



Factsheet concerning the issuing of confirmation of flag registration for small boats (coastal and inland waterway navigation)

1. Principles and scope

The Swiss 'confirmation of flag registration for small boats' (for coastal waters and foreign inland waterways) was created to enable owners of non-ocean-going vessels to navigate in foreign waters. In these respective territorial waters of foreign states, **local legislation always takes precedence and must be observed**. The confirmation of flag registration for small boats is intended for navigation on foreign inland waterways and in coastal waters within a maximum distance of five nautical miles (9.2-km) from the nearest coastline. This restriction does not apply in cases of officially recognised regattas with accompanying safety measures.

2. Nationality

The owners of the vessel must be Swiss citizens or a Swiss association that promotes nautical sports or sailing for pleasure. Citizens of EU/EFTA states are treated equally if their residence in Switzerland is based on the provisions of the free movement of persons under the respective EU/EFTA agreements. Citizens with dual nationality cannot obtain a confirmation of flag registration if their official place of residence is in the country of their other (i.e. non-Swiss) citizenship.

3. Proof of ownership and financing

Proof of ownership of the vessel must be provided in the form of appropriate documentation, e.g. purchase agreement, deed of gift or certificate of inheritance, or compilation of invoices in cases where the vessel was built by the owner.

4. Vessels for which a confirmation of flag registration cannot be issued

A confirmation of flag registration cannot be issued for ocean-going yachts. To be considered ocean-going, yachts are generally expected to have living quarters and an automatic bilge pump in the cockpit and to be equipped in compliance with the guidelines of the Swiss Maritime Navigation Office (SMNO). Such vessels must be registered in the SMNO's yacht register and are issued a certificate of flag registration. In cases of doubt, the SMNO reserves the right to demand brochures, photographs, plans, etc.

5. Foreign influence and registration in other countries, commercial use, precedence of local regulations

In submitting an application, the owner is required to simultaneously declare that they are not concealing any foreign influence on the vessel, and that they have not applied to register it in a foreign public register, nor do they intend to do so. With the application, the owner also declares that they will only use the boat for private, non-commercial purposes, and that they will always observe the respective local regulations. The corresponding declarations are included in the application form.

6. Boat safety

Boats registered in a cantonal register under the Federal Act of 3 October 1975 on Inland Navigation do not require a further safety inspection if the original sailing licence is presented and if the most recent safety inspection was carried out within the past two years.

A safety certificate must be presented for boats permanently berthed abroad. It must be issued by a shipyard, a shipbuilding engineer, a ship safety expert or a harbour authority and must confirm that the vessel meets the safety requirements for coastal navigation in the country concerned.

For new boats delivered directly from a shipyard, a photocopy of the certificate confirming the type of vessel and/or the construction certificate must be presented. This document is supplied as a rule with the delivery of the new vessel. The certificate indicates the vessel's draught, etc.

7. Safety equipment

At a minimum, vessels registered under the Federal Act on Inland Navigation must carry on board the safety equipment required for them in Switzerland, as stipulated in Article 132 of the Act and in Annex 15 of the Inland Navigation Ordinance. For other boats, the regulations of the corresponding country and category of vessel are binding.

8. Change of ownership

A confirmation of flag registration is non-transferable. If the boat changes hands, the confirmation of flag registration becomes no longer valid and must be returned to the SMNO for cancellation. If the new owner wishes to obtain a confirmation of flag registration, they must submit an application to the SMNO.