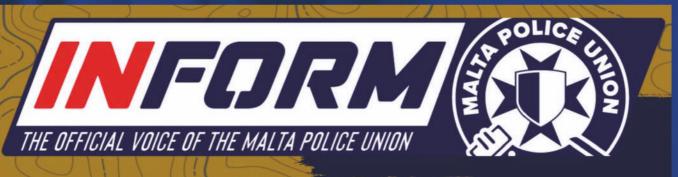
June 2024 Issue No.10









Spring Meeting 17-18 April - Malta

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The Union thanks for their assistance during the EuroCOP Spring Meeting - Malta





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Editorial

Neville Mercieca

Welcome to another issue of our inhouse magazine. This period is very busy for all of us because of the European Parliament Elections. Amidst all this, the Union also hosted the EuroCOP Spring Committee Meeting where representatives from 27 Police Unions from around Europe attended. Meetings were held at the AX The Palace Hotel and at Our office in Marsa.

April has been an amazing and important month for us. The highlight of this issue is of course the EuroCOP.

Whilst thanking you as always for taking time to go through this publication, we inform you that it is also available in a digital format.

Malta Police Union Legal assistance to members



The Union offers free legal assistance to its members during disciplinary proceedings and Public Service Commission (PSC) cases.

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EuroCOP Spring Meeting – Malta Marlon Hili, MPU Chairperson

April was an exciting month for the Malta Police Union because, as many of you may have seen from our social media posts, on April 16–18, 2024, the union hosted the European Confederation of Police (EuroCOP) alongside with about 26 other police unions from across Europe as part of the EuroCOP Spring Meeting.



The meeting takes place twice a year, in Spring and Autumn, and this spring we had the privilege of hosting them in our country. The Union also had the pleasure of welcoming the committees for a board meeting of EuroCOP and the Nordic Police Federation (Nordiska Polisförbundet) at our offices in Marsa on the 16th April.

Following these meetings, we had the chance to chat and exchange some mementos as a keepsake for this special occasion.

Let us now change the focus of our article to the meeting, where the rise in violence against police officers throughout Europe was once again addressed.

As Chairperson, I had the honour of presiding over this meeting and thanking everyone for their attendance. In addition, I addressed the conference's topic, pointing out that since the introduction of body cameras in 2021, there has been a significant decline in violence, particularly physical violence. I also urged the unions in attendance to push their local authorities to implement this technology. I also mentioned and emphasised how crucial the body-worn cameras were to enhance our officers' professionalism and approach because of the recordings.

During my speech, I also discussed the productive discussions that took place in 2023 regarding the sectorial agreement that the Malta Police Unions, in collaboration with all relevant parties, agreed upon and signed in October 2023. I also mentioned how this agreement contributed to a notable increase in our officers' takehome pay. In actuality, the increase was between 7% and 17% at most.

I included the maximum 129% increase in police allowance and the introduction of a €5 allowance in relation to the "Change in Location" in this percentage. It is important to note that whereas wages in Scotland increased by 4%, those in Finland were able to receive an 8% pay increase.





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recruitments, is creating a critical staffing shortage.

To create a fair compensation structure for all police officers across the force, I also discussed how we implemented the Duty Allowance for all of them, regardless of the branch to which they are assigned. To change the topic, I mentioned how the Malta Police Force continues to struggle with general wellbeing, particularly regarding mental wellbeing, even though the force and the unions are working to establish a proper procedure for when a police officer needs psychological assistance. I also mentioned the possibility that today's tough and intense competitions are also to blame for the high number of police officers quitting the force before their terms are through, which, when combined with an inadequate number of

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I mentioned how this is having a cascading effect, making those who are still in the force feel demotivated but at the same time pressured to perform the same number of tasks with the same level of dedication. Of course, the lack of experience brought on by the exodus of police officers is still a major problem. According to our calculations for 2023, Malta has one police officer for every 254 people, whereas the average for the EU is one police officer for every 298 people. This information is based on data from Eurostat. Even though you may argue that Malta's statistics are good when compared to other nations, bear in mind that other nations are serviced by independent organizations or civilians, while Malta has a single police force that handles all national duties including immigration, finance investigations, community policing, and many more.

