

P r e s s R e l e a s e

EUCAR and European Commission highlight the industrial challenges and priorities for strategic automotive R&D

Brussels, 8 & 9 November 2011 - The European Council for Automotive R&D (EUCAR) assembled today in Autoworld, Brussels for its Annual Reception & Conference, emphasising the industry's role in innovation and the need for enhanced automotive R&D in the future EU Framework Programme, Horizon 2020. European Commission Vice-President Siim Kallas, Commissioner for Transport addressed the opening Reception, and highlighted how R&D must support transport policy goals and European industrial competitiveness.

Paul Mascarenas, Ford Chief Technology Officer representing EUCAR's 2011 Chairmanship highlighted the contribution of the automotive sector to Europe and the industry's key role in innovation for future mobility and transport. He stated: "Innovation has always been the competitive advantage of the European industry. Without political support, it will be tougher in the future to maintain the global competitiveness of the European automotive industry".

European Commission Vice-President Siim Kallas, Commissioner for Transport, also highlighted the importance of innovation and investment in the transport sector to support the Europe 2020 Strategy. He emphasised "the significant role the European automotive industry will play, as a partner to the Commission, in developing the European transport system of the future and providing the innovation required to meet the policy objectives of the EU's 'Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area'".

EUCAR Chairman and Managing Director of Ford of Europe Research Centre Pim van der Jagt detailed how industry and the EU can most effectively cooperate, stating "EU R&D initiatives are needed on priority themes, including Green Cars, ITS for mobility, materials and manufacturing, integrated safety, advanced powertrains & fuels, and heavy-duty vehicles & green corridors". He called for "An increased budget for automotive R&D investment in the future Horizon 2020 Framework Programme, reflecting the automotive sector's economic and social contribution to Europe".

In the panel sessions, researchers presented results of projects co-funded by the European Commission in the R&D domains Mobility & Transport, Materials & Manufacturing, Integrated Safety and Fuels & Powertrain. Together with an exhibition of co-funded projects and highly innovative demonstrators for future mobility, these illustrated the value of EU investment in automotive R&D and innovation, and how the results can be exploited in real products. Automotive beneficiaries co-invest in the European R&D, confirming the value these projects have for industry in providing results and feeding future innovations.

Also speaking was MEP Mathieu Grosch, who reiterated the essential contribution of transport to the EU's development, stating "There needs to be a focus on the 2020 timeframe and clear targets for transport R&D. If Europe wants to maintain its leading role in transport and industry, we need the investment in R&D." András Siegler, Director for Transport Research and Innovation in the European Commission, explained how Horizon 2020 will support "Clean, Safe and Integrated Transport" as a major societal challenge as well as industrial leadership through collaborative R&D and public-private partnerships.

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 development 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 €26 billion investment per annum, or 5% of turnover. EUCAR members are BMW, DAF, Daimler, Fiat, Ford of Europe, GM/Opel, Jaguar Land Rover, Porsche, PSA Peugeot Citroën, Renault, Scania, Volkswagen, Volvo Cars and Volvo Group. EUCAR is closely connected to ACEA, the European Automobile Manufacturers Association.

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