

# KVNR surprised by judgement of the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights

News

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## Judgement of the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights breaks with international maritime practice

Today, the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights has judged that the standing international practice for rewarding seafarers, namely based on the price level in the country where they reside, is not justified. Two seafarers from Indonesia and the Philippines had filed complaints with the College against two Dutch employers. The Royal Association of Netherlands Shipowners (KVNR) has taken note with great surprise of the non-binding judgment of the College and warns of the possible risks to the international position of the Dutch maritime sector and further undermining of a level playing field in international shipping.

“By now deviating from the international practice in these national judgements, the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights undermines the international level playing field with all the potential risks for the Dutch maritime sector.”

KVNR DIRECTOR ANNET KOSTER

The maritime sector is an inherently international industry. This has resulted in the labor market becoming increasingly internationalized over the past decades. Since seafarers reside on board the ship for their work and spend their leave primarily in their country of residence, an international system has emerged for rewarding based on the price level in the seafarer's country of residence. Each country or monetary region has a different social setup, legal system, and tax policy. Therefore, to have a fair system without wage discrimination, the country of residence is considered. Costs of living vary from country to country.

In 1997, a case was heard by the Equal Treatment Commission which is comparable to the case on which a judgment has been published today. At that time, this predecessor of the Human Rights College still held the opinion that the international standing system was justified, and it is also regulated under the supervision of the International Labour Organization.

Koster: "It is incomprehensible that the College states that the country of residence principle would no longer be necessary, while this international state practice is simultaneously confirmed by the College. We will first discuss the judgments with the government and social partners."

According to data from the KVNR, approximately 23,000 seafarers work on Dutch flagged sea ships, who reside in countries all over the world where the Netherlands recognizes navigation authorizations. Together with the Dutch union Nautilus International, the Dutch shipowners are committed to sustainable collective labor agreements with local trade unions in the countries where many seafarers reside.

