Statement on Revitalising the use of regional or minority languages in public life, adopted by the Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages on 19 November 2026, during its 86th plenary meeting held in Strasbourg.

The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is the only treaty worldwide devoted to the protection and promotion of regional or minority languages. While the demographic situations of regional or minority languages vary greatly, they share a greater or lesser degree of vulnerability and a need to revitalise their use in private and public life.

On 17 November 2026, the Council of Europe held the conference “Revitalising the use of regional or minority languages in public life” in the framework of Montenegro’s Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. The conference brought together representatives of civil society organisations, researchers, practitioners and states representatives. It showcased relevant good practices in policies, legislation and practice in states parties to inspire regional or minority language users and authorities across Europe.

The Committee of Experts emphasises the invaluable role of users of regional or minority languages in the revitalisation and promotion of their languages. It commends their tireless efforts and calls on states to support them. The Committee of Experts also recalls that users of regional or minority languages, including women who often carry the language, must be involved in decisions that affect them. It therefore encourages states parties to implement their language policies in close co-operation with the bodies and associations that promote regional or minority languages, ensuring that these policies incorporate gender equality. The Committee of Experts also recalls that the Charter provides for the involvement of users of regional or minority languages in various fields, ranging from regional and local assemblies to bodies concerned with media, culture and language policy. Involving users of regional or minority languages in decision-making processes strengthens their representation and democratic participation.

The Committee of Experts underlines that respect for linguistic diversity and the effective use of regional or minority languages in all fields of public life strengthens the identity and sense of belonging of the linguistic groups, reduces their marginalisation and helps build more cohesive societies, thereby reinforcing democratic security. For these reasons, the Committee of Experts stresses that the protection of minorities and language rights should be a key element of the New Democratic Pact for Europe.