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## Changes on Maritime Traffic Scheme of Turkish Straits

The regulation regarding the Maritime Traffic Scheme of Turkish Straits ("the Regulation") which came into force on July 15, 2019, is drafted to carry out maritime traffic regulations in order to ensure the safety of navigation, life, property, sea and environment within the Turkish Straits. A recent amendment to the Regulation was made on December 16, 2020.

The Article 26/4 of the Regulation states that no vessel carrying dangerous cargo and having the qualifications specified in the paragraphs 1 and 2 of the Article are allowed to enter Istanbul Strait until a vessel which has the same qualifications entering the Istanbul Strait from the north passes the 15<sup>th</sup> July Martyrs Bridge (also known as the Bosphorus Bridge) or entering from the south passes the Hamsi Burnu-Fil Burnu line.

Pursuant to the amendment, ro-ro vessels and container ships are exempted from the Article 26/4. Thus, a ro-ro vessel or a container ship will be allowed to enter Istanbul strait from the north even though a similar vessel has not reached to the 15<sup>th</sup> July Martyrs Bridge or a ro-ro vessel as well as a container ship will be allowed to enter Istanbul Strait from the south while similar vessel has not reached to the Hamsi Burnu-Fil Burnu line.

With the promulgation of the recent amendment ro-ro vessels and container ships will be waiting less while passing through the Istanbul Strait.

## CONTACT US

Polat İş Merkezi No: 29  
Offices: 28 - 29  
Mecidiyeköy, Istanbul, Turkey  
+ 90 (212) 215 30 00  
info@gurulkan.com  
www.gurulkan.com