

## COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

### FINAL COMPROMISE AMENDMENTS

#### Draft Report on the 2019-2020 Commission Reports on Montenegro (2019/2173(INI))

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## PARAGRAPHS

### COMP 1

#### Paragraph 1 and 1a (new)

AM 28 (Deli/NI), Rapporteur

AM 27 (Rivière, Mariani/ID) falls

1. Welcomes Montenegro's continued engagement in the EU integration process and its overall progress;

*1a (new) Stresses the importance of the swift implementation of the revised enlargement methodology based on thematic negotiation chapter clusters and phasing-in to individual EU policies and programmes, in order to accelerate the overall negotiation process and provide clear and tangible incentives of direct interest to citizens of Montenegro;*  
(AM 28)

### COMP 2

#### Paragraph 2

AM 30 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 31 (Deli/NI)

AM 29 (Rivière, Mariani/ID) falls

2. Welcomes the opening of Chapter 8 (Competition policy) and Montenegro's decision to accept the principles of the revised enlargement methodology; calls in particular for *efficiently* (AM 30) meeting the interim benchmarks for Chapters 23 and 24, ***which will be the next milestone*** (AM 30), ***and strongly supports closing of accession chapters, as Montenegro delivers and implements reforms on required benchmarks***; (AM 31) recalls that ~~only~~ (AM 31) three chapters have been provisionally closed since the opening of the first chapter in December 2012, and encourages a clear focus on working to address the closing benchmarks in all other chapters;

### **COMP 3**

#### **Paragraph 3**

AM 32 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 33 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 34 (Deli/NI), AM 35 (Rapporteur), AM 36 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D)

3. ~~Notes~~ ***Welcomes*** (AM 33) that the 30 August 2020 elections resulted in the first transition of power since the ~~country's independence~~ ***introduction of the multi-party system***, (AM 35) in full respect of democratic standards and Montenegro's constitution ***as well as the fact that OSCE/ODIHR found the elections to be conducted in an efficient, competitive and transparent manner***; (AM 34) ***positively notes that the election results were not contested and that all elected Parliamentarians have actually resumed their duty***; (AM 33) ***expresses concern about the reports of external influence in the election process***; (AM 32, 36)

### **COMP 4**

#### **Paragraph 4**

AM 37 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 38 (Rapporteur), AM 39 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 40 (Rapporteur)

4. Welcomes the fact that on its first working day, the newly formed Montenegrin Government held an exchange of views with Members of the European Parliament and EU officials and ***the new government's explicit commitment to further pursue EU integration and to meet standards necessary for the country's progress on the EU path and to strengthen the transatlantic alliance*** (AM 39, 40); ***stresses that it is vital not to reverse earlier achievements in the reform process*** (AM37) ***and*** encourages the new Government to use its mandate to accelerate EU-related reforms and accession negotiations; ***notes that an open and constructive dialogue between all political and social stakeholders, as well as an agreement on key issues concerning the overall progress of the country are needed for Montenegro to make progress on the EU path***; (AM 38)

## COMP 5

### Paragraph 5

AM 41 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 42 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 43 (Grošelj et al./Renew)

5. Stresses the need for cooperative and constructive cohabitation between the President, ***and*** the new Government ***and the new Parliament***, (AM 42) with a view to enhancing Montenegro's progress on its EU path ***and strengthening further democratic progress of the country; calls on all parties to abide by democratic and constitutional principles*** (AM 41, 43);

## COMP 6

### Paragraph 6

AM 40 (Rapporteur), AM 44 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 45 (Deli/NI),

6. Welcomes recent public opinion surveys, which show that ***an increasing number of Montenegrin citizens 75 % (76,6%)*** (AM 40) ~~***of the citizens***~~ support ***Montenegro's accession to the country's membership in*** (AM 40) the EU, ~~***which is as***~~ (AM 40) a clear message to the new Government that the people want ***reforms*** (AM 40) based on European values; ***notes that this is one of the highest rates of public support for the EU in the region;*** (AM 44) ***in this context, welcomes the fact that the Commission gave new impetus to enlargement in 2020 with a new strategy for the Western Balkans and the Economic and Investment Plan;*** (AM 45)

## COMP 7

### Paragraph 7

AM 46 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 47 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 48 (Deli/NI)

7. Commends Montenegro's progress in several areas of the accession negotiations, including international police cooperation and the fight against ***organised crime*** (AM 47) (***including*** trafficking in human beings ***and drug smuggling***) (AM 48); calls on the authorities to accelerate political and economic reforms, particularly on the rule of law ***and fundamental rights***, (AM 46) the judiciary, media freedom and the fight against corruption, where further significant progress has to be made;

## COMP 8

### Paragraph 8, 8a (new), 8b (new)

AM 49 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 50 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 51 (Rapporteur), AM 151 (Grošelj et al./Renew)

8. Calls for the active engagement and appropriate inclusion of the Western Balkans countries, *including civil society as well as youth*, (AM 50) in the Conference on the Future of Europe *and their contribution should be taken into account given their commitment to become Member States of the Union in the future*; (AM 49)

*8a (new) Calls for the creation of new opportunities for high level political and policy dialogue with the Western Balkans countries, through regular EU-Western Balkans summits and intensified ministerial and parliamentary contacts, in order to strengthen the political credibility of the enlargement process, to ensure stronger steering and high-level engagement, as also called for by the revised enlargement methodology; (AM 151) [also in Kosovo report]*

