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Basic information		
INI - Own-initiative procedure	2021/2011(INI)	Procedure completed
A European strategy for critical raw materials		
Subject		
3.40.16 Raw materials		
3.70.20 Sustainable development		

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	 Industry, Research and Energy (Associated committee)	 BENTELE Hildegard	17/12/2020
	Committee for opinion	Shadow rapporteur	
	 International Trade (Associated committee)	 CHAHIM Mohammed	
	 Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (Associated committee)	 PEKKARINEN Mauri	
European Commission	Commission DG	 HAHN Henrike	
	Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs	 TOVAGLIERI Isabella	
		 KLOC Izabela-Helena	
		 REGO Sira	
		Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
		 HAIDER Roman	28/01/2021
		 MATTHIEU Sara	17/02/2021
		Commissioner	
		BRETON Thierry	

Key events			
11/02/2021	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
11/02/2021	Referral to associated committees announced in Parliament		
27/09/2021	Vote in committee		
12/10/2021	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0280/2021	Summary

22/11/2021	Debate in Parliament		
24/11/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0468/2021	

Technical information

Procedure reference	2021/2011(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Strategic initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 57; Rules of Procedure EP 54
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 159
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ITRE/9/04691

Documentation gateway

Committee draft report		PE693.560	28/05/2021	EP	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE695.024	23/06/2021	EP	
Committee opinion	ENVI	PE689.783	29/06/2021	EP	
Committee opinion	INTA	PE689.605	14/07/2021	EP	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0280/2021	12/10/2021	EP	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0468/2021	24/11/2021	EP	

A European strategy for critical raw materials

The Committee on Industry, Research and Energy adopted an own-initiative report by Hildegard BENTELE (EPP, DE) on a European strategy for critical raw materials.

Technologies requiring critical raw materials will be key to ensuring the EU and the world as a whole can achieve their goals under the Paris Agreement. The EU currently supplies only 1% of the raw materials for wind energy, less than 1% of lithium batteries, less than 1% of fuel cells, only 2% of the raw materials for robotics and only 1% of silicon photovoltaic assemblies. Moreover, COVID-19 has damaged global supply chains and led to shortages of critical raw materials in Europe.

According to Members, a comprehensive EU strategy for critical raw materials should be based on high environmental, social and human rights standards, also taking into account the natural scarcity of minerals.

Challenges and opportunities

Members considered that an integrated approach throughout the value chain, from waste collection and product design for recyclability to material recovery, is an essential strategy to increase the supply of critical raw materials. They stressed the need for an active industrial policy to support the sector in its transformation, with access to affordable sources of clean energy.

The report warned that the EU's transition to climate neutrality should not replace reliance on fossil fuels with reliance on raw materials, stressing that the transition should decrease the EU's dependence on imported critical raw materials.

Project of common European interest

Members called on the Commission and the Member States to create, as soon as possible, an Important Project of Common European Interest (IPCEI) on critical raw materials to strategically and sustainably plan for EU demand for the twin transition, covering requirements, sources

of supply and (social, environmental and financial) costs. The IPCEI should cover all the relevant topics in order to reduce criticality and dependence, such as recycling, reuse, substitution, reduction of material use and mining. These projects should unlock the unfulfilled potential in critical raw material-rich EU countries that have large untapped sources.

The Commission is also invited to:

- pay attention not only to critical raw materials, but also to the potential criticality of other raw materials needed for strong supply chains;
- ensure that national plans for recovery and resilience under NextGenerationEU address the challenges of economically, environmentally and

socially sustainable supply of critical raw materials;

- promote research and development on critical raw material skills and competences for SMEs, as part of a strategy for the growth of EU high-tech technologies such as lithium-ion batteries, fuel cells, wind turbines, electric traction motors, photovoltaics, robotics, drones, 3D printing and a wide range of digital technologies and medical devices.

Members called for EU support and funding for the technological development of critical raw materials and stressed, in particular, the need for specific financial instruments and targeted research and innovation (R&I) funds for recycling processes.

Strategic autonomy and resilience

The report welcomed the creation of the European Raw Materials Alliance (ERMA) as an investment pipeline and encouraged it to become more involved in unlocking public and private investment for environmentally assessed and sustainable critical raw materials projects.

Members regretted that the establishment of strategic stockpiling is not yet part of the action plan. They called on the Commission to focus on securing the supply of critical raw materials in the EU by encouraging Member States to undertake strategic stockpiling in a coordinated approach, where necessary.

Closing material loops

The report highlighted the need to develop functional markets for secondary critical raw materials flows and thus strengthen the EU's industrial ecosystem and retain jobs in the manufacturing industry.

The Commission is encouraged to: (i) promote the recycling and recovery of critical raw materials from mining, processing and commercial waste streams to ensure reliable, secure and sustainable access to them; (ii) propose minimum recycled content targets and dedicated recycling targets for critical raw materials, with a robust monitoring framework.

Supply from the EU

Highlighting that primary and secondary sourcing in the EU is subject to the highest environmental and social standards worldwide, Members called on all actors to promote responsible and sustainable sourcing of critical raw materials within the EU and to raise awareness of the environmental footprint of critical raw material imports from third countries. Responsible sourcing in the EU should be based on an effective social dialogue promoting workers' health and safety, securing decent jobs and working conditions.

Diversification

The report called on the Commission to diversify as much as possible the supply sources of critical raw materials and to reduce the current reliance on a few non-EU countries by supporting investments that involve European and global partners and SMEs as part of a long-term international sourcing strategy.

To achieve this goal, it recommended strengthening existing partnerships and trade agreements and building new strategic agreements or EU joint ventures with resource-rich and other like-minded sourcing countries, in accordance with clearly defined priorities.

Members stressed the need to strengthen cooperation between the EU, the US and Japan and to cooperate more closely with key international suppliers in the Western Balkans, Eastern Europe, Latin America and Africa, as well as with China and other developing countries in the global south.