



Council of the
European Union

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NOTE

From:	Presidency
To:	Permanent Representatives Committee
Subject:	Establishment of a High Level Working Group on Competitiveness and Growth

Delegations will find in Annex a Presidency Note on the establishment of a High Level Working Group on Competitiveness and Growth as approved by the Permanent Representatives Committee (Part I) on 31 October 2014.

**Presidency Note for the establishment
of a High Level Working Group on Competitiveness and Growth**

1. The Competitiveness Council of 2 December 2013 highlighted in its Conclusions “the importance of streamlining existing structures in order to increase visibility and effectiveness of the Single Market policy” and recognized “the need for a stronger role of the High Level Group on Competitiveness and Growth in monitoring and providing guidance” in feeding the results of the Annual Commission Report on the state of Single Market integration into the European Semester process on a regular basis¹.
2. In its Conclusions on 25 September 2014 the Competitiveness Council called upon “*Member States to put forward proposals for a revised multiannual work programme for the COMPCRO HLG that would enable the Group, through COREPER according to Article 16 of TEU and Article 240 of TFEU, to support the Council more consistently in its reinforced role of monitoring and mainstreaming industrial competitiveness across all relevant EU policy initiatives, starting with those based on Articles 114 and 173 of the TFEU*”. Moreover it emphasised “*its willingness to take without delay all decisions needed concerning the work programme, the membership and the chairmanship of the COMPCRO HLG.*”²
3. On this basis, the Presidency considers that a permanent High-Level Working Group on Competitiveness and Growth (COMPCRO HLG) needs to be set up to support COREPER in the policy coordination for competitiveness and growth.

¹ Council Conclusions on Single Market Policy of 2 December 2013, doc 16443/13, para. 1.

² Council Conclusions on the mainstreaming of industrial competitiveness of 25 September 2014, doc. 13617/14, par. 20 and 21.

4. The mandate of the High Level Working Group is to carry out the following non-legislative tasks:
 - Monitor the state of Single Market integration and discuss the policy priorities set out in the relevant documents, including within the European Semester, providing guidance in that regard for EU action and promoting exchange of information and best practices among Member States.
 - Support the Council in its reinforced role of monitoring and mainstreaming competitiveness, in particular industrial competitiveness, across all relevant policy initiatives, particularly those based on Articles 114 and 173 TFEU.
5. This High-Level Working Group will be composed of high level representatives designated by the Member States. The Member States should ensure the continuity in membership and participation to the meetings by nominating *ad personam* a maximum of two members and two alternate members of the Group. The Commission should designate a high level representative to take part in the High Level Working Group meetings.
6. In the inception phase, the three Trio Presidency Member States, with unanimous decision, will jointly appoint, from among their respective HLG representatives, a chair and two vice-chairs, who will retain those functions for the duration of the same Trio Presidency.
7. In order to align the COMPCRO HLG's agenda with the Trio Presidency Programme of the Council, the High Level Working Group will have a work programme, with a duration corresponding to the 18-month Trio Programme, taking into account the Commission's work programme, and which will be submitted for consideration and approval to the COREPER.
8. The High Level Working Group will report to COREPER in line with Article 240 TFEU, and will be supported by the General Secretariat of the Council.
9. Against this background, the Permanent Representatives Committee is invited to approve the establishment of the High-Level Working Group on Competitiveness and Growth, along the lines set out above.