*8b (new) Recalls that it is the interest of the government to ensure adequate representation abroad; refers, in this regard, to the pending appointment of Head of Montenegro's Mission to the EU; (AM 51)*

## **COMP 9**

### **Paragraph 9 and 9a (new)**

AM 52 (Bilík/EPP), AM 53 (Deli/NI), AM 54 (Rapporteur)

9. Takes note of the findings and conclusions of the international observers from the OSCE ODIHR, and calls on the authorities to address their recommendations fully *and in due time before the next national elections* (AM 53); welcomes the Government's adoption of a decision on the establishment of the Council for the Control of the Electoral Roll; *notes that the Parliament of Montenegro passed a Decision on the establishment of the Committee for Comprehensive Electoral Reform in December 2020 and expects this Committee to begin functioning without any further delay*; (AM 52)

*9a (new). Encourages holding local elections simultaneously across the country in order to bring more stability to democracy, avoid constant campaigning and to ease the tense political climate in Montenegro; (AM 52, 54) expresses disappointment, that despite a cross-party agreement to hold local elections on the same day, the legal framework still does not address this issue sufficiently; (AM 53) recalls that a two thirds majority is needed to amend the Law on the Election of Councillors and MPs, which requires a broad consensus of parliamentary parties; (AM 54)*

## **COMP 10**

### **Paragraph 10**

AM 55 (Bilík/EPP), AM 56 (Grošelj et al./Renew)

10. Calls on all political forces in the newly elected Skupština (Parliament) of Montenegro

to engage in a constructive, meaningful and inclusive dialogue in the Parliament, as this is the key to a successful parliamentary democracy; *welcomes the decision of the opposition not to boycott the work of the parliament and (AM56) reiterates that a functioning parliamentary democracy is based on the participation of both government and opposition in the parliamentary decision-making process; underlines that broad consensus of both the ruling majority and the opposition is fundamental in moving forward on the EU accession path and on reforms; calls on measures aimed at improving dialogue and trust across the political spectrum;* (AM 55)

## COMP 11

### **Paragraph 11, 11a (new)**

AM 57 (Bil ik/EPP), AM 58 (Bil ik/EPP), AM 59 (Bil ik/EPP),

11. Welcomes the *first recent* appointments to Montenegro's Delegation to the EU-Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee (SAPC) *and the completion of the Montenegro delegation to the SAPC;* calls for *the finalisation of the process and the appointment of members of the opposition and resuming of the work of SAPC* as soon as possible; (AM 57)

*11a (new) Welcomes the steps aimed at improving the supervisory role of the Parliament of Montenegro as well its transparency and openness to citizens and civil society;* (AM 58)  
*Calls for the newly elected parliament to ensure inclusive political dialogue within parliament and for a stronger role for civil society;* (AM 59)

## COMP 12

### **Paragraph 12 and 12a (new)**

AM 61 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 62 (Ernst/The Left, Franz, Urtasun, Waitz/Greens/EFA, Incir/S&D, Grošelj/Renew), AM 63 (Waitz/ Greens/EFA), AM 64 (Castaldo/NI), AM 65 (Rapporteur), AM 82 (McAllister/EPP), AM 101 (Grošelj et al./Renew)

12. Reiterates the importance of accelerating work on the implementation of the action plans for Chapters 23 and 24 and other strategic documents relating to the rule of law *and fundamental rights* (AM 63), in particular through effective cross-party dialogue aimed at ensuring the required qualified majority for key judicial and prosecutorial appointments, *as well as through conducting public and expert consultations concerning changes of key legislation;* (AM 63) *expresses concern that the working group on chapter 24 has not met over the past year;* (AM 61, 62)

*12a (new) Is concerned about the recent developments as regards the Special Prosecutor for organized crime and corruption as well as around the planned changes in the composition of the Prosecutorial Council; (AM 82) invites the Montenegrin government to amend crucial pieces of legislation, including in the case of the proposed amendments to the Law on Prosecutor's Office and the Law on Special Prosecutor's Office in line with democratic norms and established European practice, and to follow-up on the Venice Commission's opinion in this respect; (AM 64, 101) emphasises that the independent functioning and integrity of the Special Prosecutor's Office is key for Montenegro's progress in the area of rule of law; (AM 65)*

### **COMP 13**

#### **Paragraph 13, 14**

AM 65 (Rapporteur), AM 67 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D)

AM 66 (ECR) falls

13. Regrets limited progress in the judiciary, and calls on the Montenegrin authorities to urgently address the remaining challenges with regard to the independence, professionalism, efficiency and accountability of the judiciary ***through implementation of existing legislation and*** (AM 65) in line with the recommendations made by the Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) ***and the Venice Commission; stresses that Montenegro needs to make further progress on rule of law reforms, including to advance and not reverse the implementation of the judicial reform in line with good democratic norms and practice; reiterates that as ~~the~~ a result of reforms already carried out, Montenegro ~~already~~ has the bodies and mechanisms in place to ensure judicial and prosecutorial independence and accountability; encourages the authorities to make consistent use of these mechanisms and to build on the work done to produce further ~~develop~~ results and its track-record in the fight against corruption and organised crime;*** (AM 65)

14. Expresses deep concern over the Judicial Council's interpretation of the Constitution, which condones the unlawful reappointment of court presidents for more than two terms; ***notes that the President of the Supreme Court and the presidents of the basic courts in Bar, Kotor and Plav resigned after the call for judges with multiple mandates to resign, respecting good European practice and democratic standards;*** (AM 67)

