



TEXTS ADOPTED

P10_TA(2026)0261

2025 Commission report on Serbia

European Parliament resolution of 8 July 2026 on the 2025 Commission report on Serbia (2025/2255(INI))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States of the one part, and the Republic of Serbia, of the other part¹, which entered into force on 1 September 2013,
- having regard to Serbia's application for membership of the EU of 19 December 2009,
- having regard to the Commission opinion of 12 October 2011 on Serbia's application for membership of the European Union (COM(2011)0668), the European Council's decision of 1 March 2012 to grant Serbia candidate status and the European Council's decision of 28 June 2013 to open EU accession negotiations with Serbia,
- having regard to the Brussels Agreement of 27 February 2023 and the Ohrid Agreement of 18 March 2023, and to the implementation annex thereto,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2021/1529 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 September 2021 establishing the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III)²,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2024/1449 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on establishing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans³,

¹ OJ L 278, 18.10.2013, p. 16, ELI:
http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_internation/2013/490/oj.

² OJ L 330, 20.9.2021, p. 1, ELI:
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1529/oj>.

³ OJ L, 2024/1449, 24.5.2024, ELI:
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1449/oj>.

- having regard to the presidency conclusions of the Thessaloniki European Council meeting of 19 and 20 June 2003,
- having regard to the declarations of the EU-Western Balkans Summits of 17 May 2018 in Sofia and of 6 May 2020 in Zagreb,
- having regard to the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, ratified by Serbia in 2001, and the Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, ratified by Serbia in 2006,
- having regard to the Amnesty International technical briefing published on 27 March 2025 entitled 'Serbia: journalists targeted with Pegasus spyware' (EUR 70/9186/2025), documenting the targeting of investigative journalists with Pegasus spyware,
- having regard to the Freedom House Freedom in the World 2026 country report on Serbia, published on 19 March 2026,
- having regard to the 2025 World Press Freedom Index by Reporters Without Borders, published on 2 May 2025,
- having regard to the Western Balkans Leaders' meeting of 1 July 2025 in Skopje, North Macedonia, on the Growth Plan for the Western Balkans,
- having regard to the declaration of the EU-Western Balkans summit of 17 December 2025,
- having regard to the Presidency conclusions of 16 December 2025 on enlargement,
- having regard to the Berlin Process, launched on 28 August 2014,
- having regard to the Chair's conclusions of the 2025 Summit of the Berlin Process of 22 October 2025,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 6 October 2020 entitled 'An Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans' (COM(2020)0641),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 8 November 2023 entitled 'New growth plan for the Western Balkans' (COM(2023)0691),
- having regard to the Commission communication of 8 July 2025 entitled '2025 Rule of Law Report – The rule of law situation in the European Union' (COM(2025)0900), accompanied by the Commission staff working document entitled '2025 Rule of Law Report – Country Chapter on the rule of law situation in Serbia' (SWD(2025)0931),

- having regard to the Commission communication of 4 November 2025 entitled ‘2025 Communication on EU enlargement policy’ (COM(2025)0690), accompanied by the Commission staff working document entitled ‘Serbia 2025 Report’ (SWD(2025)0755),
- having regard to the first agreement on principles governing the normalisation of relations between the governments of Serbia and Kosovo of 19 April 2013, to the agreements of 25 August 2015, and to the ongoing EU-facilitated dialogue for the normalisation of relations,
- having regard to the final report of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) election observation mission on the early parliamentary and presidential elections of 3 April 2022 in Serbia, published on 19 August 2022,
- having regard to the final report of the OSCE/ODIHR election observation mission on the early parliamentary elections of 17 December 2023 in Serbia, published on 28 February 2024,
- having regard to the European Council conclusions of December 2006, to the Council conclusions of March 2020 and to the Conclusions of the Presidency of the European Council in Copenhagen of 21-22 June 1993, also known as the Copenhagen criteria,
- having regard to the statements of UN Special Rapporteurs of 4 August 2025 on the Serbian government’s crackdown on the student movement,
- having regard to Article 14 of the Serbian Constitution on the protection of national minorities,
- having regard to its previous resolutions on Serbia, in particular that of 22 October 2025 on the polarisation and increased repression in Serbia, one year after the Novi Sad tragedy⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 11 March 2026 on the EU enlargement strategy,
- having regard to the mission of its Committee on Foreign Affairs to Serbia from 22 to 24 January 2026,
- having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the report of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

⁴ OJ C, C/2026/2098, 29.4.2026, ELI:
<http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2026/2098/oj>.

(A10-0163/2026),

- A. whereas enlargement is a key EU foreign policy tool and a strategic geopolitical investment in long-term peace, stability, security and prosperity on the continent;
- B. whereas each candidate country in the enlargement process is evaluated on its own merits in fulfilling the Copenhagen criteria and respect for, and unwavering commitment to, shared European values and rights, protection of minorities and alignment with the EU's foreign and security policy; whereas there are no shortcuts to EU membership;
- C. whereas Serbia needs to make additional efforts to further align its foreign policy with the EU's foreign and security policy, as certain actions, statements and high-level contacts, including participation by the Serbian President in the 9 May 2025 military parade in Moscow, run counter to key EU foreign policy positions, particularly with regard to Russia;
- D. whereas EU-related reforms in Serbia have slowed significantly or have shown backsliding in several key areas, particularly in the fundamentals of the accession process, such as the rule of law, fundamental rights, and media freedom; whereas the Commission has noted continued shortcomings in the functioning of democratic institutions; whereas only 2 of the 35 negotiating chapters have been provisionally closed to date;
- E. whereas in recent years, political rights and civil liberties have been steadily eroded in Serbia by the ruling coalition, putting pressure on independent media, academia, ethnic minorities, the political opposition and civil society organisations, while in parallel systematically weakening institutions and blurring the lines between political actors, state and media power;
- F. whereas Serbia remains a critical battleground for foreign disinformation campaigns, notably by Russia and China, which seek to create anti-Western narratives, many of which are also generated and disseminated by domestic actors; whereas Russian propaganda outlets such as RT Balkan (formerly Russia Today) and Sputnik operate freely in Serbia and exert significant influence in shaping anti-EU and antidemocratic narratives and spreading them across the region; whereas these narratives are amplified by national state-associated media;
- G. whereas, according to independent media monitoring in 2024, the Serbian media has shown continued democratic backsliding, with the ruling majority taking up over 90 % of prime news airtime on national TV stations and being portrayed predominantly neutrally or positively, while the opposition receives less than 10 % of airtime and is largely presented negatively;

