



THE CRITICAL RAW MATERIALS REGULATION: EU'S CHALLENGES IN ENSURING A SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE SUPPLY OF RAW MATERIALS

The “Critical Raw Materials Regulation” (CRMR) establishes a comprehensive regulatory framework aimed at securing and diversifying the EU’s supply of critical raw materials – materials vital to the green and digital transitions as well as the defense and aerospace sectors. As part of the EU’s broader strategy to enhance its strategic autonomy and economic resilience, the CRMR envisages 2030 benchmarks to bolster domestically sourced, processed, and recycled raw materials while reducing dependency on single third-country suppliers. It also enables the monitoring of critical supply chains, stress-testing, and the coordination of strategic stocks to prevent disruptions. Furthermore, it mandates national measures to improve the collection and recycling of critical raw materials, particularly from waste. Considering that the overarching objective of the CRMR is to ensure the Union’s access to a secure and sustainable supply of materials, this article analyses the main provisions of this legislation to evaluate if they consciously prioritise supply security over social and environmental aspects, despite the (at least theoretical) equal-ranking economic and sustainability goals.