I concluded my address by insisting how much the Malta Police Union cares for its members, and its commitment to keep on working hard for a better working environment for its members.

We also had the honour of having several other speakers, including Hon. Dr. Byron Camilleri MP, Minister for Home Affairs, Security, Reforms and Equality, and Commissioner of Police Angelo Gafa', who both went into further detail about the state of the force today and, of course, touched on the introduction of body-worn cameras and their benefits. They also discussed future initiatives in their speech, with a particular emphasis on the police force's four-year-old transformation strategy and the welfare of its personnel.

During the conference, there was a speaker from the Police Firearms Officers Association (PFOA). The organisation was founded with the intention of providing support to all individuals involved in armed police in the United Kingdom, as well as their families. As a result, they help police officers who have injured or involved third parties while on duty. The organisation gave us an overview of their stringent protocols, which, in conjunction with an impartial panel, oversee any involuntary inquiry that emerges after an event. The way they have taught staff members about their rights as well as the department's right to investigate is what drew my attention the most.

The Malta Police Union has already acted and is in communication with the management of PFOA to support the inclusion of a comparable procedure in our agenda for the management of the force.

Following the conference, the Malta Police Union threw a social dinner where everyone was welcome to unwind, chat, and share stories about their personal lives in addition to their work-related responsibilities. Despite the hectic week, the Malta Police Union is pleased to have hosted this prestigious conference in Malta. We take immense pride in the fact that everyone was impressed by our organisation and the friendly welcome they received everywhere they went.



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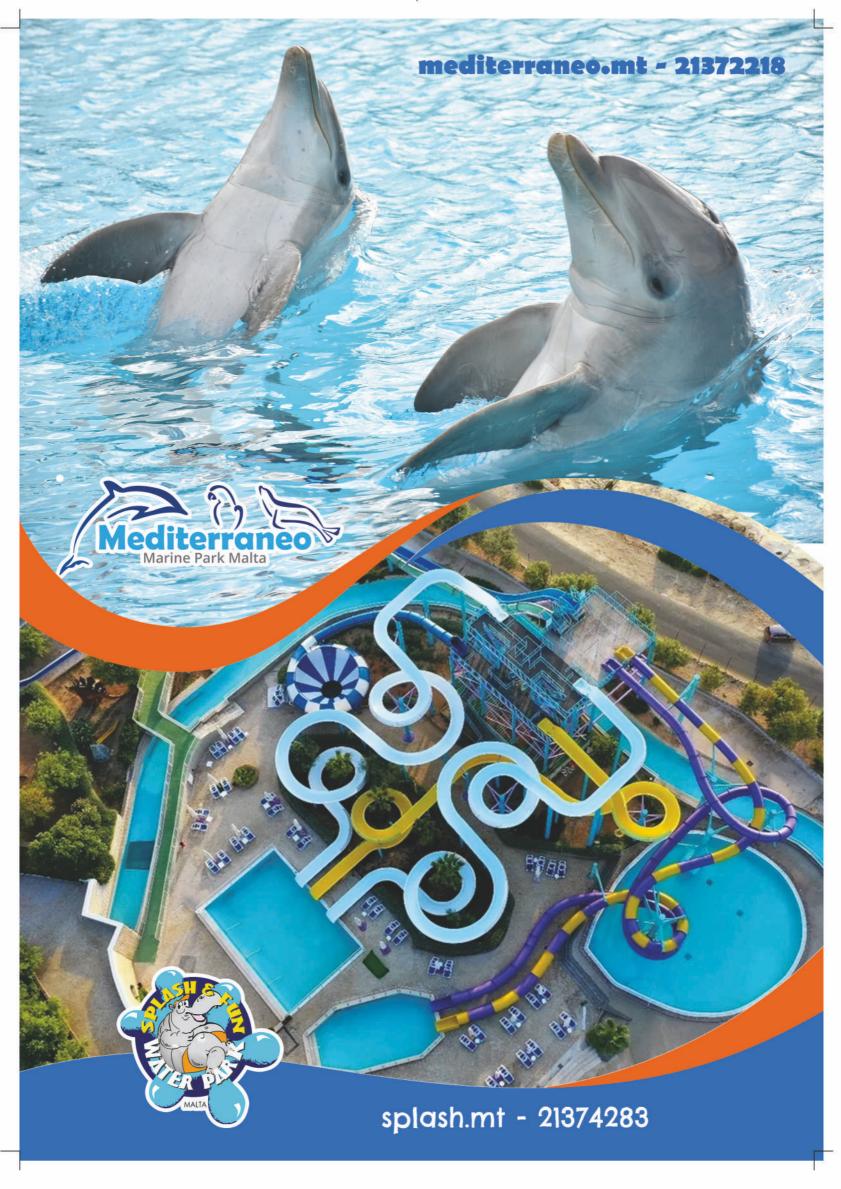


