

Brussels, 6 June 2012

## Shifting up a gear for competitiveness and sustainable growth

Today the CARS 21 (Competitive Automotive Regulatory System for the 21st century) High Level Group adopted recommendations for a policy and regulatory framework to improve global competitiveness and employment in the automotive industry. CLEPA supports smart selective regulation which will contribute to maintain the global technological leadership notably concerning safety and environmental issues.

*“The automotive suppliers employ 5 million people in Europe making it a leading creator of wealth on our continent. By further investing in safety and environmental performance we will strengthen the global technology leadership of the whole industry”, said Mr. Peter Tyroller, CLEPA President and Member of the Board of Management of Robert Bosch GmbH.*

The industry is expected to heavily invest in **high added value** products in several markets segments including small passenger cars. These cover products featuring decarbonisation of road transport (including advanced ICE power-trains), advanced lightweight materials, safety, intelligent transport systems and manufacturing-engineering technologies.

*“CLEPA expects the EU institutions to support this innovation path by allocating significant RDI resources to road transport from Horizon 2020 in line with the size and the effort of the industry”, added Mr. Jean Marc Gales, CLEPA CEO.*

A skilled workforce is an absolute necessity to innovate, develop and manufacture new products and processes capable to compete successfully in a global market place. The core problem is a qualitative and quantitative shortage of skills. The planned European Automotive Employment and Skills Council will be a useful tool to secure close connections between university and industry as well as to share national best practices (e.g. trainee/apprenticeship systems) in Europe.

The automotive suppliers produce 75% of the vehicle and generate most of the innovation. The majority of suppliers are Small and Medium sized Enterprises who are the major source of the European employment.

*“Access to finance is one of the basic conditions for SMEs to develop their business and innovation. This is particularly critical at times of restructuring”, stated Mr. Giuliano Zucco, CLEPA Vice President and CEO of Dytech Group.*

CLEPA considers that the European Investment Bank should ensure access to global loans also to lower tiers of the supply chain and simplify lending procedures in particular for investments that fulfill the CARS21 objectives.

Market access and Internationalization efforts are further crucial success factors for SMEs. To maximize the export potential of SMEs, focus should be on eradicating non-tariff barriers, providing advice on market access and IPR protection.

National and transnational **clusters** are powerful instruments to intensify knowledge transfers and share best practices between different European regions.

CLEPA thanks the Commission for a comprehensive and balanced CARS-21 report and looks forward to implementation of its recommendations.

### **Note to Editors**

**CLEPA is the European Association of Automotive Suppliers.**

90 of the world's most prominent suppliers for car parts, systems and modules and 25 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, CLEPA is recognized as the natural discussion partner by the European Institutions, United Nations and fellow associations (ACEA, JAMA, MEMA, etc).

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