### **COMP 14**

#### **Paragraph 15, 15a (new)**

AM 68 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 69 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 140 (Loiseau/Renew), AM 142 (Waitz/Greens/EFA)

15. Welcomes the fact that some progress has been made in the fight against organised crime, in particular as regards stronger capacity and professionalism of the police; *encourages Montenegro to continue its efforts in this area, in particular through combating internationally operating criminal networks, with a particular focus on the fight against money laundering, human, drug and arms trafficking as well as illegal gambling, cigarette smuggling and tracking the links to local politicians and police officers*; (AM 69, 140, 142)

15a (new) Underlines that systemic deficiencies in the criminal justice system remain and need to be addressed as a matter of priority; *urges the authorities to put in place concrete measures to limit the use of plea bargains to exceptional cases in order to enhance the transparency and the credibility of the judicial response to organised crime*; (AM 68)

## **COMP 15**

### **Paragraph 16, 16a (new), 17**

AM 70 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 71 (Rapporteur), AM 72 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D)

16. Is seriously concerned about the limited progress in the fight against corruption, and calls on the institutions responsible to *significantly* (AM 70) improve the country's track record in the confiscation of criminal assets, prosecutions and final convictions, *in particular for high-level cases, by substantially improving quality and independence of the criminal investigation and law enforcement*; (AM 70)

*16a (new) Notes some positive developments in the operations of the Agency for Prevention of Corruption; stresses however that challenges related to its independence and priority-setting still remain and calls on the agency to act independently and to implement consistently the Law on Prevention of Corruption*; (AM 71)

17. Reiterates the need for a robust criminal justice response to high-level corruption; recalls the need for an effective response to the alleged abuse of state resources for political parties and illegal financing of political parties;

## **COMP 16**

### **Paragraph 18, 18a (new), 18b (new)**

AM 73 (Deli/NI), AM 74 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 75 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 76 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D), AM 77 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 78 (Waitz/Greens/EFA)

18. Welcomes the efforts to implement public administration reform (PAR) and the results already achieved; is concerned by the findings that party membership still *strongly* (AM 74) influences employment in the Montenegrin public sector *and calls on the new government to*

*avoid politically-motivated dismissals and hiring of civil service professionals* (AM 75); calls on the Montenegrin authorities to continue their efforts to create an efficient public administration and to retain expertise, in particular on the EU accession process, *and in that respect welcomes transparent appointment procedures* (AM 74); *regrets that institutional capacities of the competition and anticorruption agencies remain weak*; (AM 73)

*18a (new) Expresses concern over the amendments to the Law on Civil Servants and State Employees adopted in the Parliament of Montenegro, which lower the criteria for the work in public administration and could undermine the progress made in public administration reform aiming to implement merit-based employment*; (AM 76, 77)

*18b (new) Welcomes the new government's promises to significantly increase transparency in all areas, including public finances and encourages ~~them~~ it to urgently develop and adopt an improved Law on free access to information*; (AM 78)

## **COMP 17**

### **Paragraph 19, 19a (new)**

AM 79 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 80 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 95 (Grošelj et al./Renew)

19. Notes the upcoming population and housing census in Montenegro, and calls on the institutions responsible to hold it in line with European standards and international recommendations; *urges to avoid any politicisation of the process* (AM 79) and *calls for an investigation of all accusations related to foreign interference in the census procedure*; (AM 95)

*19a (new) Calls on the Montenegrin authorities to devote special attention to money laundering, tax evasion and any other criminal activity in the framework of the investor citizenship scheme, while considering phasing out of it*; (AM 80)

AM 81 (Castaldo/NI) - VOTE

## **COMP 18**

### **Paragraph 20**

AM 83 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 84 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 85 (Georgiou et al./The Left)

AM 86 (Rivière, Mariani/ID) falls

20. Deplores the state of freedom of expression and media freedom, an area in which five successive Commission reports have noted 'no progress', *especially when it comes to the work*



*of the public broadcasting service RTCG* (AM 84); strongly condemns all types of attacks against the media and intimidation of journalists, and calls for the urgent and effective investigation of these, *including past cases, in order to end impunity of crimes against journalists* (AM 84); *regrets that some cases of violence against journalists still remain unsolved*; (AM 83) *calls for further steps to be taken to ensure independence of media and journalists* (AM 85); (urges Montenegro to provide conditions conducive to the effective exercise of freedom of expression, which is one of the EU's fundamental values and a crucial element of Montenegro's EU accession process;

## **COMP 19**

### **Paragraph 21, 21a (new), 21b (new)**

AM 88 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 89 (Rapporteur), AM 90 (Bilík/EPP), AM 91 (Zovko/EPP), AM 92 (Krasnodarski et al./ECR), AM 93 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 94 (Castaldo/NI), AM 153 (Zovko/EPP), AM 154 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 166 (Castaldo/NI), AM 167 (Deli/NI),

21. *Is concerned about the high polarisation of the media landscape, in particular about the growing volume of disinformation* (AM 89), also *aimed at exacerbating ethnic tensions, distorting electoral processes* (AM 94) *and reducing the support of the population for the euro-Atlantic integration*; (AM 92); underlines that media literacy, ~~and~~ media freedom *and independence* (AM 89) are key to combating disinformation; *stresses the need to improve coordination in order to fight regional disinformation campaigns*; (AM 88)