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As from the 1st May 2024, a EUR10 administration fee is being charged to those who opt not to be registered in the Check-Off system.



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Empathy. What is it exactly?

Republished from policechiefmagazine.org

Empathy is often mentioned as a key ingredient for enhancing community-police relations, especially following the publication of the *Final Report of the 2015 Presidential Task Force on 21st Century Policing*. This increased demand for empathic policing is not surprising: officers can adequately address the needs of a community only when they can identify and understand what those needs are. When community members believe that the police are addressing such issues, their confidence, trust, and general attitude toward the police improve.

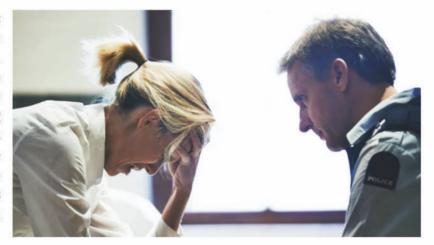
As a result of the recommendations of the report and from leaders across the law enforcement and criminal justice fields, many organizations have begun incorporating empathy into practice. For example, the Criminal Justice Training Centre in Burien, Washington, the police academy for most law enforcement in Washington State, has incorporated empathy education as a central component of its basic police training program. Training programs such as the LEED (Listen and Explain with Equity and Dignity) model and Axon's VR Training exist to help officers engage in more empathic communication.

However, conversations surrounding empathy in policing tend only to provide a cursory overview of what empathy is—the ability to understand and feel what others are thinking and feeling. Empathy is widely viewed as a good, positive characteristic. It is associated with prosocial behaviour and is a key ingredient in the formation and maintenance of healthy, loving relationships. While this conceptualization of empathy is technically correct, diminishing empathy into simply "the ability to understand and feel what others are thinking and feeling" overlooks important components of empathy that distinguish it from other separate—but related—concepts such as sympathy, compassion, and altruism.

Decades of research indicates that empathy is a complex psychological process. As social and behavioural scientists study policing and work with police agencies to enhance performance, they are constantly confronted by the practical and scientific reality that the ability to understand and feel the mental states of others is not easy. It requires the intricate interaction among emotional, behavioural, and cognitive capabilities to function properly. This process is even more complicated in the context of the policing profession given the uncertain, stressful nature of situations that officers encounter and the need to be vigilant. Deficiencies in empathic ability have been consistently shown to negatively impact relationships, well-being, and quality of life.

So, what is empathy, exactly, beyond the surface definition? What functions does it serve? What sets empathy apart from other related concepts? Why does it play such a critical role in the quality of our relationships and social interactions? What can the science of empathy tell us about improving our empathic skills?

Cognitive and Affective Empathy: Empathy comprises two components: cognitive empathy and affective empathy. Cognitive empathy refers to the ability to accurately identify what others are thinking or feeling while understanding that it may differ from our own thoughts and feelings. Affective empathy, on the other hand, refers to the ability to emotionally share the feelings of others while understanding that it may differ from our own feelings.



