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Answer given by Mr McGrath
on behalf of the European Commission
(28.9.2026)

Freedom of assembly and association is a fundamental right enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights (the Charter). Together with freedom of expression and information, it is a cornerstone of a free and democratic society. In line with its Article 51(1), the Charter applies to Member States only when they are implementing EU law.

As regards events related to commemorating victory over Nazi Germany on 8 or 9 May, the rules fall primarily within the competence of the Member States, which should exercise this competence in conformity with their international human rights obligations, notably the European Convention on Human Rights. Compliance with the Convention is assessed by national courts and, ultimately, by the European Court of Human Rights.

Regarding cultural heritage, the Commission considers the safeguarding of all forms of cultural heritage with the utmost importance. However, the EU has no specific competence in this field. The preservation, conservation and promotion of all forms of cultural heritage are primarily the responsibility of the Member States.