*21a (new)* Calls for the strengthening of European cooperation with Montenegro on addressing disinformation, and cyber and hybrid threats *that seek to undermine the European perspective of the region and; is concerned about the growing vulnerability of Montenegro through the increase of Montenegro's public debt, in particular to China*; (AM 88, 90, 153, 154, 166) *calls on Montenegro, the EU Member States and the EU Delegation in Montenegro to continue pursuing a more active and effective communication policy on the European perspective, aimed at both local and EU citizens and continue the coordinated efforts on increasing the visibility of the EU funded projects*; (AM 91, AM 167) *calls on the Commission and the EEAS to support the creation of a Balkan-focused Centre of Excellence on disinformation* (AM 88)

*21b (new)* *Calls on national authorities to take concrete steps in building resilience and cyber security at the time when Montenegro faces increasing pressure through foreign interference that seeks to undermine Montenegro's statehood and pro-Western orientation*, (AM 90) *and to enforce a deeper oversight of the media landscape in order to tackle fake news and other disinformation activities* (AM 94) *in particular orchestrated by harmful foreign influences* (AM 92) *and for operational independence of the media regulators and public service broadcaster* (AM 93), while striking a balance between fight against disinformation and disproportionate restrictions of freedom of expression online;

**COMP 20**     *Minorities, including Roma and Egyptians*

**Paragraph 22, 22a (new)**

AM 87 (Ernst/The Left, Franz, Urtasun, Weitz/Greens/EFA, Incir/S&D, Grošelj/Renew), AM 95 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 96 (Georgiou et al./The Left), AM 97 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 98 (McAllister/EPP), AM 99 (Zovko/EPP), AM 106 (Rapporteur), AM 107 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 108 (Waitz/ Greens/EFA),

22.     Strongly condemns verbal and physical attacks against and intimidation of national minorities, especially in Pljevlja following the August 2020 parliamentary elections ***and recently in Berane and Niksic*** (AM 98); ***urges Montenegrin authorities to thoroughly investigate all those incidents and bring the perpetrators to justice;*** (AM 95, 97);

***22a (new)***     ***Emphasises the need to protect all of the national minorities' rights, in particular as some of them no longer have minority party representatives to Skupština;*** (AM 106) ***urges to pay special attention to issues related to the national and ethnic affiliation of Montenegrin citizens;*** (AM 95) ***calls for respect of the multi-ethnic identity of the country, including the languages used, the cultural heritage and the traditions of local communities;*** (AM 99) ***stresses that further progress has to be made in the social inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in the labour market, education and public life in Montenegro, and calls to ensure their access to personal documents and legal status as well as to take effective measures against hate speech;*** (AM 87, 96, 107, 108)

**COMP 21**     *Domestic violence, gender balance, persons with disabilities*

**Paragraph 23, 23a (new), 23b (new), 23c (new)**

AM 60 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 100 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 102 (Georgiou et al./The Left), AM 103 (McAllister/EPP), AM 104 (Rapporteur), AM 105 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 109 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 115 (Rapporteur)

23.     Takes note of the Law on Domestic Violence Protection ***and its current changes***, (AM 100) and ***asks urges*** (AM 103) for its thorough implementation, ***including the allocation of sufficient resources***, (AM 100) as gender-based, domestic violence and violence against children remain an issue of serious concern; ***calls for more vigilance and establishing support systems for victims of domestic abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic;*** (AM 100, 102)

***23a (new)***     ***Calls the authorities to ensure a thorough implementation of the Istanbul Convention standards, including by increasing the number of well-trained and gender-sensitive law enforcement officers and judges, as to ensure the proper investigation and***

*prosecution of domestic violence crimes, and to introduce effective measures against sexual harassment, including at the work place;* (AM 100)

**23b (new)** *Is concerned about limited results of the existing policies and projects aimed at encouraging women's participation in the labour market, policy-making, and politics and face vulnerabilities in employment and in social policies;* (AM 104, 105) *regrets in this respect declining number of female MPs (AM60), lack of gender-balanced political representation in elections and in the new parliament and government;* (AM 104) *calls for necessary legal and policy measures to promote political participation of women;* (AM 60)

**23c (new)** *Recalls that while the Montenegrin government approved the annual action plan of the strategy for the protection of persons with disabilities from discrimination and for the promotion of equality, the implementation remains the key goal; regrets that persons with disabilities still face discrimination and difficult access to justice;* (AM 109) *Stresses that access to healthcare services needs to be improved for people with disabilities, internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups;* (AM 115)

## **COMP 22**

### **Paragraph 24, LGBTI persons**

AM 110 (Reintke, Waitz, Urtasun /Greens/EFA, Schreinemacher, tef nuță /Renew, Walsh/EPP, Angel, Biedro , Schieder, Köster /S&D), AM 112 (Georgiou et al./The Left), AM 113 (Grošelj et al.Renew), AM 114 (Bil ík/EPP)

AM 111 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR) falls

24. Welcomes progress on the protection of *the ~~LGBTI~~-rights of LGBTI persons* (AM 110) and *the fact that Montenegro is the first country in the region to adopt a ~~the adoption of the~~* (AM 113) *law on same-sex partnerships and calls on authorities to ensure all necessary conditions for its adequate implementation; stresses that the situation of transgender and non-binary persons needs to be improved;* (AM 110) *welcomes the peaceful conduct of the Pride Parade in 2019;* (AM 114) *calls on the Montenegrin authorities to continue to improve the climate of societal inclusion and tolerance (AM 112, 113) and to collect disaggregated data relating to hate speech and crime based on sexual orientation and gender identity;* (AM 110)