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Cognitive and affective empathy are not one and the same: sharing the excitement of your partner's retirement is separate from knowing and understanding how your partner is thinking and feeling about retiring. Both components are also equally important and fundamental to empathy. To use an example from antisocial behavioural research, bullies may know what their victims fear (cognitive empathy). However, the absence of their having affective empathy would hinder them from vicariously experiencing the fear they produce in their victims. Exhibiting only one kind of empathy does not necessarily qualify as being empathic. In fact, most people would likely not describe bullies as empathic even though the bullies are fully capable of accurately inferring what their victims are thinking and feeling.

What Sets Empathy Apart from Related Concepts? It is not uncommon to conflate empathy with concepts such as sympathy, compassion, and altruism. Although empathy shares some similarities with these concepts, there are important differences that distinguish them from one another.

Sympathy involves a feeling of care and concern for another and is typically accompanied by a desire to see them in a better state. Sympathy does not require shared knowledge or emotions. Having sympathy for someone does not mean having empathy for them. An individual can have sympathy for a friend who was laid off, but the individual cannot have empathy for their friend if they have not had the experience of being laid off themselves.

Compassion is like empathy in that it involves sharing another's emotions. However, unlike empathy, compassion also involves the desire and readiness to lessen another's suffering. Knowing what others are thinking and feeling does not always equate to taking any sort of action to lessen their suffering, or the desire to do so. An individual can have empathy for a friend who was laid off because the individual has also had the experience of being laid off, but to have compassion, the individual must also want to console their friend and take action to do so.

Altruism refers to having selfless regard and concern for the well-being of others. Knowing what others are thinking and feeling does not always equate to having selfless regard and concern for the well-being of others. An individual may display altruism by paying the bills for a friend who was laid off, but this action does not necessarily require the individual to know what their friend is feeling or thinking.

However, empathy often acts as the catalyst for sympathy, compassion, and altruism. For instance, having the knowledge and understanding that someone is experiencing sadness can more easily engender feelings of care and concern for that individual (sympathy), the desire to take away this individual's sadness (compassion), and selfless concern for their well-being (altruism).

Empathy as a Guide: Knowing the mental state of others enables individuals to steer an interaction in the direction that is in line with their needs, as well as to respond to the needs of others, in an appropriate manner. This is the reason why empathy is such a crucial element in social interactions: it provides guidance on the optimal course of action in any given situation. This guidance incorporates one's own perspective and others' perspectives. In this way, empathy is adaptive. Having knowledge of other people's mental states can be used to better anticipate their behaviour and identify options for mutually beneficial solutions.

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EuroCOP Manifesto 2024

EuroCOP adopts its 2024 European Parliament Elections Manifesto

We are at the brink of political changes in the European Union. At the beginning of June EU citizens will take part in EU elections and choose new Members of the European Parliament. By the end of the year, we shall also see new EU Commissioners taking their office. These changes will shape future EU legislative agenda. In order to make sure that priority issues for police officers in Europe are taken into account by policy makers, EuroCOP has launched its Manifesto for EU elections. This important step has been announced during EuroCOP Spring meeting in Malta on 17th of April.

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"We want Europe to be the place, where police officers are operating together in an environment of equality, safety, and support, provided with the rights, resources, and training to keep Europe's citizens safe and secure. With our 2024 European Parliament Elections Manifesto we call on all European democratic parties and candidates as well as newly elected MEPs and Commissioners to endorse our values and priorities in order to build a fair and secure European Union through 3 commitments" explains Jonne Rinne, EuroCOP President.

These three commitments cover priority issues for police officers in Europe. They are in line with EuroCOP's key goals such as Social Europe for Police, Internal Security in Europe, Safety for the Police and Solidarity and Network building.

