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European Union

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**NOTE**

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From: Presidency  
To: Council

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Subject: *Preparation of the Competitiveness Council on 12 March 2018*  
Information on the conference on "Scientific Integrity, Public Policy and  
Better Regulation"

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Delegations will find in Annex an information note from the Presidency on the above subject, to be dealt with under "Any other business" at the Council (Competitiveness) meeting on 12 March 2018.

**Conference on “Scientific Integrity, Public Policy and Better Regulation”**

**(Brussels, 20 February 2018)**

**- Information from the Presidency**

The Bulgarian Presidency considers that a strong Better Regulation Agenda is one of the key drivers delivering economic growth and ensuring support for enterprises and job creation. Designing and evaluating EU policies and law in a transparent manner based on solid evidence - and backed up by the views of citizens and stakeholders - is crucial for supporting EU competitiveness.

One of the principal objectives of the EU’s Better Regulation Strategy is to strengthen the role that evidence plays in informing decisions at all stages of the policy cycle.

That is why the Bulgarian Presidency co-organised a Conference on “Scientific Integrity, Public Policy and Better Regulation” on 20 February 2018 in Brussels. The event brought together high level representatives from Member States, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the scientific community and the civil society.

The following ideas were among the key messages from the conference:

1. Scientific evidence enables the EU’s institutions to identify the existence of hazards and their causes, to determine which hazards pose the greatest risks, to reduce uncertainties, to characterise risks and to allocate public resources rationally.
2. Legislative and regulatory decisions, based on the best available science and expert risk assessment, establish a sound legislative environment within which businesses can invest effectively in innovative products, processes and services needed to upgrade productivity and to respond effectively to digital transformation and a sustainable future.

3. Improving the standards for the collection and use of scientific evidence, establishing guidelines which define the characteristics of best-available science and thereby ensuring the integrity and quality of scientific evidence for effective policy making will contribute positively to the implementation of the priorities of the strategic agenda on better regulation and will encourage further development of the innovation principle and the enhancement of regulatory predictability, thus making Europe more attractive for innovators and investors.

A qualitative legal framework with clear and simple rules, achieved at minimum cost and taking into account high level of protection of consumers, health, environment and employees is key for the realisation of the strategic objectives for smart regulation based on solid evidence which supports the long-term EU competitiveness.

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