## **COMP 23** *freedom of religion*

### **Paragraph 25, 25a (new)**

AM 116 (Deli/NI), AM 117 (Rapporteur), AM 118 (Grošelj et al.Renew), AM 119 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D)

25. Calls on the Montenegrin authorities to *continue a genuine dialogue on freedom of religion with religious representatives and other* (AM 116) relevant stakeholders and in line with the Venice Commission's opinion of 24 June 2019; *calls on neighbouring countries to refrain from interfering in this issue and other internal affairs of Montenegro*; (AM 117)

**25a (new)** *Expresses concern that the new Government adopted amendments to the Law on Freedom of Religion or Belief and the Legal Status of Religious Communities in an urgent procedure without public debate nor dialogue with all religious communities and without the opinion of the Venice Commission*; (AM 118, 119) *notes that the President has signed the law*;

**COMP 24** *regional cooperation & neighbourly relations*

**Paragraph 26, 26a (new), 26b (new), 26c (new), 26d (new)**

AM 121 (López-Istúriz White/EPP), AM 122 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 124 (Rapporteur), AM 125 (Zovko/EPP), AM 126 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 127 (Castaldo/NI), AM 129 (Rapporteur), AM 130 (Zovko/EPP), AM 131 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 132 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 152 (López-Istúriz White/EPP)

AM 120 (Rivière, Mariani/ID), AM 123 (Krasnod ōbski et al./ECR) fall

26. Commends Montenegro for its commitment to inclusive regional cooperation, and the constructive role it plays in the Western Balkans region, and welcomes its active participation in numerous regional initiatives; *underlines that regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations are linked to Montenegro's EU perspective*; (AM 122)

**26a (new)** *Welcomes the signing of the Protocol on the Determination of the Border Point between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and the Republic of Serbia in May 2019 and* (AM 126) *encourages Montenegro to continue to address, in a constructive spirit, outstanding bilateral issues with its neighbours, including the unresolved border demarcation issues with Serbia and Croatia, as early as possible in the accession process*; (AM 125) *notes that bilateral relations with Serbia were marked by tensions and insists that all bilateral disputes be resolved through inclusive and non-confrontational dialogue, while avoiding any form of foreign interference in domestic issues*; (AM 124)

**26b (new)** *Welcomes the establishment of the Common Regional Market, which shall lead the way to the country's full accession to the European Single Market*; (AM 121, 127) *strongly believes such initiatives could be an important tool to increase the potential, the attractiveness and the competitiveness of the region and in particular could help the regional economies in their post pandemic recovery process*; (AM 127)

**26c (new)** Welcomes the signing of a protocol for cooperation in search of missing persons between governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Montenegro as a good example of cooperation in investigating cases of missing persons; (AM 129) is concerned by the lack of progress in dealing with war crimes committed in Montenegro and calls on the authorities to intensify its efforts in punishing war crimes and clarifying the fate of missing persons and to support and develop the established Documentation and Information Centre; (AM 130, 131)

**26d (new)** Reiterates its support for the initiative to establish the Regional Commission for the establishment of facts about war crimes and other gross human rights violations on the territory of the former Yugoslavia (RECOM); (AM 132) commends the governments of Montenegro on their commitment and fulfilment of their obligations in the framework of the Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO) membership, underlining the importance of the current Montenegrin rotating chairmanship in this organization; (AM 132, 152)

AM 133 (Zovko/EPP) VOTE

**COMP 25** foreign and security policy

**Paragraph 27, 27a (new), 27b (new)**

AM 128 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 135 (Rapporteur), AM 136 (Zovko/EPP), AM 137 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 138 (Deli/NI), AM 139 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D), AM 155 (Grošelj et al./Renew)

AM 134 (Georgiou et al./The Left) falls

27. Commends Montenegro's full alignment with the EU's common foreign and security policy and its active participation in ~~civilian~~ EU (AM 135) missions under the common security and defence policy (CSDP), notably EU NAVFOR ATALANTA and EUTM Mali, (AM 136, 138) and other international missions, notably UN operation MINURSO and in the UN Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus, NATO-led Resolute Support mission in Afghanistan and the KFOR mission in Kosovo; (AM 138)

**27a (new)** Expresses concern over the governmental appointments in the security and military intelligence sector and the danger that Montenegro's strategic alliance with the EU and NATO could be called into question; (AM 139) underlines the strategic importance of Montenegro's NATO Membership (AM 128) and encourages Montenegrin authorities to cooperate in the field of resilience to foreign interference and cybersecurity with both the EU and NATO; (AM 137)

**27b (new)** Underlines the need for the EU and the United States to strengthen their partnership and coordination in the Western Balkans in order to advance key reforms, improve governance and reconciliation; (AM 155)

**COMP 26** *cooperation on migration, cross-border crime, smuggling*

**Paragraph 28, 28a (new), 28b (new)**

AM 143 (Georgiou et al./The Left), AM 144 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 145 (Deli/NI), AM 146 (Rapporteur), AM 147 (Deli/NI), AM 148 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 149 (Zovko/EPP), AM 150 (Ernst/The Left, Franz, Urtasun, Waitz /the Greens/EFA, Incir/S&D, Grošelj/Renew), AM 141 (Rivière, Mariani/ID) falls

28. *Commends Welcomes* (AM 144) Montenegro's progress on and renewed commitment to international police cooperation, and encourages it to continue its efforts to cope with the ~~migratory pressure~~ *irregular migration*, by further developing its international cooperation on *the protection of borders*, AM 145) readmission and raising its capacity to prosecute migrant-smuggling networks;

