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EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR REGIONAL OR MINORITY LANGUAGES

**Evaluation by the Committee of Experts
of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action contained
in the Committee of Experts' sixth evaluation report on**

MONTENEGRO

Introduction

1. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereafter referred to as “the Charter”) is a treaty of the Council of Europe putting obligations on its states parties to protect and promote the country’s traditional minority languages in all fields of public life: education, judicial authorities, administrative authorities and public services, media, cultural activities and facilities, economic and social life, and transfrontier exchanges. The Charter entered into force in Montenegro on 6 June 2006 and applies to the following languages: Albanian, Croatian, Bosnian and Romani. The Bosnian and Croatian languages are covered by Part II (Article 7) only, whereas the other languages receive protection under both Part II and Part III (Articles 8-14).

2. The Committee of Experts monitors the implementation of the Charter. Each state party shall present a periodical report on the implementation of the Charter every five years. On the basis of the periodical report, the Committee of Experts adopts an evaluation report in which it makes “**recommendations for immediate action**” and “further recommendations” on how to improve the protection and promotion of the regional or minority languages in the state concerned. Based on this evaluation report, the Committee of Ministers adopts its recommendations to the state party.

3. Two and a half years after the due date of its periodical report, the state party shall present information on the implementation of every recommendation for immediate action¹ that the Committee of Experts has made in its evaluation report. The Committee of Experts then adopts an evaluation of the implementation of these recommendations. The “further recommendations” by the Committee of Experts are examined after reception of the next periodical report and the on-the-spot visit to the state party. Five-yearly periodical reports shall contain comprehensive information about the implementation of all Charter undertakings and all recommendations by the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers.

4. Montenegro submitted the **information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** contained in the Committee of Experts’ sixth evaluation report² on 29 January 2025. This **evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action** is based on the information received from the Montenegrin authorities, as well as from representatives of the minority language speakers pursuant to Article 16.2 of the Charter.³ As far as the compliance of Montenegro with all its undertakings under the Charter is concerned, the Committee of Experts refers to its sixth evaluation report. The Committee of Experts will examine the implementation of all of the undertakings concerning all of the minority languages in the next evaluation report.

5. This evaluation was adopted by the Committee of Experts on 13 June 2025.

¹ In accordance with Committee of Ministers Decisions “Strengthening the monitoring mechanism of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages” ([CM/Del/Dec\(2018\)1330/10.4e](#)), para. 1.a.

² Sixth evaluation report on Montenegro, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)14](#).

³ In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Committee of Experts ([MIN-LANG\(2019\)7](#)), Rule 17, paras. 1-6.

Examination of the implementation by Montenegro of the recommendations for immediate action

I. General developments

6. The authorities of Montenegro informed of the recently adopted Strategy for Minority Policy for 2024–2028 and its accompanying Action Plan for 2024–2025, which include goals for enhancing equality and strengthening the rights of ethnic and minority groups in education, employment, language use, including support for minority languages through programmes for linguistic revitalisation. A new Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians is set to be drafted in 2025, with the working group responsible for its preparation to be formed in the second quarter of that year.⁴ At the time of the adoption of this evaluation, this has not yet happened.

7. The Committee of Experts welcomes the inclusion of language use goals in the new Strategy for Minority Policy and the accompanying Action Plan and encourages the authorities to actively involve representatives of regional or minority language speakers in their implementation. It also welcomes the preparation of the new Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians and encourages the authorities to consider incorporating objectives for promoting Romani in Montenegro, including its use in public and private life, as well as in education and teacher training, with the aim of enhancing Montenegro's implementation of its Charter undertakings with respect to Romani, in co-operation with representatives of its speakers.

Consultation of representatives of the minority language speakers

8. The representatives of the Romani speakers have informed the Committee of Experts that they have not been consulted by the authorities regarding the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action that the Committee of Experts has made in its sixth evaluation report nor when preparing the information on the implementation of these recommendations. The Committee of Experts reiterates that, in conformity with Articles 6 and 7.4 of the Charter, it is necessary to inform the organisations concerned of the recommendations made during the monitoring cycle and to take into consideration the needs and wishes expressed by them in the implementation and related reporting.⁵

9. The Committee of Experts reminds the Montenegrin authorities to ensure dissemination of the Committee of Experts' evaluation reports and related Committee of Ministers recommendations on their official websites.

