

**Question for written answer E-000234/2023/rev.1  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Mathilde Androuët (ID)**

**Subject:** Will the conflict in Ukraine allow the EU to continue meeting its strategic-partnership objectives in terms of provision of rare earths?

In his answer of 13 December 2021 to a parliamentary question (E-004335/2021) expressing concerns about the European Union's capacity to maintain a sufficient supply of rhodium – in this case for the development of the EU's hydrogen industry – Internal Market Commissioner Thierry Breton seemed optimistic. Faced with the burgeoning global demand for rare earths and the resulting rapid price hike, Mr Breton stressed the efforts being made to 'diversify supply with sustainable and responsible sourcing from third countries'. In this regard, he made specific mention of the 'strategic partnership' entered into with Ukraine in July 2021.

1. With war raging in Ukraine, does the Commission believe that the country's government still has access to rare earths, particularly the sizeable deposits in the Donbas, an area also rich in lithium<sup>1</sup>?
2. With the stress the conflict is putting on Ukrainian infrastructure and given that mining is a particularly polluting activity, does the Commission believe that it is possible to guarantee the exploitation of these resources, while respecting the environment to the best extent possible<sup>2</sup>?

Submitted: 25.1.2023

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.novethic.fr/actualite/energie/transition-energetique/isr-rse/metaux-strategiques-la-guerre-en-ukraine-pourrait-freiner-la-transition-ecologique-de-l-union-europeenne-150623.html>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.systext.org/sites/all/documents/RP\\_SystExt\\_Controverses-Mine\\_VOLET-1\\_Nov2021\\_vf.pdf](https://www.systext.org/sites/all/documents/RP_SystExt_Controverses-Mine_VOLET-1_Nov2021_vf.pdf)