sources mapped on an intelligent European electricity grid and the application of the principle of subsidiarity – whereby supranational communities come into play only when “objectives cannot be attained fully at the local or national levels, or can

only be attained under unfavourable conditions” (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, pp. 8-10).

Respective policy in this regard should not be a “first-aid industrial policy” (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 21) but a proactive, preventive, competitive approach with broader social goals (*ibid.*) such as “equity...between all countries as well as between social groups within countries” (Steiner, Somavia, Penalosa & Ryder in UNEP, 2008, p. 7). Amongst many proposed features, when it comes to green jobs, proposals include training programmes, research fellowships and exchanges schemes (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 11); combining a sustainable energy economy to financial services, information technology and e-commerce since the latter are of “substantial importance” particularly to small states’ economies (Commonwealth Secretariat/World Bank Joint Task force on Small States, 2000, pp. 45-46) and “the principle of geographical return...(whereby)...value of projects, investments...are distributed according to individual member states’ contributions” (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 11).

Collaboration between EU countries to exploit member states’ potential for sustainable energy will particularly affect small states that are rich in solar energy (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 8) thus reducing their geographical vulnerability to insularity, isolation and dependency on fossil fuel and nuclear energy (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 10). Another projected consequence of the policy would be that, as in past conventions and treaties, not all member states are likely to join immediately (Schreyer & Mez, 2008, p. 10), hence a period of transition and negotiations is foreseen. Small states also have the potential for strategic sustainable energy entrepreneurial alliances to overcome limitations of size and human capital (Hochfeld *et al.*, 2010, p. 15). In this context, small EU states and candidate countries have the potential to become hubs for the production of sustainable energy with related social (e.g. welfare), economic (e.g. growth) and political (e.g. EU enlargement) effects.

Within such a context, the European Greens are amongst the main promoters of green jobs, through the framework of the Green New Deal. A main goal in this regard is the shift towards sustainable energy production, until 100% use of renewable energy is reached in 2050. This would create new employment opportunities whilst enhancing European competitiveness,

energy security, and cutting down CO₂ emissions, amongst other improvements (Pierini, 2010, p. 7). The European Greens believe that during the process, a minimum of 20% renewable energy is to be reached within the EU by 2020, whilst CO₂ emissions are to be reduced by 40% in the same period, compared to 1990 levels. Concurrently, a European energy supergrid should be created (ibid., p. 8). In this regard, the EU has opted for a less ambitious 20 per cent reduction of CO₂ emissions and 20 per cent renewable energy, amidst criticism from Greens and Environmental NGOs for being too weak and for being too lenient on carbon offsets (<http://www.planetark.org/wen/50953>). In this context, Malta requires to produce 10 per cent of energy from clean renewable sources by 2020. This includes energy from transport, electricity, heating and cooling (MEPA, 2010, p. 31). Malta was also obliged to limit CO₂ emissions increase by 5 per cent by 2020 (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2009:140:0136:0148:EN:PDF>).

These projections mark a shift in the medium and long term aims of policy making on a macro and micro level. The “Green New Deal” policy framework, which is a trade mark of this shift will be dealt with in the following section.

The Green New Deal

The idea of the Green New Deal is partially inspired by the USA’s “New Deal” political framework that was realised in the 1930s by President Roosevelt as a state response to the biggest recession in human history, which consisted of a “growing unemployment, a decline in the economic production and a drastic increase of public debt” (Szwed, 2011, p. 7). At that time, however, the New Deal did not give priority to ecological policy, but focused on social and economic issues. In other words, environmental policy was not an element of activism of any country at that time (ibid.).

The Green New Deal, on the other hand, consists of a number of policies that are aimed to address and solve the threats posed to the natural world, the global economy and our livelihoods by a triple crunch that is the financial crisis, climate change and high oil prices (GND Group, 2008, pp. 1-2). The European Green Party is promoting the Green New Deal through macro-economic, financial and social policies aimed at promoting alternatives to the economic, environ-

mental and social crises (<http://europeangreens.eu/greennewdeal/>). It is also being promoted by others such as the Green European Foundation (GEF), Environmental NGOs, the New Economic Foundation and the United Nations (<http://www.gef.eu/about/structure/>).

As a policy framework, the Green New Deal combines stabilisation in the short term with longer-term restructuring of the financial, taxation and energy systems. While it is international in outlook, it requires action at local, national, regional and global levels (GND Group, 2008, p. 3). It is designed to address the contemporary and future threats confronting society and to restore stability to our financial, political and ecosystems through a “joined-up thinking” (GND Group, 2008, p. 6).