*28a new* *Notes the entry into force of the agreement on border management cooperation between Montenegro and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) which will allow Frontex to assist Montenegro in border management and carry out joint operations; (AM 146, 147, 148, 149) and with tackling cross-border crime at the country's sea borders, including the smuggling of drugs and weapons, and trafficking in human beings and terrorism; (AM 149)*

*28b (new)* *Urges Montenegrin authorities to keep the respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and international law at the core of their migration and border policies; calls on Frontex/EBCG operations in Montenegrin territory to operate by these same standards; (AM 143, 150)*

**COMP 27** *financial sector, budget, tax reforms*

**Paragraph 29, 29a (new), 29b (new)**

AM 156 (Rapporteur), AM 157 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D), AM 161 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 164 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 185 (Rapporteur),

29. Welcomes Montenegro's progress in reinforcing the stability of its financial sector, as well as in implementing concrete improvements to labour market condition; *notes however, that the unemployment rate remained high, particularly among women, youth, Roma and low-skilled people;* (AM 156) *Encourages authorities to improve the participation of women in the labour market and to address issues such as gender gap in employment and pay and affordable childcare;* (AM 161)

*29a (new)* *Expresses concern that the Budget Law for 2021 was not proposed until the end*

of 2020 (AM 157) and calls for a more transparent and timely national budgeting process (AM 164)

**29b (new)** Welcomes the implementation by Montenegro of the necessary reforms to comply with EU tax good governance principles and its removal by the Council (18/02/2020) from the list of non-cooperative jurisdictions for tax purposes; (AM 185)

## **COMP 28**    *education and labour market*

### **Paragraph 30**

AM 158 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 159 (Georgiou et al./The Left)

30. Encourages Montenegro to intensify work on better aligning the education system with the labour market in order to more effectively tackle the phenomena of skills mismatch and brain drain among young people; ***calls on the Montenegrin authorities to strive for an open and transparent human resource policy in public administration*** (AM 158) ***as well as for increased public investments for sustainable social and economic development;*** (AM 159)

## **COMP 29**    *impact of COVID-19*

### **Paragraph 31, 31a (new)**

AM 160 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 162 (Zovko/EPP), AM 163 (Ernst/The Left, Franz, Urtasun, Waitz/Greens/EFA, Incir/S&D, Grošelj/Renew), AM 165 (Deli/NI),

31. Notes with concern the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Montenegro's economy ***as its GDP has declined by 14.3% in 2020;*** (AM 162) calls on the Government to carry on a responsible macroeconomic and fiscal policy in view of the high public debt; encourages the authorities to make the best use of EU assistance in order to mitigate the impact of the crisis, ***including developing and implementing targeted measures to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on marginalised communities and vulnerable people;*** (AM 163) ***underlines the importance of developing entrepreneurial skills among youth;*** (AM 165)

**31a (new)**    ***Calls on the Commission to support Montenegro's efforts to reduce unemployment, seriously impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular in the tourism sector, that accounts for more than 20% of Montenegro's GDP and taking into account large decline of the number of tourist arrivals;*** (AM 160, 162)

## **COMP 30**    *EU assistance for fight with COVID-19*

### **Paragraph 32, 32a (new), 32b (new), 32c (new)**

AM 168 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D), AM 169 (Rapporteur), AM 170 (Zovko/EPP), AM 171 (Reintke, Urtasun /Greens/EFA, Schreinemacher, tef nuță /Renew, Walsh/EPP, Angel, Biedro , Schieder, Köster /S&D), AM 172 (Deli/NI), AM 173 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 174 (Zovko/EPP), AM 175 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D)

32. Reiterates that the European Union has swiftly mobilised ~~substantial immediate~~ (AM 169) **financial and material** (AM 170) support for the Western Balkans to tackle the **health emergency resulting from the** (AM 169) COVID-19 pandemic ~~health emergency~~ (AM 169) and the socio-economic recovery of the region; **recalls EUR 53 million granted to Montenegro for the procurement of urgent medical equipment and for assisting sectors most seriously affected by the COVID-19 crisis and the decision to provide macro-financial assistance (MFA) of up to EUR 60 million to help Montenegro limit the negative socio-economic consequences of the pandemic;** (AM 169, 170, 172)

**32a (new) Stresses the fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a detrimental impact on the whole society, in particular women, single-parent families and vulnerable groups, such as Roma, Egyptians, LGBTI people and people with disabilities and other minorities, by deepening inequalities and exacerbating existing problems; calls on the Montenegrin authorities to take into consideration the needs of these groups when creating and implementing COVID-19 socio-economic relief measures;** (AM 171, 173)

**32b (new) Expresses concern about the ongoing process of dismissal of leaders in public health institutions at a time when Montenegro is seriously affected by the COVID 19 pandemic** (AM 175) **as well as over a new loan of EUR 750 million by the Government, without consulting the Parliament;** (AM 168)

**32c (new) Commends the role of EU Civil Protection Mechanism that has secured much needed support in medical and personal protective equipment in the fight against the coronavirus in Montenegro;** (AM 174)

### **COMP 31** COVID-19 vaccines

#### **Paragraph 33**

AM 177 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 178 (Rapporteur), AM 179 (Deli/NI), AM 180 (Ernst/The Left, Franz, Urtasun, Waitz/The Greens/EFA, Incir/S&D, Grošelj/Renew), AM 181 (Paet/Renew), AM 182 (Castaldo/NI)

