

**Joint declaration of the Visegrad Group and France on mutual cooperation in the field
of pharmaceutical industry development**

Krakow, 21 June 2021

We, the ministers for economic development of the Visegrad Group (V4) - the Czech Republic, Hungary, the Republic of Poland and the Slovak Republic as well as the French Republic,

RECOGNISING strong ties among our countries and societies,

EMPHASISING more than 30-year fruitful cooperation within the Visegrad Group and its current constructive contribution in shaping the European politics in the field of economy, society and environment,

UNDERLINING a friendly and efficient economic and political cooperation among the V4 members and France, their mutual friendly relationships within bilateral contacts and efficient, joint involvement in numerous multilateral projects,

REITERATING that in accordance with the arrangements of the Extraordinary Meeting of the European Council of 1-2 October 2020 the accomplishment of the strategic autonomy while preserving open economy is one of the key objectives of the European Union,

DRAWING lessons from the pandemic crisis, that highlighted the necessity to secure and diversify critical supply chains and a shift to a more resilient European industry benefiting from a fully functioning Single Market,

EMPHASISING, it is not enough to take action at a time of crisis, but to prepare in advance for the challenges ahead, thus we need a better understanding of Europe's current and potential future strategic dependencies as in certain cases production capacity has been lost in recent decades but also to reinforce our positioning in sectors, especially those at the heart of the green and digital transformation, which will be key to our future prosperity,

SUPPORTING the implementation of an ambitious European industrial policy, through a better use of its different instruments and of the Single Market, in order to foster investments and production and to boost the competitiveness of the EU industry and its ability to develop breakthrough innovation in strategic sectors,

UNDERLINING the importance of having a coherent and comprehensive approach to trade, competition and industrial policies to support an ambitious European agenda for sustainable development including by offering incentives for investments in green and digital technologies, to promote our economic interests in the global competition, prevent unfair practices and ensure a level playing field with third countries,

RECOGNIZING that tightening the V4 cooperation on the pharmaceutical industry development establishing tighter cooperation with France and open to Member States is an immediate

priority following the crisis: that this includes building the European resilience in the field of medication manufacturing and development of active pharmaceutical substances and semi-products for producing medications as well as developing ambitious pharmaceutical projects aimed at overcoming social, economic and political aspects of the global COVID-19 pandemic,

EMPHASISING the legitimacy of cooperation on joint standpoint pertaining to the challenges of the pharmaceutical industry and representation of joint interests of the signatory states within the EU and internationally,

UNDERSTANDING cooperation in the pharmaceutical sector to open up wider industrial cooperation and projects between V4 countries, France, and the European Union in the medium term more widely, is in the interest of improving Europe's resilience, innovation potential and strategic positioning in the sector, but also quality of, and access to, care for patients;

Hereby declare goodwill to build, enhance and strengthen the bilateral and multilateral cooperation on the basis of mutual benefits and respecting the will and needs of all parties within the V4 Group as well as France in the area of strengthening resilience of the pharmaceutical industry in the following fields:

- 1) coordination of activities aimed at improving competitiveness and development of the pharmaceutical potential of the V4 countries and France as part of the implementation of priorities of the EU pharmaceutical strategy for Europe in connection with the concept of building European medication resilience and EU autonomy in this strategic sector; in particular in the field of developing production infrastructure, activities related to developing new Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients – API and medications as well as cross-border pharmaceutical projects;
- 2) establishing joint cooperation framework in the field of building European resilience and medication autonomy, among others, by virtue of establishing the mechanism of consultation for pharmaceutical matters at the working level and indication of a contact point responsible for regional pharmaceutical cooperation from each of the V4 countries as well as France in order to indicate opportunities for taking up joint pharmaceutical projects from various fields (developing new products, business models, investments or research and development works in the field of building resilience, shortening value chain where necessary, improved access to medications for patients);
- 3) tightening cooperation aimed at increasing the capacities for production and accomplishment of security in the scope of deliveries of raw materials and medications in Europe as well as relocation of production of active pharmaceutical ingredients and semi-products to Europe, including enhancement of production capacities in the Middle and Easter Europe region;

- 4) cooperation on securing the EU funds for building European resilience in the field of medication production, including the production of active pharmaceutical ingredients in particular in the field of joint cross-border projects of the V4 countries and France;
- 5) exchange of data regarding current problems that pertain to the availability of medications and active ingredients and monitoring of occurring medication shortages with special consideration of the demand for individual groups of products;
- 6) successful reaction to crises in the health protection area, including the research on production increase capacity, pursuing independence of raw materials and autonomy in the field of building permanent, resilient, diversified and safe value chains for pharmaceutical products and medical devices;
- 7) supporting cooperation in the R&D area among research centres from the area of pharmaceutical sciences and biotechnology as well as among those centres and business in order to build permanent links including within clusters, implement joint projects and stimulate transfer of technology;
- 8) raising awareness among enterprises from the pharmaceutical and biotechnological sector for business opportunities and perspectives in the V4 countries and France as well as joint efforts for creating incentives to establish cross-border cooperation, in particular in the area of joint investments and creating new financial opportunities;
- 9) cooperation for presenting standpoints and implementation of the EU pharmaceutical strategy and the new EU industrial strategy in the context of the pharmaceutical strategy (analysis of the share of European pharmaceutical entities in global value chains, analysis of the potential to increase production capacities in Europe, including in the V4 countries and France, analysis of the legal framework of the state aid in order to assure the security of medicinal products deliveries, acting in favour of global promotion of the regulatory concurrence in the field of security of deliveries of medicinal products);
- 10) development of a joint standpoint on creating the system of incentives as part of the state aid for the development of the production of active pharmaceutical substances for business entities operating within the EU by actions aimed at increasing the production of active pharmaceutical substances and assuring customers market in Europe;
- 11) supporting organisation of joint international events promoting the development of the pharmaceutical industry by delegating high-level experts and representatives to meetings aimed at the implementation of this declaration;
- 12) exchanging best practices and mutual promotion of achievements of the V4 and France in the field of pharmaceutical industry;

13) Undertaking other actions jointly decided upon by the signatories, concerning sustainable development, resilient economy and society that meet the goals of above mentioned.

This declaration does not create any rights or obligations under international law and is not legally enforceable.

For the Republic of Poland:

For Hungary:

For the Slovak Republic:

For the Czech Republic:

For the French Republic: