

Press Release

Automotive suppliers urge technology-neutral strategy in meeting with President von der Leyen



Brussels, 12 September 2025 - CEOs from Europe's automotive supply industry met today with President Ursula von der Leyen in the framework of the third Strategic Dialogue, launched eight months ago to address the mounting crisis in a sector vital to the European economy. Suppliers stressed that only a technology-neutral approach can provide the certainty and flexibility needed to overcome the current structural challenges.

“Today, we continued the dialogue that began in winter. There is agreement that we must work together to make the transformation succeed. And it is a significant task - not only to deploy charging infrastructure and frameworks for electrification, but also to ensure that the right policies are in place. There is also not much time, and we need to reach effective solutions in the coming months,” said **Matthias Zink**, CLEPA President. “We must keep ambitious climate goals but build the path together. A substantial and timely revision of the CO₂ regulation, true openness to all climate-neutral technologies - including a freeze of the utility factor for plug-in hybrids - and decisive steps toward a realistic regulatory framework that supports a role for hybrids, range extenders, hydrogen, renewable fuels are essential. Focusing solely on electric-only solutions risks sidelining the flexible, climate-neutral technology portfolio where Europe already leads globally.”

He added: “To safeguard Europe’s industrial future, the EU must also urgently address how to keep manufacturing, R&D and know-how in Europe, maintaining local content in our vehicles and securing critical capacities across the entire supply chain, not just in batteries, semiconductors and software. At the same time, long-term solutions are needed to tackle structural challenges, such as high energy costs and red tape.”

According to recent figures, automotive suppliers face a 15–35% cost disadvantage compared to global competitors, driven by high energy and labour costs, regulatory burdens, and fragmented EU frameworks. Companies are also experiencing severe job losses: more than 54,000 job losses were

announced in 2024, with a further 22,000 already foreseen this year, as factory closures and stalled investments take their toll.

A next meeting of the Strategic Dialogue is expected by December.

About CLEPA

CLEPA, the European Association of Automotive Suppliers based in Brussels, represents over 3,000 companies, from multi-nationals to SMEs, supplying state-of-the-art components and innovative technology for safe, smart and sustainable mobility, investing over €30 billion yearly in research and development. Automotive suppliers in Europe directly employ 1.7 million people in the EU.

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You can contact us at communications@clepa.be