

**Question for written answer E-004282/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Price setting and potential market power in the market for high-purity vacuum salt

In its response to written question P-002226/2025¹, the Commission acknowledged the importance of high-purity vacuum salt for European industry, but did not suggest that it would be classified as a ‘critical raw material’. There is currently growing evidence of a highly concentrated market in which a small number of suppliers, like the Dutch company Nobian, have considerable pricing power.

This market situation has led to a significant increase in the price of high-purity vacuum salt in recent years. In the light of this development, the following questions arise:

1. Does the Commission have data on recent price developments in the European market for high-purity vacuum salt, particularly with regard to the possible dominant market positions of individual suppliers?
2. How does the Commission assess the risk of an abuse of market power within the meaning of Article 102 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union in this sector and what legislative measures are available to take action if necessary?
3. As part of its internal market strategy and the upcoming review of the Critical Raw Materials Act², does the Commission intend to systematically examine competition and price formation aspects in oligopolistic raw material markets in order to identify and prevent potential market failures?

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¹ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/P-10-2025-002226_EN.html.

² Regulation (EU) 2024/1252 of 11 April 2024 establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials, OJ L, 2024/1252, 3.5.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1252/oj>.