- EU decision makers should address the increasing problem of violence against police officers. This
 deteriorating situation has been routinely ignored for too many years. As a first step, EuroCOP is
 calling to establish a central repository of data in the EU as regards incidences of violence against
 police officers. Collection of data at EU level would help understand the roots of the problem,
 exchange best practices between Members States and adapt safety awareness training programs
 for police officers.
- 2. In order to secure continuous recruitment and retention of police officers in EU Member States, EuroCOP believes that it is indispensable to guarantee to them fair working conditions and social rights. EuroCOP is calling on EU decision makers to provide police officers with appropriate support, training and resources needed to carry out their duties and to guarantee adequate wages, working time provisions as well as mental health support.
- 3. EuroCOP sees urgent need in enhancing common trust between Members States and their authorities and to facilitate cooperation and information exchange between police forces in Europe. EuroCOP is calling on future decision makers to remove any obstacle that hampers police cross-border cooperation and strengthen cooperation with regards to migration crisis, human and weapon trafficking, terrorist threats and eco-crime.

"The EuroCOP Manifesto has been endorsed unanimously during our Spring Annual meeting in Malta. The Manifesto will serve as a guiding document for EuroCOP priorities for the legislative term 2024-2029. We very much count on new European Parliament and European Commission to deliver on our priorities and to address the issue of violence against police officers in a holistic fashion" added Jonne Rinne, EuroCOP President.

Malta Police Union









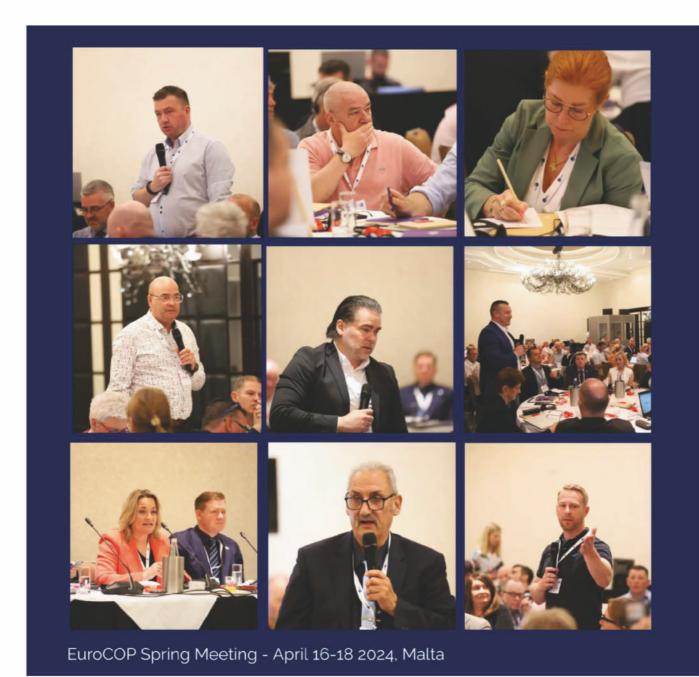












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Data Protection: CCTV

From the office of the Information and Data Protection Commissioner [idpc.org]

As technology improves, systematic automated monitoring for the purpose of property protection has become a significant phenomenon in our days. The use of CCTV installed at private dwellings is based on the collection and retention on images of persons passing through the monitored area. The principal objective is to collect evidence and identify a person who might have maliciously or unintentionally caused damage or harm to one's property.

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Nevertheless, the potential risk of misuse of such data collection increases at par of the area or space being monitored. The risk is also based on the place, time, and frequency of the captured angle by each individual camera installed.

In this regard, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Article 35 (3)(c) requires that where data shall be capturing or monitoring systematically a public accessible area on a large scale, a data protection impact assessment is required. In such a case, the person installing the CCTV systems may be identified as a 'data controller'.

However, pursuant to Article 2 (2)(c), the processing of personal data by a natural person during a purely personal or household activity, which can also include online activity, is out of the scope of the GDPR. This provision is known as 'household exemption'.

The Household exemption is interpreted by the European Court of Justice (CJEU) as "activities which are carried out in the course of private or family life of individuals...". Therefore, if cameras within a CCTV installation have their angle of focus directed to only capture a private property or area, this is considered as an activity under the household exemption.

