

? BLACKFLAG



Initiated by GSHW e.V. – The German umbrella organisation for traditional vessels in operation - www.gshw.de

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Objectives and Possible Solutions

Traditional vessels need a secure legal basis upon which to operate.

There is an urgent need for politicians to actively support traditional shipping in the international sphere so as to give administrative bodies and national authorities the backing they require when trying to resolve existing problems.

It is necessary that a highly qualified body be set up, made up of representatives from the political level, from administrations and stakeholders of the affected ones, which takes care of the interests of traditional shipping in a creative and supportive way.

Germany

A clear commitment to the desirability of traditional vessels operating in an economic and legally secure environment is overdue.

The dynamic evolution of traditional shipping and its many different concepts should be appreciated. Traditional shipping should not be perceived as only having to do with floating museums.

The specific safety concepts for traditional vessels which have been drawn up should be further developed. Formalistic legal wrangling should not be allowed to get in their way (<http://www.gshw.de/richtlinie.html>).

Europe / International arena

The rules obtaining for modern passenger vessels cannot be translated one to one to fit traditional vessels and sailing ships. This needs to be acknowledged. Existing national concepts in this regard should be taken seriously and be mutually recognised.

The Council of Europe Recommendation no. 1468 on traditional vessels in operation gives suggestions to this. The document quoted recommends adequate rules and mutual recognition of national concepts in Europe.

Since signing the London Memorandum¹ in 2005, the nine European signatory states have not reconvened in order to tackle existing interpretation problems.

The inefficacy of this agreement has become apparently.

To get legal certainty the mutual acceptance of national rules should be obligatorily regulated by the European Commission.

Within the framework of international shipping rules and provisions sailing ships and traditional vessels should in the long term be granted a separate status. Thus, the objective of allowing for national and regional particularities could be reconciled with the binding character of an internationally recognised certification system.

¹ Memorandum of Understanding on the Mutual Recognition of Certificates for the Safe Operation of Traditional Ships in European Waters and of Certificates of Competency for Crews on Traditional Ships. This can be used as a tool to make sure that the special status of traditional vessels receives recognition at the international level. The Memorandum is not being applied and has been lying idle since 2005 (<http://www.european-maritime-heritage.org/mou.aspx>)