

Revised rules on the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA)

On 1 June 2023, the European Commission presented the maritime safety package, which includes a proposal to revise the framework of the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) and repeal its founding regulation, Regulation (EC) No 1406/2002. The proposal would update EMSA's mandate to better reflect the agency's evolving role in different areas of maritime transport, and to secure adequate human and financial resources to fulfil this role. Parliament is due to vote its first-reading position on the file during its March 2024 plenary session.

Background

Since the last [revision of its mandate in 2013](#), EMSA has assumed various new tasks and roles. However, this mandate – as affirmed by the Commission's [impact assessment](#) accompanying its proposal – does not reflect the agency's increasingly important role in supporting sustainability and the digital transition of the maritime sector. Moreover, the mandate fails to take into account the evolving challenges to security at sea.

In light of the above, it became clear that new provisions were needed to reflect EMSA's new tasks and roles, and that the EMSA Regulation needed to be rendered flexible enough to address the evolving needs of the maritime sector related to ensuring security at sea and cybersecurity, and to tackling hybrid threats. The agency would furthermore need to become future-proof regarding developments in the areas of alternative fuels and autonomous shipping.

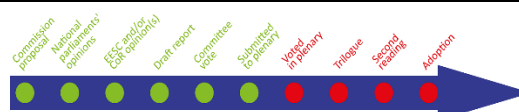
European Commission proposal

The [proposal](#) aligns EMSA's objectives with its new tasks and roles. It gives the agency a mandate in the areas of maritime safety, sustainability, decarbonisation, security and cybersecurity, maritime surveillance and crises, digitalisation and simplification, and visits and inspections. It introduces a flexibility mechanism for handling assistance requests, and tasks EMSA with supporting the Commission and Member States when implementing the FuelEU Maritime Regulation and emissions trading system (ETS) in maritime transport. It changes the administrative rules, and introduces the possibility for the agency to charge fees for specific tasks. It envisages the provision of adequate human and financial resources to fulfil EMSA's role.

European Parliament position

The Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN) adopted its [report](#) (rapporteur: Claudia Monteiro de Aguiar, EPP, Portugal) on 7 December 2023. Its amendments to the proposal include putting EMSA in charge of European cooperation on coast guard functions. The agency should provide horizontal and technical support in this regard to the Commission or the Member States on their request. Such additional tasks should be backed by adequate resources. The Parliament should be involved in the appointment of EMSA's executive director, and a Parliament representative should be appointed to the agency's management board and consulted on its multiannual programme. The agency should, inter alia, support the training of inspectors, monitor suspicious behaviour around pipelines, participate in International Maritime Organization (IMO) activities, collect data for scientific research, provide guidance for mandatory reporting of lost containers at sea, and do research on new technologies.

First-reading report: [2023/0163\(COD\)](#); Committee responsible: TRAN; Rapporteur: Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar (EPP, Portugal). For further information see our 'EU Legislation in progress' [briefing](#).



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