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From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Council

Subject: Reducing administrative burdens for companies in unprecedented times
- *Information from the Danish Delegation*

Delegations will find attached a note from the Danish delegation with a view to the AOB items at the meeting of the Competitiveness Council on 7 December 2023.

Reducing administrative burdens for companies in unprecedented times*- Request for an AOB point by Denmark*

Reducing administrative burdens is a prerequisite for maintaining the competitiveness of European businesses amid geopolitical tension, increasing global strategic competition. The European Commission's intention to rationalise and streamline reporting obligations by 25%, without undermining policy objectives is therefore both timely and necessary.

The initiatives tabled with the Commission's recently adopted work programme, aiming at bringing about around EUR 2 billion in cost savings, are all steps in the right direction. However, as indicated by the spirit of the Commission's call of evidence, these measures will have to be supplemented with additional measures to further reduce businesses' reporting burdens as well as additional administrative burdens beyond reporting. On 26 October, the European Council adopted conclusions emphasising the need *"to take forward work to simplify regulation and reduce the unnecessary administrative burden, including reporting requirements, notably for SMEs and start-ups"*. Furthermore, the European Council called for additional proposals, *"seizing the opportunities of the data economy and standardised business data"*.

Ideas have already been put forward, including by France and Germany. In their paper on "Better Regulation and Modern Administration in Europe", they have suggested concrete measures for how this could be done. Amongst other, these proposals include practical solutions that can help reduce burdens on businesses, such as a call for effective digital readiness in legislation at Union level, advancing digitalisation in the legislative process as well as a Bureaucracy Reduction Action Plan.

Considering the importance of concise and immediate actions to reduce businesses' administrative burdens and maintain the competitiveness of European businesses, we invite the Commission and Member States to share their ideas on which measures to take forward to simplify regulation and reduce administrative burdens for European companies. Especially, we encourage the COMPET Council to reflect on how standardisation of business data and automatisisation of data sharing can play a meaningful role in reducing administrative burdens for companies without undermining the underlying policy objectives.