AM 176 (Castaldo/NI) falls

33. Calls on the Commission and the Council to **show its solidarity with Western Balkan countries in helping them to receive COVID-19 vaccines** (AM 181) and to include Montenegro in joint EU procurement for vaccinations; **welcomes the actions by the**



*Commission and the Council to help Montenegro procure vaccines against COVID-19 via COVAX and by other means such as coordinating donations by EU Member States and calls for further assistance to ensure that ~~and to allocate~~ (AM 178) a sufficient amount of COVID-19 vaccines is available (AM 178) to the ~~citizens of people in~~ (AM 180) all Western Balkan countries as soon as possible (AM 179, taking into consideration each country's pandemic situation; (AM 177) strongly believes that vaccine policies in general should be humanitarian and should not serve geopolitical interests of any kind; (AM 182)*

**COMP 32** EIP, IPA

**Paragraph 34, 34a (new)**

AM 183 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 184 (Deli/NI), AM 186 (Deli/NI), AM 187 (Waitz/Greens/EFA)

34. Encourages Montenegro to make best use of the Commission's Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans; recognises its importance in supporting sustainable connectivity *in transport and infrastructure*, (AM 184) human capital, competitiveness and inclusive growth in the region *while stressing that any investment must be in line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement and EU decarbonisation targets*; (AM 183)

*34a (new) Notes the equal importance of all investment targets of IPA III; (AM 186) calls in this respect on the Commission to focus an appropriate share of the IPA III funds on the ongoing democratic transition of Montenegro, especially in light of persistent problems with the investment climate, absorption capacity, and environmental standards in the country; (AM 187)*

**COMP 33** energy and environmental standards, electricity market

**Paragraph 35, 35a (new), 35b (new)**

AM 191 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 192 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 193 (Deli/NI), AM 194 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 195 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 196 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 197 (Grošelj et al./Renew), 198 (Grošelj et al./Renew), 199 (Grošelj et al./Renew)

35. Welcomes Montenegro's progress in diversifying its electricity production towards renewable sources *and exceeding its overall 2020 renewables target and sectorial targets for electricity and heating and cooling*, (AM 191, 192) as well as its active participation in the Western Balkans Connectivity Agenda; *invites Montenegro to introduce streamlined and simplified rules for facilitating the further deployment of renewable projects*; (AM 191, 192) *highlights the importance of EU support of the shift towards cleaner and renewable energy*; (AM 193)

**35a (new)** *Commends Montenegro's decision to discontinue financial support for small hydropower plants that do not follow appropriate environmental standards; (AM 191) notes the slow progress and the delay in shutting down the Pljevlja thermal power plant (AM 197) and invites Montenegro to comply with the rules of the Large Combustion Plant Directive without delay; (AM 191, 197)*

**35 b (new)** *Recognizes the steps Montenegro has taken towards establishing an electronic system for guarantees of origin, in order to ensure compatibility with the standardized European Energy Certificate System; (AM 194) takes note of the advanced stage of implementing reforms in the electricity sector and invites Montenegro to transpose the REMIT Regulation without delay and transpose network codes into national grid codes; (AM 195) invites Montenegro to increase the current low level of cross-zonal capacities available to electricity market participants in line with the best EU practices; (AM 196) commends Montenegro for being a frontrunner in establishing a carbon pricing and emission trading mechanism in the region; (AM 198) welcomes the full compliance achieved as regards the Fuel Quality Directive and calls for further progress in holding emergency oil stocks; (AM 199)*

## **COMP 34**

### **Paragraph 36, 36a (new), 36b (new)**

AM 188 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 189 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 190 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), 200 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 201 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 202 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 203 (Rapporteur), AM 204 (Rapporteur), AM 205 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 208 (Bil ík/EPP), AM 209 (Castaldo/NI)

36. Welcomes the positive developments in further aligning Montenegro's national environmental and climate change legislation, *National Energy and Climate Plan*, with the *acquis* and calls for further efforts to finalise the document as soon as possible in line with the recommendations of the Ministerial Council of the Energy Community; (AM 200) commends Montenegro for protecting the Zeta river as a Nature Park (AM 201); calls on the authorities to take urgent measures to better safeguard protected areas and potential Natura 2000 sites, including *Ulcinj Salina, Lake Skadar, the Tara river and others* (AM 202); calls on Montenegro to improve waste management and address the issue of illegal waste disposal; (AM 203); calls on the authorities to include local communities and civil society in the implementation of environmental, climate and energy policies and projects in the country; (AM 201)

**36a (new)** *recalls that establishing Sinjajevina military training and weapons testing area in UNESCO-protected areas must follow UNESCO principles of socio-cultural and ecological sustainability; (AM 201, 202) recalls with satisfaction that according to Article 1 of its constitution Montenegro is an ecological state; (AM 189) notes that the development of additional hydropower and tourism capacities, particularly those in protected areas, should*

*take into account EU environmental protection standards (AM 204); calls on the authorities to assess the environmental effects of the construction of the highway at Tara river (AM 190) and to better protect the most valuable areas; (AM 189) reiterates its call to conduct thorough and comprehensive ex-ante environmental, economic and social impact assessments of infrastructure projects in line with European standards; (AM 188, AM 205)*

*36b (new) Welcomes the launching of the Green Agenda in the Western Balkans, (AM 208, 209) which has the potential to drive the transition towards a sustainable, carbon-neutral economy; calls on Montenegro to continue introducing and implementing the necessary legislation to achieve the agreed common goals on the digital and green transformation (AM 209)*

