

Press release

European aftermarket ecosystem calls for stronger guidance on Data Act amid industry transformation

- Fair access to in-vehicle data for all market players will need further guidance under the European Commission's Data Act
- The Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation (MVBBER) requires adaption to latest technology developments after 2028

The European automotive aftermarket is experiencing rapid change as sustainability goals, technological progress, and shifting regulatory frameworks reshape the sector. Reflecting these developments, the 17th edition of the CLEPA Aftermarket Conference highlighted strong expectations surrounding the implementation of the Data Act and the strides being made toward a future-ready regulatory environment. The event, held on 18 & 19 March in Brussels, brought together over 200 participants, featuring key industry experts, top-level speakers, and representatives from the European Commission.

In his opening remarks, CLEPA Secretary General **Benjamin Krieger** stated: "Affordable mobility is crucial for consumer confidence and mobility solutions for the entire society. Data holds huge potential for the cost efficiency and resilience of this sector. Delays in implementing frameworks that enable open and fair data markets risk substantial losses for companies of all sizes, from SMEs to multinationals, and could ultimately weaken Europe's competitiveness in a rapidly evolving market."

Dr. Jens Knodel (Caruso) presented findings from the Connected Vehicle Field Test (CVFT) 5.0, highlighting the practical challenges of implementing the Data Act. While European Commission guidance clarifies what data should be available, paving the way for new applications, the amount of data shared still varies widely between car manufacturers. Caruso's testing reveals a lack of standardised, real-time data, alongside lingering concerns over fair and transparent pricing. Currently, the Data Act does not ensure sufficient compliance; carmakers interpret conditions differently, resulting in an uncertain and fragmented implementation landscape.

"The Data Act is a strong first step, but it is not yet a solution that will inspire investors, a critical need in an increasingly volatile economic environment," said CLEPA's Senior Consultant, **Frank Schlehuber**. "With support from the European Parliament and Member States, the next step must be to expand the Commission's guidelines to better address competitive dependencies and ensure fairer access across the market."

Beyond data access, fair competition remains a critical aspect for the sector. **Anne Federle** (Bird & Bird) emphasised that while the Motor Vehicle Block Exemption Regulation (MVBBER) has historically been effective, it now faces growing constraints on suppliers' access to the independent market and enforcement challenges point to the need for an updated framework after 2028 to reflect new business practices and technical developments.

The panel discussion “The new balance of power in the aftermarket” brought together leading industry representatives, including **Stéphane Derville** from Mobivia, **Stefan Onken** from Matthies, **Alexander Brenner** from Boston Consulting Group, **Alexander Jess** from Verband der Internationalen Kraftfahrzeughersteller (VDIK), and **Daniel Mesfin** from Allianz, who discussed the evolving balance of power shaping the automotive aftermarket.

The next edition of the CLEPA Aftermarket Conference is planned for Spring 2027.

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