However, if a video surveillance system, to the extent it involves the constant recording and storage of personal data and covers, "even partially, a public space and is accordingly directed outwards from the private setting of the person processing the data in that manner, it cannot be regarded as an activity which is purely personal or household activity for the purpose of the second indent of Article 3 (2) of Directive 95/46". (CJEU Case C-212/13)

Video surveillance is lawful if it is necessary to meet the purpose of a legitimate interest pursued by a controller or a third party, unless such interests are overridden by the data subject's interests or fundamental rights and freedoms (Article 6 (1) (f)).

The European Data Protection Board (EDPB) indicates that legitimate interest may be based on a real and hazardous situation, the purpose to protect property against burglary, theft or vandalism can constitute a legitimate interest for video surveillance. However, the controller should consider that if the data subject objects to the surveillance in accordance with Article 21 the controller can only proceed with the video surveillance of that data subject if it is a *compelling* legitimate interest which overrides the interests, rights, and freedoms of the data subject or for the establishment, exercise or defence of legal claims. The legitimate interest needs to be of real existence and must be a present issue (i.e. it must not be fictional or speculative) [CJEU Case C-708/18 p.44]. A real-life situation of distress needs to be at hand – such as damages or serious incidents in the past – before starting the surveillance.

Am I allowed to install a CCTV camera on my private property?

Yes, you are allowed to install a CCTV camera on your private property. Under the GDPR this falls within the category of the so-called household exemption. As considered by the European Court of Justice, the

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so called "household exemption" must "be interpreted as relating only to activities which are carried out in the course of private or family life of individuals".

It is important therefore that each camera that is installed is pointed solely to the private premises of the household.

A video surveillance system involves the constant recording and storage of personal data. Therefore, if a camera is pointing even partially, a public space and is accordingly directed outwards from the private setting of the person processing the data in that manner, it cannot be regarded as an activity which is a purely 'personal or household' activity for the purposes of the second indent of Article 2(2)(c) of Regulation 2016/679.

Besides the above-mentioned elements, the user of video surveillance at home needs to perform an overall assessment before choosing the location of each camera to be installed.

What assessment should I carry out prior to the installation of a CCTV system?

Video surveillance based on the mere purpose of "safety" or "for your safety" is not sufficiently specific (Article 5 (1) (b)). Video surveillance is lawful if it is necessary in order to meet the purpose of a legitimate interest. Given a real and hazardous situation, the purpose to protect property against burglary, theft or vandalism may constitute a legitimate interest for video surveillance.

Personal data should be adequate, relevant, and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which they are processed ('data minimisation').

Before installing a video surveillance system, a person should always critically examine if this measure is firstly suitable to attain the desired goal, and secondly adequate and necessary for its purposes. Video surveillance measures should only be chosen if the purpose of the processing could not reasonably be fulfilled by other means which are less intrusive.

For how long shall I retain the video footage?

Article 5(1) of the GDPR stipulates the general principle that personal data should not be retained for no longer that is necessary for the purposes for which the personal information is processed ('storage limitation'). In general, CCTV recordings should not be kept for more than a few days, unless the controller is able to justify a longer retention period based on justifiable grounds.

Am I allowed to disclose the recordings to third parties?

Under Article 4(2) GDPR, 'disclosure' is defined as the transmission (e.g. individual communication), dissemination (e.g. publishing online) or otherwise the making available of information.

Any disclosure of personal data is a separate kind of processing activity for which you need to have a legal basis in terms of Article 6(1) GDPR. Therefore, a request for CCTV recordings made by law enforcement authorities during an official investigation, would fall under the legal ground of Article 6(1)(c) GDPR as the processing would be necessary for compliance to a legal obligation to which the controller is subject.

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Essential advice on looking after your furry friends.

