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REGISTERED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT

German UNESCO Commission (DUK) Attn:
Prof. Dr. Christoph Wulf Martin-Luther-Allee
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53175 Bonn

Your sign	Your letter of	Our sign	IKE-Project	Datum
Wulf	28.12.2023	2402gey	Morse telegraphs	15.03.2024

Morse telegraphy as UNESCO intangible cultural heritage

Here: Continuation of our expression of interest

Dear Prof. Wulf,

We would like to thank you and the members of the UNESCO expert committee for examining and responding to our expression of interest in Morse telegraphy as UNESCO intangible cultural heritage of 23 March 2023.

We remain firmly determined to ensure that classical Morse telegraphy receives the long-deserved recognition as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage.

Contemporary historical classification of telegraphy and its German roots

As early as 1833, Johann Carl Friedrich Gauss¹ and Wilhelm Eduard Weber² in Göttingen put a self-built telegraph into operation and used it to transmit signals electromagnetically for the first time. Gauss and Weber were among the pioneers of a technology that, together with the emerging railway system, later led to significant changes in transport and economic life in the 19th century. Telegraphy - as a tool for transmitting coded information - can be proven to have its roots in Germany!

Almost eleven years later, the first official Morse telegram was sent on May 24, 1844 between the US Capitol in Washington DC and Baltimore between Samuel FB Morse⁴ and Alfred Vail⁵ with the message What Hath God Wrought³. This not only represents the actual beginning of the

¹ Johann Carl Friedrich Gauss, German mathematician and physicist, * April 30, 1777 in Braunschweig, † February 23, 1855 in Göttingen.

² Wilhelm Eduard Weber, German physicist, * 24.10.1804 Wittenberg, † 23.06.1891 Göttingen.

³ [Behold] what God has created! (Numbers 23:23)

⁴ Samuel Finley Breese Morse, US-amerik. Erfinder, * 27.04.1791 Charlestown, MA, † 02.04.1872 New York City, NY.

⁵ Alfred Vail, US-American engineer and inventor, * September 25, 1807 Morristown, NJ, † January 18, 1859 Morristown, NJ.

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modern electrical communications, but defined by the beginning of the spread and

The use of Morse Landline Code also marked the beginning of a timeless and worthy of protection form of communication and art by and for people.

The Morse Landline Code (American Morse Code) initially used by Morse and Vail to transmit messages via telegraphy quickly proved to be too complicated and too prone to errors.

lasted until the 1850s, until Friedrich Clemens Gerke⁶ found a solution and was able to significantly improve the telegraphic code developed by Vail. Ultimately, it was his optimizations of the barely usable telegraphic code of his creators from the new world that made it into a Morse code, which is still valid and used worldwide today, was made possible. He thus truly revolutionized.

Gerke reduced the code to just three elements: short signal (dot), long signal (dash) and pause. A dash is as long as three dots; the pause between two signals is as long like a dot; the pause between two letters is as long as a dash and the pause between two Words as long as seven dots.

The representation as a written form of the characters is only a makeshift, much more important is the It makes Morse telegraphy a special form of music – a single tone, but a constantly changing rhythm. The fastest telegraph operators can achieve a sending and reading speed of up to three letters per second! A speed that is also It is difficult to beat the use of SMS on a modern smartphone, for example.

Finally, the Hamburg Alphabet – as Gerke once called his telegraphy code – was introduced with the initialing of the International Telegraphy Treaty of 1865 by the German-Austrian Telegraph Association. the international recognition as a telegraphy standard that is still valid today.

Because of all these links to Germany and the local pioneers in the field of electromechanical communication, we are extremely pleased that Morse telegraphy has had a permanent place in has found a place in the national inventory of intangible cultural heritage.

We will also continue to work on promoting the Morse telegraphy project intensively in order to to compete both nationally and internationally.