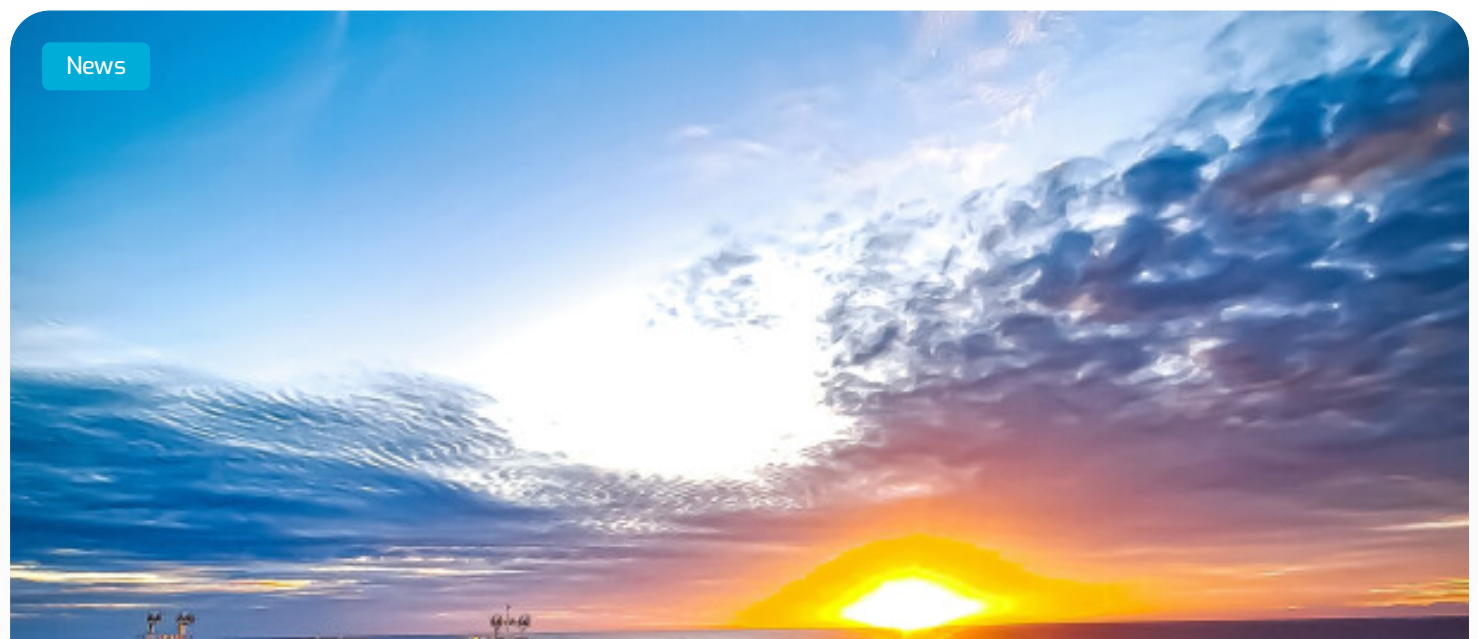
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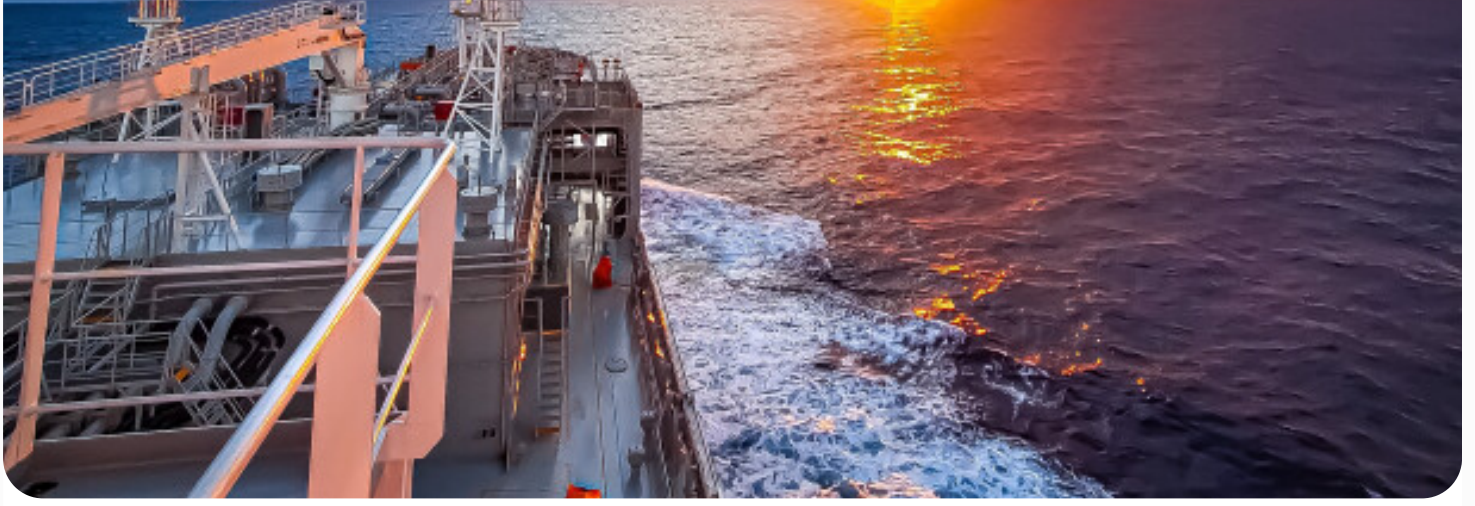
## No wage discrimination on Dutch ships

Seafarers on Dutch seagoing vessels receive wages based on the price level of their country of residence. This is in line with a balanced system of international conventions and collective bargaining agreements. So says the Royal Association of Dutch Shipowners (KVNR) following media coverage of a hearing by the Human Rights Board on whether...



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