AM 206 (Castaldo/NI), AM 207 (Castaldo/NI), AM 210 (Castaldo/NI) - VOTE

# RECITALS

## COMP 35

### All recitals A - Gc

AM 6 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 8 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 10 (Zovko/EPP), AM 11 (Waits/Greens/EFA), AM 12 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 13 (Fajon, Schieder/S&D), AM 14 (Grošelj et al./Renew), AM 15 (Zovko/EPP), AM 16 (Zovko/EPP), AM 17 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 18 (Deli/NI), AM 19 (Krasnod bski et al./ECR), AM 20 (Krasnod bski/ECR), AM 21 (Deli/NI), AM 22 (Deli/NI), AM 23 (Deli/NI), AM 24 (Deli/NI), AM 25 (Ernst/The Left, Franz/Greens/EFA, Incir/S&D, Grošelj/Renew), AM 26 (Ernst/The Left, Franz, Urtasun, Waitz/Greens/EFA, Incir/S&D, Grošelj/Renew)

AM 7 (Rivière, Mariani/ID), AM 9 (Waitz/Greens/EFA) fall

A. whereas each enlargement country is judged individually on its own merits, and it is the speed and quality of reforms that determine the timetable for accession;

*Aa. whereas pursuant to Article 49 TEU, any European country may apply to become a member of the Union provided that it adheres to all of the Copenhagen criteria (AM 6), including the respect for and protection of minorities; (AM 26)*

B. whereas democracy and rule of law are fundamental values on which the EU is founded and are at the heart of enlargement and stabilisation and association processes; whereas reforms are needed to tackle the challenges that remain in these areas;

C. whereas Montenegro is currently the most advanced in its negotiation process, having opened all the 33 screened chapters of the EU's *acquis*, and has provisionally closed negotiations on three;

D. whereas Montenegro has continued to build a **good** (AM 8) track record in implementing the obligations of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA);

E. whereas the parliamentary elections of 30 August 2020 have resulted in the first transition of power in a democratic setting in the country *since introduction of the multi-party system* (AM 12); *whereas this transition was conducted in orderly manner;* (AM 10)

*Ea. whereas the previous Government acknowledged the election results and the transition of power, thus confirming the level of democratic maturity and progress achieved in Montenegro;* (AM 13, 14)

*Eb. whereas the European Union is Montenegro's biggest trading partner accounting for 37% of total exports and 47% of total imports of goods with a volume of trade at EUR 1.38 billion in 2019;* (AM 15)

F. *whereas the EU is the largest provider of financial assistance to Montenegro and* (AM 24) *whereas Montenegro benefits from pre-accession assistance under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) with a total of EUR 504.9 million for the period of 2007 - 2020; (AM 16, 24)*

*F a. whereas the EU mobilised EUR 38 million in immediate support for the Western Balkans to tackle the health emergency caused by coronavirus; (AM 17)*

G. *whereas the EU agreed on the reallocation of EUR 374 million from the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance to help mitigate the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 in the region; whereas an amount of EUR 53 million was agreed between the Commission and Montenegro; (AM 18, 19)*

*Ga. whereas a macro-financial assistance package of the value of EUR 60 million was also offered to Montenegro (AM 21) and whereas EUR 804 million has been provided via EIB loans since 1999; (AM 22)*

*Gb. whereas the Commission adopted a package of EUR 70 million under the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA II) to help fund the access of Western Balkans countries to COVID-19 vaccines procured by EU Member States; (AM 20) whereas Montenegro signed an agreement in October 2020 under the COVAX initiative to receive 248.800 doses of these vaccines; (AM 23)*

*Gc. whereas Roma and Egyptians were particularly affected during the Covid-19 pandemic as they remain victims of deep-rooted prejudice in both the social and professional settings; (AM 25)*

## CITATIONS

### COMP 36

#### **Citations 15a, 18, 22, 22a, 22b**

AM 1 (Deli/NI), AM 2 (Waitz/Greens/EFA), AM 3 (Krasnod ōbski et al./ECR), AM 4 (Reintke, Waitz, Urtasun /Greens/EFA, Schreinemacher, tef nuŕă /Renew, Walsh/EPP, Angel, Biedro , Schieder, Kōster/S&D), AM 5 (Ernst/The Left, Franz, Urtasun, Waitz/Greens/EFA, Incir/S&D, Groŕelj/Renew)

*Citation 15a (new) having regard to the Commission communication of 29 April 2020 entitled ‘Support to the Western Balkans in tackling COVID-19 and the post-pandemic recovery’ (COM(2020)0315), (AM 1)*

Citation 18 having regard to the statement of preliminary findings and conclusions of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) international election observation mission to the parliamentary elections of 30 August 2020 in Montenegro, issued on *11 December* 2020, (AM 2)

Citation 22 having regard to the EU-Western Balkans *summits* in the framework of the Berlin Process of *5 July 2019 in Pozna and of 10 November 2020 in Sofia*, (AM 3)

*Citation 22a (new) having regard to the fifth country monitoring report of the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), published on September 2017, and to the conclusions on Montenegro concerning the state of implementation of the 2017 recommendations, published on June 2020;* (AM 4)

*Citation 22b (new) having regard to the Declaration of Western Balkans Partners on Roma Integration within the EU Enlargement Process of 5 July 2019 and the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in Montenegro 2016–2020;* (AM 5)