Pets are wonderful companions. They can cheer you up when you're feeling low, reduce stress and anxiety, and even keep you fit. When we make the decision to adopt or buy an animal, it becomes our responsibility to care for that pet properly. Whether you've got an energetic Beagle or a fluffy Persian – every household pet has a basic set of needs that we need to fulfil.

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Keep on reading to learn how to be the perfect pet parent.

Access to nutritious food: Just like humans, your pet needs to eat healthy and nutritious meals for vital growth and brain function, and to keep their energy levels up. You want to get the balance right, where you're feeding them enough, but not overfeeding them, as this can cause obesity and other health issues. There isn't any set rule for all pets. Growing kittens and puppies will need a different diet to adults, or an animal with certain health issues will need a specialized diet. Different animals and breeds will have their own food requirements, so get advice from your vet if you're unsure what or how much to feed your pet. Browse our range of pet food and pet bowls.

Clean drinking water: Keep your pet hydrated and cool (especially in the summer months) with drinking water. Your pets should always have access to fresh drinking water at all times of the day. If you have a cat or dog, put a bowl of water next to their food bowl, we suggest refilling it twice a day, or whenever it becomes empty.

Smaller animals like gerbils or hamsters should have access to a drinking bottle with a sipper tube, you should check this regularly to make sure there aren't any blockages. If you have pets that live in water, such as fish or turtles, we suggest cleaning your aquarium once a week to prevent them from getting sick due to unhygienic water.

A safe and comfortable shelter: Your pet should always have a comfortable place to sleep and somewhere safe they can retreat to and feel protected from any potential threats.

If you own a dog, it's important they have a quiet, comfortable, and warm place to sleep without any disturbances. Place a dog bed in a quiet corner in the home, it should be large enough for your dog to stretch their legs and sleep comfortably. It's also a good idea to get an additional dog bed and place it in a communal area where the family spends a lot of time, so your pup can rest and relax while still being in your company.

You may also want to invest a dog crate or indoor kennel; this is a safe and secure enclosed space for your dog to spend short periods of time. It's somewhere your dog can go if they are feeling nervous or stressed, or if you have house guests who are wary of dogs. When buying a dog crate, make sure it's large enough for your canine to stand, turn around, stretch, and lie down in.

Regular movement and exercise: Exercise and movement are essential for your pets physical and mental health. Different pets will have different requirements, if you have a dog, they will need to be taken out on regular walks. The number of walks will depend on the size and age of your canine. When taking your pup out for a walk, make sure they're on a lead. This helpful guide from RSPCA will show you how train your dog to walk on a lead without pulling.

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If you have an indoor cat who can't go roaming outdoors whenever they want, then it's a good idea to invest in a cat climbing tower or scratching post to keep them occupied. Outdoor cats are very independent and will get enough movement out and about in your local neighbourhood. If you have an outdoor cat, we suggest getting them microchipped so you can track your feline friend and ensure that they don't get lost or into any trouble.

If you have a gerbil, hamster, or any other small animal that lives in a cage, a mini exercise wheel can promote regular movement. Pet toys are also fantastic for encouraging your pets to keep active. They're also great for entertaining pets if they're bored, plus they can curb destructive behaviour and prevent anxiety.

Somewhere they can go to the bathroom: Your furry companions should always have a clean and sanitary place to go to the bathroom whenever nature calls.

If you have a cat, we suggest having a clean litter tray within easy access. Even if you have an outdoor cat, a litter tray is a safe place where they can relieve themselves without needing to go outside in bad weather conditions or potentially getting themselves into risky situations.

Puppies don't reach their full bladder capacity until they are about 12 years old. During this time, it's important to give them plenty of opportunities to go to the toilet. You should take them outside regularly after each meal, before bed, and after playtime. Learn how to toilet train your dog with this guide from the RSPCA.

Regular vet check-ups: Take your pet for a yearly check up at the vets to make sure that they are happy and healthy, and everything is functioning as normal. Make sure to keep up to date with any vaccinations your cat or dog may need. If your pet starts acting unusually or shows any warning signs of being unwell, take them to see a trusted vet as soon as you can.



