



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

European  
Automobile  
Manufacturers  
Association

Brussels, 5 November 2007

## **Improving competitiveness of the European automotive industry is first priority for manufacturers, unions and regulators alike**

The European automotive industry has urged the EU today to truly coordinate policies towards maintaining and improving the strength of the European automotive sector. “The automotive sector is a cornerstone of the EU economy. Twelve million families depend on it”, said Ivan Hodac, Secretary General of the European Automobile Manufacturers Association (ACEA) at a press conference in Brussels.

The press conference, hosted by European Employment Commissioner Vladimir Spidla, was a follow-up of the 4<sup>th</sup> EU Restructuring Forum, held in October and dedicated to the automotive sector. Within the Forum, of which the Commission organises several in the framework of its new industrial policy and the Lisbon Agenda, the European Commission, the metalworkers federation and the European automotive industry had underlined their partnership in the ‘anticipation of change’. “The accompanying partnership declaration firmly states that improving competitiveness is a first priority for industry, unions and regulators alike”, said Hodac. “EU companies have helped shape the European social model and are committed to sustaining it. To achieve this, we need a sound business environment.”

“The importance of a supporting regulatory framework is often underestimated”, said Hodac. “The European automotive industry is one of the most regulated sectors in Europe. It is of utmost importance that regulation does not unnecessarily add to production costs, increase bureaucracy and hamper flexibility.” Hodac recalled the important work of CARS21 (Competitive Automotive Regulatory System for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century), involving representatives of national governments, the Commission, the European Parliament, the automotive industry, environmentalists, trade unions, suppliers, consumers and the oil industry.

“CARS21 has described the path to further strengthening of the automotive industry whilst at the same time continuing progress on environmental and road safety issues. The CARS21 recommendations, however, are not being adequately put into practice”, said Hodac. “We see too many examples of administrative choices that are politically driven without a sound, transparent and methodical assessment of the potential impact on competitiveness and employment levels in the European economy and following the outcome of CARS21. The European Commission has made better regulation a priority. She should address this challenge with more consistency and rigour.”

The ACEA members are BMW Group, DAF Trucks, Daimler, FIAT, Ford of Europe, General Motors Europe, MAN Nutzfahrzeuge, Porsche, PSA Peugeot Citroën, Renault, Scania, Volkswagen and Volvo. They provide direct employment to more than 2.3 million people and support another 10 million jobs in related sectors. Annually, ACEA members invest €20 billion in R&D, or 4% of turnover.

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