



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft

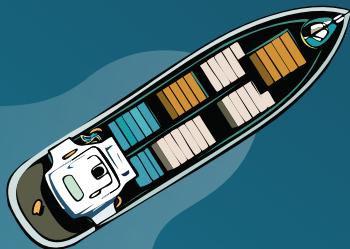
Confédération suisse

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Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

Swiss Maritime Navigation Office SMNO



The Swiss Maritime Navigation Office (SMNO)

trustworthy, courageous and farsighted

Who we are

We are the maritime administration authority for commercial seagoing vessels, yachts and coastal boats flying the Swiss flag.

We implement maritime and shipping law.

We advocate safe and sustainable maritime shipping in international maritime bodies.

We help to shape the European inland navigation regulations.



What is important to us

Trust

We focus on dialogue for reliable, transparent and efficient cooperation with a strong network of contacts and streamlined communication.

Courage

We look for innovative solutions and take decisive action in dialogue with the relevant stakeholders in society.

Foresight

We follow developments and actively shape the future for sustainable, viable international shipping – on the Rhine and at sea.

What we do

Operations – Commercial maritime shipping

Visibility at sea – Swiss companies have the opportunity to sail their vessels worldwide under the trusted Swiss flag.

Safety and law – As the responsible authority of the flag state, we monitor compliance with legal regulations by shipping companies and shipowners.

Partnerships for quality – We work closely with leading, internationally recognised classification societies for inspections and certifications.

Central contact point – We advise and support seafarers, shipping companies and shipowners and provide targeted information to exporting companies and other interested parties.

Operations – Leisure and sport

Flag and register authority – We are responsible for recreational craft used for sport or leisure purposes at sea and in foreign inland and coastal waters. We maintain the Swiss Yacht Register, thereby ensuring reliable registration.

Visibility at sea – Owners of yachts and coastal boats can sail worldwide under the trusted Swiss flag.

Safety and law – As the responsible authority of the flag state, we monitor compliance with legal regulations by owners of yachts and coastal boats.

International – the SMNO working on Switzerland's behalf

In **Strasbourg** (France) at the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) and the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Strasbourg Waste Convention, we represent Switzerland's interests in European inland navigation. In close partnership with the Federal Office of Transport, the Port of Switzerland and the inland navigation industry, we bring Switzerland's voice to the table.

In **London** (United Kingdom) at the International Maritime Organization (IMO), we help shape the international rules for safety, training and environmental protection in maritime shipping and support innovations in maritime transport – from digitalisation and new technologies to alternative fuels to achieve the IMO's net-zero climate target by 2050.

In **Kingston** (Jamaica) at the International Seabed Authority (ISA), we represent Swiss interests in relation to deep-sea mining. In collaboration with the Federal Office for the Environment, we are proposing a temporary moratorium to effectively protect the marine environment from the harmful effects of deep-sea mining, while ensuring the fair distribution of marine resources.

In **Geneva** (Switzerland) at the International Labour Organization (ILO), we represent Switzerland in the further development of international labour standards for seafarers under the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC).

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Looking back

Modernisation of the Swiss flag

The revised Maritime Navigation Ordinance came into force in January 2025. This is an important step towards making the Swiss flag more attractive for commercial seagoing vessels, yachts and coastal boats.

New SMNO website

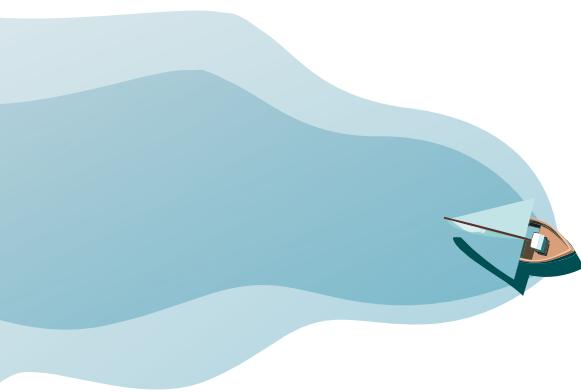
At the beginning of 2025, the SMNO website was updated to improve clarity and make it more client-friendly and user-oriented.

New Year's event

Together with representatives from business, civil society and academia, the SMNO looked back on a year of successful cooperation built on trust.

IMO audit

The IMO's comprehensive country audit in February 2025 (last conducted in 2013) gave Switzerland very good marks for the enforcement of international maritime law.

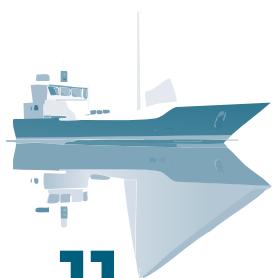


SMNO 2025 facts and figures

1,690



yachts

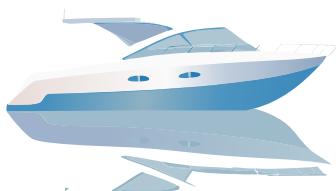


11

commercial seagoing vessels

448

coastal boats



986

flag documents issued

65

days at international conferences



Latest news

Legislation of tomorrow – We are working on an update of maritime shipping legislation so that it takes account of current circumstances and the concerns of tomorrow.

MARES 2.0 project – We are working on a new ship database and new digital services for efficient public administration.

Swiss Flag pilot project – We are working with representatives from the federal government, the cantons and the maritime industry to strengthen the Swiss flag. The aim of the pilot project, launched in 2025, is to register more commercial seagoing vessels under the Swiss flag.

Switzerland's strong voice on the Rhine – Switzerland will chair the Central Commission for the Navigation of the Rhine (CCNR) in 2026–27. Promoting cooperation with the EU, strengthening the CCNR as a centre of expertise for European inland navigation, continuing efforts to make inland navigation more environmentally friendly, as well as digitalisation and automation, are at the forefront of priorities.

Plans for the years ahead

2026: new digital registration tool

2027: expansion of the fleet with a diverse mix of ship types

2029: new revised law on maritime shipping

2030: full operation and further expansion of the fleet





Contact

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA
Swiss Maritime Navigation Office SMNO
Elisabethenstrasse 33
P.O. Box
4010 Basel, Switzerland