

PRESS RELEASE

Automotive innovation is happening at an accelerated pace

EU research programmes are crucial to tackle societal challenges for clean, safe and sustainable transport

On 8 and 9 November, 200 key stakeholders in the field of automotive research and innovation, met in Brussels for EUCAR's annual Reception and Conference. The automotive industry is Europe's biggest private investor in research and innovation; spending more than €44 billion on R&D each year and providing more than 12 million Europeans with a job. Automotive R&D also plays a critical role in addressing major challenges that affect society at large, such as further reducing CO2 emissions and improving road safety even more.

To reflect the important role of the sector in Europe's future, the theme of this year's conference was 'Mobility Innovation for Europe'. Key-note speeches stressing the importance of precompetitive collaborative research projects with industrial relevant results were given by Vladimir Šucha, Director General of the European Commission's JRC, and Ron Borsboom, Director Product Development and Member of the Board of Management at DAF Trucks.

"Innovation is happening at an accelerated pace, and more specifically through digitalisation. Technological development is exponentially growing" emphasised Mr Šucha. Šucha, who leads the Commission's Joint Research Centre, added that it is important for the automotive industry to prepare for this exponential growth, for new innovation processes and for arising digital business models.

According to Ron Borsboom from DAF Trucks, connectivity and automation will provide answers to future mobility challenges, although many questions have to be answered first. Borsboom: "Continued support from the European Commission is therefore crucial, as not all answers can be provided by one industry on its own."

The importance of collaborative European research for the competitiveness of the EU automotive industry, was also emphasised by Loek van Seeters, Chairman of EUCAR and Director Product and Services Planning at DAF Trucks.

Clara de la Torre, Director for Transport at the European Commission's DG for Research and Innovation, underlined the excellent collaboration with industry in Public Private Partnerships and acknowledged the achievements of research programmes like the European Green Cars Initiative and European Green Vehicles Initiative. De la Torre: "We see the good results from these

programmes”. Furthermore, she also emphasized the importance of demonstrating the successful implementation of European research projects, mentioning this year’s ERTRAC-EUCAR Innovation Demonstration Day as an excellent example.

About EUCAR

EUCAR is the European Council for Automotive R&D of the major European passenger car and commercial vehicle manufacturers. EUCAR facilitates and coordinates pre-competitive research and innovation projects and its members participate in a wide range of collaborative European R&D programmes. The European automobile manufacturers are the largest private investors in R&D in Europe with over €44 billion investment per annum.

EUCAR members are BMW Group, DAF Trucks, Daimler, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA), Ford of Europe, Hyundai Motor Europe, Jaguar Land Rover, Opel Group, PSA Group, Renault Group, Toyota Motor Europe, Volkswagen Group, Volvo Cars, Volvo Group.

EUCAR is closely connected to ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers’ Association.

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