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E-002916/2026

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.9.2026)

The Jadar lithium mining project has not benefited from direct EU funding. Indirectly, the Serbian geological research and exploration company Rio Sava Exploration doo Beograd participated from 2022 to 2025 as an associated partner without EU funding in the Horizon Europe project VECTOR (Vectors to Accessible Critical Raw Material Resources in Sedimentary Basins)¹. It aimed to explore current complex social, environmental and technical challenges by bringing geosciences and social sciences together. The Jadar lithium deposit was one of the three geological locations across Europe where scientists studied the geological features of the deposit on the basis of existing historical data without conducting any active fieldwork.

The Commission took note of Rio Tinto's public announcement² of November 2025 to place the Jadar lithium project into a care and maintenance phase. According to Article 7(11) of the Critical Raw Materials (CRM) Act³, the Commission may, after consulting the CRM Board, decide to withdraw the status of Strategic Project from any project previously selected if the project in question no longer fulfils the criteria for the recognition of Strategic Projects laid down in Article 6(1) of the CRM Act.

¹ <https://cordis.europa.eu/project/id/101058483>.

² <https://battery-tech.net/battery-markets-news/rio-tinto-pauses-jadar-lithium-project-amid-permit-delays/>.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:02024R1252-20240503>.