- H. whereas in line with Chapter 23, Serbia must demonstrate real improvements in the effective exercise of the rights of persons belonging to national minorities; whereas freedom of religion is a core European value and a fundamental human right; whereas Serbia is therefore obliged to respect and guarantee this freedom for all individuals residing within its territory, in accordance with its international commitments and human rights obligations;
- I. whereas the social situation in Serbia remains difficult; whereas UNICEF notes that Serbia is among Europe's less equal countries; whereas 13,6 % of the population experienced severe material and social deprivation in 2024, the at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate was 27,2 % in 2023, and the youth unemployment rate stood at 24,5 %; whereas rural populations remain especially vulnerable;
- J. whereas the EU remains Serbia's main trading partner accounting for 58,3 % of Serbia's total trade in 2024, its leading source of investment and its largest provider of financial assistance; whereas the EU by a large margin remains the biggest source of remittances, which are sent by Serbians working in the EU, and are a crucial and stable source of income for many Serbian households, playing a substantial role in the country's economy;

Commitment to EU accession

1. Emphasises that progress on the path towards EU accession – a genuinely merit-based process – is conditional on full respect for EU values and adherence to democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights, all of which are enshrined in the Copenhagen criteria; emphasises that this entails not only adopting reforms, but also implementing them thoroughly and fully, as the persistent gap between legislative alignment and effective implementation continues to undermine Serbia's progress; stresses that each country's path towards EU integration must be assessed on its own merits and that no country should be coupled with another or treated as part of a package; underscores that there can be no shortcuts on EU values and fundamental principles, as EU accession is a technical and a political process;
2. Notes that, according to the 2025 Commission report, there has been some level of preparation and partial implementation of the Commission's recommendations; regrets the fact, however, that Serbia's core commitments as outlined in its November 2024 non-paper, aimed at addressing outstanding obstacles to the opening of Cluster 3, remain largely unfulfilled; deplores, in this respect, the recent inflammatory rhetoric by the government, targeted at the countries that did not support the opening of Cluster 3;
3. Stresses that the credibility of the enlargement process must be preserved by applying strict and fair conditionality, while ensuring

that reform efforts are duly recognised where appropriate;

4. Recalls Serbia's stated commitment that EU membership is its strategic goal, but notes that stated commitments have often not been mirrored in practice, as highlighted, for example, when Serbia's highest representatives did not attend the EU-Western Balkans Summit in December 2025; stresses that this persistent discrepancy calls for a clarification of Serbia's European trajectory; calls on Serbia to tangibly demonstrate sustained commitment to EU values and standards and to consistently follow its commitment to EU membership;
5. Reiterates the strategic importance of the Western Balkans, in the current geopolitical context, for the security and stability of the EU as a whole; outlines that, owing to its size and geopolitical position, Serbia has a direct impact on the overall stability of the region; condemns, therefore, Serbia's attempt to establish a sphere of influence and its activities undermining the sovereignty of neighbouring countries;
6. Reiterates the significant need for Serbia to clearly and consistently demonstrate its geopolitical orientation towards the EU, including by fully aligning with the EU's common foreign and security policy (CFSP), in particular the restrictive measures taken by the EU in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, and expresses serious concern over Serbia's continued failure to fully align with the EU's CFSP; regrets that its alignment is among the lowest of all candidate countries; notes that Serbia's lack of alignment with the EU's foreign policy, including its failure to adopt restrictive measures, is inconsistent with one of the specific objectives set out in Article 3 of the Reform and Growth Facility Regulation⁵; reiterates its view that full alignment remains a non-negotiable requirement for accession; welcomes Serbia's recent alignment with Council Decisions (CFSP) 2026/438⁶ and (CFSP) 2025/490⁷, but reiterates

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2024/1449 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on establishing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans (OJ L, 2024/1449, 24.5.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1449/oj>).

⁶ Council Decision (CFSP) 2026/438 of 23 February 2026 amending Decision (CFSP) 2022/266 concerning restrictive measures in response to the illegal recognition, occupation or annexation by the Russian Federation of certain non-government controlled areas of Ukraine (OJ L, 2026/438, 23.2.2026, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2026/438/oj>).

⁷ Council Decision (EU) 2025/490 of 18 February 2025 on the conclusion, on behalf of the European Union, of an Agreement on the participation of the Republic of Croatia in the European Economic Area, and of three related agreements (OJ L, 2025/490, 18.3.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2025/490/oj>).

that selective alignment is insufficient;

7. Deplores Serbia's continued close ties and deepening partnership with Russia, which raise concerns about its strategic orientation and undermine a credible path towards EU membership; stresses that Serbia's European path requires a clear strategic choice; underlines that a policy of balancing between the EU and other geopolitical actors is incompatible with the political trust expected from a candidate country; calls on the Serbian authorities to desist from public messages and actions that run counter to key EU foreign and security policy positions;
8. Is deeply concerned about the investments in Serbia by Russia and China and their growing influence on political and economic processes in the region; condemns the high-level visit to Belgrade in March 2026 by the Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, who is on the EU sanctions list; calls for the immediate closure of the so-called Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Center in Niš, which acts as a base for the Russian military intelligence agency GRU to operate from a candidate country, and urges Serbia to terminate all military cooperation with Russia, as it raises legitimate questions about Serbia's strategic orientation and alignment with EU security interests; condemns Russian foreign interference activities in Serbia; recalls that Serbia is actively used as a regional platform to spread disinformation and misinformation campaigns across the Western Balkans region;
9. Expresses concern over Serbia's ongoing military build-up, combined with the increasingly hostile rhetoric towards neighbouring countries and the deepening of Serbia's security and defence cooperation with China, including special forces exercises and the expansion of strategic agreements, as well as the growing presence of Chinese security and surveillance technology; strongly condemns Serbia's recent acquisition of Chinese CM-400AKG air-to-surface ballistic missiles; warns that this military build-up alters the regional security balance and undermines regional stability and good neighbourly relations with surrounding NATO member states; stresses that such procurement contradicts the EU's CFSP and raises serious questions about Serbia's geopolitical orientation; underlines that major defence procurements from authoritarian strategic competitors of the EU require full transparency and careful assessment of their implications for regional stability, interoperability and Serbia's declared European orientation; notes with concern the recent memorandum of cooperation between the Serbian governing party and the Chinese Communist Party, which raises further questions regarding Serbia's strategic commitment to pursuing its EU path;
10. Condemns the fact that Serbia has become a base for Russian intelligence services to carry out sabotage activities in Europe; expresses serious concern over credible reports indicating that

Serbia has emerged as a key operational hub for Russian hybrid and destabilisation activities in Europe; notes, in particular, documented cases in which individuals recruited and financed by actors linked to Russian intelligence carried out coordinated provocations and acts aimed at inciting ethnic and religious tensions within EU Member States; further notes reports of organised networks operating from Serbian territory, including in the training and deployment of individuals for destabilising actions in other European countries and in the EU's neighbourhood; calls on the Serbian authorities to take immediate and effective measures to investigate, prevent and prosecute such activities;

11. Regrets Serbia's abstention on the February 2026 UN General Assembly resolution in support of a just and lasting peace in Ukraine; considers that such votes further weaken confidence in Serbia's strategic commitment to the European path;
12. Expresses concern that Serbia maintains observer status in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, a security structure led by the Russian Federation, and continues to implement a free-trade agreement with the Eurasian Economic Union;
13. Regrets the fact that Serbia has made limited or no progress in meeting the benchmarks for EU membership across many other negotiating chapters; takes note of the establishment of the Operational Team aimed at accelerating the implementation of EU-related reforms; calls on Serbia to demonstrate concrete and comprehensive action showing the country's commitment to implementing the reforms required for the EU membership path; reiterates that EU accession negotiations with Serbia should only advance once Serbia aligns with EU sanctions against Russia and on the basis of measurable and sustainable progress in the fundamentals cluster, particularly on the rule of law, free and fair elections, the fight against corruption and organised crime, judicial independence, media freedom, public administration reform and the functioning of democratic institutions; calls on the Commission to strictly apply the 'fundamentals first' principle and to reflect any significant regression in the pace and intensity of the financial support provided under the pre-accession instruments;
14. Reiterates that EU accession is a whole-of-society process and calls on the Serbian Government to promote the importance, benefits and obligations of EU accession, the EU's financial support and accession-related reforms among the Serbian population; calls for the EU and its institutions to strengthen their communication and outreach efforts in Serbia in order to better highlight the impact and benefits of EU support;
15. Reiterates its call on Serbia to make credible progress and increase

efforts to address foreign and domestic information manipulation and interference, including disinformation and anti-EU and anti-Western rhetoric, which also have a negative impact beyond Serbia across the whole region;

16. Regrets the low support for EU membership in Serbia, which is the result of a long-time manipulative anti-EU narrative spread by government-controlled media and by some senior Serbian officials and members of the governing party, including at the highest level; calls on Serbia to fight disinformation, including on Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and, in particular, to end its own state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, while promoting a consistent and constructive EU orientation; calls for the EU to enhance cooperation with Serbian non-governmental organisations to strengthen democratic resilience and counter hybrid threats; strongly regrets the continued, consistent and systematic anti-Western narratives in the Serbian media, with the EU being predominantly portrayed in a negative light, while Russia, China and, increasingly, the United States, are being represented positively;
17. Notes with particular concern the Commission's finding that Serbia has not taken any action to counter foreign information manipulation and interference; calls on Serbia to adopt and implement, without delay, a comprehensive national framework for democratic resilience, including clear institutional responsibilities, regular public reporting and protection of independent oversight bodies; encourages the EU to strengthen its strategic communication and presence in Serbia to counter anti-EU narratives; calls on the Serbian authorities to investigate and dismantle any disinformation-related networks operating from Serbian territory and strengthen cooperation with EU Member States and partner countries in countering hybrid threats and foreign interference; urges the Commission to clarify with the online platforms concerned the suspension of a number of media outlet profiles known for criticising the Serbian Government;
18. Firmly rejects all allegations by Serbian officials that the EU and some of its Member States were involved in organising the student protests, since November 2024, to trigger a 'colour revolution'; deplores the fact that the highest state officials are actively spreading conspiracy theories about the collapse of a canopy being an act of sabotage or a terrorist attack perpetrated and supported by EU Member States; reiterates its strong condemnation of the unlawful arrest and expulsion of EU citizens who made statements in support of the protesting students; equally rejects the unfounded allegations by the Serbian authorities that Croatia interfered in and participated in the conduct of local elections in March 2026; condemns all such false allegations;
19. Condemns the unacceptable behaviour, insults, smears and hate

rhetoric directed at Members of the European Parliament and other political actors, including members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs' mission to Serbia in January 2026; deplores, in this context, statements made by the President of Serbia in September 2025 referring to Members of the European Parliament in derogatory terms;

20. Reiterates its concern regarding the appeasing approach of the Commission towards Serbia against the backdrop of the country's years-long rollback of the rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights, as well as its destabilising influence on the whole region; urges the Commission to uphold the EU's fundamental values by using clearer language towards Serbia and consistently addressing its significant shortcomings, lack of progress and even backsliding; welcomes the initial improvement made in addressing Serbia's shortcomings by the Commissioner for Enlargement and the announced suspension of funds earmarked for Serbia over legislative reforms; warns against any potential systematic attempts by Serbia to impede the accelerated progress of neighbouring countries towards EU membership, particularly in the context of its own stagnation on the accession path; calls on Serbia to more closely align its visa policy with the EU list of third countries whose nationals require visas;

Democracy and the rule of law

21. Expresses concern over the deepening political crisis in Serbia against the backdrop of the mass protests that have been taking place across the country since November 2024 and that reflect the Serbian people's reaction to systemic corruption and the lack of accountability and transparency in the country; notes that Parliament's fact-finding mission in January 2026 identified increasing polarisation, limited parliamentary dialogue and weakened institutional trust as key contributing factors; expresses concern that corruption is still prevalent in many areas and that progress requires strong political will to effectively address corruption, as well as a robust criminal justice response to high-level corruption;
22. Notes with concern that Serbia recorded its worst score in two decades in Transparency International's 2025 Corruption Perceptions Index; considers this a further warning sign of weak institutions and insufficient accountability; welcomes the adoption of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy for the period 2024-2026; calls on the Serbian authorities to ensure full compliance with the recommendations of the Serbian Anti-Corruption Council; expresses concerns over the independence of the Serbian Agency for the Prevention of Corruption;
23. Notes that investigations linked to the 2024 collapse of the canopy of the Novi Sad railway station are still ongoing and regrets the fact

that there has not been any significant progress; regrets the lack of clarity surrounding the investigation, including contradictory statements by officials, as well as possible manipulation or negligent handing of evidence; strongly condemns all the undue influence that the prosecution in charge of the case is facing; calls once again for full transparency, accountability and judicial independence in the proceedings;

24. Reiterates that the Novi Sad tragedy has unveiled further structural weaknesses in Serbia's public administration, transparency, accountability and rule of law, which remain essential areas of reform for any candidate country aspiring to EU membership; warns against a recurrent pattern of government contracts being awarded to and operated by Chinese companies that lack sufficient transparency, public scrutiny and accountability, and stresses the need to ensure full compliance with EU public procurement standards and principles;
25. Believes that the best way to resolve the political crisis in Serbia is to conduct genuinely free and fair elections; calls for all ODIHR recommendations to be implemented fully, in a transparent and inclusive manner and stresses that this requires, inter alia, an end to pressure on voters, including intimidation and vote-buying, the effective prevention of misuse of public and administrative resources, a level playing field for all political actors, action to address media bias, and an end to impunity for electoral irregularities and related crimes as repeatedly highlighted by ODIHR and the Commission;
26. Strongly condemns the hostile environment surrounding the local elections conducted in 10 municipalities on 29 March 2026, with observation missions reporting many violent incidents, threats and voting irregularities, including intimidation and pressure on voters, attacks on journalists, students, activists and observers, violence around polling stations, parallel election lists and voter records, vote-buying, bussing of voters from other cities to the polling stations, raids on opposition parties' offices, misuse of administrative resources and a lack of a level playing field; calls on the national authorities to provide accountability through a decisive, thorough and transparent investigation; notes the high voter turnout as a positive sign of civic engagement; stresses that free and fair elections require effective protection of the electoral information environment against covert influence, coordinated disinformation and the abuse of structural advantages by incumbents; condemns the climate of pervasive violence and intimidation that is regularly observed during election periods in Serbia, where journalists and citizens alike face systematic obstruction, physical threats and direct attacks, representing a serious deterioration in the democratic environment, with law enforcement failing to intervene in many cases;

27. Reiterates its calls for the thorough and complete implementation of the law on the unified voter register, including with respect to meeting legal deadlines and ensuring the full and effective cooperation of all relevant state institutions in the audit of the register; recalls that improving the voter register remains a key ODIHR recommendation and a precondition for credible elections; underlines that the proper implementation of these measures is essential to ensure public confidence and trust in the accuracy and integrity of the voter register and therefore public trust in the electoral process;
28. Deplores the increased violence, physical attacks, illegal surveillance and intimidation to which journalists are being subjected, which culminated during the March 2026 local elections and was perpetrated by masked attackers; calls for increased accountability and prosecution of attackers; reiterates the importance of press freedom for EU candidate countries;
29. Is concerned about the increasing role of foreign information manipulation and interference (FIMI) and foreign cyberoperations and interference in Serbia's democratic election processes;
30. Notes with concern the ongoing editorial changes in the media and condemns the increased pressure on the remaining independent media broadcasters, as part of a broader process of media capture; condemns the continued operation of RT Balkan and Sputnik Srbija, which are used to propagate pro-Russian narratives and disinformation across the Western Balkans region; recalls that these networks are used to circumvent European sanctions on Russia; urges the Serbian authorities to counter hybrid threats and fully align with the Council's decision on the suspension of the broadcasting activities of Sputnik and RT;
31. Expresses serious concern over the amendments adopted by the National Assembly on 28 January 2026 to modify key judicial laws under an urgent procedure, without public consultation, involvement of judicial bodies or adequate justification; emphasises that this represents yet another serious step backwards on Serbia's path towards EU accession, as it further weakens judicial independence and prosecutorial autonomy; deplores the fact that the so-called 'Mrdić's Laws' have already been implemented by removing the Prosecutors for Organised Crime (TOK), thus effectively reversing the progress achieved in judiciary reforms since the 2022 constitutional reform, hence making the call for their later revocation obsolete; takes note that the implementation of these amendments has been halted; calls for their urgent revision, fully in line with the recommendations of the opinion of the Venice Commission, and urges the Serbian authorities to present a clear timeline for the restoration of guarantees of judicial independence; urges the Commission to halt further disbursements of funding for Serbia under the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western

Balkans against the background of the adopted amendments;

32. Expresses grave concern over Serbia's lack of continuity in effective cooperation with the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) through its failure to appoint a liaison prosecutor in time, leading to the temporary closure of its liaison office and negatively affecting ongoing cooperation, reportedly leaving more than 200 cases stalled or affected; takes note of the reappointment of the liaison prosecutor at Eurojust and urges Serbia to continue proper judicial cooperation and treat judicial cooperation with EU agencies as a core accession obligation; calls on the Serbian authorities to ensure full and consistent engagement as a precondition for further disbursement of funds;
33. Expresses further concern over the increasing instances of undue influence on the judiciary in Serbia, including public attacks on judges and prosecutors, political statements undermining their independence, and attempts to exert pressure on them through institutional and legislative means; warns that such practices risk creating a chilling effect on independent decision-making and further undermine public trust in the justice system; underlines that judicial independence must be effectively protected in both law and practice; calls on the Serbian authorities to refrain from any actions or rhetoric that may compromise the independence of the judiciary and to ensure a safe and enabling environment for judges and prosecutors to perform their duties free from pressure; condemns Serbian officials' use of language inciting violence;
34. Expresses concern over persistent indications of state capture, including undue political influence over key institutions, regulatory bodies and the public administration; stresses that strengthening institutional independence and accountability is essential for restoring public trust and advancing on the European path;
35. States with concern that the prescribed constitutional role and impartiality of the institution of the President is further undermined by constant campaigning and party activism, including through candidate lists for local elections that carry the President's name; denounces the misuse of public office and public funds for party-political purposes to benefit the ruling party, including but not limited to election campaigning and voter mobilisation, which ultimately leads to the blurring of the lines between the state and the ruling party;
36. Regrets the fact that discontinued parliamentary work, coupled with the permanent campaign mode and high polarisation, contribute to a lack of functionality of the National Assembly; reiterates its readiness to support the National Assembly and the members thereof in the democratic processes related to Serbia's European path, including the proper functioning of the parliament according to its

rules of procedure, by using the European Parliament's existing democracy support tools and initiatives; encourages further strengthening of the EU-Serbia parliamentary dialogue and constructive engagement within the European Parliament's Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee;

37. Expresses deep concern about the systemic issues highlighted by the student protests and various other protests in Serbia, such as issues relating to civil liberties, separation of powers, corruption, environmental protection, institutional and financial transparency, especially in relation to infrastructure projects;
38. Expresses deep concern over the adoption of the *lex specialis* and subsequent 'authentic interpretation' of the law concerning the Generalštab Modernist Complex in Belgrade, which effectively overrides the legal framework for the protection of cultural heritage and undermines legal certainty; stresses that such ad hoc legislative measures weaken the rule of law, legal predictability and the overall integrity of the legal system; calls on the Serbian authorities to repeal these measures and to ensure full compliance with constitutional, heritage-protection and planning legislation;
39. Recalls that under the terms of the Constitution, the law on the financing of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina should have been adopted by the end of 2008; therefore encourages the government to submit the matter to the parliament without any further delay;

Fundamental freedoms and human rights

40. Reiterates its support for the fundamental right of all of Serbia's people, including students, to express their opinions freely and protest peacefully, including in order to call for accountability and democratic reforms directly linked to the rule of law, as well as the country's alignment with the EU's principles and values;
41. Denounces the fact that over the past year, peaceful protesters, students, activists and journalists have been subjected to a wide range of repressive measures, including excessive use of force and police violence, arbitrary detentions and arrests, political exile, illegal surveillance, gender-based online harassment and intimidation, including the dissemination of non-consensual intimate material, the misuse of personal data from public registries to retaliate against peaceful protesters and other forms of intimidation and wrongful expulsions; calls for targeted sanctions against individuals responsible for serious and systematic breaches of the law and violations of human rights in Serbia;
42. Condemns the wave of violence unleashed by informal gangs with close ties to the ruling party who are operating with impunity and attacking protesters; calls on the authorities of Serbia to ensure the protection of those participating in peaceful protests;

43. Calls for urgent, impartial and transparent investigations into all allegations of unnecessary and disproportionate use of force and unlawful surveillance against demonstrators; calls on the authorities to stop targeting individuals for their legitimate activities and to ensure the full respect for political rights;
44. Remains deeply alarmed by reports of Amnesty International and the SHARE Foundation, among others, indicating that Serbian authorities have used illegal spyware such as Pegasus to surveil activists, journalists, civil society members and citizens, and is deeply concerned by the absence of adequate institutional or independent oversight responses to cases of spyware use; calls on the Government of Serbia to immediately end such practices, thoroughly investigate all cases, and hold those responsible to account; urges the Commission to follow up on these incidents and press the Serbian authorities to ensure a full and independent investigation; strongly condemns the unacceptable statements of 4 April 2026 by the Minister of Information and Telecommunications of Serbia concerning police violence against citizens; expresses deep concern over the use of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs) against investigative journalists and civil society activists;
45. Expresses deep concern over credible allegations regarding the use of an acoustic weapon against peaceful protesters; notes the absence of a prompt and transparent investigation into the incident; recalls the Council of Europe's interim measure of April 2025 concerning the protection of demonstrators and stresses that failure to investigate such allegations may constitute a violation of the European Convention on Human Rights; calls on the Serbian authorities to conduct an immediate, impartial investigation and to ensure accountability; notes that Serbia is purchasing Chinese hardware and software at reduced prices in order to step up surveillance of its citizens, notably with the deployment of extensive video-surveillance systems and advanced facial recognition in public spaces through cooperation with Huawei under the 'Safe City' project implemented in Belgrade; expresses serious concern over reports that Serbian authorities have used EU pre-accession funds to procure biometric and forensic software from Papillon, a Russian company subject to EU sanctions; calls on the Commission to ensure full compliance with EU restrictive measures in all EU-funded programmes; deplores the Serbian authorities' campaign of intimidation against peaceful students, journalists and activists, which relies on a controversial report by the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) to falsely accuse protesters of using a sound cannon during the Slavija Square protest in Belgrade on 15 March 2025; underlines that weaponising fear to suppress civil dissent is entirely unacceptable and incompatible with EU fundamental values; strongly condemns the latest attacks by highest-ranking Serbian officials against Members of the European Parliament, including

false accusations that they have spread lies and misinformation concerning the protest;

46. Expresses deep concern over the intensification of verbal attacks, smear campaigns and pressure against civil society organisations advocating for the rule of law; expresses further concern that civil society organisations in Serbia face increasing challenges, including restrictive conditions, funding constraints, police raids and other forms of intimidation by state authorities; underlines the importance of a framework that enables local, vibrant civil society organisations to participate in policymaking, including EU integration processes, in an inclusive and meaningful manner; calls on the authorities to ensure a safe environment for civil society to operate freely, and to refrain from any actions that undermine their independence and work; condemns the deterioration of working conditions for journalists and the media; urges Serbia to reverse its backsliding on freedom of expression; notes with concern that in 2025 Serbia reached its lowest-ever score on the World Press Freedom Index, ranking 96th out of 180 countries, placing it second-to-last in Europe;
47. Expresses deep concern over the creation of a hostile environment towards the independent media and individual journalists through verbal attacks by highest political figures; raises serious concern over the increase in recorded attacks against journalists in the past year, combined with declining prosecution rates, fostering impunity; highlights the persistent structural problems in media ownership, insufficient regulatory oversight and the absence of genuine media pluralism; notes with concern the concentration of media ownership and the disproportionate influence of pro-government outlets, which limits pluralism and contributes to the spread of disinformation; calls on the Serbian authorities to ensure a genuinely independent and diverse media environment in line with European standards;
48. Notes with serious concern that Serbia's Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media (REM) remains unable to function effectively because it continues to lack a legitimate and operational Council independent of political interference; recalls that the National Assembly has failed for the second consecutive year to elect the REM Council's members; stresses that the continued paralysis of REM undermines regulatory oversight during a period of heightened political polarisation; recalls that the Commission has repeatedly stressed the need for a fully functioning and independent REM as a key safeguard for media pluralism; stresses the critical importance of ensuring the independence and effective functioning of REM; welcomes the participation of civil society organisations, professional associations and other authorised proposers in an inclusive selection process, despite irregularities and procedural breaches, and considers that such participation underscores the need for the recognition of the process outcome in order to remove the grounds

for the withdrawal of duly selected candidates; considers that the credibility of both the process and the future REM Council can only be restored by returning to the lawful stage of the procedure and recognising the outcome of the most recent inclusive selection process;

49. Expresses concern over the independence, trustworthiness, and integrity of the Serbian media landscape; highlights in particular the dissemination of disinformation and pro-Russian propaganda by state-affiliated media outlets; calls on the Serbian Government to take appropriate measures to ensure media transparency, accuracy of information, and respect for journalistic standards; urges Serbia to reverse its backsliding in media freedom and align with the European Media Freedom Act⁸; underlines that strengthening media and digital literacy is essential for countering disinformation, foreign information manipulation and interference and anti-EU narratives, and for reinforcing democratic resilience; calls on Serbia to further develop and implement comprehensive and inclusive media literacy initiatives across the education system;
50. Views with concern the extensive control that political parties exert over appointments in the public sector, state agencies, state-owned enterprises, supervisory boards and key regulatory bodies, as political patronage undermines the professionalism and accountability of the administration;
51. Stresses the importance of protecting academic freedom and institutional autonomy in line with the principles of the European Higher Education Area; expresses its deep concern over reports of financial, administrative and physical pressure on academic staff and of government measures' interference with the institutional autonomy of universities, including political threats against the Rector of the University of Belgrade and deans of universities across Serbia, dismissals of academic staff and reported police interventions on university premises; calls on the Serbian authorities to immediately end these practices and fully respect the autonomy of universities in line with the European Convention on Human Rights; condemns the political pressure exerted on universities and other research institutions; condemns the vilification of professors, researchers and other academic staff in pro-government media; condemns the police raid, broadcast through pro-government tabloid media, of the premises of the University of Belgrade, as yet another form of pressure and intimidation on academia and on academic freedoms;

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2024/1083 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 establishing a common framework for media services in the internal market and amending Directive 2010/13/EU (European Media Freedom Act) (OJ L, 2024/1083, 17.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1083/oj>).

52. Notes with concern that the Serbian Government's conduct in the field of education and academic freedom is undermining standards under Chapters 25 and 26, which are the only two chapters Serbia has provisionally closed; calls on the Commission to assess whether the conditions for the provisional closure of Chapters 25 and 26 continue to be fulfilled;
53. Expresses serious concern over increasing political interference in cultural institutions in Serbia, including pressures on artistic programming, governance structures and funding decisions, as well as on heritage-protection institutions and professionals; notes reports of restrictions on access to cultural content that undermine citizens' right to participate in cultural life, cancellations of cultural programmes, dismissals of cultural professionals and pressures on experts involved in heritage protection; stresses that freedom of artistic expression, institutional autonomy and professional independence are integral parts of democratic life; calls on the Serbian authorities to fully respect these principles in line with European standards and the European Convention on Human Rights and to establish a transparent, merit-based and depoliticised cultural governance, ensuring fair and independent allocation of public funding and an enabling environment for the cultural and creative sectors free from political interference;
54. Reiterates that Serbia must ensure the consistent and effective implementation of the legislative and institutional frameworks for the protection of fundamental rights, in particular as regards policies addressing violence against women, deinstitutionalisation and violence against children; expresses concern about the persistently high rate of gender-based violence in Serbia, including its digital dimension, and calls on the Serbian authorities to ensure a response with adequate action plans, funding and implementation mechanisms;
55. Calls on Serbia to ensure respect for the rights of all national minorities in practice and to show sincere commitment in resolving outstanding issues, including access to education, information, dedicated media space, funding, facilities and religious services in minority languages, as well as full representation at all levels of government, in line with the principle of reciprocity, whenever possible, and with all relevant European standards; regrets the fact that since 2025, there has been no representation of national minorities at the ministerial level, particularly covering the human and minority rights portfolio; highlights that, while Serbia's legal and policy framework regarding the protection of national minorities is broadly in place, significant shortcomings persist in its effective and consistent implementation; notes the considerable delay in drafting a new action plan for the realisation of national minority rights, which was finally adopted on 28 May 2026, and stresses the urgent need for Serbia to implement it promptly; calls for further concrete

measures, including clear timelines, adequate resources and robust monitoring mechanisms; calls for the full implementation of anti-discrimination legislation and for the stepping up of efforts to ensure the non-discriminatory treatment of all national and other minorities; calls for effective investigations and convictions for hate-motivated crimes; strongly condemns attacks, intimidation, targeting and harassment of minority communities, including Slovaks, Romanians, Bulgarians and Croatians, and the use of ethnic slurs by pro-government media; stresses that measurable and verifiable progress in minority protection should be treated as part of the fundamentals cluster, with clear benchmarks and monitoring;

56. Highlights that access to education in minority languages remains limited in practice and must be guaranteed at all levels without delay or administrative obstacles, in line with fundamental minority rights; calls on Serbia to protect and promote the cultural heritage and traditions of its national minorities, in particular to create a positive atmosphere for education in minority languages, and deplores the violation of minority rights in this area; emphasises the need to fully provide sufficient teachers, textbooks and materials; calls on Serbia to refrain from exploiting national identities and strongly condemns recorded cases of hate speech against some of them;
57. Recognises the role of national minority councils but expresses concern about their limited capacities and calls for adequate financial and institutional support to ensure their independence;
58. Strongly condemns attempts by the Serbian authorities to undermine the national identity of communities within the country; expresses concern, in this context, over the promotion of narratives such as the so-called 'Shopi nation', which seek to erase the existence of the Bulgarian community and deny its historical roots, cultural heritage and right of self-identification, which is protected under international law; calls on Serbia to ensure the right to use names and language specific to minority groups, including women within the Bulgarian community; expresses concern over the demographic decline of certain minority groups;
59. Calls on the Serbian Government to ensure equal rights for the Croatian minority in Serbia, just as the Serbian minority enjoys equal rights in Croatia, and to show sincere commitment to resolving outstanding issues concerning the Croatian minority; regrets Serbia's actions to appropriate Croatian cultural heritage and the origin of its literary tradition or to question the status of the Croatian language; welcomes, at the same time, the approval of preschool education in Croatian in Tavankut; expects that full implementation will commence immediately and encourages national and local authorities to continue their dialogue with the Croatian National Council;

60. Highlights the situation of the Romanian minority in Serbia and calls on the authorities to take all measures to ensure its full enjoyment of its linguistic, religious, educational and cultural rights, including by facilitating access to Romanian-language education, religious services and media, and to promote inclusive policies that safeguard its members' identity and participation in public life; calls on the Serbian authorities to refrain from making distinctions between Vlachs and Romanians; regrets the situation of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Serbia, which is not officially recognised by the state as a traditional church, thus creating significant challenges for Romanian churches and clerics in conducting religious worship for the Romanian community;
61. Reiterates its concern regarding restrictive and arbitrary enforcement of the Law on Permanent and Temporary Residence related to the passivation of the addresses of thousands of Albanians in the south of Serbia; urges the Ministry of the Interior to publicise, as soon as possible, comprehensive statistics on citizens passivised between 2011 and 2024 in Medveđa, Bujanovac and Preševo, disaggregated by nationality/ethnicity; underlines that the Ministry for Public Administration and Local Self-Government needs to halt the process of removing the citizens with passivised addresses from the single electoral roll;
62. Calls on Serbia to ensure full implementation of the Roma inclusion strategy, including adequate funding, coordination and monitoring with participation of Roma communities; calls for measures to ensure equal access to education and to prevent segregation;
63. Expresses concern regarding the increasing political influence of religious institutions and calls on the authorities to ensure respect for secularism, equal treatment and full recognition of all religious communities;
64. Condemns the continued climate of hostility, discrimination and hate speech against LGBTIQ+ persons in Serbia; calls for Serbia to improve its implementation of laws on hate crime, hate speech and anti-discrimination; encourages the Serbian authorities to resume, without delay, the legislative process concerning the Gender Equality Law and the Law on Same-Sex Unions in order to strengthen the protection of fundamental rights and ensure alignment with European standards on equality and non-discrimination;
65. Notes that the Trafficking in Persons Report highlights the fact that the relevant authorities in Serbia do not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in human beings, despite demonstrating increased efforts compared to the previous reporting period; calls on the authorities to address these deficiencies by strengthening victim-centred approaches, ensuring effective and

dissuasive prosecutions, improving interinstitutional coordination, and enhancing cooperation with civil society in line with international standards;

