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FIGIEFA Contribution to the European Commission hearing on the European strategy on clean and energy efficient vehicles

FIGIEFA¹ welcomes the two-pillar approach of the European strategy on clean and energy-efficient vehicles of the European Commission within the frame of the new EU 2020 Action Plan and would like to contribute to the debate by a few remarks on the importance of the principle of “**open reparability**” of vehicles.

Affordable mobility for European citizens is crucial and largely depends on the motorists' ability to have their vehicles serviced and repaired at reasonable cost, and this throughout the entire life-cycle of a vehicle. This is also true for vehicles equipped with cleaner next generation power trains, and it is most crucial that an adequate repair shop infrastructure will be put in place.

Any future technological developments in alternative power trains, be it electrical vehicles or hydrogen or any alternative fuel cells will require major adaptations in the repair and maintenance of these vehicles. Independent, multi-brand market operators play a vital role in providing competitive after-sales services, provided that they have open, non-discriminatory access to training, multi-brand test equipment, technical information and replacement parts.

As there are no reparability provisions in the Framework Directive 2007/46/EC, **the European Commission is kindly invited to anchor the principle of “open reparability” of vehicles by granting access to repair and maintenance as well as diagnostics information to independent market operators in any future piece of legislation affecting cars equipped with cleaner next generation power trains.** Moreover, it would be most crucial that this general principle is complemented by more specific technical implementing measures.

All this is to ensure that all independent aftermarket operators may carry out repair and maintenance works efficiently and in an affordable way throughout the entire life cycle of the these next generation vehicles.

¹ Founded in 1956, FIGIEFA is the international federation of automotive aftermarket distributors. Gathering 26 national trade associations from 23 countries in Europe, FIGIEFA represents the interests of both independent spare parts distributors and independent repairers organised in repair chains. FIGIEFA's key objective is to safeguard free competition in the aftermarket at European and international level.

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