⁴ [MIN-LANG\(2025\)IRIA1](#), Information Document on the implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action based on the 6th monitoring cycle submitted by Montenegro on 29 January 2025.

⁵ See, for example, the Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action by Slovenia ([MIN-LANG\(2021\)11](#)), para. 8; Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action by the United Kingdom and Isle of Man ([MIN-LANG\(2021\)3](#)), para. 7; Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action by Hungary ([MIN-LANG\(2020\)14](#)), para. 6.

II. Recommendations for immediate action

Romani – Part II and Part III language

Recommendation for immediate action

a. Introduce Romani into formal education in co-operation with the speakers.

Implementation measures taken by the Montenegro authorities

10. Romani is still absent from formal education, despite the previous recommendations from the Committee of Experts and the Committee of Ministers in earlier monitoring cycles. According to the authorities, the lack of qualified teachers continues to be an obstacle, preventing the development of a coherent strategy for basic and further teacher training in this language as well as the introduction of Romani into education, as also emphasised in paragraph 15 below.

11. The authorities informed about the publication of a Romani-Montenegrin and Montenegrin-Romani Language dictionary in 2023 by the Public Institution Center for the Preservation and Development of Minority Culture. It is the first dictionary written in the varieties spoken by Roma in Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina and was expected to serve as a starting point for a future standardisation process, which, however, has not progressed since the previous monitoring cycles.⁶

12. Several other projects funded by Montenegro aimed at promoting Romani, including in the field of education, were also listed by the authorities.⁷ However, according to speakers, these initiatives are not part of the standard school curriculum and rely on project-based funding, often from international donors or national grants, rather than being financed in a sustainable manner by the Ministry of Education.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

13. The Committee of Experts takes note of the information about the various projects and initiatives funded by Montenegro to promote Romani. It also welcomes the publication of the new dictionary and encourages the authorities to explore ways in which it can serve as a basis for developing teaching materials and other resources, thereby fostering Romani language teaching and supporting the relaunch of the standardisation process in co-operation with the speakers.

14. The Committee of Experts regrets, however, that this recommendation has not yet been implemented and that Romani remains absent from formal education. It is also concerned that no specific information has been provided about concrete steps taken or currently under discussion in co-operation with speakers to introduce Romani into the education system. Effective measures are needed to integrate Romani at all levels of public education, in line with Montenegro's undertakings. As a first step, the authorities could consider introducing Romani at the preschool and primary levels, where the lack of standardisation is not an insurmountable obstacle, and to subsequently consider sustainable measures for its inclusion at all levels of formal education.⁸

⁶ Sixth Evaluation report on Montenegro, [MIN-LANG \(2023\)14](#), para. 63.

⁷ [MIN-LANG\(2025\)IRIA1](#), page 4.

⁸ See for example: Third evaluation report on Montenegro, [ECRML\(2015\)3](#), para. 54; Seventh evaluation report on Norway, [CM\(2018\)88](#), para. 11; See also the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, Fourth Opinion on Montenegro, [ACFC/OP/IV\(2024\)1](#), para. 146.

Recommendation for immediate action

b. Develop and implement a coherent strategy for the basic and further teacher training for the teaching in/of Romani in co-operation with the speakers.

Implementation measures taken by the Montenegrin authorities

15. According to the authorities, the lack of qualified teachers is a key obstacle to developing a strategy for teacher training for the teaching in/of Romani. To address this issue, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, in co-operation with the Faculty of Philology, University of Montenegro, is considering the options for introducing a master's level programme in Romani, drawing on the experiences and practices of other Council of Europe member states, and including units on teaching methodology. In the initial phases, guest lecturers from neighbouring countries will be invited to hold classes until the first generation of graduates completes the programme and can assume lecturing positions.⁹ According to the speakers, it is unclear what the timeline would be.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed

16. The Committee of Experts takes note of the authorities' intention to introduce a master's level programme for Romani, thereby taking into consideration its recommendations made in the fifth evaluation report on Montenegro.¹⁰ Furthermore, in order to implement these recommendations and tackle the lack of qualified teachers, the authorities could consider short-term remedies which could incentivise students, such as further scholarships, guaranteed employment or salary bonuses.¹¹ Bearing in mind that there has been no progress in implementing this repeated recommendation from previous monitoring cycles, further and urgent measures are needed to implement this recommendation, in co-operation with the speakers.

