**Hidden Charges on Car Rentals**

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There is currently the malpractice from a number of car hire companies in Malta to make unfair profit for their service through many hidden charges. One of them is fuel which the lessee must buy from the service provider whether the client wants to do so or not as otherwise the car is not given out. The cost for this is not specified online. Also, in cases where the client does not use all this petrol, the cost of the balance is not refunded. This is having a negative impact on the way we treat our visitors to Malta

The contracts we have seen on hiring the vehicle reveal that clients are being forced to agree to paying for petrol to fill half a tank and this at a much higher cost than if the petrol was purchased at a local petrol station. Clients should be given the option to return the car with same amount of fuel as they hired it or if they do not honour this commitment, they would be charged on their credit card, which the car company is already holding as security.

Another hidden charge is the cost the client has to pay to reduce the excess on the insurance. Representatives of the Association for Consumer Rights (ACR) saw a contract for a Peugeot 207, where the daily charge was EUR35 a day and the excess was EUR1500 ! If the client pays a huge optional additional daily price of EUR14 a day, the excess would be reduced to EUR300. The client is certainly taken for a ride as all these conditions are excessive.  This is another devious way that these car hire companies are applying to make unfair profit .