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## President's Editorial

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**It is my pleasure to address you in my first editorial as the new President of CLEPA. I hope you all had a good start into the new year and that this finds you in good spirits. With the manifold geo-political and economic challenges around us, it is more important than ever for our sector to prove its resilience, innovative strength, and future-readiness. And there is reason enough to be confident.**



**Matthias Zink**  
CLEPA President

The automotive supply industry is the top private investor in research and development in Europe with €30 billion invested annually. It accounts for 1.7 million direct jobs and 39,000 patents each year.

Moreover, 75% of the value of a car comes from suppliers. These figures show how powerful our sector is and that automotive suppliers are critical to enabling the green and digital transition in Europe. We as CLEPA represent over 3,000 companies, from multi-nationals to SMEs, supplying state-of-the-art components and innovative technology for safe, smart, and sustainable mobility across Europe.

I am engineer by education and at heart, and I believe in the innovative strength and technological expertise of the European automotive supply industry. That is also why I joined the association back in 2018 as a member. After being voted Vice President in 2020, I'm now honoured and proud to serve as President of CLEPA for the next two years. Also, I wish to thank Thorsten Muschal for his four, successful years as

President, and I look forward to building on the work done.

### ***"I will be a strong voice for technology diversity"***

We are at a crucial point of the mobility transformation in Europe. There are a lot of challenges, but more importantly, many opportunities lie ahead for the automotive supply industry. I am fully committed to strengthening the voice of the sector in Brussels and throughout Europe, with the aim of fostering dialogue and collaboration for a regulatory framework that supports a competitive and sustainable industrial base. Keeping Europe competitive is a task for policymakers and industry alike. We as CLEPA stand ready to bring leading technological mobility solutions to market and to actively contribute to shaping policies that foster climate action and support a thriving EU industry. But we are the first to acknowledge that mobility is diverse. Since technological innovation and the future of the global supply chains is unpredictable, I will be a strong voice for technology diversity and a technology open regulatory framework that ensures options to meet ambitious targets.

Furthermore, mobility needs to be affordable. Electrification is the key overlying trend in today's automotive industry, but in Europe, the EV market has been dominated by premium-segment vehicles that are highly expensive. The EU automotive industry will need to pick up its pace to avoid being cut out of this crucial business opportunity.

CLEPA is also firmly committed to the implementation of Fit for 55. The ambitious goals can only be met provided the shift to electric mobility is assisted by suitable infrastructure, affordable renewable energy, a strong European battery supply chain, and a flexible EU regulatory framework, which allows all technologies to contribute to emission reduction.

### ***"Overall regulatory framework must remain ambitious yet flexible to empower continuous innovation"***

One of the most important regulations still to be proposed is on access to in-vehicle data, complementing the Data Act. Automotive suppliers who build the crucial components and systems of a vehicle will need such data for engineering, repair and maintenance of vehicles and new mobility services for the benefit of consumers. That is why fair access to such data will be needed to foster large-scale investments in innovative products and services.

Ahead of us are the European elections and a new European Parliament and Commission will define the political priorities for the next five years. The CLEPA team and myself stand ready to contribute with expertise and proposals to ensure that the implementation of the ambitious targets in the Green Deal is effective and efficient, that its components achieve their objectives and that they are adequately developed further.

Across our broad agenda, from emissions to digitalisation and sustainability, to trade and competitiveness as well as many other topics, the overall regulatory framework must remain ambitious yet flexible to empower continuous innovation. This will help us reach our goals faster and more efficiently while also catering to consumer choice. In my profession, I have grown adhering to an uncompromising customer focus. The citizens of Europe are our customers, ladies and gentlemen. Whatever we do, policymakers and industry alike, our unwavering focus must ultimately benefit of the people of Europe.

I'm looking forward to working with you and hope to see you soon.

Yours,

**Matthias Zink**

*CLEPA President and CEO Automotive Technologies, Schaeffler*