

BUDAPEST DECLARATION

**Joint declaration of the Ministers of Economic Affairs of the Visegrad Group countries
on the Future of Economic co-operation
19 April 2018 – Budapest**

WE, THE MINISTERS OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS OF THE VISEGRAD GROUP (V4) COUNTRIES CONVENING IN BUDAPEST ON 19 APRIL 2018, HEREBY ADOPT THE FOLLOWING JOINT DECLARATION.

UNDERLINING the importance of a strong and modern industrial base as a key driver of economic growth, innovation, employment and major prerequisite to tackle successfully economic and societal challenges of today and in the future.

REMINDING the Europe 2020 strategy, the EU's agenda for growth and jobs for the current decade which emphasises smart, sustainable and inclusive growth as a way to overcome the structural weaknesses in Europe's economy, improve its competitiveness and productivity and underpin a sustainable social market economy.

WELCOMING the joint *Berlin Declaration* on industrial policy of the Friends of Industry of June 2017, which reiterated the commitment of the interested countries towards a strong industrial base in Europe.

RECOGNIZING that the principle adopted in the *Rome Declaration* calling for a strong, connected and developing European Single Market, of which the digital dimension is one of the main engines, should be of priority interest; and it needs our strong and continued political support at the highest level.

UNDERLINING the importance of EU industrial policy, which is continuously reflected within the Council and also elaborated in the Commission's communication "*Investing in a smart, innovative and sustainable industry - A renewed EU Industrial Policy Strategy*" presented on 13 September 2017.

RECALLING the last Council conclusions from March 2017 on EU industrial policy strategy and the Council conclusions from May and November 2017, as well as the European Council conclusions from June 2017 emphasizing the need for a comprehensive, long-term strategy and the need to monitor the implementation of the industrial policy objectives with appropriate indicators.

EMPHASIZING that digital transformation will determine the future of industry and digitisation is at the heart of the fourth industrial revolution and as such, will transform the world as we know today. Therefore, successful digital transformation is one of the preconditions for further enhancement of the competitiveness of the EU, and the V4 countries therein.

In line with the European Commission's Digitising European Industry (DEI) initiative and following the main goals of the "Warsaw Declaration" of the Prime Ministers of the V4 in March 2017, the Economic Ministers of the Visegrad Group are willing to strengthen their cooperation in policies targeted at the digital transformation of their industrial sectors.

WE DECLARE OUR INTENTION TO:

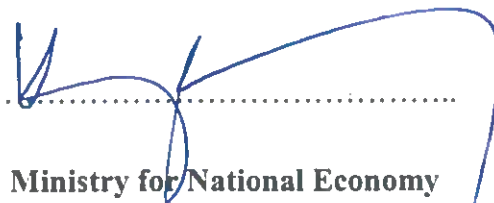
- Emphasize the need to coordinate our common positions and actions aimed at boosting competitiveness, innovativeness and digital transformation of the V4 countries. Therefore, we propose to:
 - a) Hold regional debate and exchange best practices of V4 countries concerning our funding programmes and the overall framework as appropriate, notably on how to strengthen and expand cross-border cooperation and foster innovation and prosperity of digital ecosystems within the framework of existing national and EU funding mechanisms and for joint Industry 4.0 projects, with a view to achieve more rapid and effective commercialization of use cases and pilot-factory results of the digital technology.
 - b) Initiate the elaboration of a common V4 position (non-paper) on future-oriented long-term EU industrial strategy in the light of on-going discussion at the EU level.
- Maximise the potential of a data-driven economy and new business models, particularly through joint V4 lighthouse projects, common big data pools, digital technology programs, excellence centres or Virtual Research Institutes, which will stimulate productivity growth based on innovation and customised services. This will directly impact companies / entrepreneurs of all sizes – multinationals, mid-sized companies as well as SMEs.
- Enhance the cooperation among existing national Industry 4.0 Platforms as declared in the Strategy Document of the Hungarian V4 Presidency. This includes close cooperation in the fields of digital technologies, digitalisation of education systems, promotion of innovative activities, and support of start-up and scale-up communities and SMEs. Industry 4.0 National Technology Platforms would be a useful element supporting the adoption of digital technologies and digital services. These Platforms will also help to bring different technologies and applications together, facilitating the development of new products, processes and business models.
- Promote mutual learning through sharing best practices, information on successful innovative projects and methods in order to foster innovation and their commercialisation.

- Encourage participation of our national institutions in the EU's Digital Innovation Hub (DIH) activities, building necessary competence-centres and setting up pilot projects and test environments needed for the implementation of new digital processes.
- Facilitate joint V4 I4.0 pilot projects inter alia by involving the International Visegrad Fund and its grant programmes in line with its supportive practice.
- Emphasize knowledge-based activities of our industrial ecosystem, including universities and connected start-ups, and with that, focus on innovation management and knowledge sharing in the field of IP services, provided by National IP Protection Organizations and the Visegrad Patent Institute.
- Stress the importance of arising issues that include cyber security, standardization, free flow of non-personal data, scale of data-usage and emerging 5G communication. All these factors will contribute to the data-economy of the coming digital age. Next generation mobile services – 5G – laid the foundation of the digitised industry. Joint activities in developing data pools for AI technologies can benefit all V4 economies. A good and trusted blueprint of cyber-security cooperation at V4+ level should be followed.
- Exchange macroeconomic and foreign trade data regularly, also focusing on the role of investments in intangible assets in V4 economies.
- Observe and monitor industrial strategy at the EU level and agree to meet regularly to advance progress and promote further cooperation in this field.

SIGNED BY



**Ministry of Industry and Trade
Czech Republic**



**Ministry for National Economy
Hungary**



**Ministry of Entrepreneurship and
Technology
Poland**



**Ministry of Economy
Slovak Republic**