Nomination procedure

We are familiar with the process for selecting national nominations and are happy to support We support the members of the national UNESCO expert committee in this process through our active participation. In order to underline our intention to have Morse telegraphy recognized as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage, we will shortly present you with an article for a duk/UNESCO publication that appears suitable.

Further information on expressing interest, knowledge, skills, sharing

The planned multi-page article for one of the national duk/unesco publications will provide interesting provide background information and look at the long history of Morse telegraphy from different perspectives. He will also discuss what we mean by "Knowledge. Skill. Passing on.", how we implement these core points and interested people can benefit from them.

There are currently around 61,000 radio amateurs in Germany. Around 33,000 of these radio operators are Members of the non-profit German Amateur Radio Club e. V. (darc) ⁷ . the third largest amateur radio Club of the world. The radio amateurs organized in the darc are spread across 960 local associations in Germany. Many active radio operators use Morse telegraphy regularly – as one of the many possible Modes of operation in amateur radio – to get in touch with around 2.5 million like-minded people worldwide.

⁶Friedrich Clemens Gerke, German writer, journalist and technician, ⁷ 22.01.1801 Osnabrück, † 21.05.1888 Hamburg.
⁷DARC: <https://www.darc.de>.

The knowledge is passed on at club evenings, joint radio activities, radio competitions, in the form of training courses or lectures. The German Amateur Radio Club (darc) also offers courses and educational video seminars on selected topics related to amateur radio. Participation is open to everyone and is free of charge, except for the on-site seminars lasting several days, with accommodation in Baunatal.

Ultimately, the skill is the result of regular practice under expert guidance.

Morse telegraphy can also be learned through courses in local associations or even via the Internet become.

Knowledge and experience are passed on personally, in local associations and clubs, at Trade fairs and radio events or as part of holiday games for school children. Internet sites and portals operated by radio amateurs and clubs also provide valuable information free of charge in the form of specialist articles from various areas of amateur radio in general and Morse telegraphy in particular.

The Telegraphy Association (agcw) ⁸ has been offering interested parties the so-called qrs-Net since 2011. The opportunity to practice Morse telegraphy at moderate speeds every week. Experienced teachers lead these practice sessions, listen carefully, encourage the students and Students to participate and help to successfully overcome initial hurdles.

The agcw's Morsefreund program is also very popular for learning Morse telegraphy from scratch. An experienced telegraph operator acts as a volunteer teacher (called Elmer), who first agrees an individual curriculum with each student. The lessons for Telegraphic connections are then regularly – as is usual in real radio traffic – on one of the regular amateur radio bands, at pre-arranged times. Participation in the Morsefreund program or qrs-Net are free of charge.

Another way to learn Morse code online is with the portal Learn CW9 Online (lcwo) ¹⁰ by Fabian Kurz. To participate, you only need access to the Internet and a Browser required. After a free registration on the portal, you can learn Morse telegraphy from the comfort of your own home using various learning modules and levels of difficulty, according to your own schedule and personal commitment.

Morse code can also be learned sensibly and with a lot of fun using newly developed devices, such as the Morserino11 by Willibald Kraml from Austria. The kit is available for just under 90 EUR also available here and can be set up and working in around 30 minutes. You can then connect the device to the Internet via a router and start exchanging Morse signals with Enjoy like-minded people, without interference and in almost HiFi quality.

The Morserino also comes with a number of pre-installed practice lessons. For a small Group of 6-8 students can even use several of these devices in a classroom, for example because each device has a built-in transmitter/receiver with a short range. Learning telegraphy in this way is particularly fun because sent and received characters are not only transmitted as sounds through a loudspeaker, but also simultaneously in written form via a display. This makes it much easier for children and young people to get started with learning Morse telegraphy.

Another form of passing on knowledge and exchanging experiences around Morse telegraphy takes place during the annual cw weekends of the agcw e. V. From close and far away, interested telegraphists travel to spend 3–4 days in a conference hotel. Spending time with like-minded people. Workshops, exhibitions and interesting lectures form a varied supporting programme for the annual general meetings of the fmc12 clubs, which also take place at the same time ¹¹, hsc13 and agcw.

