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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné
on behalf of the European Commission
(12.8.2026)

The European forest-based industries, including the pulp and paper industry, contribute to the EU's transition towards a net-zero economy by replacing fossil-based with renewable bio-based materials. Under the proposal for an Industrial Accelerator Act¹, the manufacture of paper and paper products is considered strategic for the purpose of Member States establishing industrial acceleration areas. The Commission is aware that the pulp and paper industry, like all energy-intensive industries, faces significant competitiveness challenges, including high electricity and gas prices. These challenges are being addressed horizontally, *inter alia* through the EU Omnibus Packages², the Clean Industrial Deal³ as well as the action plan on Affordable Energy⁴ and AccelerateEU⁵.

In November 2025, the Commission presented the Strategic Framework for a Competitive and Sustainable EU Bioeconomy (EU Bioeconomy Strategy)⁶. It stresses the role of the bioeconomy in strengthening the EU's competitiveness and strategic autonomy by reducing reliance on imported fossil-based products and proposes several measures to stimulate investments in bio-based production in the EU. The European pulp and paper industry also benefits from the provisions on streamlining and digitalising permitting procedures for its decarbonisation projects in the Industrial Accelerator Act.

European pulp and paper production facilities may be considered for financing instruments⁷ that support investments in industrial modernisation and decarbonisation, where they meet the eligibility criteria laid down in the applicable legal framework for each instrument and are selected through the relevant procedures.

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52026PC0100>.

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025PC0081>.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0085>.

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0079>.

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52026DC0370>.

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0960>.

⁷ Examples of financing instruments are the Innovation Fund, the InvestEU Programme, the Cohesion Policy Funds, particularly the European Regional Development Fund and, the Just transition Fund for eligible territories. As announced in the EU Bioeconomy Strategy, moving forward Common Agricultural Policy Strategic Plans, National Energy and Climate Plans, Cohesion Policy and national or regional bioeconomy strategies should support efficient and appropriate biomass use, which is fully in line with the Clean Industrial Deal State Aid Framework.