

Government abolishes import duties on solar technology



Companies in Cuba can now import solar technology duty-free (source: [Dad Hotel/Unsplash](#))

In view of the worsening energy crisis in Cuba, the government in Havana has created new incentives for the expansion of renewable energies. According to a [regulation published](#) in the official gazette on Friday, solar modules and accessories are now exempt from import duties. The regulation applies to private individuals as well as state-owned and private companies.

Previously, the duty exemption, which was introduced in 2021, only applied to private imports. The extension to legal entities is intended to promote the expansion of solar installations throughout the country, according to the Ministry of Finance. The regulation has retroactive effect for all imports from May 1, 2025.

Wide range of technologies benefits

In addition to photovoltaic modules, inverters, batteries, charge controllers, and mounting racks are also exempt from customs duties. The same applies to thermal solar systems, water pumps, small wind turbines, biogas plants, solar-powered air conditioners, and chargers for electric vehicles, provided they are powered by renewable energies.

To benefit from the duty exemption, travelers must declare the relevant items separately upon entry. Companies wishing to import larger systems can submit an application to the Ministry of Finance in advance.

Those who install solar systems to feed into the public power grid will also be exempt from income tax for the first eight years. This is subject to an assessment by the national energy authority ONURE on the technical feasibility of the project.

New incentives after years of stagnation

With these expanded incentives, the government is attempting to boost the expansion of renewable energies in the economy. Cuba currently covers only around five percent of its electricity needs from renewable sources, falling far short of its own targets.

After taking office in 2018, President Miguel Díaz-Canel announced plans to cover 24 percent of electricity needs with renewable energies by 2030. However, a lack of foreign currency and US sanctions are slowing down these plans. “This update is necessary to improve the regulatory framework after more than three years of applying the initial incentives, to incorporate practical experience, and to expand the scope to encourage citizens and businesses to participate in clean electricity generation,” explained Deputy Finance Minister Yenisley Ortíz Mantecón.

Since the beginning of the energy crisis and the increasing number of blackouts, more and more Cubans have installed solar panels on their roofs to have at least a few hours of electricity. However, with prices running into thousands of dollars, the systems are unaffordable for most people – although the situation is different for businesses. They must meet at least 50 percent of their peak energy demand with renewable sources by 2028 or pay corresponding compensation payments. This is stipulated by a [law that came into force in December 2024](#).

It remains to be seen whether the new incentives will be enough to accelerate the expansion of solar energy. The latest tariff exemption is a first step in this direction. However, the road to a sustainable energy transition is still long, as the [current energy crisis](#) shows. ([Cubaheute](#))