

**Question for written answer E-004403/2020  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Kostas Papadakis (NI)**

Subject: Immediate repatriation of sailors

Thousands of sailors remain trapped on board vessels, with no possibility of being repatriated and banned from leaving ports, despite having been quarantined for almost six months. This is having a huge impact on both sailors and their families. Organising replacement crews is virtually impossible as, even when feasible, too much bureaucracy is involved. In the meantime, sailors are being deprived of any access to healthcare facilities.

While the COVID-19 outbreak has been reaching its peak, shipping companies, keen to make a profit and with the support of the government, have held sailors against their will in an insecure environment and with only minimal access to healthcare and protection.

The situation is dire for hundreds of thousands of unemployed sailors who receive no financial assistance from the government, the State or the shipping companies themselves. Moreover, companies are exploiting many long-term unemployed sailors by offering them jobs with lower wages and limited employment rights.

1. What can the Commission do to bring an immediate end to the suffering of sailors and their families and repatriate those who wish to return to Greece, under the responsibility of shipping companies, the competent Greek authorities and EU repatriation programmes?
2. How does the Commission intend to supply ships with medicinal products and the sanitary equipment needed to protect sailors and disinfect public areas?