Recommendation for immediate action

c. Introduce Romani in official use in at least one local self-government unit, where the Romani speakers have their highest concentration.

Implementation measures taken by the Montenegrin authorities

17. The authorities acknowledged that Romani is still not in official use in any municipality. The main issue, as reported in the sixth evaluation report and previous cycles, is that the number of speakers does not reach the 5% threshold in any administrative unit. The lack of administrative personnel formally trained in Romani is reported by the authorities to be the key obstacle for the implementation of this recommendation. The authorities indicate that they are committed to continuing their efforts to find solutions to this issue and fully implement the recommendation.

18. In addition, the authorities informed that, on 5 November 2024, the first court interpreter for Romani in Montenegro was appointed.

Evaluation by the Committee of Experts and further action needed test

19. The Committee of Experts is concerned that the recommendation has not been implemented and that Romani is not yet in official use in at least one administrative unit, despite repeated recommendations in this regard in previous cycles. The Committee of Experts reminds the authorities that implementing the undertakings under Article 10 of the Charter requires both organisational measures within administrations (e.g., recruitment of officials speaking the relevant minority language, training of existing staff) and

⁹ [MIN-LANG\(2025\)IRIA1](#), page 3.

¹⁰ Fifth evaluation report on Montenegro, [MIN-LANG \(2020\)1](#), para. 63.

¹¹ See for example the Evaluation by the Committee of Experts of the Implementation of the Recommendations for Immediate Action contained in the Committee of Experts' fifth evaluation report on the United Kingdom and Isle of Man, [MIN-LANG \(2021\) 3](#), para. 32.

measures encouraging minority language speakers to avail themselves of the possibility of using their language in contacts the authorities.¹² According to their undertaking under Article 10.4.c, the Montenegrin authorities should identify existing Romani-speaking staff and in consultation with them appoint them in at least one local self-government unit, where the Romani speakers have their highest concentration in relative or absolute numbers. The authorities are encouraged to continue efforts to find a solution to this issue, to enter into a dialogue with Romani speakers and to actively promote the recruitment of Romani speakers within the local public administration and to consider in-service training.

20. The Committee of Experts further refers to its observations made in paragraph 8 of the sixth evaluation report and reiterates its recommendation to the Montenegrin authorities to take effective steps to enable the official use of Romani in at least one administrative unit, irrespective of the 5% threshold.

21. The Committee of Experts takes positive note of the appointment of the first interpreter for Romani, which can contribute to using Romani before judicial authorities.

¹² See, for example Fifth evaluation report on Croatia, [ECRML \(2015\)2](#), para. 96.

Communication to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

The Committee of Experts of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, while acknowledging the efforts of the Montenegro authorities to comply with their undertakings under the Charter, has in its sixth evaluation report ([CM\(2023\)187](#)) made “recommendations for immediate action” and “further recommendations” on how to improve the protection and promotion of the regional or minority languages in Montenegro.

In accordance with the Committee of Ministers Decisions of 28 November 2018 ([CM/Del/Dec\(2018\)1330/10.4e](#)), Montenegro had to present information on the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action, which contain the priority measures that should be taken by the state party. Montenegro presented this information on 29 January 2025. In the present evaluation, the Committee of Experts has examined the implementation of these recommendations.

In accordance with its Rules of Procedure, the Committee of Experts invites the Committee of Ministers to:

1. take note of the evaluation made by the Committee of Experts of the implementation of the recommendations for immediate action by Montenegro and invite the Montenegrin authorities to disseminate it to the competent national authorities and relevant stakeholders;
2. reiterate its Recommendation [CM/RecChL\(2023\)5](#) and invite the Montenegrin authorities to present their next periodical report by 6 June 2027 in the required format.