

"From pets to *pids*: Spain's new Animal Welfare Law"

ALMOST 30% OF OWNERS ADMIT THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE INSURANCE FOR THEIR DOG DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE NEW ANIMAL WELFARE LAW MAKES ITS MANDATORY

- **The Animal Welfare Law will force dog owners to insure their pet regardless of their breed. Despite the fact that this measure will not come into force until the corresponding implementing regulation is developed, almost 30% of owners admit that they do not yet have such a policy. However, more than half of the owners surveyed (52%) are in favour of this measure because of the protection offered in terms of civil liability coverage against possible accidents caused by their pet.**
- **For many owners, dogs are just another member of the family. In fact, according to the survey, 42% consider them as a family member and more than 7% as their child. And in terms of the household budget, having a dog costs, on average, €1,982 per year or €165 per month, with food (€49.8 per month) being the item on which Spaniards spend the most, followed by vet bills (€34.7/month) and vaccinations (€24.8/month).**
- **It is estimated that there are now more than 9 million dogs in Spain, up by more than 48% over the past four years. 56% of owners adopted their pet, although 29% admit that they have bought their pet, a practice that under the new rule is subject to controls in the case of sales between individuals and purchases from shops are now banned.**
- **From the perspective of obligations, this new law makes completing a training course mandatory. This measure has been well received, with 75% of Spaniards in agreement with it. However, 32% say they only agree if it is voluntary and only 14% are in agreement when it comes to new dog owners and that it should not apply to those who already had their pet before the law entered into force.**
- **10% of owners indicate that their dog has attacked somebody or another animal at some time, causing minor injuries such as scratches (64%) as well as serious injuries such as bites (23%). As for the penalties for these mishaps, almost 4 out of 10 owners of these pets had to pay a fine of between €600 and €3,300.**
- **Autonomous Communities: Navarre, Castile-León and Castile-La Mancha had the highest percentage of owners whose pets had attacked somebody or another animal; while at the opposite end of the scale were the Region of Valencia, Aragón and Extremadura.**

Madrid, 18 December 2023. In Spain there are currently more than 9 million dogs, meaning there are now more dogs than children aged under 14 in the country, an

increase of more than 48% over the past four years. In this context, the new Animal Welfare Law has been passed, the first state regulation to regulate the conditions for the adoption, ownership and care of pets.

The law will force dog owners to insure their pet regardless of their breed. Despite the fact that this measure will not come into force until the corresponding implementing regulation is developed, **almost 30% of owners admit that they do not yet have such a policy**. However, **more than half of the owners surveyed** (52%) are in favour of this measure because of the protection offered in terms of civil liability coverage against possible accidents caused by their pet. This percentage increases to 60% when considering people who do not have a dog.

These are two of the main conclusions from the study "**From pets to pids: Spain's new Animal Welfare Law**", drawn up by the Home Division at **Línea Directa Aseguradora** based on a **survey of more than 1,700 people** nationwide. The report analyses the characteristics of families with dogs and the people's opinion about a number of the bans and obligations contemplated by this new regulation.

Snapshot of households in Spain with dogs

For many owners, dogs are just another member of the family. In fact, according to the survey, **42% consider them as a family member and more than 7% as their child**. And in terms of the household budget, having a dog costs, on average, **€1,982 per year or €165 per month**, with **food** (€49.8 per month) being the item on which Spaniards spend the most, followed by **vet bills** (€34.7/month) and **vaccinations** (€24.8/month).

Another outgoing is on **insurance**. Seven out of 10 owners currently have insurance for their pet. Of these, 63% as part of their home insurance and 37% as part of a specific policy for dogs. Those who have coverage indicated that the factor most important to them was **Civil Liability** (75%) followed by **harm to their dog** (47%) and **veterinary assistance** (34%).

In terms of how they came to acquire their dog, 56% were adopted, although **29% of owners admit that they have bought their pet**, a practice that under the new rule is subject to controls in the case of sales between individuals and purchases from shops are now banned.

The opinion of Spanish citizens on the new Animal Welfare Law

From the perspective of obligations, this new regulation makes completing a **training course** mandatory for dog owners. This measure has been well received, with **75% of Spaniards in agreement with it**. However, **32% say they only agree if it is voluntary and only 14% are in agreement when it comes to new dog owners** and that it should not apply to those who already had their pet before the law entered into force.