Reconciliation and good neighbourly relations

66. Expects Serbia to fully cooperate with Kosovo to finally bring to justice the perpetrators of the 2023 terrorist attack in Banjska; condemns the fact that Serbia still has not prosecuted the culprits, most notably Milan Radoičić, the former Vice-President of Srpska Lista; reiterates that all individuals responsible for acts of violence must be held accountable and face justice without delay, in line with the rule of law and due process; strongly condemns the attack on the Ibër-Lepenc/Ibar-Lepenac canal in the north of Kosovo in November 2024, and calls for the perpetrators to be swiftly apprehended and brought to justice; calls on Serbia to respond without further delay to Kosovo's January 2025 request for mutual legal assistance in relation to this attack and to cooperate fully with the investigation;
67. Acknowledges the important role of Serbia in the Western Balkans region, while strongly condemning any actions or attempts aimed at asserting a sphere of influence that would undermine the sovereignty and territorial integrity of neighbouring countries;
68. Recalls that the normalisation of relations with Kosovo and implementation of all agreements reached within the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue remain an integral part and a fundamental and necessary component of Serbia's European perspective; stresses that concrete, lasting and verifiable progress in this area is vital in order to strengthen regional stability and advance the country's European perspective; emphasises that normalisation cannot be seen as a secondary concern, but must remain an absolute political priority; underlines the importance of further strengthening the EU's facilitation efforts between the parties with a view to overcoming the current stalemate;
69. Reiterates that good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation remain essential elements of the enlargement process; stresses the importance of Serbia developing good neighbourly relations, in particular by implementing agreements with EU Member States;
70. Underlines that European integration cannot go hand in hand with the concept of the 'Serbian World', which aims to undermine peace and stability in the region; stresses that such narratives run counter to the principles of good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation, which are core elements of the EU accession process; underlines that such narratives threaten the process of normalisation of relations with the Republic of Kosovo; calls on the Serbian authorities to refrain from rhetoric and actions that may fuel regional tensions;

71. Strongly condemns recurring instances of hate speech, hostile rhetoric and inflammatory narratives directed at its neighbouring countries, in particular Bulgaria, Croatia, Kosovo and Albania, including by public officials and media outlets; underlines that such discourse is incompatible with European values and undermines trust, reconciliation and regional stability; calls on the Serbian authorities to actively counter hate speech, ensure accountability, and promote a climate of respect and constructive dialogue in the region;
72. Reiterates its call to improve the quality of the dialogue process through the participation of women, increased transparency towards the public, and the meaningful involvement of civil society;
73. Reiterates its full support for the EU-facilitated Dialogue and welcomes the extended mandate of Peter Sørensen as the EU Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue until 29 February 2028;
74. Reiterates the importance of constructive engagement on the part of the authorities of Kosovo and Serbia in order to advance the implementation of the Agreement on the Path to Normalisation and the implementation annex thereto, which remains valid and legally binding on both parties; calls on both Kosovo and Serbia to implement the Brussels and Ohrid Agreements in full, including through the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb-Majority Municipalities and the lifting of Serbia's opposition to Kosovo's membership of regional and international organisations, and to avoid unilateral actions that could undermine the dialogue process;
75. Condemns the repeated negative, aggressive and chauvinistic rhetoric from Serbian political leaders directed at neighbouring countries and peoples, which undermines efforts to establish good neighbourly relations, including regarding the unconstitutional celebration of Republika Srpska Day, which threatens the stability and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina; calls on Serbia to refrain from escalatory narratives and ensure that its security and defence policies are aligned with European values and respect good neighbourly relations;
76. Condemns the aggressive and inflammatory rhetoric used by the President of Serbia against neighbours when claiming, without evidence, that Croatia, Albania and Kosovo were preparing to attack Serbia, and using this as a pretext to purchase Chinese supersonic missiles;
77. Regrets the fact that Serbia continues its attempts to isolate its neighbouring country Kosovo from the international scene by campaigning against its recognition or by excluding the country from

international organisations; calls on Serbia to stop opposing Kosovo's application to become a member of the Council of Europe, which contradicts the 2013 agreement between Kosovo and Serbia on the normalisation of relations;

78. Calls on Serbia to take a more active approach to tackling war crime denial and historical revisionism, particularly concerning the wars in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo; calls on the Serbian authorities to achieve justice for victims by recognising and respecting court verdicts on war crimes, fighting against impunity for wartime crimes and supporting domestic prosecutors in bringing perpetrators to justice; strongly condemns the widespread public denials of international verdicts for war crimes, including the denial of the Srebrenica genocide; calls for the denial of war crimes and the glorification of war criminals to be included in the Criminal Code, with a view to prosecuting any form of denial of war crimes determined by the verdicts of the International Criminal Tribunal of the Former Yugoslavia and the International Court of Justice;
79. Regrets the fact that Serbia has not demonstrated a genuine commitment to addressing its past and effectively investigating and prosecuting war crimes, as reflected in its failure to indict high-level suspects, the absence of a Chief Public Prosecutor for War Crimes since 2023, and the widespread public denial of international war crimes verdicts, including the denial of the Srebrenica genocide; deplores the continued promotion of convicted war criminals by the ruling party and through pro-governmental media outlets, which provides them the space for historical revisionism and hate speech;
80. Reiterates its position on the importance of opening and publishing wartime archives, and reiterates its call for the former Yugoslav archives to be opened up and, in particular, for access to be guaranteed to the files of the former Yugoslav secret service (UDBA) and the Yugoslav People's Army Counterintelligence Service (KOS), and for the files to be returned to the respective successor governments if they so request;
81. Underlines the need for a meaningful regional cooperation in handling of war crimes by avoiding conflicts of jurisdictions and ensuring that war crimes are prosecuted without any discrimination, underlining that all outstanding issues in this regard must be fully resolved;
82. Notes that unresolved 'missing persons' cases remain a serious challenge and significant obstacle to normalisation of relations; urges Serbia to step up its reconciliation efforts and take a more active approach; calls on Serbia to fully cooperate with the judicial authorities of the EU Member States in their investigations into war crimes, including those involving crimes against missing persons, and to provide all relevant information that would enable their

identification; calls for meaningful bilateral cooperation with the other states concerned through the swift exchange of information, including through access of documentation and archives and through resolution of cases of missing persons, the settlement of succession matters, the prosecution of war crimes and the return of cultural property; urges Serbia to finally adopt its long-announced law on missing persons in a truly inclusive and transparent manner;

83. Condemns the use of the Serbian Orthodox Church as an extension of Serbian influence across the region and calls on religious leaders in the country to promote messages that foster good neighbourly relations and understanding among different countries and religions in the region, as well as to contribute actively to preventing a culture of confrontation; calls for the protection of religious minorities in Serbia and Kosovo and for access to places of worship to be ensured;