⁸AGCW: <https://www.agcw.de>.

⁹CW: Amateur radio term for Morse telegraphy (continuous wave).

¹⁰LCWO: <https://lcwo.net>.

¹¹Morserino: <https://www.morserino.info>.

¹²FMC: Friends of S. F. B. Morse Club <https://www.fmc-morse.org>.

¹³HSC: High Speed Telegraphy Club <http://www.highspeedclub.org>.

A highlight of this event, which usually takes place in April and lasts a whole weekend, is certainly the German Telegraphy Cup (dtp). This prestigious showdown between telegraphists is organized in close cooperation with darc e. V., the competition sponsor. Since 2000, the best telegraphists, divided into different age and participant classes, have competed against each other in various individual disciplines.

Contribution of the cultural form to the sustainable development of our society

As a cultural form, Morse telegraphy makes an important and lasting contribution to our society, and not just as a reliable means of communication in emergencies and crises. It is gender-, politically and religiously neutral, creates friendships and promotes inclusion. Telegraphers are also very polite to one another, no one is excluded. Help is available to those who seek it. Only the acquired skill on the Morse key counts. Morse telegraphy thus promotes discipline and a meaningful, peaceful and people-connecting leisure activity.

As a cultural heritage of humanity, it can therefore make significant contributions to sustainable development and to tackling societal challenges:

1. **Preservation of cultural identity** – Morse code has a long and significant history in communication. Its inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List recognises its deserved significance as a cultural heritage and strengthens appreciation for this historic means of communication.
2. **Promoting linguistic diversity** – Morse code is a universal form of expression that is independent of spoken languages. By preserving and promoting this unique art as a cultural heritage of humanity, the diversity of forms of communication is preserved and maintained and the importance of non-verbal communication is emphasized.
3. **Promoting education and research** - Recognition of Morse telegraphy as a UNESCO cultural heritage has the potential to help raise awareness of historical communication technologies and encourage interest in technical education and research. This can contribute to the development of new technologies and deepen understanding of the history of telecommunications. In addition, targeted learning of telegraphy often means the discovery and active use of new learning and relaxation techniques that can also prove useful outside of amateur radio.
4. **Strengthening the community and social cohesion** - Morse code has created a large community of radio amateurs and enthusiasts all over the world. Recognition as a UNESCO cultural heritage site will further strengthen the sense of solidarity within this community and further promote the exchange of knowledge and skills.
5. **Promoting sustainability** – Morse telegraphy is a resource-efficient form of communication that can be operated with comparatively little energy consumption. By promoting Morse telegraphy as a cultural heritage of humanity, alternative forms of communication are supported that require fewer resources and therefore contribute to sustainability.

Recognition of Morse telegraphy as a UNESCO cultural heritage will help to recognise the importance of historical communication technologies, raise awareness of cultural diversity and contribute to sustainable development and to tackling societal challenges.

Contribution of the cultural form to the development of an open and democratic society

Telegraph signals and messages can be received and answered worldwide; they form one of the oldest social networks in existence. Morse telegraphy can therefore make valuable contributions to the development of a democratic society and also has considerable potential for maintaining international cooperation.

