

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-001551/26
to the Commission
Wouter Beke (PPE)
(15 April 2026)**

Subject: Permitting challenges and the need for a comprehensive EU ‘Permitting Omnibus’

While the Commission has included permitting provisions in the Net-Zero Industry Act, the Critical Raw Materials Act and the Industrial Accelerator Act, these proposals mainly focus on procedures and speeding up administrative handling, rather than addressing the underlying reasons why permits are often not granted.

Strict EU environmental legislation (notably the Nitrates Directive, the Habitats and Birds Directives, and the Water Framework Directive) with near-absolute ‘no deterioration’ requirements and case-law of national and EU courts have led to significant permitting challenges for businesses.

The EU Grids Package and EU Ports Strategy acknowledge this. While parallel initiatives are ongoing (including a stress test of the Habitats Directive and a consultation on the Water Framework Directive), these remain fragmented and sector-specific and do not address root causes. A comprehensive permitting ‘omnibus’ is still lacking.

In March 2026, the European Council explicitly called on the Commission to ‘put forward further omnibus and other simplification initiatives, including to further speed up and streamline planning and permitting procedures’.

1. How will the Commission follow up on the March 2026 European Council conclusions?
2. What further steps will be taken to address the root causes of permitting challenges?
3. Is the Commission considering a ‘Permitting Omnibus’ to systematically and horizontally address permitting barriers in EU legislation?

Submitted: 15.4.2026

**Answer given by Ms Roswall on behalf of the European Commission
(3 July 2026)**

In line with the March 2026 European Council conclusions, the Commission continues to advance ambitious initiatives that provide benefits to citizens and businesses, upholding the Union’s high level of environmental protection.

In its communication entitled ‘A simpler and faster Europe’ ⁽¹⁾, it announced undertaking a ‘stress testing of the entire acquis’ that will help ensure improved regulatory efficiency of EU law in priority areas.

As regards environmental assessments as part of the overall permit granting process, the Commission’s proposal ⁽²⁾ for a regulation on speeding-up environmental assessments aims at accelerating and simplifying these procedures for economic operators and administrations, including through single points of contact, digital portals, and shorter deadlines.

It also requires Member States to have sufficient qualified staff and financial, technical and technological resources as this is often at the root of slow permitting processes at national level.

Discussions on this proposal are ongoing; the Commission stands ready to support the co-legislators in ensuring simple and workable permitting rules.

In its recent Communication ‘A Simpler, Clearer and Better Enforced EU Rulebook’ ⁽³⁾, the Commission expressed its intention to work with the co-legislators on the basis of this proposal to strengthen a comprehensive cross-sectoral approach, while maintaining environmental and health policy objectives.

⁽¹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/8556fc33-48a3-4a96-94e8-8ecacef1ea18_en?filename=250201_Simplification_Communication_en.pdf.

⁽²⁾ COM(2025) 984 final.

⁽³⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-making-process/better-regulation/simplification-implementation-enforcement/simpler-clearer-and-better-enforced-eu-rulebook_en.