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*THE OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE MALTA POLICE UNION*



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# Editorial

Neville Mercieca

Today, as I retire from the Malta Police Force, I find myself looking back on a journey that has shaped not only my career but also the person I have become. When I first put on the uniform, I understood that it carried weight: the trust of the public, the duty to protect, and the responsibility to uphold the law with fairness and integrity. What I didn't fully grasp then was how deeply this calling would define my life.

The years have been filled with challenges and sacrifices. There were long nights, difficult cases, and moments of risk that tested courage and resolve. But there were also moments of pride and the satisfaction of helping those in need, the camaraderie of colleagues who became family, and the knowledge that I played my part in safeguarding Malta.

Retirement, for me, is not simply about leaving the Force; it is about carrying forward the lessons and values it instilled discipline, resilience, and above all, service to others. While I step away from the daily duties of policing, my heart will always remain tied to the badge, the uniform, and the community it represents. To my fellow officers, past and present: thank you for your support, your friendship, and your unwavering commitment to the profession. To the public we served: thank you for your trust. It has been the greatest honour of my life to serve Malta in this way.

As I begin this new chapter, I do so with gratitude for the career I have had, for the people I have met along the way, and for the peace of mind that comes from knowing I gave my very best.



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## Marlon Hili, MPU Chairperson

Collegiality is more than just friendliness at work, it is the spirit of cooperation, mutual respect, and shared responsibility that allows teams and organizations to thrive. Rooted in the idea of colleagues supporting one another, collegiality fosters an environment where people feel valued, motivated, and united in purpose. History has shown that some of the most important labour protections we enjoy today like weekends, paid leave, and safety standards were won through collective bargaining. Beyond the practical benefits, a union gives you a sense of belonging and solidarity.

At its core, collegiality means building professional relationships on trust, respect, and collaboration. It is about seeing coworkers not as competitors but as partners working toward common goals. Collegiality can be expressed through small acts like listening attentively, offering help, or celebrating a colleague's success. The Evolution of Police Trade Unions in Europe as well as through larger practices such as teamwork, mentoring, and inclusive decision-making.

Collegiality is not just a workplace nicety but is a cornerstone of professional success. By cultivating mutual respect, cooperation, and support, colleagues create an environment where individuals and organizations alike can flourish. In today's fast-paced and often stressful professional world, collegiality remains a vital ingredient for harmony and progress.

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# Audi Alteram Partem: Ensuring Fairness in Police Discipline

In law enforcement, maintaining discipline and accountability is essential for public trust and operational integrity. However, discipline must be administered fairly, and this is where the principle of “**Audi alteram partem**”—Latin for “*hear the other side*”—becomes crucial.

## Why It Matters in Policing

Police officers operate in high-pressure environments, making quick decisions that can be scrutinized internally or by the public. Disciplinary processes must be transparent and just to ensure:

- **Protection of Officers’ Rights:** Officers are entitled to respond to allegations before any punitive action is taken. This ensures that misunderstandings, incomplete information, or context-specific factors are considered.
- **Integrity of the Investigation:** Hearing the officer’s perspective can provide crucial insights that might not be visible in initial reports, leading to more accurate and fair outcomes.
- **Trust in the System:** Officers are more likely to respect disciplinary outcomes when they know their side has been heard, fostering a culture of accountability rather than fear or resentment.

## Practical Implementation in Police Departments.

1. **Clear Notification:** Officers must be informed in writing about the allegations against them, including evidence and potential consequences.
2. **Opportunity to Respond:** The accused officer should have the chance to present facts, provide witnesses, or clarify circumstances relevant to the complaint.
3. **Impartial Hearings:** Disciplinary panels or investigators should be neutral, ensuring that decisions are based on facts and not bias or external pressures.
4. **Documentation and Transparency:** A record of the officer’s response and the decision-making process helps maintain accountability and legal compliance.

While the principle is clear, implementation can be challenging in policing due to urgent operational needs, confidentiality concerns, or complex cases. Departments must balance prompt action with fairness, ensuring that officers are not penalized without proper consideration of their perspective.

In police disciplinary settings, “**Audi alteram partem**” is more than a procedural formality—it is a safeguard of justice, professionalism, and morale. By ensuring that officers are heard before any disciplinary decision, law enforcement agencies uphold ethical standards, reinforce trust within the force, and strengthen their credibility with the public. **Fair processes create not only accountable officers but also a culture of respect, transparency, and integrity.**





## Celebrating 70 Years: 8 Major Achievements of the Malta Police Union

- 1. Transition from Association to Legal Trade Union (2015):** Initially founded as the Malta Police Association in 1955, the organization focused on improving basic working conditions—such as wages, uniform comfort, working hours, and pension terms. In 2015, it achieved official recognition as a registered trade union under Act IV of 2015—the first of its kind for police personnel in Malta. This transformed the MPU from a mere association into a fully independent, autonomous union.
- 2. Joining European and National Trade Union Bodies (2016):** To strengthen support and advocacy, the MPU joined: EuroCOP (European Confederation of Police) in February 2016. Confederation of Malta Trade Unions (CMTU) in June 2016, boosting its influence in national labour matters.
- 3. First Sectoral / Collective Agreement (2018):** The MPU secured a historic collective agreement in 2018, encompassing full-time police personnel. Key outcomes included: Shift from a 46-hour to a 40-hour work week. Overtime explicitly compensated. Rank-based salary increases for constables and inspectors. This was Malta's first-ever sectoral agreement for police.
- 4. New Multi-Year Collective Agreement (2024–2025):** Following negotiations, the MPU and the Police Officers Union endorsed a new five-year collective agreement. This extended the framework initiated in 2018 by enhancing pay, allowances, and other employment conditions.
- 5. Representation in National Public Service Collective Bargaining (2024–2030):** MPU became one of ten unions included in Malta's landmark Public Service Collective Agreement (2025–2030) alongside other public employees. The agreement, representing an investment of €1.27 billion which covers improvements in Work-life balance and mental health support. Training, overtime and shift allowance, pension incentives, and qualification bonuses.
- 6. Advocacy for the Right to Strike:** The MPU actively campaigned for striking rights for police officers, rights currently restricted by law. It lodged a constitutional case in 2022, seeking alignment with the European Social Charter, which grants such rights. At EuroCOP's autumn congress, MPU leadership reiterated that this remains a long-term priority.
- 7. Defense of Impartiality in Disciplinary Processes:** In 2023, MPU demanded the removal of a disciplinary board member, citing concerns about impartiality and fair hearings for union members. The union even issued directives distancing members from any proceedings involving the contested official.
- 8. Stand for Officer Welfare and Conditions:** MPU spotlighted poor working environments, like dilapidated police stations and pressured authorities for facility upgrades. It highlighted issues such as overloaded workloads, infrastructure deficits, and institutional neglect.

**The Malta Police Union remains firmly committed to securing the best possible conditions, rights, and protections for all its members. Guided by our mission to safeguard the wellbeing and professional dignity of every officer, we will continue to advocate tirelessly, engage constructively, and ensure that the voice of our members is always heard and respected.**



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# Botika.mt: Redefining Wellness and Self-Care in Malta



In recent years, the way we shop for wellness, skincare, and personal care has changed dramatically. Convenience is no longer a luxury; it's an expectation. But convenience without trust can leave people feeling overwhelmed by choice and underwhelmed by quality. This is where Botika steps in - a Maltese wellness hub that combines accessibility, expertise, and a curated portfolio designed to put people at the heart of self-care.