1. **Democratic communication** – Morse telegraphy enables direct, immediate and often anonymous communication over long distances. In a democratic society, The ability to exchange information independently of government or commercial interests helps to maintain freedom of speech and democratic principles. Since 1844, Morse telegraphy has been based on fundamental democratic principles and unites people across national borders.
2. **Inclusion and participation** – Morse telegraphy has always been a barrier-free form of communication that allows people to communicate regardless of age, gender, physical abilities, geographical location or social status. This helps to ensure the participation of all To encourage members of a society to participate in the democratic process and to reduce social inequalities reduce.
3. **Crisis communication and emergency management** – In crisis situations, such as natural disasters or political unrest – when traditional communication infrastructures can fail or are only available to a limited extent – Morse telegraphy has proven to be a reliable means of transmitting important information and initiating and coordinating rescue measures. This in turn strengthens the resilience of a democratic society and contributes to the protection of their citizens.
4. **International cooperation** – Morse telegraphy has a long history of use in international communication networks, such as maritime radio links or diplomatic messaging. Their universal nature and independence from language barriers make it becomes an effective tool for international cooperation, whether in scientific Exchanges, humanitarian missions or even diplomatic negotiations.
5. **Cultural exchange and international understanding** – Morse telegraphy brings people of different cultures and nationalities together by providing a common language of communication. This in turn promotes intercultural, intergenerational and peaceful exchange and mutual understanding between nations and contributes to strengthening international relations and friendships.
6. **Friendship through common interests** – The shared passion for Morse telegraphy connects people across national borders. Radio amateurs and Morse telegraphists regularly organize international meetings, Morse telegraphy competitions and technical projects that exchange and promote friendship between the participants. All this always happens peacefully, politely and with consideration and respect for one another.
7. **Fun and sporting competition** – Telegraphing is simply fun! Real experts Experts regularly compete in national or international competitions, such as the hst World Championship¹⁴ – the Olympics of High Speed Telegraph Operators – the German Telegraph Cup, Annual Telegraphy Competition Golden Key, or a variety of other telegraphy competitions.

Our application for the recognition of Morse telegraphy as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage will be contribute to the development and strengthening of democratic societies at both national and international levels by promoting free communication, participation, crisis resilience and international cooperation as well as friendships between people.

Importance and practice of Morse telegraphy

Initially, Morse telegraphy was used primarily for commercial and military purposes, only later did it become available as a form of communication in other areas and for private individuals. Morse telegraphy laid the foundations for many other forms of wireless communication. It forms the forerunner of digital message transmission (on-off mode). Since the accident of the rms Titanic on 14 April 1912, Morse telegraphy was for a long time a mandatory means of communication on Used on board sea-going vessels.

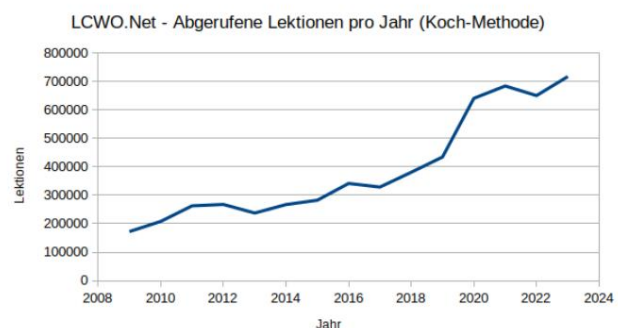
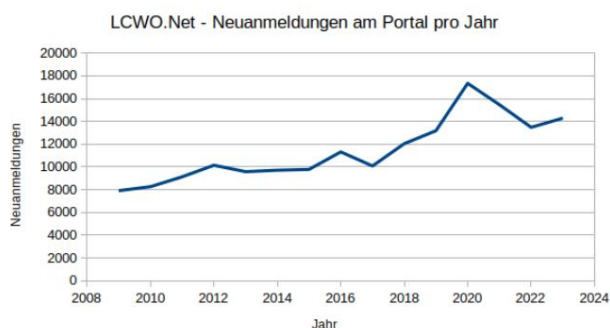
¹⁴High Speed Telegraphy World Championship 2024 (HSTWC 2024), 09.–13. September 2024, in Primorsko, Bulgarien.

Distribution and development

Today, telegraphy is no longer as important in the commercial or military sector as it was a few years ago. Nevertheless, telegraphy and amateur radio clubs are seeing a steady influx of members, which is why membership numbers are fortunately remaining constant, and in some cases even increasing, despite people leaving due to age. People - young and old alike - are still fascinated by the myth of Morse telegraphy. It is even still possible to take a Morse test at one of the German Federal Network Agencies (BNetzA). Until 2003, this was a mandatory requirement for obtaining an amateur radio license.

