THE **EU** AND **MONTENEGRO**



November 2026

Montenegro is working towards **closing the remaining negotiating chapters** by the end of **2026**.

DECEMBER 2008
Application for EU membership

MAY 2010
Stabilisation and Association Agreement enters into force

DECEMBER 2010
European Council grants candidate status

JUNE 2012
European Council decides to open accession negotiations

DECEMBER 2013
Opening of "Rule of Law" Chapters (Chapters 23 and 24)

JUNE 2020
All 33 screened chapters opened

JUNE 2024
IGC on setting the Closing Benchmarks for the "Rule of Law" chapters

DECEMBER 2024
IGC to provisionally close 3 further chapters

JUNE 2025
IGC to provisionally close Chapter 5 "Public Procurement"

DECEMBER 2025
IGC to provisionally close 5 further chapters

JANUARY 2026
IGC to provisionally close Chapter 32 "Financial Control"

MARCH 2026
IGC to provisionally close Chapter 21 "Trans-European networks"

MAY 2026
IGC to provisionally close Chapter 2 "Freedom of Movement for Workers" and Chapter 28 "Consumer and Health Protection"

JULY 2026
IGC to provisionally close Chapter 8 "Competition Policy" and Chapter 29 "Customs Union"

OCTOBER 2026
IGC to provisionally close Chapter 17 "Economic and monetary policy", Chapter 18 "Statistics" and Chapter 19 "Social policy and employment"

NOVEMBER 2026
Presentation of the indicative roadmap

Montenegro has now provisionally closed **21 out of 33** negotiating chapters. In June 2026, the European Commission presented the financial package for Montenegro's accession. In November 2026, the Commission published an accession roadmap for the country, with indicative priorities.



GROWTH PLAN FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS

Under the **Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans, €383.5 million in non-repayable grants and favourable loans** are allocated to Montenegro for the implementation of its Reform Agenda.

Montenegro has implemented 94% of the steps in its Reform Agenda. In recognition of this progress, **€89.3 million** has been released to Montenegro.

The EU is Montenegro's

- largest trade partner
- largest investor
- largest provider of financial assistance

ONGOING EU SUPPORT FOR MONTENEGRO

The **EU** is the **largest provider of financial assistance to Montenegro**. This support is provided through channels like the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA), part of the EU's Global Gateway initiative.

Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA)

Between **2021-2024** the EU has allocated **over €135 million** of financial and technical assistance to Montenegro under IPA III. Assistance is provided in the form of **non-repayable grants**.This includes:

- **€7 million** to help Montenegro advance towards EU accession in key areas of **judiciary reform, fundamental rights and fight against organised crime**.
- **€14 million** budget support to improve citizens' quality of life and economic growth by creating a well-functioning, **digital and accessible public administration**.
- **€30 million Energy Support Package** which supported vulnerable families and SMEs in Montenegro in dealing with rising energy prices.

The Commission adopted further IPA financial assistance in the amount of €45 million via the IPA III 2025-2027 multiannual action in July 2025.



Global Gateway in Montenegro

In the framework of Global Gateway, the EU has identified investments in sustainable transport, clean energy, environment and climate, digital future, human capital and the private sector. These investments aim to support a green and digital transition and bring the region closer to **the EU's single market.**

For projects in **Montenegro**, since 2021, the EU has provided **€440 million, expected to mobilise €1.4 billion** in total investments. This includes:

Rehabilitation of 45 km of railway line

along the Bar-Vrbnica Railway Line Section and increasing travel speed up to 120 km/h, as part of the extension of the TEN-T Core Network.

Construction of a new wastewater treatment plant

and sludge incineration plant serving a population of **240,100 people** and installing 34 km of sewer pipes.

Modernisation of kindergartens and schools

as well as provision of IT equipment providing **1,690 new places to students**, benefitting around 9,500 children annually. The WBIF Bilateral Donors and the EU co-fund this project.

What we are **achieving together**

- **7,345 km** of railway lines rehabilitated
- **38 km** of electricity transmission lines upgraded
- Improved water and sanitation services for **290,000 people**
- Better schools for **9,500 students** annually

CLOSE TRADE & INVESTMENT LINKS

The **EU is Montenegro's main trading partner**. In 2025, the EU accounted for 42.1% of Montenegro's total trade in goods (32.5% of total exports and 43.3% of total imports). Total EU Foreign Direct Investment reached €2.4 billion by 2024.



Progressive trade liberalisation and mutual duty-free access for most goods has been taking place since 2010 and is currently based on the **EU – Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Agreement** (SAA).

FOREIGN, SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY COOPERATION

Montenegro fully aligns with the **EU Common Foreign and Security Policy** statements and restrictive measures. In addition:

- Montenegro continues to participate in **EU crisis management missions and operations under the Common Security and Defence Policy**, currently in the EU NAVFOR ATALANTA.
- In February 2025, the EU adopted a **€6 million** assistance measure under the **European Peace Facility** to strengthen the capacities of the Armed Forces of Montenegro.
- The EU supports Montenegro in strengthening its resilience to hybrid threats, including cyber threats and foreign information manipulation and interference.





PEOPLE TO PEOPLE CONTACTS

- Since 2010, Montenegrins benefit from **visa-free travel** to the EU.
- The EU has funded over **6,700** exchanges between EU and Montenegrin citizens in the areas of education, training, youth, and sport under **ERASMUS+** between 2021 and 2025.
- The city of Niksic was selected as the **European Capital of Culture 2030.**

enlargement.ec.europa.eu
facebook.com/EUEnlargement | x.com/eu_enlargement_ | instagram.com/eu_enlargement

© European Union, 2026
Reuse of this document is allowed, provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated (Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license). For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders. All images © European Union, unless otherwise stated.