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Answer given by Mr Breton

on behalf of the European Commission

(22.12.2021)

The Commission has been closely monitoring the situation with regard to the access to and availability of magnesium in the EU.

The lack of diversification of sources of supply at a global scale and the lack of EU own production capacities of magnesium limit the availability of short-term actions to compensate for reduced volumes of magnesium produced in China. Nevertheless, the Commission will explore possibilities to diversify the supplies from other existing producers (Israel, United States, Russia). Moreover, at the latest meeting between the Commission and the Chinese Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) on 21 October 2021, the MIIT reassured that while the production had been disrupted due to high energy prices, energy rationing and the need to reduce CO2 emissions, it has nevertheless restarted and is expected to reach in the fourth quarter of 2021 85% of 2020 production level. The Commission will continue to monitor closely the evolution of the situation.

In the medium to long term, the EU and its industry should improve the security and sustainability of magnesium supply. The Commission is discussing with industry players at both ends of the value chain and Member States the feasibility of creating magnesium smelting capacities in Europe. In line with the EU industrial strategy's objectives, the Commission will also keep exploring possibilities to diversify its sources of supply of magnesium by reaching out to its trade partners.