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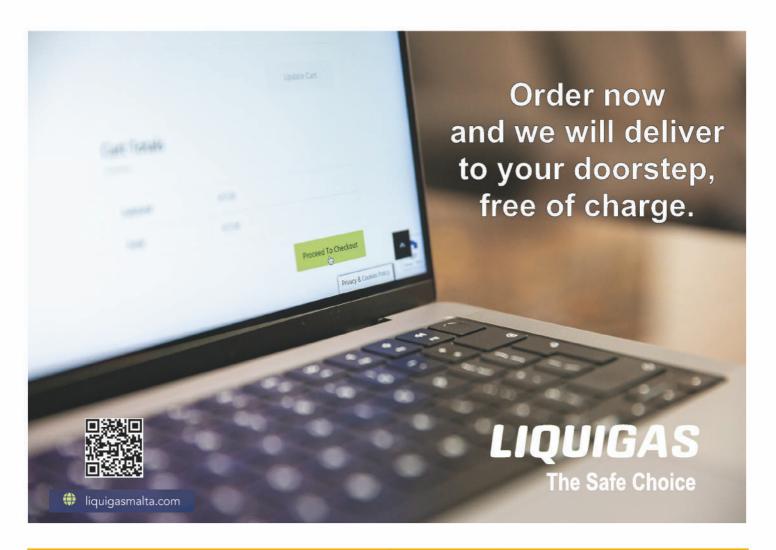
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Good for Your Health and the Environment: Why We Should Be Eating Oily Fish Gumersindo Feijoo Costa

A range of economic, nutritional, religious and ideological factors influence our diets. The key, however, lies in finding a balance that cares for both our health and that of the planet.

The traditional Mediterranean and Atlantic diets are two options that meet these requirements. Fish plays an important role in both, providing flavor as well as nutritional value.

Globally, annual per capita fish consumption has almost doubled over the last 50 years, from 10.75kg in 1970 to 20.03kg in 2021. It has grown exponentially in China, where the average person ate 4.58kg in 1970, and 39.87kg in 2021, and has also grown significantly in the EU, where annual consumption has increased by 40%, from 16.58kg to 23.44kg in the same period.

Oily fish is defined as fish with a proportion of fat higher than 5-6% of their muscle mass: sardines, longfin tuna, mackerel and horse mackerel are some the most well-known examples.

Oily fish has been part of many countries' cultural heritage throughout history. In Spain, for example, sardines are integral to the San Juan festivities in June, while the coastal fishing season for longfin tuna is also traditionally followed due to the seasonal migration of fish in search of nutrient-rich waters and suitable temperatures for breeding and feeding.

Oily Fish as Part of a Healthy Diet

On a nutritional level, oily fish stands out thanks to three important components:

Polyunsaturated omega-3 fatty acids, which can help to protect against cardiovascular disease and other illnesses.

Peptides—protein molecules made up of two or more amino acids—which have various health benefits such as preventing or treating conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity.

High vitamin content (notably vitamins A, D and E) and other micronutrients such as magnesium, selenium, and iodine.

The benefits of this combination of nutrients have been demonstrated by the GALIAT (Galician Atlantic Diet) project, led by the Santiago de Compostela University Hospital. The project consists of a series of clinical trials to determine the effects of the traditional Atlantic diet on the general population. The results show a reduction in metabolic syndrome—a group of conditions that increase the risk of heart disease and diabetes.

Oily Fish and Traditional Cooking

Fish consumption is part and parcel of the evolution of *Homo sapiens*. For hundreds of thousands of years our species has incorporated it as a staple food, and its preparation has been perfected throughout history.

Oily fish lends itself to a multitude of uses in the kitchen, from simple grilling to more elaborate dishes like tataki or papillote. One advantage of oily fish is that it is easy to clean and bone, meaning it can be included in children's diets.

Given such a wide range of uses, along with its nutritional benefits and low environmental impact, this type of fish should be making regular appearances on our plates.

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