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Magda Kopczynska, director of maritime strategy at the European Commission, claims the insurance demand could have a significant impact. Photo: TradeWinds Events

EU targets shadow fleet with insurance demand

European Commission backs new rule to force ships to report insurance details while passing through EU waters

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By Paul Peachey in London

The European Union has adopted new rules that require all vessels passing through its waters to provide insurance details.

The 27-nation bloc said the measure strengthens its ability to monitor “and if necessary investigate” vessels suspected of having no proper insurance cover.



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The rules apply to ships above 300 gt but exempt naval ships, fishing boats and recreational craft less than 45m in length.

European Commission transport chief Magda Kopczynska said: “This is a targeted measure with potentially great impact.

“It reflects the EU’s dedication to safer, more secure and environmentally responsible maritime operations, aligning its regulations with international standards and tackling the challenges associated with hazardous cargo and geopolitical tensions.”

Leaders of European nations have repeatedly spoken of cracking down on uninsured vessels that pose a threat to their country’s coastlines, but actions have been limited.

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A coalition of the UK, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Finland and Estonia announced a similar measure in December, saying the information would be “assessed and acted upon”.

In November, Britain blacklisted the 106,000-dwt Ksenia (built 2003) after it refused UK requests to supply insurance details while passing through UK waters.

But shadow fleet operators have turned to alternatives to the 12-strong group of major protection and indemnity insurance clubs to cover them to haul Russian oil above the price cap.

They have included unregulated companies with little evidence of financial backing, but have avoided action by EU.

The role of “phantom” insurance was highlighted after Norwegian authorities charged four people over an alleged bogus operation that supplied papers to the shadow fleet.

Oslo-based Ro Marine was said to have provided papers for more than 250 ships, but operated illegally from an office that did not exist, and with no evidence of assets to use in case of a claim, according to news site Danwatch and Norwegian public broadcaster NRK. [\(Copyright\)](#).

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