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Answer given by Ms Kos
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.2.2025)

In its 2023 Report on Albania[1], the Commission called on Albania to conduct the 2023 national population and housing census in line with the relevant international standards and recommendations, including those issued by the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In the 2024 Report on Albania[2], the Commission noted that the national population and housing census was completed in October 2023, and the preliminary results, including as regards self-declared ethnic identity, were published in June 2024.

In addition, in the statistic chapter (chapter 18) of the 2024 Report on Albania, the Commission noted the results in regard to the decline in population and increase in its age and called on Albania to publish detailed data and a thematic analysis of the population and housing census following the initial data release in June 2024.

The Commission is not directly involved in assessing the census procedure or in validating the census data. Furthermore, ethnic minorities are not part of the EU *acquis* on population censuses under Chapter 18 - Statistics. The conduct of the census will be reviewed by the competent international organisations, including as part of regular monitoring of rights of people belonging to minorities. In the 2024 report on Albania, the Commission noted that the legal framework for the protection of minorities is generally aligned with European standards. In December 2024 Albania adopted the remaining implementing legislation on the crucial issues of free self-identification of national minorities and the use of minority languages.

The Commission provided EUR 4.8 million for technical and logistical assistance in support of the census, which is subject to the standard expenditure verification and audit provisions for this type of support. So far, no irregularity on the use of the EU funds has been reported to or detected by the Commission.

[1] https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/ea0a4b05-683f-4b9c-b7ff-4615a5fffd0b_en?filename=SWD_2023_690%20Albania%20report.pdf
[2] SWD(2024) 690 final, https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/document/download/a8eec3f9-b2ec-4cb1-8748-9058854dbc68_en?filename=Albania%20Report%202024.pdf