Basic information

2021/2011(INI) INI - Own-initiative procedure	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
ITRE Industry, Research and Energy	BENTELE Hildegard (EPP)	17/12/2020
	Shadow rapporteur CHAHIM Mohammed (S&D) PEKKARINEN Mauri (Renew) HAHN Henrike (Greens /EFA) KLOC Izabela-Helena (ECR) TOVAGLIERI Isabella (ID)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
INTA International Trade (Associated committee)	HAIDER Roman (ID)	28/01/2021
ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (Associated committee)	MATTHIEU Sara (Greens /EFA)	17/02/2021

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs	BRETON Thierry

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
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		
23/11/2021	Results of vote in Parliament		
24/11/2021	Decision by Parliament	T9-0468/2021	Summary

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2021/2011(INI)
Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Strategic initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 57_o Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ITRE/9/04691

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

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

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2022)199	28/04/2022	

Meetings with interest representatives published in line with the Rules of Procedure

Rapporteurs, Shadow Rapporteurs and Committee Chairs

Transparency

Name	Role	Committee	Date	Interest representatives
HAHN Henrike	Shadow rapporteur	ITRE	13/04/2022	KGHM Polska Miedź Spółka Akcyjna
HAHN Henrike	Shadow rapporteur	ITRE	11/04/2022	IGMNiR

A European strategy for critical raw materials

2021/2011(INI) - 12/10/2021 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

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.

A European strategy for critical raw materials

2021/2011(INI) - 24/11/2021 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 543 votes to 52, with 94 abstentions, a resolution on a European strategy for critical raw materials.

Need for a comprehensive EU strategy

Technologies requiring critical raw materials (CRMs) will be key to ensuring the EU and the world's ability to meet 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.

Members stressed the strategic importance for the EU to **reduce its dependence and preserve its value and supply chains**. A comprehensive EU strategy for CRMs should be based on high environmental, social and human rights standards, also taking into account the natural mineral scarcity.

Challenges and opportunities

Members believe that an **integrated approach** along the entire value chain, from waste collection and product design for recyclability to material recovery, is an essential strategy for increasing the supply of CRMs. However, they stressed that recycling alone will not be sufficient to meet the growing demand for CRM and that **substitution** of critical materials could help solve CRM sufficiency challenges.

The resolution emphasised the need to **support research and innovation** in recycling and substitution of CRMs as well as in product design.

Stressing that climate neutrality should not replace reliance on fossil fuels with dependence on raw materials, Members called for an **active industrial policy** with access to affordable clean energy sources.

Given the favourable circumstances in the EU for low-emission and sustainable extraction activities, Members called for further exploration of **supply opportunities** in CRM-rich Member States. They also stressed the role that optimising resource consumption and maintaining and reusing valuable raw materials within the EU can play in reducing dependence on CRM.

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 called upon to ensure that national plans for recovery and resilience under NextGenerationEU address the challenges of economically, environmentally and socially sustainable CRM supply.

Members also called for **EU support and funding** for the technological development of CRMs 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

Parliament called for further strengthening of the European Raw Materials Alliance (ERMA), mainly with regard to materials which are of great importance for the twin transition, like CRMs needed for energy storage and conversion.

Closing material loops

The resolution highlighted the need to develop well-functional markets for secondary **critical raw material** flows and thus strengthen the EU's industrial ecosystem and keep jobs in the manufacturing industry. The Commission is encouraged to 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.

Supply from the EU

Parliament stressed the vital role of Member States in increasing the sustainable domestic supply of CRM from primary and secondary sources. It called on Member States to improve the timeliness, predictability and transparency of **authorisation procedures for prospecting and sourcing projects** without lowering environmental and social standards.

Diversification

The Commission is called on 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, Parliament 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.