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Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.8.2026)

The Commission closely monitors developments related to the protection of minority rights, including the preservation and promotion of linguistic, cultural and religious identity in Montenegro under Chapter 23 (Judiciary and Fundamental Rights) of the EU accession negotiations.

In this context, the Commission outlined in its 2025 enlargement package¹ that the legal and institutional framework for the protection of persons belonging to minorities is largely in place but needs to be improved and further aligned with the EU *acquis*. The Law on Minority Rights and Freedoms² ensures the protection and respect of human rights for all citizens, including the right to publicly express their national, ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic identity.

The Commission applies a comprehensive monitoring approach to assess the practical implementation of European standards on minority protection in Montenegro. This includes continuous dialogue with the authorities, consultations with minority communities, civil society organisations, human rights defenders and international organisations, and assessment of the functioning of relevant institutions.

The Commission will continue to closely monitor these issues and take them into account as part of its assessment and reporting on Montenegro's compliance with the EU accession criteria and in its contacts with the Montenegrin authorities.

¹ https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/montenegro-report-2025_en.

² Official Gazette of the Republic of Montenegro 31/06, 51/06 and 38/07 and Official Gazette of Montenegro 2/11 and 31/17.