Socio-economic reforms

84. Recalls that support from the Reform and Growth Plan is conditional on respect for effective democratic mechanisms, including a multi-party parliamentary system, free and fair elections, pluralistic media, an independent judiciary, the rule of law, the fulfilment of all human rights obligations, and constructive engagement in the normalisation of relations with Kosovo; notes with concern that in January 2026, the Commission nevertheless approved the first release of funds to Serbia under the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans; calls on the Commission to explain how the preconditions were fulfilled; notes that providing funds to Serbia sends the wrong message to other countries seeking EU membership, suggesting that EU funds can be obtained without genuine progress on accession-related reforms; believes that European funding should better support the country's democratic reforms; calls for the relevant existing and future EU funding to be reprogrammed to redirect more funds towards supporting judicial reforms, anti-corruption measures, independent media and civil society organisations and the independent cultural sector, in order to support their critical work; stresses that support channelled through the Serbian Government should be suspended immediately given the absence of clear and credible progress in the areas of the rule of law, media freedom and electoral conditions;
85. Notes that the EU accession process is based on the approximation of national legislation with the EU *acquis*; stresses the need for further efforts in implementing public financial management and public administration reforms and in addressing continued administrative capacity constraints through sustained EU investment in high-quality capacity development and knowledge-sharing frameworks; calls on Serbia to step up efforts and increase investment in the socio-economic development of its border regions to address depopulation and ensure that residents have access to

essential services, including professional opportunities, healthcare and education;

86. Calls for the EU and the Western Balkan countries to establish a framework for cooperation between the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) and its Western Balkan counterparts and swiftly conclude bilateral working arrangement with the EPPO in order to ensure that the EPPO can effectively exercise its competences on IPA III and Western Balkan Facility funds in the recipient countries; calls for funding under future Global Europe to be disbursed under strict rule of law conditionality;
87. Expresses concern about the scale and scope of contracts awarded that are exempted from the existing legislative framework on public procurement;
88. Welcomes the Commission's proposal to open negotiations with Serbia and other Western Balkan countries with a view to their integration into the EU's 'roam like at home' regime; emphasises that extending the 'roam like at home' area to the Western Balkans would deliver tangible benefits to citizens and businesses alike, fostering people-to-people contacts, boosting economic ties, supporting educational exchanges and facilitating tourism; calls for the swift adoption of the negotiating mandates and the timely conclusion of bilateral agreements with the Western Balkan partners;
89. Welcomes the fact that banks in Serbia officially began executing cross-border euro transactions through the Single Euro Payments Area (SEPA) system;
90. Notes with regret the demographic challenges faced by Serbia due to an ageing population and low birth rates, exacerbated by a youth exodus driven by political uncertainties and socio-economic difficulties;
91. Calls on Serbia to strengthen occupational health and safety protections by adopting specific national policies on psychosocial and emerging risks, including in the gig and platform economy, and by ensuring that workers have an effective right to disconnect; calls on Serbia to ensure that domestic workers are fully covered by occupational health and safety legislation and effectively protected in practice, including through adequate labour inspection and enforcement mechanisms; calls on Serbia to ensure equal pay between women and men by adopting effective measures capable of delivering measurable progress in reducing the gender pay gap;
92. Calls on Serbia to bring its legislation on the right to strike into line with ILO standards; calls on Serbia to step up efforts to reduce the gender employment gap and to promote measurable progress in the representation of women in executive positions;

93. Notes that social dialogue and social partner consultation remains weak and calls on the authorities to strengthen collective bargaining, in law and practice, and to use the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans to support capacity building for the social partners; notes that the disbursement of the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans must remain conditional on the involvement of social partners in drawing up the Reform Agenda;
94. Reiterates the need for Serbia to strengthen transparency regarding the examination of foreign direct investments;

Energy, the environment, sustainable development and connectivity

95. Notes the politically sensitive developments regarding the oil and gas company Naftna Industrija Srbije (NIS) and the transformation of its ownership structure, in the context of the sanctions imposed by the United States and NIS's majority ownership by the Russian companies Gazprom and Gazprom Neft; notes the engagement and support of the EU and Croatia to find a sustainable solution to this crisis; takes the view that it is an essential security policy objective for Serbia to wean itself off Russian energy;
96. Calls on the Serbian authorities to urgently step up efforts to diversify gas supply sources, including through enhanced regional interconnectivity, investments in renewable energy and alignment with the EU's energy diversification strategy; regrets the fact that despite Serbia's efforts to diversify its energy supply away from Russia, recent talks have led to a new gas import deal with Russia, undermining the country's progress towards alignment with EU energy policy and raising serious questions about Serbia's commitment to reducing its strategic dependence on Russian energy sources; notes that energy diversification can be viewed as part of the strategic orientation of the country;
97. Reiterates the importance of protecting environmental standards in Serbia, particularly with regard to mining projects, while fully respecting the rights of local communities;
98. Calls on Serbia to properly and transparently scrutinise and evaluate inward foreign direct investment, particularly in terms of environmental standards and sustainability; expresses concern over the reported environmental degradation and social impact linked to large-scale extractive projects, and about the serious environmental and public health impacts of mining and industrial activities involving Chinese investors, which has led to intensified exploitation of copper, gold and other rare materials in the municipalities of Bor and Majdanpek; stresses that Serbia must fully safeguard its constitutional order, ensure strict compliance with environmental standards and protect the rights of local and national minority

communities when approving and implementing such projects; calls on the Serbian authorities to ensure full transparency, accountability and due diligence in public procurement, privatisation and concession processes involving foreign state-owned companies, including Chinese contractors;

99. Is concerned about the recent blockades at border crossings into the Schengen Area by professional drivers from Western Balkan countries in relation to the implementation of the EU Entry-Exit System (EES), threatening the livelihood of people in the candidate countries and potentially disrupting supply chains in the EU; calls on the Commission, in close cooperation with the Member States, to assess possible pragmatic and legally sound solutions that balance operational realities in the transport sector with the need to preserve the integrity of the Schengen *acquis*, ensuring appropriate safeguards and preventing any abuse;
100. Calls on Serbia to increase its efforts towards the transposition of the relevant environmental and climate *acquis* and to ensure the proper application of environmental protection standards; urges the Serbian authorities to improve the transparency and environmental impact assessment of all investments, including those from China and Russia; welcomes the adoption of the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment and the Law on Strategic Environmental Assessment; stresses, however, that effective implementation remains essential, in particular in terms of ensuring that all projects are subject to full and transparent assessment procedures, that public participation is meaningful and timely, and that no administrative practices allow projects to bypass comprehensive environmental scrutiny;
101. Calls on Serbia to accelerate its alignment with the Birds and Habitats Directives and to significantly step up efforts to identify and pre-designate sites for the Natura 2000 network with a view to meeting core obligations under Chapter 27, and to expand and effectively manage protected areas, including by strengthening enforcement against wildlife crime; expresses concern about increasing pressures from extractive industries on high-value biodiversity areas, including protected areas and old-growth forest ecosystems; reiterates its regret over the lack of action on pollution, including of the River Dragovishtitsa, by mines operating in the region and the detrimental effect on the health of the local people and the environment;

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102. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the President of the European Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the

Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and to have this resolution translated into Serbian and forward it to the President, Government and National Assembly of Serbia.