Port de Barcelona

Press release

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The Port of Barcelona is intensifying its cooperation with cruise operators to resume activity

Over the next few days, the Port of Barcelona will intensify its cooperation with cruise operators to resume activity in the coming weeks, once the Procicat (Catalan Territorial Civil Protection Plan) has approved the Sectorial Plan for cruise activities in the Ports of Catalonia, which incorporates health protocols that must be adhered to by all cruise ships calling at Catalan ports. This authorisation by Procicat of the protocols on which the Port of Barcelona and the shipping companies have been working in recent months marks the start of the countdown to the return of cruise ships to the Port of Barcelona this summer.

The return of cruise operations "will be done in a completely safe way. We have been working with the shipping companies for many months to provide the public with a guaranteed safe return to cruise activities, complying with strict health protocols designed by professional international specialists. These protocols are designed not only for passengers and crews, but also aim to provide effective protection to the people living in the destinations", added the president of the Port of Barcelona.

The stoppage of all cruise activity since the beginning of the state of alarm, in mid-March 2020, has provided an opportunity not only to work towards the resumption of cruises after the pandemic, but also to assess the externalities of this activity in the destination cities and to work to minimise them in order to achieve a more environmentally, economically and socially sustainable cruise tourism.

Despite the approval of the health protocols, it is still too early to set a specific starting date for activity. Cruise ships require several weeks' advance preparation to be in optimal operating condition, both to reposition the vessels at the ports of departure and to ready the ships themselves and their crews. Nonetheless, this authorisation already allows Catalan ports and shipping companies to work with clear return objectives in sight. For the time being, it will be possible to operate cabotage cruises since the Spanish governmental External Health department has yet to authorise international cruises out of the Port of Barcelona.

"After months of waiting, we consider the approval of the sanitary protocols by the Procicat to be excellent news, both for the cruise industry and for the city of Barcelona and Catalonia. I want to remind you of the current delicate economic situation of many families in our country and the fact

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that gradually reactivating different economic sectors, as the pandemic becomes less severe, is not only necessary but is key to recovering lost jobs", concluded Port of Barcelona president Mercè Conesa.

The cruise sector directly employs more than 9,000 people in Barcelona. Annual turnover in Catalonia is €1.083 billion and its contribution to Catalan GDP is €562 million.

PHOTO: AIDANova, one of the newest and most sustainable cruise ships in the world, filling up with LNG at the Port of Barcelona.



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