People today are learning Morse code because it enables them to communicate with others using simple means and without digital infrastructure. Even children and young people are enthusiastic about building small devices for telegraphing and are curious to uncover the secrets of the beeping tones themselves. Technologically, the old and new worlds are not mutually exclusive. Quite the opposite, telegraphy is possible in both analogue and digital form, and works equally well with ancient and modern devices. The measures required are minimal and usually cost little and take little time to implement.

Current user numbers show a positive upward trend, as can be seen in the two diagrams shown below from Fabian Kurz's previously mentioned online portal lcwo. Over the last 15 years, there has been no decline, but rather a constant worldwide interest in telegraphy.



Especially during the period of the Corona pandemic (2021-2022), amateur radio and telegraphy associations were able to register increased interest, as was the Federal Network Agency (BNetzA), in terms of the number of exams taken as well as the allocation of call signs.

The number of participants in national and international radio and telegraphy competitions grew equally during this period, with an annual increase of around 4 %¹⁵. Even after the pandemic subsided, interest in meaningful leisure activities such as amateur radio and telegraphy remained. For us, this is a very clear and encouraging sign.

Cross-border initiatives, association and committee work

We organize exchanges with other cultural heritage communities, for example in the Netherlands, through regular discussions and joint activities such as competitions, visits to trade fairs and conferences.

Internationally, we are pursuing the Morse telegraphy project as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage together with numerous other countries as part of regular project work and coordination in conferences of the amateur radio umbrella organization of iaru Region 1¹⁶.

¹⁵Here referring to the radio competition Worked-All-Germany in the period 2014–2023.

¹⁶IARU: International Amateur Radio Union, Region 1 (Europe, Africa, Western Asia) <https://www.iau-r1.org/>.

At the last iaru conference¹⁷ of Region 1, which took place from 1 to 4 November 2023 in Zlatibor, Serbia, 64 representatives of the participating nations voted in favour of intensifying cooperation to protect Morse telegraphy and to have it recognised as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage. A proposal submitted by the Dutch delegation entitled Establishing Morse Code As An Intangible World Heritage¹⁸ is now being vigorously pursued within the iaru R1 working group C2 under the leadership of Oliver Tabakovski.

The agcw e. V. is planning a Morse telegraphy activity week together with friendly European amateur radio associations from Belgium and the Netherlands, among others. This is to take place from May 5 to 12, 2024, from 00:00 to 23:59 (GMT) under the motto Morse telegraphy as a UNESCO cultural heritage on certain amateur radio bands. The intention is to cover the two European days, May 5 (founding of the Council of Europe in 1949) and May 9 (Schuman Declaration in 1950). The aim of this week-long event is to remind people of the European idea of strengthening human rights, democracy and the rule of law and at the same time to win over other associations and supporters for the Morse telegraphy project as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage within Europe.

In addition to Germany (2014), the Netherlands (2014) and Belgium (2017) have also successfully applied for the Morse Telegraphy initiative as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage worthy of protection and have thus meanwhile been able to achieve the inclusion of the cultural asset in the national registers.

Belgium The project has been registered in the national lists of Flanders, German-speaking Belgium and Brussels since 2017. Negotiations for inclusion in Wallonia are planned. The project is supported by the two Belgian amateur radio clubs uba¹⁹ and rbo²⁰. Our contact person at uba is Stefan Dombrowski.

Netherlands The project was added to the national list of cultural assets of the Netherlands in 2014.

The initiative is supported by the Dutch amateur radio association veron²¹. The state-accredited institute kien²² is responsible for cultural heritage issues in the Netherlands. Our contact at veron is Remy FG Denker.

Cyprus At the 2023 iaru conference in Zlatibor, the Cypriot delegation reiterated its interest in submitting an application for the recognition of Morse telegraphy as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage and pledged its support in working on a multinational application.