The Green New Deal rests on three important pillars. Firstly, it addresses the re-regulation of the financial markets which works toward sustainable economic development. The second pillar rests on the environmental and social restructuring of society, driven by measures that address climate change, education, social justice as well as green industrial policy. The third and last pillar focuses on the renewal of the social contract between the North and South divide and between the rich and poor countries (Bütikofer and Giegold, 2009, p. 9).

The Green New Deal targets state investment in consumption and production activities which not only produce goods and services, but also prevent, limit, minimise or correct environmental damage to water, air and soil, as well as problems related to waste, noise and eco-systems (GND Group, 2008, p. 10). It offers a 10 year action strategy to protect the global climate, propose new economic dynamism, promote new justice and create sustainable jobs. It also presents itself as an opportunity to tackle the present global crises by embarking in a “common effort” (Bütikofer and Giegold, 2009, p. 36). Hence the Green New Deal presents a concrete framework for world economic recovery, whilst creating green jobs in the process.

It is against the background of this global economy that this study tries to explore the viewpoints of Maltese civil society about the importance and incidence of green jobs in Malta. One of the scopes of the investigation in this study is to see whether key players involved in civil society

have the tendency to fall in the dichotomy trap of defining sustainable energy as either a last resort which has to be lumped or a phenomenon of the latest development. Given the scant reference to small states in the EU literature this academic exercise may hopefully fill a part of this lacuna.

METHODOLOGY

The method used to collect data for this analysis was elite interviewing which consisted of a qualitative research survey conducted to a select group of key persons involved in the main organisations representing the Maltese civil society. On the basis of their relative experience and commitments these key persons are considered to be experts in their respective fields.

Elite interviewing is characterised by a situation in which the respondents are chosen because of their high levels of knowledge of the subject matter under discussion and their general intellectual and expressive abilities (Burnham *et al.*, 2004). According to Beth L. Leech (2002, p. 663 as cited in Burnham *et al.*, 2004), "elite interviewing can be used whenever it is appropriate to treat a respondent as an expert about the topic in hand." Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman (1999, p. 114 as cited in A. Zammit, 2002) claim that one of the advantages of elite interviewing is that "elites respond well to inquiries about broad areas of content and to a high proportion of intelligent, provocative, open-ended questions that allow them the freedom to use their knowledge and imagination." Nevertheless, there are three main disadvantages in elite interviewing, namely that in certain cases informants may be difficult to contact because of their busy schedules, they can also refuse to be interviewed and if they decide to participate, they can assume control during the interview because of their position and their experience in public life (Marshall and Rossman, 1999, as cited in A. Zammit, 2002).

Unfortunately some organisations did not reply to the recruitment letter, whilst others turned down the invitation due to lack of time and lack of knowledge. Others promised to send feedback, but never did. The organisations that accepted to take part in this survey were the two largest Maltese trade unions namely the Unjoni Haddiema Magħqudin (UHM) and General Workers Union (GWU) and two Environmental NGOs (Nature Trust Malta and Friends of the Earth (FoE Malta) which are two prominent ENGOs in Maltese civil

society. It is to be noted that the combined membership of the two trade unions taking part in this survey, namely GWU and UHM, amount to more than 80% of the total number of registered unionised members in Malta.

DATA ANALYSIS

The Small States' Context

The literature review of this study pointed out the various development challenges such as remoteness, small local niche markets and diseconomies of scale which small island states such as Malta has to face (The World Bank, 2000, pp. 1-3). However, rather than being considered as drawbacks, these challenges are seen by the participating entities in this research as an opportunity to obtain more environmentally friendly measures which are less damaging to the social and natural environment. In fact, UHM's interviewee stated that if the Maltese Government seriously addresses these challenges to create green jobs, this sector can become one of the main sources of employment on the Maltese islands. This point was corroborated by the GWU's interviewee who stated that the benefits of green jobs would

"far outweigh any traditional job losses as better paid jobs will be created."

Furthermore, the interviewee on behalf of FoE was confident that if the Green Jobs project is well implemented, Malta could

"offer its services to other countries especially since it could be seen as a stepping stone to northern African countries that have a huge potential."

Nature Trust's representative added that while the size of a country might be seen as a handicap,

"if used well can be a case example for other states."

The statements are in line with the beliefs expressed by the World Bank (2000, p. 3) wherein it has been emphasising, that addressing these challenges is in everyone's interest, and an ongoing work program of actions, and the successful development in small states depends on innovative initiatives.

Perceptions on The Green New Deal

When respondents were asked to identify the current challenges that Malta is currently facing in this regard the spokesperson of Nature Trust and Friends of the Earth mentioned amongst other factors the current global economic crisis. This is a challenge which the Green New Deal as a policy framework is aiming to address. The financial crises together with climate change and high oil prices are threats that are endangering the global economy, and in the process also causing harm to the environment and people's lives (GND Group, 2008).

According to the GWU's respondent, various NGOs have organised seminars and acted as pressure groups so that Government meets the renewable energy targets by the year 2020 as laid down by the European Union. Even the FoE's interviewee added that his ENGO is

“lobbying with stakeholders in creating more green jobs with an aim in fulfilling a sustainable future.”

The spokesperson of UHM stated that as a trade union, it is

“continuously promoting sustainable energy development, waste separation, recycling of raw material and thus green jobs creation.”

On the other hand the representative of the GWU stated that his union has been actively pressing government to draw out a strategic plan for the creation of a green economy. This point was highly emphasised by the GWU as otherwise the 2020 EU Renewable Energy targets would not be achieved. The stand taken by these organisations and their proposals are in tune with the calls for policies “to protect the global climate, propose new economic dynamism, promote new justice and create sustainable jobs” (Bütikofer and Giegold, 2009, p. 36).

These views about the way Maltese Government is being advised to address the issue of Green Jobs correspond with the ideal of an “expanded vision” as espoused by Barbier (Barbier, 2009). The focus of the “New Deal” is much wider and deeper than that of 1930s which limited its focus to social and economic issues. In other words the “Green New Deal” environmental policy of the new Green Deal is becoming an “element of

activism” (Szwed, 2011, p. 7) in those countries that want to address the critical situation of the environment as well. The respondents to this survey seem to have grasped this new reality.

Green Jobs in Sustainable Energy: the current situation

Respondents showed different degrees of awareness about the incidence and variety of green jobs in sustainable energy sector in Malta. Specific references to sustainable energy sector were sometimes missing in their responses. NGO representatives focused on jobs in the fields of solar and wind energy, albeit Friends of the Earth Malta (FOE) also referred to academics, thus adopting a more holistic vision of employment within the green industry, as proposed by Angelov and Johansson (2011, p. 247).

Friends of the Earth also recognised that research on sustainable energy is being carried out within the University of Malta. Nevertheless with the exception of the GWU, the respondents do not know of any employee training programmes on sustainable energy that are being organised. The General Workers Union (GWU), claimed that in spite of some initiatives in this regard the programmes are limited.

As regards job conditions and wage levels within Malta's sustainable energy sector, the UHM expressed overall satisfaction as it claims that the wages of unskilled workers in the sustainable energy sector tends to be higher than average wages of their counterparts in other sectors. This view is not shared by the GWU spokesperson who referred to the low wages in waste collection and recycling and the poor working conditions similar to those of low paid workers. The Union also expressed its concern about the loss of traditional jobs through the development of the sustainable energy sector in Malta. However it still feels that benefits outweigh negative outcomes.

The Nature Trust spokesperson said that wages in the sustainable energy sector are very low and working conditions are not satisfactory. According to the ENGO the main challenges related to green jobs in the sustainable energy sector are short-term profits, the need to save existing jobs, the current economic context, and lack of knowledge. Friends of the Earth said that in some sectors, such as those employing highly educated workers, wages were reasonably decent, but in others,

wages were on the low side. The ENGO added that conditions vary between one firm and the other.

Friends of the Earth referred to the lack of an adequate investment in the sustainable energy sector. Although it admits that this may be due to Malta's small size and its relatively limited market it still believes that this sector has the potential to expand and in the process create more jobs as happened in other countries such as Austria:

"Low tech and low cost solutions, such as home made solar water heaters have created a niche in countries like Austria".

These responses tend to confirm the concern expressed by Angelov and Johansson (2011, p. 252) and emphasised by the European Greens (Pierini, 2010, p 12) and the European Parliament (2010) on the unevenness in the creation of green jobs and on the need to look at the quality of such employment.

