

High-level meeting on technological and digital innovation

Statement

SAFETY - SUSTAINABILITY - AFFORDABILITY

Pierre Thibaudat (ADPA Director General), Brussels, 17 February 2025 - I would like to warmly thank you, Executive Vice-President Virkkunen, and your team, for inviting us today. We are a mini but mighty cog in the automotive sector and for automotive innovation. Our members develop and provide essential knowledge, ensuring reliable repair and maintenance. As vehicles grow more complex, this role is crucial for keeping skilled workers fully operational despite evolving technical processes. With their solutions and softwares, ADPA members contribute to vehicle roadworthiness, safety, sustainability, and affordability for individuals and professionals alike. We are part of the wider automotive aftermarket, responsible for the vast majority of automotive jobs and the longest period of a vehicle's lifetime.

Our members, global pioneers and leaders, actively contribute to and invest in technical and digital innovation, including enhancing artificial intelligence and machine learning in vehicle diagnostics; improving augmented reality and virtual reality tools for repair and technician training; supporting connected car technologies and smart systems through structured data; optimising remote diagnostics and over-the-air updates, crucial for autonomous vehicles; utilising blockchain for secure vehicle data management; developing digital twins and simulation technologies; and, as a last example, enhancing fleet management with predictive maintenance.

However, we face systemic challenges accessing our new "raw" material, in-vehicle technical data. We lack visibility on what is available and, based on our experience with access to simpler information, we consider that currently restrictive access conditions, such as pricing, latency, or technical barriers, are harming innovation, are harming competition, and are harming consumer choice and welfare.

A key priority is therefore securing a long-awaited sector-specific legislation on access to in-vehicle technical data and functions, complementing the Data Act. Studies, including from the European Commission, confirm its urgent need, as both businesses and consumers overwhelmingly support it. And no one can suspect consumers of taking their data privacy and cybersecurity lightly.

Regarding the question on simplification: legislation is key in securing consumers' confidence in the newest vehicles, especially in light of not so old scandals on emissions, safety, and data privacy. Legislation as such has a neutral impact on competition if all competitors abide by it. It might lead to unfair and undue competitive advantages only if some don't follow the rules. So rather than deregulation, we advocate for stricter enforcement of existing rules, and their reinforcement to tackle new practices.

To conclude, digitalisation presents both challenges and opportunities. Mrs Virkkunen, a holistic, collaborative approach is vital to keeping the European automotive sector as a whole at the forefront of the global competition for innovation. Thank you, we are looking forward continuing our fruitful exchanges.

For more information

ADPA webpage on [digitalisation](#)

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ADPA, the European Automotive Data Publishers Association, aims to ensure fair access to automotive data and information needed for the repair and maintenance of the 280 millions vehicles on European roads, contributing to their continuous roadworthiness over their lifetime. Its members design and provide competitive, innovative and multibrand solutions to operators of the automotive aftermarket. Founded in 2016 and based in Brussels, ADPA is a Member of AFCAR, the Alliance for the Freedom of Car Repair in the European Union, and FAAS, the Forum for Automotive Aftermarket Sustainability.