

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-001913/24
to the Commission
Dan-Ștefan Motreanu (PPE)
(2 October 2024)**

Subject: Graphite exploitation projects

Romania (in the form of the state-owned national salt company — Salrom) has applied for EU funding for two advanced graphite exploitation projects under the new EU Regulation establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials (the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA)).

1. What stage has been reached in these projects?
2. When will they start and what is the deadline for their completion?

Submitted: 2.10.2024

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Vestager on behalf of the European Commission
(29 October 2024)**

The Commission opened a call for applications for strategic projects ⁽¹⁾ under the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA) ⁽²⁾ on 23 May 2024.

The Commission received 170 applications by the cut-off date of 22 August 2024. These applications are currently under assessment.

The Commission will not communicate about the applications during the assessment since it could undermine the commercial interests of the project promoters. Once the assessment process is finalised, the Commission will publish on its website the list of recognised strategic projects.

Strategic projects under the CRMA are expected to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 benchmarks defined in Article 5 of the CRMA.

They must also demonstrate that they are technically feasible, implemented sustainably and that they make a meaningful contribution to the security of the EU's supply of strategic raw materials.

The recognition of a project as a strategic project by the Commission has several advantages, including streamlined and predictable permitting procedures and support in gaining access to finance. The CRMA itself does not provide for direct EU funding to the recognised projects.

⁽¹⁾ https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/raw-materials/areas-specific-interest/critical-raw-materials/strategic-projects-under-crma_en

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1252 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 establishing a framework for ensuring a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials and amending Regulations (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1724 and (EU) 2019/1020 (Text with EEA relevance), https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202401252