Botika.mt is more than an e-commerce store. It's a local initiative with a simple vision: to make high-quality wellness and beauty products accessible to everyone across Malta and Gozo. From the start, the team behind Botika believed shopping for personal care shouldn't feel like a chore or a guessing game. By offering free delivery with no minimum spend, a collection point in Qormi, and a straightforward online experience, Botika has positioned itself as both a trusted supplier and a wellness partner.

But the company doesn't stop at products. Through its Health Talk platform, Botika has created a space where conversations lead to healthier living.

Articles, tips, and expert insights are shared to help readers understand how to use products effectively, combine them safely, and adopt healthier habits. This focus on knowledge sets Botika apart. It isn't just about what you buy, but how those choices fit into your wider wellbeing journey.

## A Curated Portfolio for Every Stage of Life

Step into Botika.mt and you'll find a diverse, thoughtfully curated range of categories. Parents will appreciate the Baby & Kids section, which covers essentials from feeding and hygiene to toys and skincare for little ones. For skincare lovers, there's a wide selection of cleansers, serums, and advanced formulations from respected international brands, including dermatological lines like Neostrata.

The Hair Care range addresses everything from everyday maintenance to specialised solutions for thinning hair, while the Health & Personal Care collection includes vitamins, supplements, and wellness products that support a healthier lifestyle. For those seeking practical solutions, the site also stocks medical devices and orthotics, including braces, supports, and diagnostic tools. Even oral care and lifestyle items like wellness teas and gifts feature in the Botika mix, completing a well-rounded catalogue.

Botika offers products from over 40 trusted brands, blending everyday essentials with premium choices. There's something for everyone - busy parents, skincare fans, those with specific health needs, or anyone wanting to treat themselves.

## Why We Do What We Do

A clear set of principles drives everything behind Botika's range and service. Accessibility comes first. By removing delivery thresholds and focusing on local service, the company makes self-care products available to anyone, whether it's a single pack of toothpaste or a full skincare routine.

The second principle is trust. In a market of varying quality, Botika carefully evaluates every product, giving customers both convenience and confidence in their purchases.

Third is education. Wellness is personal, and Botika's Health Talk reflects its commitment to helping customers make informed decisions.

Finally, Botika is proudly Maltese. Its team understands life in Malta and Gozo, offering a platform both globally competitive and local at heart.

## A Holistic View of Wellbeing

Botika.mt is more than a store - it's a hub for self-care in every form, from supplements and skincare to medical aids and the simple comfort of a soothing cup of tea.

In a world where the lines between wellness, beauty, and healthcare are increasingly blurred, Botika stands out by offering an integrated approach. By combining accessibility, education, and curation, it has carved a new space in Malta's self-care landscape - one where every product and piece of advice works toward helping people live healthier, happier lives.

# Botika

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## Understanding the Broken Windows Theory

The *Broken Windows Theory* is one of the most influential and controversial ideas in criminology and urban sociology. First introduced in the early 1980s, the theory suggests that visible signs of disorder—such as broken windows, graffiti, litter, and vandalism—encourage further crime and antisocial behaviour if left unaddressed. While it has shaped policing strategies worldwide, it has also sparked debates over fairness, effectiveness, and community trust.

The theory was first articulated in 1982 by social scientists James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling in an article for *The Atlantic Monthly*. They used the metaphor of a broken window in an abandoned building: if one window is broken and not repaired, it signals neglect, and soon more windows will be broken. Eventually, the entire building and neighbourhood may decline. Applied to crime, the idea is that small acts of disorder create an environment where larger crimes are more likely to occur.

Its core Principles are that Disorder Breeds Crime as Minor signs of neglect like graffiti, public drinking, or vandalism which signal that rules are unenforced, making more serious crimes seem easier to commit. Environment Shapes Behaviour as people adjust their behaviour based on their surroundings. Clean, orderly neighbourhoods encourage law-abiding conduct, while chaotic environments foster lawlessness and Community Confidence since Addressing small problems quickly can build residents' trust in authorities and reinforce community pride, reducing tolerance for crime.

The Broken Windows Theory had a profound impact on policing, especially in the United States during the 1990s. For example, in New York City, Police Commissioner William Bratton and Mayor Rudy Giuliani implemented “zero-tolerance” policies, cracking down on minor offenses such as fare evasion, loitering, and vandalism. Crime rates dropped dramatically, and supporters credited the strategy with transforming New York into one of the safest big cities in the world.

While influential, the Broken Windows Theory has faced significant criticism:

1. **Causation vs. Correlation.** Critics argue that reducing disorder does not necessarily cause serious crime to decline. Other factors, like economic changes or demographic shifts, may explain falling crime rates.
2. **Over-Policing and Inequality.** “Zero-tolerance” strategies often resulted in aggressive policing of minor infractions, disproportionately impacting marginalized communities and contributing to tensions between police and residents.
3. **Community-Led Alternatives.** Some scholars suggest that community empowerment, social services, and addressing root causes of crime (poverty, inequality, lack of opportunity) are more effective than heavy-handed policing of minor offenses.

Today, many criminologists and policymakers advocate for a balanced approach. Maintaining public spaces and addressing disorder can help prevent crime, but enforcement should be fair, proportional, and community focused. Crime prevention should also emphasize social investment, improving housing, education, and employment opportunities to address deeper causes of criminal behaviour. Newer approaches like community policing and problem-oriented policing incorporate aspects of the Broken Windows Theory but stress collaboration with residents rather than punitive crackdowns.





The Broken Windows Theory reshaped crime prevention by highlighting the link between disorder and community safety. While its application has sometimes led to over-policing and social tensions, the central insight that environment influences behaviour remains influential. The challenge for modern justice systems is to balance maintaining order with ensuring fairness, equity, and respect for all communities.

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Inform is the official magazine of the Malta Police Union. It provides a wide-ranging overview of general knowledge topics, which may not be Police related, but which are useful in the every day life, thus making it an option for non-police staff.

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## Tunnel Vision in Police Investigations: Risks, Causes, and Solutions.

In the world of criminal justice, the term *tunnel vision* does not refer to eyesight, but to a cognitive bias that can have serious consequences in policing and prosecution. Tunnel vision occurs when investigators or prosecutors become overly focused on a single suspect or theory of a case, ignoring or undervaluing alternative explanations and contradictory evidence. This narrowed perspective can lead to wrongful convictions, eroded public trust, and justice denied for victims and communities.

Tunnel vision in law enforcement describes a situation where investigators “lock in” on a particular suspect or hypothesis early in the process. From that point onward, all evidence is interpreted in a way that supports the preferred theory, while conflicting information is disregarded, rationalized, or explained away. This isn’t usually intentional misconduct—it often results from natural human cognitive biases—but the impact can be devastating.

