

**Critical Raw Materials potential in the Western Balkans region**  
- **Online workshop –**  
**25 April, 9.30 – 12.30**

Global demand for critical raw materials (CRMs) is forecasted to increase significantly over the next years, as many countries need CRMs for their green and digital transitions.

In March 2023 the European Commission presented its proposal for a **Regulation on a framework to ensure a secure and sustainable supply of critical raw materials for the EU**, the so-called *European Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA)* with the expected date of entry into force in May 2024.

The CRMA aims to increase the EU domestic extraction, processing and refining and recycling, and to ensure the diversification of our supplies from third countries. The Acts puts forward several benchmarks including for the diversification actions, saying that not more than 65% of the EU's annual consumption of each strategic raw materials should come from one single country.

Starting from the 2020 Action Plan for Critical Raw Materials and continuing with the Critical Raw Materials Act, the EU commits to develop strategic international partnerships and associated funding to secure a diversified and sustainable supply of critical raw materials, essential for the green and digital transition and for defence and aerospace applications. The EU has signed so far 11 Strategic Partnerships on raw materials value chains with Canada and Ukraine in 2021, Kazakhstan and Namibia in 2022, Argentina, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zambia and Greenland in 2023 and with Rwanda and Norway in 2024. The partnerships developed are win-win partnerships aiming at developing local value addition and creating the conditions for developing local processing capacities and moving up along the value chain. Outside the countries with strategic partnership, the EU is keen to identify and support relevant projects that could contribute to the diversification of our supplies.

An essential step in this direction is the identification of concrete investment opportunities in third countries that could supply the European market and where EU can act as Team Europe together with the Member States. The EU may also assist in improving the surrounding enabling environment and to facilitate activities, by pooling available resources and de-risking tools.

This workshop aims to offer an overview of the EU raw materials policy including by presenting the aims and pillars of the Critical Raw Materials Act. It also aims to bring together governments and businesses. The event will be attended by the business representatives from the Western Balkans and EU Member States, business associations, the EU Member States, representatives from Western Balkans governments, the European Commission, the EU Delegations in the Western Balkans, financial institutions. The workshop will also aim to facilitate knowledge and match making in the CRM sector. It will be an opportunity to hear about business opportunities on the ground and to share ideas on how these opportunities can come to life.

## DRAFT AGENDA

### “Critical Raw Materials potential in the Western Balkans region”

25.4.2024 Online Zoom meeting

[Link for registration](#)

- 9:30 – 9:40**            **Welcome introduction**
- WB6 CIF – Tatjana Shterjova Dushkovska, Secretary General
  - European Commission, DG NEAR – Maria Asenius
- 9:40 – 9:45**            **Opening remarks**
- European Commission, DG GROW –Joaquim Nunes de Almeida, Director
- 9:45 – 10:10**            **Overview of the EU raw materials policy: The European Critical Raw Materials Act**
- European Commission, DG GROW - Madalina Ivanica /Peter Handley
- 10:10 – 10:15**            **Q&A session**
- 10:15 – 11:00**            **Western Balkans potential for critical raw materials**
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Serbia – Igor Kronja, advisor to the President
- Presentations from EU associations**
- 11:10 – 11:05**            **Q&A session**
- 11:05 – 11:50**            **Projects from the WB**
- 11:50 – 12:20**            **Funding opportunities in the region**
- 12:20 – 12:25**            **Q&A session**
- 12:25 – 12:30**            **Final remarks (DG NEAR and DG GROW)**