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## Maritime safety: deal on more thorough vessels check

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- Flag states to check safety and environmental performance of ships
  - EU database on ships flying the flag of a member state
  - Inclusion of an environmental parameter in the ship risk profile
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**On Tuesday, Parliament and Council negotiators reached an informal agreement on EU rules updating conditions how flag and port states check if vessels are safe to sail.**

An informal deal seeks to improve maritime safety by better adjusting relevant EU rules to changing international standards, as well as making sure EU countries have a common approach to vessels inspections, control and monitoring.

### Flag state requirements

MEPs managed to commit the flag States, which take the first responsibility that a vessel flying its flag is safe to operate, to check their ships at least once every five years and focus their inspections not only on safety, but also on environmental performance of their ships, as well as on the social conditions of the crews on ship engaged in any type of international voyage.

In order to support the breakthrough towards maritime digitalisation, improve the transparency and facilitate monitoring negotiators agreed to set-up an EU database on ships flying the flag of a member state. In order to make the risk based inspections more efficient and better use the available resources, the member states also committed to report on a yearly basis the inspection details such as date, place and IMO number of the inspected vessels.

### Port state control

A preliminary agreement also updates the criteria that allows to target ships for inspection at ports. MEPs ensured that environmental deficiencies of ships will have more weight in

determining their risk profile. Negotiators also agreed to a review clause to consider the inclusion of the Carbon Intensity indicator in the environmental parameters as soon as IMO concludes its revision of the indicator.

Negotiators also agreed on the establishment of a quality management system within five years of transposition of new rules and on the possibility for member states to put in place a voluntary port state control regime for fishing vessels over 24 meters. This will contribute to improving the level of safety aboard these ships, which experience a relatively high level of accidents.

### Quote

EP rapporteur Vera Tax (S&D, NL) said: "The international shipping sector is very hard to regulate. We made maximum use of our political power to achieve goals that are long overdue. Shipping has to become cleaner to achieve the climate goals. It has to be safer so that accidents that pollute the European waters and beaches are something of the past. And the rights of workers have to be better protected. All change start with workers who are well educated, motivated and protected by the law."

### Next steps

The preliminary deal still needs to be approved by Council and Parliament. EU countries will have 30 months to transpose new provisions into national law and prepare for its implementation.

### Background

The deal on flag state requirements and port state control rules is a part of the [Maritime safety package](#) presented by the Commission in June 2023. It aims to modernise and reinforce EU maritime rules on safety and pollution prevention.

### Further information

[Procedure file \(flag State requirements\)](#)

[Procedure file \(port State control\)](#)

[EP Research Service briefing on flag state requirements \(January 2024\)](#)

[EP Research Service briefing on port state control \(January 2024\)](#)

[Committee on Transport and Tourism](#)


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