

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002048/26
to the Commission
Martin Günther (The Left)
(19 May 2026)**

Subject: Transparency and integrity of the CRMA strategic project selection process

Following reports on the selection of strategic projects under the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA), concerns have emerged regarding transparency and procedural integrity ⁽¹⁾. Internal documents indicate that several projects — including highly controversial mining projects such as the Barroso lithium project in Portugal and the Jadar Valley project in Serbia — were added between a draft and final list in 2025, despite earlier expert assessments. This raises questions about the consistency and credibility of the selection process.

1. What steps does the Commission intend to take to ensure full transparency in the CRMA selection process, including publication of draft and final project lists, expert assessments and clear justification for changes introduced between stages, particularly where projects initially failed to meet technical or sustainability criteria?
2. How does the Commission safeguard the independence and weight of expert evaluations during consultations within the European Critical Raw Materials Board?
3. How does the Commission ensure that Member State or political considerations do not override prior technical assessments, particularly for projects that are environmentally and socially sensitive?

Submitted: 19.5.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Séjourné on behalf of the European Commission
(22 July 2026)**

The selection of Strategic Projects follows the process and requirements set out in the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA) ⁽¹⁾. The technical assessment is conducted by external experts, who work independently and are coordinated by the Commission. All selected projects were assessed as meeting the criteria set out in Article 6 of the CRMA.

In accordance with Article 7 of the CRMA, the Member State whose territory is concerned receives the full application and can veto the recognition of a project as a Strategic Project.

The Critical Raw Materials Board is consulted and issues an opinion on whether the proposed projects fulfil the criteria laid down in Article 6(1).

The consultation process with Member States and the adoption of the opinion are transparently reported and publicly available on the Critical Raw Materials Board website ⁽²⁾.

From the minutes of the relevant Board meetings for the first selection round, it is clear that the results presented on 20 February 2026 were preliminary and that the expert assessment was not finalised for some projects.

The Commission has published substantial information on the process, including guidance for applicants, assessment report templates and project factsheets ⁽³⁾.

Certain detailed evaluation elements cannot be disclosed where this would undermine the protection of commercially sensitive information or the integrity of the decision-making process.

¹ <https://table.media/esg/talk-of-the-town-en/critical-raw-materials-doubts-raised-about-the-eus-project-selection>.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1252/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials/critical-raw-materials-act/board_en.

⁽³⁾ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials/strategic-projects-under-crma_en.