

Maritime Transport: EU guidelines in response to Covid-19 Emergency

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The Coronavirus public health emergency has had widespread repercussions on maritime transport and on crew and passenger management on board.

The European Commission has, therefore, issued detailed guidelines on repatriating cruise ship passengers and protecting ship crews, whilst simultaneously maintaining operational the supply chain for essential goods and services for member-States across the ports.

Briefly, key recommendations prescribed include the following: EU Member-States are called upon to assist the repatriation of European citizens and foreign residents in Europe. Non-EU essential workers must be allowed to travel to allow for continued professional activity. It is the responsibility of cruise liners and carriers to organise the repatriation of passengers and crew, regardless of whether they are due to disembark in a EU or non-EU port, with the provision of adequate transport connections onward to their home country. All crew members assigned to merchant ships, regardless of nationality, are entitled to travel to their designated embarkation port and to disembark upon their return to reach their home country. It is important to create a network of ports where crew changes can take place without delays, in full safety, and thereby ensure that maritime transport continues to operate to safeguard the import/export of essential goods.

Download the document "**Guidelines on protection of health, repatriation and travel arrangements for seafarers, passengers and other persons on board ships**" (975)