Several factors contribute to tunnel vision in police investigations. **Confirmation Bias:** The tendency to seek and interpret evidence that confirms pre-existing beliefs, while discounting evidence that contradicts them. **Pressure to Solve Cases Quickly:** Public and political pressure to “get results” can push investigators to fixate on the first plausible suspect. **Emotional Involvement:** High-profile or emotionally charged cases can fuel the urge for quick closure, making investigators more susceptible to bias. **Groupthink and Institutional Culture:** Team members may reinforce each other’s assumptions, especially in hierarchical environments where dissent is discouraged. **Media Influence:** Sensational coverage can shape perceptions of suspects and subtly influence investigative focus.

Tunnel vision can distort the investigative process at every stage. **Misinterpretation of Evidence:** ambiguous forensic results may be read in ways that support the chosen theory. **Witness - Mismanagement:** investigators may lead witnesses or disregard testimony that doesn’t align with their assumptions. **Suppression of Alternatives:** Other suspects or scenarios may never be pursued. **Wrongful Convictions** – Innocent individuals can be convicted, while the true perpetrators remain free. Numerous wrongful conviction cases across jurisdictions (e.g., those later overturned by DNA evidence) cite tunnel vision as a major contributing factor.

Recognizing and mitigating tunnel vision is critical to ensuring fair justice. Effective strategies include: **Training in Cognitive Bias:** Teaching investigators about psychological biases helps them recognize when they may be narrowing their focus. **Peer Review and Independent Oversight:** Having fresh eyes review evidence and case theories can reveal blind spots. **Structured Investigative Techniques:** Using decision-making frameworks that require consideration of alternative hypotheses. **Encouraging Dissent:** Building a culture where questioning assumptions is not only allowed but expected. **Evidence-Based Safeguards:** Blind testing in forensic analysis, double-blind lineups, and strict disclosure rules reduce the risk of biased interpretations.

Tunnel vision in police investigations is a well-documented cognitive trap with real-world consequences. By recognizing its signs and implementing safeguards, law enforcement agencies can improve accuracy, protect the innocent, and strengthen public trust in the justice system.

**True justice depends on investigators keeping their vision wide, open, and objective.**



## The Vital Role of Police in Supporting the LGBTIQ+ Community

In recent decades, the global conversation around LGBTIQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and other diverse identities) rights has gained momentum, highlighting the need for safety, equality, and acceptance. While legal protections and social awareness have increased, the role of law enforcement in supporting the LGBTIQ+ community remains crucial. Police forces play a pivotal role not just in enforcing laws but also in fostering trust, preventing discrimination, and ensuring that all members of society feel safe and protected.

### Building Trust Between Police and the LGBTIQ+ Community

Historically, relationships between law enforcement and LGBTIQ+ individuals have been fraught with tension and mistrust due to discrimination, harassment, and bias. Addressing these historical wounds is essential for creating a society where everyone can seek help without fear. When police actively demonstrate inclusivity, sensitivity, and understanding, it fosters trust. This trust encourages members of the LGBTIQ+ community to report crimes, seek assistance, and collaborate with law enforcement to maintain safety and justice.

### Protecting Against Hate Crimes and Violence

Members of the LGBTIQ+ community are disproportionately affected by hate crimes, domestic violence, and harassment. Police intervention is crucial in addressing these crimes promptly and effectively. By implementing specialized training programs on LGBTIQ+ issues, law enforcement can better identify bias-motivated crimes, respond appropriately, and provide victims with compassionate support. Such measures not only hold perpetrators accountable but also send a clear message that violence and discrimination against LGBTIQ+ individuals will not be tolerated.

### Promoting Awareness and Inclusivity

Police departments can act as catalysts for societal change by advocating for inclusivity and diversity. Community outreach programs, workshops, and participation in events such as Pride parades demonstrate solidarity and raise awareness of LGBTIQ+ issues. Visibility and engagement help normalize the presence of LGBTIQ+ individuals in society while reducing stigma and fostering a culture of respect and equality.

### Enhancing Mental Health and Wellbeing

Fear of discrimination or harassment often prevents LGBTIQ+ individuals from seeking help, even in emergencies. Police support can significantly impact mental health and wellbeing by ensuring victims feel heard, validated, and protected. When law enforcement is trained to recognize the unique challenges faced by the LGBTIQ+ community, it contributes to a safer environment where individuals can thrive without fear of prejudice.

The role of police in supporting the LGBTIQ+ community extends far beyond enforcing laws—it is about creating an environment of safety, trust, and inclusion. Through training, community engagement, and proactive protection against violence, police forces can help build societies where all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, feel valued and secure. Strengthening this partnership is not just a legal or social responsibility—it is a moral imperative that reflects the core values of justice, equality, and human dignity.





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## Opinion: The Impact of Internal Affairs on Police Performance: Balancing Accountability and Fear.

In modern policing, accountability and integrity are cornerstones of public trust. Internal Affairs (IA) departments exist within police organizations to investigate complaints, misconduct, and breaches of protocol. While the primary goal of IA is to ensure ethical behaviour and protect the community, its presence can influence the performance of officers in complex ways.

Internal Affairs plays a crucial role in maintaining high standards of policing. Knowing that actions are subject to review encourages officers to follow legal and ethical guidelines consistently. This oversight promotes professionalism, reduces incidents of misconduct, and strengthens public confidence in law enforcement. Moreover, IA investigations can identify gaps in training or operational knowledge, providing opportunities for officers to improve their skills. By highlighting areas that need development, Internal Affairs can serve as a tool for professional growth rather than merely a mechanism for punishment.

However, the presence of Internal Affairs can also produce unintended consequences. Some officers may perceive IA oversight as intrusive or punitive, leading to heightened anxiety and fear of being reported. This fear can impact performance in several ways:

**Hesitation in Critical Situations:** Officers may second-guess decisions in high-pressure scenarios, potentially delaying action or affecting the outcome of interventions.

**Reduced Initiative:** Fear of scrutiny can discourage proactive policing or creative problem-solving.

**Stress and Morale Issues:** Constant anxiety about being reported can contribute to burnout, lower morale, and strained workplace relationships.

The key to maximizing the benefits of Internal Affairs while minimizing negative effects lies in transparency and fairness. Officers are more likely to view IA oversight as constructive if investigations are consistent, unbiased, and clearly communicated. Leadership also plays a pivotal role: supervisors who foster supportive, ethical environments help officers understand that IA exists to guide, not to intimidate.

Training programs that clarify expectations, ethical standards, and reporting procedures further reduce anxiety. When officers feel informed and supported, Internal Affairs becomes a source of accountability and professional development rather than fear.

Internal Affairs departments are vital for maintaining integrity and public trust in policing. While their presence may introduce concerns about fear and over-scrutiny, transparent processes, supportive leadership, and clear communication can transform IA oversight into a positive force.

By balancing accountability with encouragement, police organizations can ensure officers perform effectively, ethically, and with confidence, ultimately benefiting both law enforcement personnel and the communities they serve.



## Welcoming Statement from the Secretary General of the Malta Police Union



It is with great honour and a strong sense of responsibility that I address you for the first time as the new Secretary General of the Malta Police Union. Over the years our Union has worked hard to protect the rights, interests and well-being of all our members. Together we have made important progress, from improving working conditions to making sure our members' voices are heard and respected. These achievements have only been possible thanks to our shared effort, unity and commitment.

As I take on this role, I am determined to build on the solid foundations laid by my predecessors and to keep moving the Union forward. I believe the real strength of our Union lies in you, our members. Your experiences, ideas and dedication are what makes us stronger, and I encourage you to get in touch, share your thoughts and put forward your suggestions.

This is the start of a new chapter for our Union, where we will continue working to create the best possible working conditions for our members, and I want to assure you of my commitment to fair representation for all the ranks we represent. Every member, no matter their position, deserves to have their voice heard and their concerns addressed.

Let us move forward with determination and integrity, recognising the important role police officers play in our community and staying true to the values we stand for as a Union and as professionals.



# *Join Us!*

The Malta Police Union is open to all sworn members of the Malta Police Force, including Reserve Police Constables.

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## When the Search Barks Back: Handling Dangerous Dogs During Police Operations – Suggestions

Search operations are often unpredictable, with risks ranging from hostile suspects to environmental hazards. Yet one frequently underestimated threat is the presence of a dangerous dog. Whether kept as a guard animal or simply protective of its territory, an aggressive dog can put officers, bystanders, and even the animal itself in danger. This article explores best practices for safely managing such encounters during searches.

Dogs, particularly those trained or naturally inclined to protect, may perceive police officers as intruders. A sudden confrontation can escalate quickly, resulting in serious bites, disrupted searches, or even the need for force against the animal. For law enforcement, preparedness is key.

### Preparing Before the Search

**Intelligence gathering:** Before entering premises, officers should check for signs of dogs—warning notices, barking, kennels, or food bowls.

**Planning:** If possible, animal control professionals or trained handlers should be on standby.

**Equipment:** Protective clothing, bite sleeves, shields, and less-lethal tools like catch poles or pepper spray should be part of the preparation.

### Responding During the encounter.

**When a dangerous dog appears:** Stay calm as sudden movements or shouting can trigger aggression.

**Control the environment.** Close doors or gates to limit the dog's movement.

**De-escalate if possible.** Firm, simple commands may calm the animal.



**Use barriers like batons, shields, or even chairs** can create space between officer and dog. Non-lethal deterrents such as pepper spray, tasers, or even a fire extinguisher can break up a charge without lasting harm.

**If the Dog Attacks, the officers should:** Protect vital areas (face, throat, torso). Push into the dog rather than pulling away to minimize tearing injuries. Restrain the animal using leashes, catch poles, or improvised tools. Resort to lethal force only if there is an immediate and serious threat to life.

**After the Incident.** **Medical care:** All bites must be treated promptly to avoid infection. **Reporting:** Document the circumstances and actions taken. **Animal welfare:** Ensure the dog receives appropriate care if injured or contained.

Dangerous dogs are an unpredictable but very real risk in police searches. By combining planning, calm response, non-lethal tools, and last-resort force, officers can safeguard themselves and the public while minimizing unnecessary harm to animals. Preparedness transforms a potential hazard into a manageable challenge.



## Flying Police Drones: How Dubai and Spain Are Shaping the Future of Law Enforcement

When it comes to policing, innovation is no longer limited to faster cars or smarter radios. Today, nations are looking to the skies, literally. Both **Dubai** and **Spain** have introduced drone-powered vehicles that promise faster response times, broader surveillance, and futuristic solutions to modern challenges.

### Dubai: A High-Tech Patrol Fleet in the Sky



*[The Hoversurf S3 "Hoverbike" in action—Dubai Police's rideable VTOL drone under training and initial deployment]*

Dubai Police are globally known for their luxury supercar patrol fleet, but their aerial innovations are even more striking.

- **Hover surf S3 Hoverbike:** A rideable vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) drone designed for quick response in traffic-congested or inaccessible areas. It can fly up to 70 km/h for about 25 minutes, carrying riders or equipment.
- **Autonomous Patrol Vehicles (M01/M02):** Self-driving units with onboard deployable drones for aerial intelligence. They integrate AI for facial recognition, license plate scanning, and crowd monitoring.
- **Eagle Eye Drone Lightbar:** A police car lightbar conceals a launchable AI-powered drone that provides 360° aerial surveillance, LIDAR speed checks, and even detects distracted driving.
- **Drone Box Network:** City-wide drone stations that dispatch autonomous drones to incidents within minutes, streaming live video to command centres.
- **Ghaith Patrol SUV:** A futuristic police vehicle with 12 hidden cameras and a drone capable of broadcasting warnings and relaying live data from the air.

Dubai's aerial systems focus on rapid emergency readiness, high-tech surveillance, and projecting an image of futuristic law enforcement.



## Spain: Europe's Pioneer in Manned Police Drones



*[The EHang EH216 "Megadrón", Spain's two-seater autonomous aerial vehicle adopted by the Policía Nacional, now part of their Aerial Media Service]*

Spain's Policía Nacional is leading Europe in adopting drones not just as surveillance tools but as full-fledged patrol units.

- EHang EH216 "Megadrón": A two-seat autonomous aerial vehicle (AAV) capable of speeds up to 130 km/h, carrying 220 kg, and operating in hazardous NRBQ (Nuclear, Radiological, Biological, Chemical) zones or areas unreachable by helicopters. It is the first manned drone aircraft deployed by a European police force.
- Unmanned Drone Fleet: Beyond the Megadrón, Spain operates over 120 drones, including DJI models for urban surveillance and Tekever AR3 VTOL drones with 16-hour endurance for border patrols.
- Servicio de Medios Aéreos (SMA): The National Police's aerial unit coordinating 29 aircraft and hundreds of unmanned systems.
- Cervus III Anti-Drone System: An armoured vehicle equipped with radars, RF sensors, and remotely operated weapons to detect and neutralize rogue drones as defensive capability unique to Spain's approach.



Spain’s strategy emphasizes versatility in both urban and border control, plus resilience against drone threats.

While Dubai and Spain approach drone policing differently, Dubai with an emphasis on spectacle and rapid deployment, Spain with operational depth and defensive robustness, both represent a clear shift in law enforcement. The future may see cities around the world adopting flying police cars, drone patrols, and autonomous aerial units as standard tools of public safety.

Feature	Dubai Police	Spanish National Police
Manned Drones	Hoverbike (single rider)	EHang EH216 Megadrón (two-seat AAV)
Unmanned Systems	Drone Box, EagleEye, patrol drones	DJI drones, Tekever AR3 VTOL for long-range ops
Patrol Integration	Autonomous ground vehicles with drones	SMA coordination of aircraft and drones
Defensive Tech	Not emphasized	Cervus III anti-drone armored system
Focus	Rapid urban response, global prestige	Hazardous-zone entry, border security, resilience

Malta’s Current Use of Drone Technology

Hunting Season Enforcement.

Malta’s Police Force, in coordination with the Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) and wildlife authorities, uses drones to monitor spring hunting activities for turtle doves and quail. These unmanned aerial vehicles conduct surveillance flights—typically around 30 minutes per sortie—to ensure compliance with strict hunting laws.

Traffic Accident Documentation.

Drones are sometimes deployed as tools for accident investigation—capturing aerial imagery that can be used to reconstruct crash scenes, generate 3D maps, and provide detailed insights to investigators.