Incidentally ENGOs, in comparison to other civil society organisations, were recognised by respondents as being the ideal agencies for the generation of awareness on the importance of green jobs. As regards the role of employers and the Government in this regard there was no unanimity. The UHM representative identified government as being one of the key agents for the creation of green jobs through Wasteserv which is a Government agency responsible for waste management), and the state-owned Water Services Corporation. The trade unions through their increasing level of awareness of the importance of such jobs could also play a crucial part. The EU was viewed positively with respect to the creation of green jobs, through its Directives and funding. While overall respondents endorsed the EU-wide policies in this respect FOE and GWU said that these policies should take into account the specific context in which they have to be implemented.

A Sustainable Energy Policy? Challenges and prerequisites

There was wide consensus among respondents about the adoption of a policy on sustainable energy. The UHM expressed its willingness to contribute to the promotion and implementation of such a policy. The GWU tends to look more on the strength of Malta's strategic geographical location which may be used to its advantage. It argues that,

"...we feel that our country is very well geographically placed and has the potential to enter the export market."

Another theme emerging from the data analysis is that the implementation of a policy on green jobs in sustainable energy calls for the need of a well-educated workforce, particularly in the fields of engineering, technical, research and environmental management. NGOs were particularly vocal on this need. With regard to the availability of human and material resources related to green jobs in sustainable energy in Malta, there were mixed opinions among respondents. For example, as regards new technologies that can support EU 2020 targets Friends of the Earth pointed out that,

"...not enough investment has been made in this sector. Some out of the box ideas need to be considered too. Low tech and low cost solutions, such as home-made solar water heaters have created a niche in countries like Austria."

Common and transnational actions featured prominently in the respondents' recommendations. The GWU spokesperson referred to the national and EU pipeline projects involving the allocation of Malta on the EU Intelligence Electricity Grid; the installation of an offshore wind farm and the production of gas from landfill waste. In line with the principle of subsidiarity (Fücks in Schreyer & Mez, 2008, pp. 8-10). Friends of the Earth mentioned government strategies that are independent of EU funding, to indirectly support green jobs by granting subsidies on solar water heaters/solar panels. Nevertheless, UHM noted that in Malta, the management of sustainability projects is centralised within Government. The need for increased inclusion of civil society and decentralisation was also sustained by the General Workers Union:

"...the GWU had on several occasions suggested to Government to give its full assistance for the creation of cooperatives to conduct energy audits for households and industry. This is just one example of a concrete proposal put forward by the GWU."

Respondents were also in synch with a policy advised by the World Bank of combining a sustainable energy economy to broader areas of society, such as financial services, information technology and e-commerce (The World Bank, 2000,

pp. 45-46); they recommended that a sustainable energy policy should provide ample space for collaboration. Friends of the Earth made reference to the ongoing research programmes of the Energy Institute at the University of Malta.

The context within which these policies have to be implemented was emphasised by some respondents. The thrust of their argument is that the policy has to be adapted and/or customised to the specific needs and situation of the state concerned:

“The GWU is very much in favour of adopting an EU-wide mainstreamed policy that takes into account Malta’s limitations and economic circumstances.”

What this implies is that the formulation and implementation of a policy on green jobs in sustainable energy calls for consultation, dialogue and decentralisation. Such a consultative and wide participative approach might enable the actors involved in pre-empting the repercussions, such as the loss of traditional jobs, that might result from the enlargement of green jobs in sustainable energy sector.

CONCLUSION

The data emanating from this qualitative survey shows that the representatives of Maltese civil society are aware of and knowledgeable about the shift towards sustainable-energy use and its potential of creating green jobs. They also

acknowledge that it may lead to some jobs losses in particular sectors. But they still believe that benefits, which this shift can bring about, outweigh these negative repercussions. This strong belief is however tempered with a serious concern about uneven developments within the green job market, which may create skill mismatches and give rise to precarious employment. There seems to be a wide degree of consensus among the key players of Maltese civil society that the smooth implementation of a green sustainable policy depends heavily on a holistic and inclusive approach characterised by consultation and decentralisation, and finding the ideal mix of macro and micro policies. Overall respondents believe that smallness should not act as a deterrent to policy makers. Through innovative policy making and exploitation of Malta’s geographical position and its natural and human resources, the shift to a green sustainable economy can be successfully implemented. The supportive role of civil society as amply shown in the responses of its key respondents fulfils the need identified by Sutton to synthesize economic, social and environmental priorities through the involvement of the State and civil society by means of cooperation at international, national and local levels (Sutton 2004). Such support augurs well for the future prospects of green jobs in Malta.

Hence, consciousness on the green job potential exists within civil society in Malta. In itself, this augurs well for the myriad of challenges and opportunities which Maltese society is likely to encounter in relation to sustainable energy use.

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