Battery life malta

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Thanks to recent government grant scheme for domestic batteries, first introduced in 2021, and recently improved in February 2024 with grants of up to EUR7,200 per battery system, more and more Maltese households enquire about the benefits of home batteries.

Until recently, solar batteries were used mostly for off-grid applications to store solar energy for use on site. But latest advancements in battery technology, particularly the rise of lithium iron polymer phosphate (LiFeP04) cell chemistry, sparked huge interest from people who want to store their excess solar energy, whether or not they are connected to an electricity grid.

With a home battery storage system, solar energy generated during daylight hours can be stored and used in the evening or at night, thus avoiding having to import electricity from the grid. This allows households with PV systems to generate additional savings on energy bills over and above savings generated by solar panels alone.

Due to wide range of energy storage systems available on the market today, selecting the right type of solar battery can be a daunting choice. Virtue Solaris has been installing domestic and commercial battery systems in Malta since 2019, both on and off-the-grid, and we have gained considerable experience in selecting the right type of battery system for our customers" needs.

Until recently, many of our customers expressed scepticism about financial viability of owning a home battery system. The relatively high purchase cost and uncertain return generated doubts about whether solar batteries are a great investment. This may have indeed been the case about 5 years ago, when high feed-in solar tariffs, low import tariffs and absence of government incentives for battery systems made investment in grid connected battery systems a risky choice.

However today, situation is totally different. Feed-in tariffs for solar PV systems installed with the benefit of a government grant have been reduced from EUR0.165/kWh to just EUR0.105/kWh, making export of surplus solar energy generated during the day much less attractive. Conversely, lower feed-in tariffs encourage households to shift to self-consumption, that is to try to consume as much as possible own PV energy and to avoid having to buy energy from Enemalta at much higher tariffs.

Additionally, recent spate of nation-wide power cuts undermined confidence in the ability of Enemalta"s generating capacity and distribution infrastructure to cope with increasing energy demand. Although Enemalta is continuously investing in upgrading its distribution network and is in the process of creating additional generating capacity, this process is not likely to completely eliminate power cuts any time soon. On the other hand, owners of home battery systems can be self-sufficient and enjoy power supply even during a power cut.

Finally, recent government grants scheme whereby one can get a rebate of up to 80% of the costs of a battery system, capped at EUR720 per kWh of storage capacity and up to maximum of EUR7,200 per system, has effectively reduced initial capital outlay of investing in a solar battery system to only a fraction of its market cost. This scheme has been extremely popular with Maltese consumers: in the first two months since opening of the new scheme at the end of February 2024, over 600 households have applied for a government grants incentive.

With solar energy alone, most Maltese households can cover about 35% or more of their electricity needs. This percentage can even be increased to 85% or more by using smart home battery systems that adapt their output according to load requirements at any given time.

By maximizing self-consumption, a household can become almost, or even completely energy independent by using a home battery. By using a battery with the right capacity, the entire average daily electricity requirement can be covered with solar energy.