Drone Demonstration Videos.

Malta Police have publicly shared demonstration footage showing how drones are used operationally—initially inspired by their usage in anti-hunting surveillance.

Regulatory Framework.

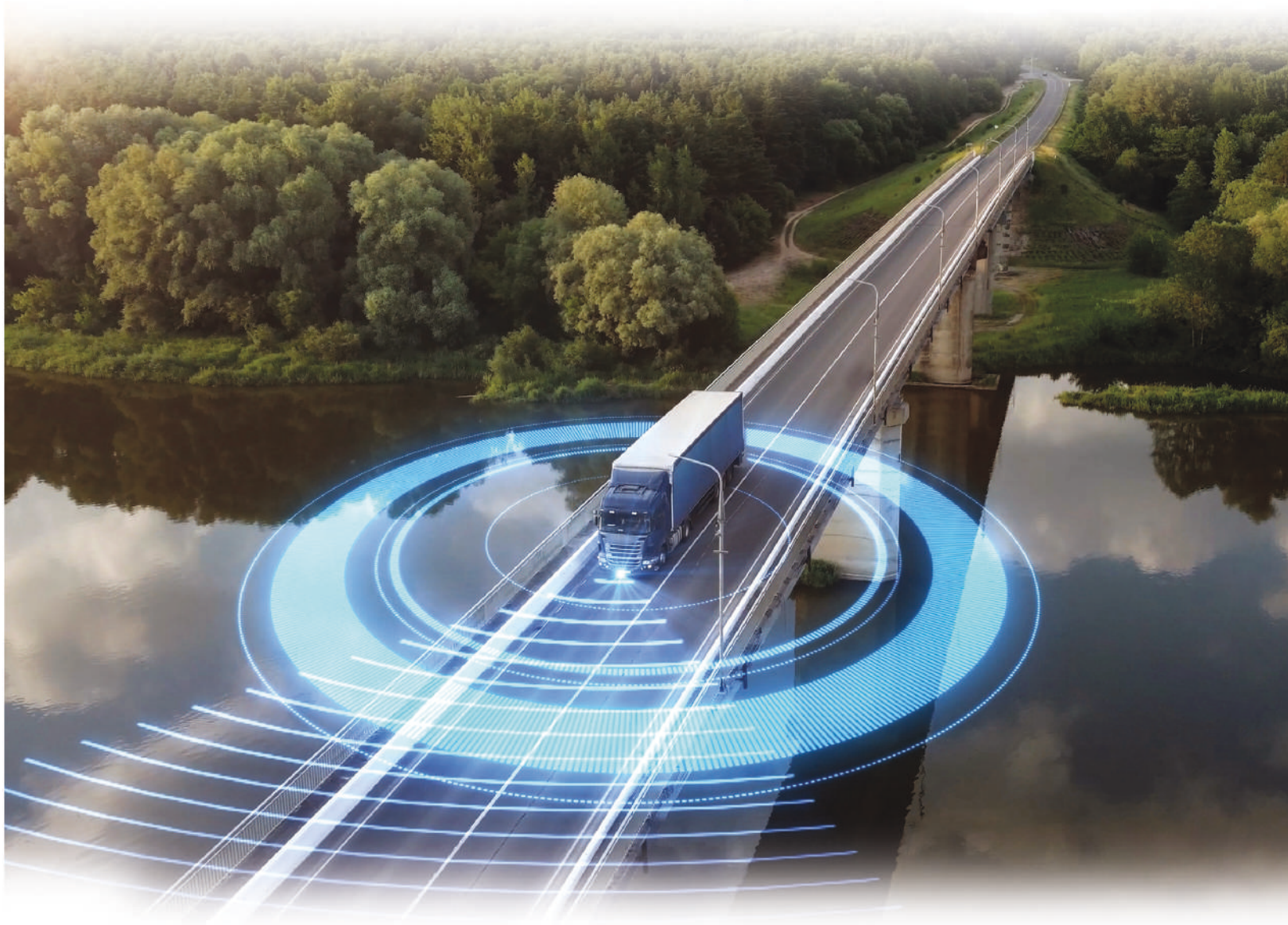
Transport Malta mandates that all drones in Malta must implement remote identification systems, in line with EU aviation safety standards effective from January 2024. This ensures drones can be tracked and associated with their registered operators, enhancing transparency and oversight.

**The sky, it seems, is no longer the limit, it’s the new beat for the police of tomorrow.**





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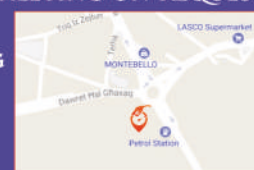
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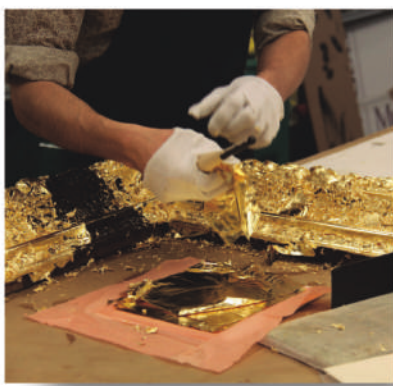
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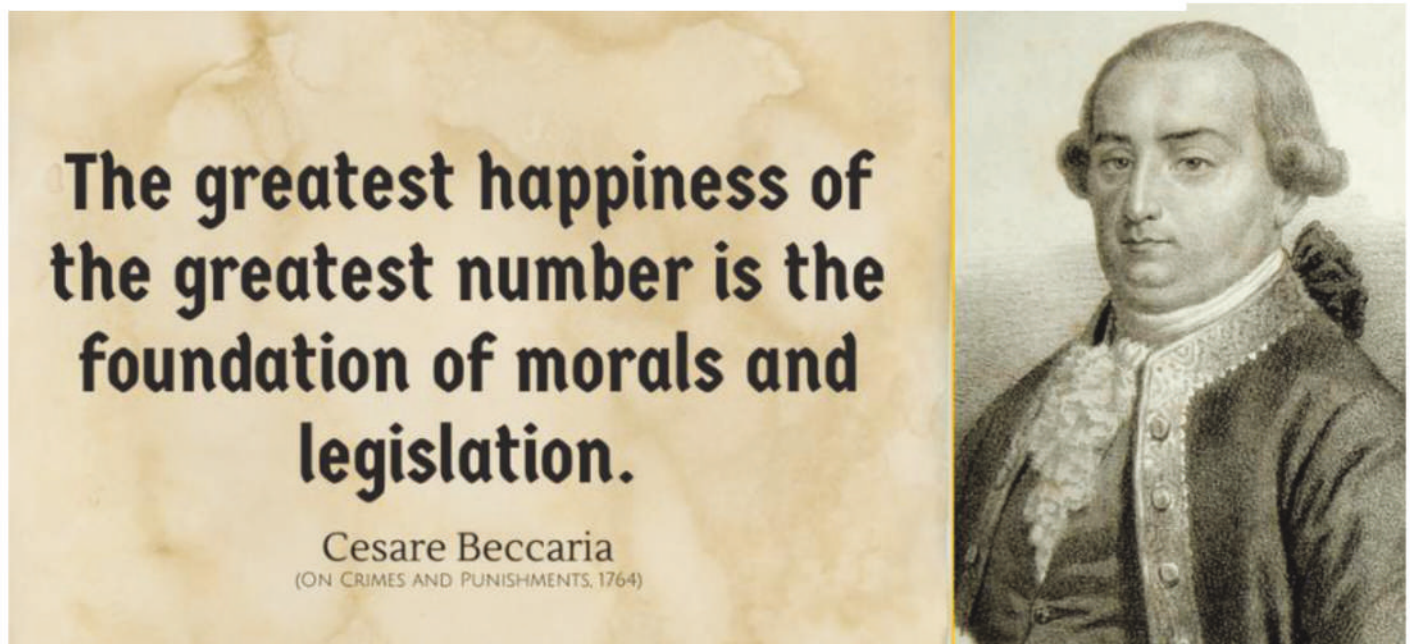
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## Cesare Beccaria: The Father of Modern Criminology



Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794) was an Italian philosopher, jurist, and economist whose writings revolutionized the way societies think about crime, punishment, and justice. Best known for his seminal work *On Crimes and Punishments* (1764), Beccaria is widely regarded as the father of modern criminology. His ideas challenged centuries of brutal penal practices and laid the foundation for fair, rational, and humane criminal justice systems around the world.

Born into an aristocratic family in Milan, Beccaria was educated in law and mathematics but became deeply influenced by Enlightenment thinkers such as Montesquieu and Rousseau. Alongside a circle of Milanese intellectuals known as the "Academy of Fists," Beccaria embraced reason, social contract theory, and reformist ideals. It was in this environment that he developed his groundbreaking critiques of criminal law.

Beccaria's most famous work was a direct attack on the arbitrary and cruel practices of 18th-century justice. In it, he argued that the purpose of laws is to preserve social order and protect individuals, not to serve as instruments of tyranny. His proposals were radical for the time and continue to resonate today.

Beccaria's legacy endures because he shifted the focus of criminal justice from retribution to fairness, rationality, and prevention. His insistence on proportionate punishment, rejection of torture and the death penalty, and advocacy for laws rooted in reason remain central to debates on justice today.

Cesare Beccaria's Enlightenment vision transformed criminal justice into a system guided by rationality, humanity, and the protection of individual rights. As the father of modern criminology, his work continues to inspire reformers, legal scholars, and policymakers committed to building justice systems that are both effective and humane.

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## The Role of Accessible and Equipped Police Stations in Strengthening Community Safety.

A police station is far more than a building with uniforms and patrol cars. It is a visible symbol of safety, justice, and trust within a community. When a police station is both well-equipped and easily accessible to the public, it becomes a crucial point of contact between citizens and law enforcement. Its presence provides reassurance, enables effective policing, and strengthens the relationship between officers and the people they serve.

One of the primary functions of an equipped police station is to guarantee rapid response in times of crisis. Whether it is a domestic violence incident, a theft, or an accident, citizens must have a reliable place to turn to. With modern communication tools, proper vehicles, and trained personnel, such stations ensure that emergencies are addressed swiftly and effectively.

The very visibility of a police station serves as a deterrent to crime. A station that is open and approachable signals to the community that help is near and that law enforcement is actively safeguarding public spaces. This constant presence reassures residents and discourages unlawful behavior.

For many people, the police station is the first step in seeking justice. Accessibility allows individuals to report crimes, lodge complaints, or request advice without barriers. Specialized facilities—such as safe interview rooms for vulnerable victims or proper holding areas—ensure that cases are handled professionally and sensitively.

Community policing thrives when the public sees the police as approachable and supportive. An accessible station fosters dialogue, making it easier for officers to engage with residents, listen to concerns, and build long-term relationships. This mutual trust is the foundation of effective law enforcement.



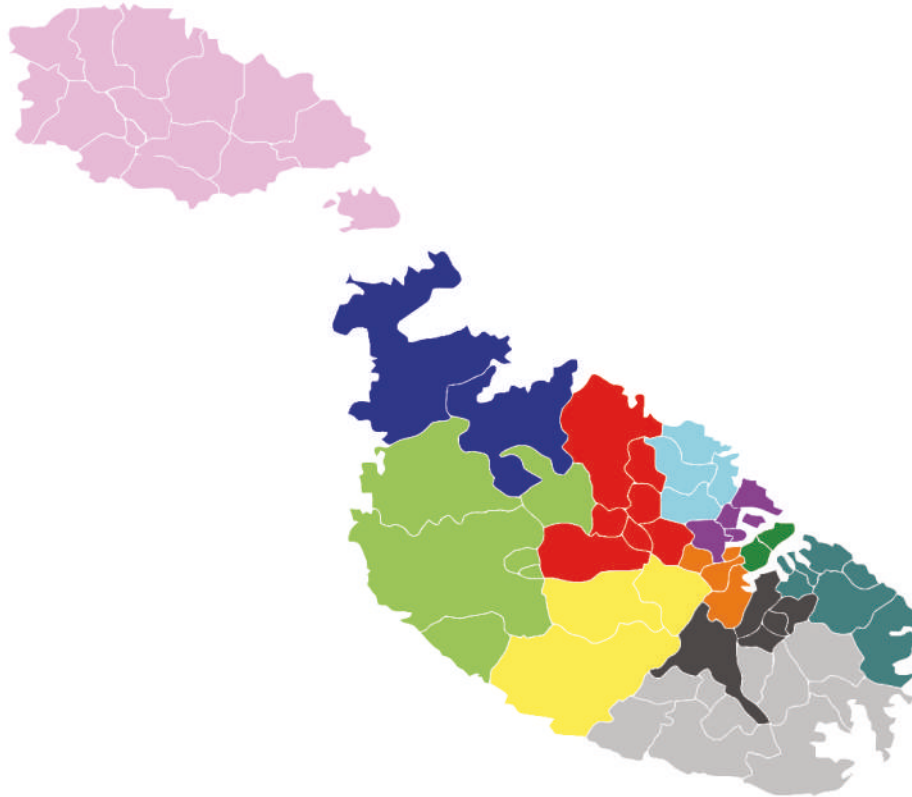
Beyond public access, a properly equipped station benefits officers themselves. From forensic tools and secure data systems to modern communication equipment, these resources enable efficient investigations and case management. Better working conditions for officers translate into better service for the public.

An accessible and well-equipped police station is more than an operational hub, it is a cornerstone of community safety, justice, and trust. By ensuring quick responses, providing a safe space for reporting, and symbolizing the rule of law, such stations reinforce the vital connection between citizens and the police force. In today's society, where security and trust are paramount, their importance cannot be overstated.

Visit **[www.pulizija.gov.mt](http://www.pulizija.gov.mt)** for a complete list of Police Stations.

**In case of emergency dial 112.**





Malta and Gozo are divided into two regions, Region A and Region B, which are further segmented into 12 police districts. This structured division allows for targeted and efficient policing, tailored to the specific needs of each locality.

This organization ensures that the police force maintains a close-knit and informed presence in each district, enhancing their ability to safeguard the community, manage resources effectively, and foster a safer environment for all. Whether you are a resident or a visitor, you can be assured of dedicated police attention, with officers who are intimately familiar with their district and committed to the well-being of the community.

