



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency

To: Permanent Representatives Committee/Council

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Subject: **Preparation** for the Council meeting "**Competitiveness**" of 2 - 3 December 2013

**Contribution to the European Semester and upcoming European Council meetings**

*-Policy debate*

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1. The Annual Growth Survey (AGS) for 2014, adopted by the European Commission on 13 November 2013, launches the 2014 European Semester for economic policy coordination, which ensures that Member States align their budgetary and economic policies with the Stability and Growth Pact and the Europe 2020 strategy. It is the basis for building a common understanding about the priorities for action at the national and EU level as the Union seeks to return to a path of sustainable growth and job creation.

2. At the same time, the Commission issued its second annual Report on Single Market Integration, as a contribution to the 2014 AGS, reviewing in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy the way the Single Market functions within the various Member States. The report takes stock of where progress has been made since the start of the crisis and seeks to identify where bottlenecks remain and defines a set of policy priorities on that basis.
3. The Lithuanian Presidency has proposed three sets of Council conclusions for adoption at the Council (Competitiveness) of 2-3 December 2013. These draft conclusions address European Industrial Policy, Single Market Policy and Smart Regulation.
4. In the context of the above, the Presidency is proposing for the Ministers a policy debate as a contribution in view of future discussions on the European Semester and upcoming European Council meetings of December 2013 and February 2014. To orient the discussion, the Presidency is proposing that the Ministers should focus on the following questions:
  - a) What could be the areas of closer coordination of economic policies including on monitoring progress on structural reforms within the remit of Competitiveness Council with the most prominent positive effects on competitiveness?
  - b) Based on the negotiations on Council Conclusions and the discussions with stakeholders to date, what are the three main messages the Competitiveness Council could send to 2014 February European Council with the view to fostering the industrial competitiveness in Europe?

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