



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From:	Polish delegation
To:	Council
Subject:	Results of the Friends of Industry meeting (Warsaw, 22 April 2016) - Information from the Polish delegation

Delegations will find attached an information note from the Polish delegation on the above-mentioned subject with a view to the Competitiveness Council on 26 May 2016.

PL AOB item on the results of the *Friends of Industry* meeting in Warsaw, 22 April 2016 –

COMPET Council on 26 May 2016

On 22 April 2016 Poland hosted the IV Ministerial Conference of *Friends of Industry*. Thus we would like to present the results of the meeting and pass on a *Joint Warsaw Declaration* adopted during the event at the Competitiveness Council meeting on 26 May 2016.

Friends of Industry conference was a continuation of efforts, initiated in 2013 by France, to draw the attention of Member States and the EU institutions, especially the European Commission, on necessary policy changes to strengthen the competitiveness of European industry. We feel that there are no visible results of efforts to the manufacturing industry from the European Commission.

During the conference, which brought together 20 Member States, the Commissioner and representatives of industry, the participants were discussing the diversified situation in industry which shows that general horizontal solutions do not always fit for all specific sectors. They proposed a hybrid approach meaning a combination of horizontal policies with inclusion of specific policies for selected sectors of industry and branches of economy. Moreover a group of particular problems were identified during the discussion: overregulation in some sectors (automotive, cosmetics, chemical, pharmaceutical), weakness of the external competitiveness of the energy-intensive industries, need for a quicker and more effective use of the trade defense instruments against unfair trade practices.

The conference was also an occasion to look deeper into the effects which the fourth industrial revolution has on the manufacturing sector. It opens up a whole range of innovations and intelligent industrial processes as well as challenges that require rapid and effective action. The participants of the conference highlighted the importance of the Single Market Strategy and priority of the development of a strong industrial base, ICT standards, data storage, high-speed broadband infrastructure. It was also stressed that the wider introduction of ICT into education programs and development of vocational education are crucial for the progress of the digitalization of the industry.

The *Friends of Industry* meeting has resulted in the adoption of a *Joint Warsaw Declaration*. The Declaration contains a diagnosis of the situation of the European industry and calls the Commission for carrying out a deepened analysis of few sectors, going beyond the CCA: steel, automotive, chemicals, railway, cement, renewable energies, pharmaceuticals in order to identify the difficulties they are facing and to consider all relevant instruments to increase their competitiveness. The aim is to ensure that all EU regulations are transparent, simple and achieved at minimum costs, while fostering competitiveness, growth and jobs.