Region A	Region B
<div>1 PD – Valletta &gt; Floriana</div>	<div>7 PD – Sliema &gt; Gzira / Ta' Xbiex / Msida</div>
<div>2 PD – Hamrun &gt; Santa Venera / Pieta / Marsa</div>	<div>8 PD – St. Julians &gt; Pembroke / Swieqi / San Gwann</div>
<div>3 PD – Paola &gt; Fgura / Santa Lucia / Tarxien / Luqa</div>	<div>9 PD – Birkirkara &gt; Balzan / Lija / Attard / Iklin / Naxxar / Gharghur</div>
<div>4 PD – Bormla &gt; Birgu / Isla / Kalkara / Xghajra / Zabbar / Marsaskala</div>	<div>10 PD – Mosta &gt; Mgarr / Rabat / Dingli / Mdina / Mtarfa</div>
<div>5 PD – Zejtun &gt; Birzebbuga / Marsaxlokk / Gudja / Ghaxaq / Mqabba / Kirkop / Safi / Zurrieq / Qrendi</div>	<div>11 PD – St. Pauls Bay &gt; Mellieha</div>
<div>6 PD – Qormi &gt; Zebbug / Siggiewi</div>	<div>12 PD – Gozo</div>



## Psychological Wellbeing. Country-Specific Studies

**Italy:** A study spanning 1995–2014 found that Italian male police officers had a suicide rate 1.7 times higher than the general male population; for female officers, the rate was 2.7 times higher than the general female population.

**Portugal:** Between 2005–2014, the suicide rate among male Portuguese National Police officers was 20.6 per 100,000 person-years, compared to 13.9 per 100,000 in the general population. The difference wasn't statistically significant, but given the healthy-worker effect, it suggests a potentially elevated risk.

**Austria:** From 1996–2006, male police officers had a suicide rate nearly identical to that of the age-adjusted general population (~30 per 100,000), but considering the generally healthier baseline of police officers, this is still concerning. Female officers showed much lower rates.

**Germany:** A 1997 survey estimated suicide rates among German police at 25 per 100,000, higher than the 20 per 100,000 among similarly aged civilians. Firearms were involved in 66–71% of cases.

**Romania:** A study covering 2016–2021 showed that suicides among Romanian police and public safety personnel outnumbered deaths from accidents or assaults during the same period. Firearms were used in nearly 46% of cases.

**Spain (Civil Guard):** An article in the *Spanish Journal of Psychiatry and Mental Health* addresses suicide mortality within the Civil Guard, indicating rising concerns but not yet disclosing clear figures.

In the Valencian Community, union data suggests a police officer commits suicide every 20 days. Between 2014–2018, there were around 107 suicides (50 national police, 57 Guardia Civil), with 2016–2018 showing 45 Guardia Civil deaths, 33 national police suicides, and more.

**France:** A 2021 study by the Mutual Security Forces involved 6,000 police officers: 24% had considered suicide or had heard colleagues consider it, and 40% were in psychological distress. Over 25 years, there were over 1,100 officer suicides, averaging 44 per year—around 50% higher than the general population.

**United Kingdom (England & Wales):** Community-sourced data indicates 169 serving officers committed suicide from 2011–2019, averaging 21 per year. In 2019 alone, there were 16 suicides among the roughly 123,000 officers, about 13 per 100,000, versus 11 per 100,000 in the general population that year.

There are no Europe-wide studies, but national-level research consistently shows that police officers face elevated suicide risks compared to the general population, often several times higher. Contributing factors include trauma exposure, occupational stress, firearm access, and insufficient mental health support.

**Malta Police Force Initiatives:** Under the Malta Police Transformation Strategy 2020–2025, the police introduced a Wellbeing Policy. This includes automatic mental health referrals and counselling support for officers exposed to traumatic events such as suicides, major injuries, or fatalities in the line of duty. These measures aim to reduce stigma and build a culture of support.





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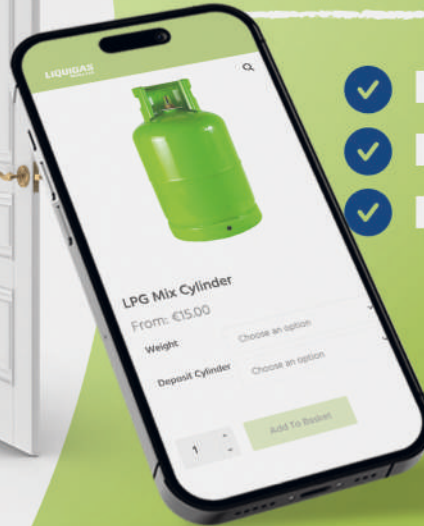
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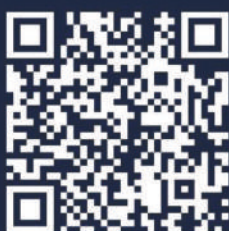


## Legal Assistance

[www.mpu.mt](http://www.mpu.mt)

The Malta Police Union provides complimentary legal services to its members, ensuring professional support and protection when it matters most.

This includes legal representation by a qualified lawyer in internal disciplinary proceedings, cases before the Public Service Commission, and as parte civile when a member is the victim of a crime in the line of duty.





## The Evolution of Police Trade Unions in Europe

Police trade unions in Europe have long been critical advocates for the rights, welfare, and working conditions of law enforcement officers. Over the past few decades, these organizations have evolved significantly, reflecting broader social, political, and economic changes across the continent. From traditional labour advocacy to engagement in public policy and professional development, police unions are playing increasingly complex and influential roles.

Historically, police unions emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to address issues such as wages, working hours, and workplace safety. Initially, many faced legal and political restrictions, as police were often considered part of the state apparatus and were prohibited from striking or engaging in typical labour activism. Despite these limitations, unions gradually gained recognition, focusing on Negotiating salaries and benefits, Ensuring safe working conditions and Protecting officers from unfair disciplinary actions.

In several European countries, police unions have increased their involvement in political discourse. While maintaining neutrality in principle, they lobby for Better funding for law enforcement, Modernization of equipment and facilities and Policies addressing officer mental health and stress management. This engagement has sometimes sparked debate over the appropriate role of unions in shaping law enforcement policy. European police unions are increasingly prioritizing the mental and physical well-being of officers. Programs addressing burnout, PTSD, and workplace harassment have become common. Many unions also provide legal support and counseling services, recognizing that policing is both high-risk and high-stress.

To remain relevant and influential, unions are leveraging modern communication tools. Social media, digital platforms, and online forums allow unions to Communicate rapidly with members, mobilize collective action and engage the public in discussions about policing issues. Transnational cooperation is becoming more prominent. Organizations such as the European Confederation of Police (EUROPOP) allow unions from different countries to share strategies, advocate for pan-European labour standards, and address cross-border issues affecting law enforcement personnel.

The future of police unions in Europe is likely to include 1) greater emphasis on training and professional development, helping officers adapt to new crime trends and technologies, 2) expansion of well-being programs, recognizing that a healthy workforce is essential for effective policing, 3) Stronger transnational collaboration, sharing best practices and advocating for European-wide standards in working conditions and labour rights and 4) continued engagement in policy dialogue, ensuring that officer perspectives are considered in shaping modern law enforcement strategies.

Police trade unions in Europe are evolving from traditional labour organizations into multifaceted institutions that blend advocacy, professional development, and public engagement. By balancing the needs of officers with the expectations of society, these unions are increasingly shaping the future of policing, ensuring that law enforcement personnel are supported, heard, and prepared for the complex challenges of modern policing.





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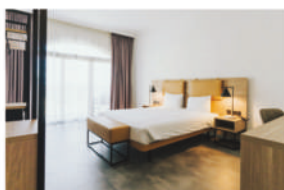


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## Calendar of events

### Visual Arts

#### Look at Me: Framing the Iconic by Lorenzo Agius - 12/09/2025 - 02/11/2025

This exhibition marks photographer Agius's Malta debut, celebrating his roots through iconic portraits and cinematic moments. Spanning four immersive rooms, it features large-format prints, a projection room, and highlights from his Trainspotting series. Agius's career blends resilience, curiosity, and artistic integrity, capturing the spirit of a generation and global icons alike. **Venue:** Space C, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta

#### How to Feed on Majesty to Become Eloquent - 19/09/2025 - 09/11/2025

This collective exhibition features African artists whose work explores land, water, light, and time as portals to knowledge and ancestral memory. Engaging indigenous aesthetics and subaltern landscapes, the artists forge mystical, horizontal alliances; revealing Southern epistemologies through moments of rupture, intimacy, and beauty that challenge dominant narratives and celebrate the ineffable.

**Venue:** Space A, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta

#### Jazz Assemblea Festival - 26/09/2025 - 09/11/2025

Jazz Assemblea Festival returns for its second edition, celebrating Malta's rich jazz legacy. Featuring over 60 local artists, this vibrant programme includes discussions, workshops, concerts, visual experiences, an album launch, and a jam session, uniting past, present, and future in one unforgettable celebration of Maltese jazz. Not to be missed!

**Venue:-** Atrium, Upper Atrium & Atrium Approach, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta

#### Blow-Up - 7/11/2025 - 4/01/2026

Blow-Up is City of Art's second multidisciplinary project, inspired by Antonioni's 1966 film. Featuring contemporary artworks, historical artefacts, film, fashion, music, talks, and publications, it explores spectacle, perception, and modern life's image-saturated reality. The project offers an immersive, culturally rich experience for diverse audiences across ages and backgrounds. **Venue:** Space C, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta

#### Fjamma/Flame: every child a guardian of nature - 15/11/2025 - 11/01/2026

Fjamma/Flame is a multi-sensory exhibition guiding children on a mythical journey through five elemental pods-earth, fire, water, wind, and space. Blending storytelling, art, and sensory experiences, it fosters creativity, presence, and resilience. An art programme and advisory board support ongoing exploration of heritage, self-awareness, and environmental connection. **Venue:** Space A & B, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta

#### Misophonia - 27/11/2025 - 11/01/2026

This audiovisual project explores misophonia-a condition causing intense emotional reactions to everyday sounds like chewing or breathing. Through a discomforting soundscape and mixed-media animation, the work immerses visitors in the sensory world of misophonia, evoking its psychological impact and raising awareness of this often misunderstood neurobehavioral experience.

**Venue:** Atrium Approach, Spazju Kreattiv, Valletta

### Performing Arts

#### Made in Ilva - 20/09/2025

Made in Ilva is a masterpiece of physical theatre, exploring the impact of the biggest steelworks of Europe on the environment and surrounding population. The critically-acclaimed performance is a perfect combination of extreme physical actions, sounds that become obsessive rhythms, original music, vocals and video projections. An emotional and poetic exploration of the alienation and oppression of a human body reduced to an artificial machine.

Supported by the Istituto Italiano di Cultura La Valletta

**Venue:** Spazju Kreattiv Theatre

#### Decolonisation: The Story of Us All - 05/12/2025 - 06/12/2025

The Story of All of Us is an interdisciplinary performance by ARDA, blending dance, sound, visual art, and spoken word. Created by artists across Europe, it explores how colonial legacies shape identity and knowledge, inviting audiences into a space of radical questioning, reimagining, and collective transformation.

**Venue:** Spazju Kreattiv Theatre

#### Jack and the Beanstalk - Chucky's Christmas Cracker - A Solo Panto Experience - 19/12/2025 - 28/12/2025

After last year's hit, Malta's beloved drag queen Chucky returns with a fierce solo panto: Jack and the Beanstalk, written and directed by award-winner Vikesh Godhwani. Expect pop bangers, killer lip-syncs, wild costumes, audience chaos, and X-rated laughs in this outrageous, high-camp adventure where Jack and sis SLAYYYY a giant.

**Venue:** Spazju Kreattiv Theatre





# Every Identity Matters

## Malta Police Union Supports LGBTIQ+ Equality

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There may be instances when an employee cannot start performing his/her new duties on the date of appointment shown on the relative Letter of Appointment. In such cases, the appointment date would be the date when s/he was supposed to have started performing the new duties, while the effective date would be the date when the employee actually started performing duties. In such cases, increments and progressions would need to follow the original appointment date, while payment and confirmation would need to follow the payment date. Both dates should be clearly visible on the Letter of Appointment given to the respective employee.

### Pay on Appointment/Promotion - Public Officers

Public officers who are promoted from one grade/position to another should not be placed on a salary step less than the third of the new scale. Public officers already in service, who enter a lower grade or position through an appointment, will retain their current salary, which may in no case exceed the maximum salary of the highest scale of the new grade or position. Public officers already in service who are appointed to a higher grade or position and whose salary in the previous grade is higher than the minimum of the new grade or position, are to be assimilated into the higher grade or position by carrying their own salary into the scale of the new post, and if resulting out of step, they are to be placed immediately on the next higher step of the higher scale.

The Administration may, subject to the approval of both the respective Permanent Secretary and the Principal Permanent Secretary, engage employees following a selection process on different salary steps within the entry salary scale. Under no circumstances can an employee be placed on the maximum point of the salary scale. When an officer is promoted, s/he should be given the salary increase, which is equivalent to one increment in the scale of the higher post. If the resulting salary is less than the third step of the new scale, the officer should be placed on the third step of the new scale. If the salary, resulting from the addition of the promotion increase, is higher than the third step, the officer will be placed immediately on the next higher step of the new scale. Public officers who are promoted to a grade or position on the effective date of the introduction of a new scale, should first be placed on the old scale at the appropriate point, in accordance with the existing commencing salary rules, and then be assimilated to the corresponding point of the new scale. An appointee granted a promotion increase will not benefit from any subsequent increments as a result of his/her previous office except from any increments and promotion increases resulting from the new office.

A promotion to a higher grade or position but having the same salary scale - example:- an officer is promoted from Assistant Principal on salary scale 10 to Principal on salary scale 10, is also considered a promotion, and so the incumbent should also benefit from the promotion increase.





# Check Off System Registration Form



Members who wish to use the Check Off System and settle their MPU membership fee by installments (13) are asked to register.

Sworn Officers: EUR2.30c per pay.

Civilians: EUR1.53c per pay



Any already paid fees will not be lost and these will still be valid as part of your membership period.

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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