Austria Radio amateurs from Austria also intend to launch an application initiative.

The Austrian Radio Amateurs Association övsv²³ should be contacted regarding this. Our contact person is Arnold Huebsch (oe1iah).

Spain We received a request from radio amateurs of the Spanish association ure²⁴ for further information and to support a possible application from Spain. This request is being processed, our contact person is Carlos Reboreda Bernal (ea1pj).

Vatican The plan is to make the ike project known in countries that otherwise have no or only a few cultural heritage projects. More specific inquiries will soon be made via Vatican Radio and other radio amateurs at the Vatican amateur radio station hv5pul²⁵. The Vatican ratified the UNESCO World Heritage Convention in 1982, but not the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Our contact is Luca Della Giovampaola.

Andorra Representatives of Andorra have agreed at the 2023 iaru conference in Zlatibor to initiate a multinational application for the recognition of Morse telegraphy as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage and to coordinate the necessary measures for implementation together with Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. Our contact person is Joan Manel Sauri Araus.

¹⁷IARU Conference Zlatibor <https://conf.iaru-r1.org>.

¹⁸Antrag ZL23_C3_04 <https://tinyurl.com/2bo6khn3>.

¹⁹UBA: Royal Union of Belgian Radio Amateurs <https://www.uba.be>.

²⁰RBO: Radio amateurs of the Belgian Eastern Cantons <http://www.rbo.be>.

²¹VERON: Association for Experimental Radio Research in the Netherlands <https://www.veron.nl>.

²²KIEN: Kenniscentrum Immaterieel Erfgoed Nederland <https://www.immaterieelerfgoed.nl/nl/kien>. ²³ÖVSV: Austrian Experimental Transmitter Association <https://www.oevsv.at/home/>.

²⁴URE: Union of Spanish Radio Amateurs <https://www.ure.es>.

²⁵HV5PUL: Vatican Amateur Radio Station <http://www.hv5pul.info>.

We will continue to intensify our contacts with the aforementioned countries through our partner associations and clubs. We will also follow the decision of the 2023 iaru conference to include Andorra, with the aim of launching a multinational application.

The ike project working group meets regularly every 14 days in the form of video conferences. We plan, implement and monitor activities together. We will continue to inform the German UNESCO Commission quarterly or as needed about the progress of our work. At the end of this letter, we would like to inform you of our next appointments.

Schedule and milestone plan (excerpt)

1. Coordination with other countries on a multinational ike application March/April 2024
2. Preparation of an article on Morse telegraphy for one of the duk/unesco publications from April 2024
- 3rd AGCW-CW weekend from
12 to 14 April 2024 at Hotel Büker, Erwitte
4. Lecture and discussion session Morse telegraphy as intangible UNESCO cultural heritage
Saturday, April 13, 2024 from 4 p.m., Hotel Büker, Erwitte
5. World Radio Day 18.
April 2024
- 6th Morse Telegraphy-ike Activity Week 05–
12 May 2024, all day 00:00–23:59 (gmt), on various shortwave bands
7. Morse Telegraphy Project Days
28–30 June 2024, exhibition stand of agcw e. V., Hall 1, Messe Friedrichshafen/Bodensee
8. iaru-Meeting A
Century of Connections: Celebrating 100 years of Amateur Radio Innovation, Community, and Advocacy 28.–30. Juni 2024, Halle 1, Messe Friedrichshafen/Bodensee

We would like to thank you once again, dear Prof. Wulf, and the members of the expert committee of the German UNESCO representation in Bonn, for your appreciation and also for your helpful support of our UNESCO cultural heritage project Morse telegraphy.

We are happy to answer any questions you may have or to arrange a personal meeting.

Together we now have a unique opportunity to protect, develop and preserve for future generations what once began with the words What Hath God Wrought as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Best regards

i. A. Karlheinz Geyer as

IKE project manager on behalf of the
sponsoring associations AGCW e. V.
and DARC e. V.

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