Among the measures introduced by the regulation that have been best accepted by the population are those aimed at controlling ownership and ensuring good care for these animals. To this end, and although **28% of those surveyed claim to have left their pet alone for a whole day** for reasons such as work, unforeseen circumstances such as illness, leisure or holidays, it is most common (47%) for owners to leave their dogs alone on average for less than 4 hours a day. Another 40% usually leave their pet at home unattended for between 4 and 7 hours, coinciding with the work day.

A common practice such as leaving a dog tied up at the supermarket door while shopping is now prohibited under the Animal Welfare Law, and doing so can lead to a fine of up to 10,000 euros. To this end, **40% of owners recognize having left their dog alone at a shop door while running errands.**

The ban on the sale and purchase of animals at establishments has also been received positively by Spaniards, with **nearly 60% in favour of prohibiting the sale of dogs in shops** or the transfer of ownership as part of adoption between individuals being reflected in a contract (64%). Finally, the sanctions with the largest amount of support are **finest for having a dog without a microchip** (63%) or **penalties for leaving dogs unattended for more than 24 hours** (60%).

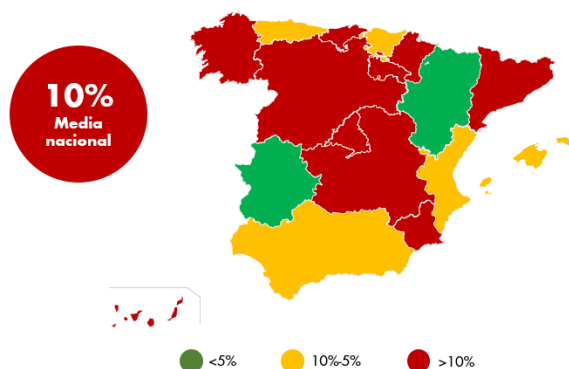
Dog attacks

In recent years, there have been cases of dog attacks in Spanish cities with 3 people having died as a result of these attacks. In fact, **10% report that their dog has attacked another person or animal at some time**, causing minor injuries such as scratches (64%) but also serious injuries such as bites (23%), with the most frequent victims being the owner (38%), another dog (28%) or another family member (26%).

As for the penalties for these mishaps, almost 4 out of 10 owners of these dogs had to pay a **fine of between €600 and €3,300**. This figure can rise substantially, especially in the case of serious personal injury. According to a study published by UNESPA, although the average cost of this type of personal accident paid by insurers is €3,162, between 2019 and 2020 **cases of up to €57,000** were recorded as compensation for personal injuries caused by a pet.

In the different Autonomous Communities, **Navarre** (20%), **Castile-León** and **Castile-La Mancha** (both on 14%) are the regions where the **highest percentage** of owners report their dogs having attacked somebody or another animal at some time.

Porcentaje de dueños cuyos perros han atacado en una o más ocasiones



At the other end of the scale, the **Region of Valencia** (6%) **Aragon** and **Extremadura** (both on 3%) are the regions accounting for the **lowest percentages**.

Methodology

Survey carried out by Línea Directa in collaboration with the consultancy firm MDK on 1,700 people proportionally distributed along quotas by sex, age and region. Margin of error of +/- 2.37% ~ 3.1% with a confidence interval of 95%. Fieldwork carried out between 30 October and 9 November 2023.

About Línea Directa

Línea Directa Aseguradora is the 5th largest insurer of cars in Spain, specialising in direct sales of insurance for cars, motorbikes, companies, the self-employed, homes and health. Línea Directa is among the 100 Spanish companies with the best reputations, according to the MERCOCOM ranking.

This initiative applies to the following **Sustainable Development Goals**:





For **more information:** <https://lineadirectaaseguradora.com>

Línea Directa Aseguradora

Santiago Velázquez

santiago.velazquez@lineadirecta.es

682 196 953

TresCom Comunicación

Elena Vélez 660 176 951

elena.velez@trescom.es

Leticia Poveda

leticia.poveda@lineadirecta.es

659 639 022

Florita Vallcaneras 627 811 799

Florita.vallcaneras@trescom.es

Follow us on:

