



25 April 2017

## CLEPA Policy Debate and Annual Reception 2017

Brussels, Residence Palace, 5:00 pm

### **European automotive suppliers accelerate innovation; Safe, sustainable and smart mobility trends are increasingly linked**

Safe, sustainable and smart mobility are the main drivers for automotive innovation. To obtain the best possible results for environment, society and industry, these driving trends must be addressed in parallel. These issues will be debated by speakers from the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European automotive supply industry, today, during the 2017 CLEPA Policy Debate in Brussels.

Automotive suppliers are accelerating innovation in clean and efficient vehicles, passive and active safety, and connected and automated driving. *“The enabling solutions for safe, sustainable and smart mobility are unmistakably and increasingly linked”*, said Sigrid de Vries, CLEPA secretary general. *“That offers huge opportunities because the trends will support and reinforce each other.”* But it also poses challenges to regulators, who must coordinate their actions more than ever, including at city level.

A large variety of technology solutions will be required to meet the ever more diverse mobility needs in a safe, sustainable and smart way. Electrification is a clear trend that automotive suppliers embrace. Efficient and clean combustion engines continue to be an indispensable lever to reduce CO2 emissions from transport. Other technologies, such as thermal management, light-weight solutions and advanced alternative fuels, have a role to play as well. Technology-neutrality must remain a key EU regulatory principle, going forward, being essential to drive efficiency gains at all fronts.

Equally, for connected and automated driving, it is now important to have all parties involved -- EU institutions, national authorities, and industries -- teamed up to test technologies, infrastructure and enabling conditions in real-life.

CLEPA members are world leaders in automotive technology. *“Our goal is to maintain European technology leadership”*, CLEPA President Roberto Vavassori, member of the management board of Brembo, concluded. *“Sustaining our economy and prosperity demands higher value-added – whether in services or in manufacturing. And adding value means investing in R&D.”*

Vavassori: *“I believe that Europe, in all, has understood that message quite well. But I think more can and should be done, with instruments like Horizon2020. The beauty of collaborative and pre-competitive R&D is not only that the investment risks are spread. Importantly, it creates the eco-system of – sometimes unlikely – partners that are necessary to spur innovation. And by doing that, it helps to keep the centre of gravitas where it should be: in Europe”*, he stated.

## Note to Editors

This year's CLEPA Policy Debate focusses on [Low Carbon Mobility and Connected and Automated Driving](#). Mrs Violeta Bulc, European Commissioner for Mobility and Transport, will deliver the opening keynote speech. The Debate will be followed by the Annual Reception. Both events saw over 200 participants.

**CLEPA is the European Association of Automotive Suppliers.** 121 of the world's most prominent suppliers for car parts, systems and modules and 23 National trade associations and European sector associations are members of CLEPA, representing more than 3 thousand companies, employing more than 5 million people and covering all products and services within the automotive supply chain. Based in Brussels, Belgium, CLEPA is recognised as the natural discussion partner by the European Institutions, United Nations and fellow associations (ACEA, JAMA, MEMA, etc.).

Facts about the European automotive industry

- Some 12 million people are employed in the European automotive industry
- European automotive suppliers directly employ 5 million people
- European automotive suppliers invest €22bn in RDI per year. They are the biggest private investor in research and innovation
- Per year, 18 million vehicles are manufactured in Europe, contributing to the stability and growth of the European economy

**For more information, please contact** Amalia Di Stefano, Chief Global Governmental Affairs & Communication Officer (a.distefano@clepa.be).