

Newsletter February 2026

Dear members, partners, and friends of FIGIEFA,

As we embark on the first months of 2026, political priorities in Brussels are taking clearer shape: the new EU mandate is advancing, major legislative files affecting vehicle data and competition are moving forward, and discussions on Europe's industrial future are gaining momentum.

Against this backdrop, FIGIEFA continues to play an active and influential role in shaping these developments, which will define the environment in which the Independent Automotive Aftermarket operates.

In this edition of the newsletter, we are pleased to share key updates on the regulatory and political landscape, highlight important achievements for our sector, and provide a preview of what lies ahead for 2026.

As always, FIGIEFA remains committed to ensuring that the voice of the Independent Aftermarket is heard clearly in Brussels by defending your interests, supporting your businesses, and safeguarding a competitive mobility ecosystem for Europe.

We look forward to continuing this important work together throughout the year.

Felicity and Álvaro

[Table of contents:](#)

- Highlights
- FIGIEFA's Activities & Automotive News

- Focus: Access to Technical Information & Data
- Focus: Competition & Competitiveness
- Other FIGIEFA News
 - Team activities
 - Members activities

HIGHLIGHTS

FIGIEFA Conference 2026

3&4 November 2026

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

For registration visit

figiefaconference2026.eu

Act quickly to reserve your spot!

Registrations for the FIGIEFA Conference 2026 are now open!

Following the success of our first conference in 2024, FIGIEFA will host its **2026 Conference in Brussels on 3 and 4 November**, at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel.

The two-day event will feature a dynamic programme with **high-level speakers, engaging panel discussions, and valuable networking opportunities**. Participants will gain insights into the evolving political landscape in Brussels two years into the new EU mandate, as well as the key trends shaping the European Automotive Aftermarket.

We are pleased to announce that **Roland Berger will present a new study** on the key levers of value creation in the Automotive Aftermarket and the sector's outlook towards 2035. Set against the current geopolitical context and the sector's digital transformation, the study will assess the challenges and emerging business prospects for independent distributors and other Aftermarket players, highlighting where proactive action can be taken to strengthen their competitiveness and resilience in the years ahead.

Participants are also invited to attend a **networking cocktail and dinner** on the evening of 3 November, offering a valuable opportunity to connect with FIGIEFA members, industry peers and sector stakeholders.

[Click here to reserve your tickets now!](#)

FOCUS: ACCESS TO TECHNICAL INFORMATION & DATA



Update to RMI Legislation: Progress on New Type Approval Rules for the Independent Aftermarket

Important progress has been made in improving access to technical information and diagnostic data for the Independent Aftermarket through the revision of a key piece of EU automotive legislation.

Broad support has now been expressed by Member States for the revised rules under the **EU Vehicle Type Approval Regulation**, which FIGIEFA has worked on over the past two years in collaboration with other key stakeholders. Formal adoption by the Commission is expected shortly, after which the text will need to be approved by the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers, with official entry into EU law anticipated in late spring 2026.

With vehicles becoming increasingly software-driven, this is an important step

towards ensuring **fairer access to repair and maintenance information (RMI)** in practice, which has become a critical business factor for the Independent Aftermarket. The revision will strengthen independent operators' ability to service modern vehicles by expanding access rights through an extended scope of RMI (e.g. for repairing EVs, their batteries, ADAS calibration...), new means of access to vehicle data, and the ability to install software updates.

At the same time, the outstanding issue of **spare parts coding remains unresolved**. FIGIEFA has reiterated the importance of addressing this without delay, as Aftermarket parts manufacturers still lack access to the coding processes needed to develop fully interoperable replacement parts. The Commission has indicated that further work on this topic is planned, although the final delegated act is not currently expected before 2027.

Looking ahead, 2026 will be a key year for the Automotive Omnibus simplification process and the broader **evaluation of the Type-Approval framework**, which will review what has worked well and identify areas for improvement. FIGIEFA will continue to closely monitor these developments and engage with EU institutions on these important files.



FIGIEFA advocates for fair compensation rules under the Data Act

The European Commission (DG CNECT) recently sought feedback on the draft Guidelines on “reasonable compensation” under the Data Act. These rules will determine how much data recipients and independent operators may be charged for accessing vehicle data in practice.

This is a key issue for the Automotive Aftermarket sector, as the way compensation is defined and calculated will directly affect whether data access remains affordable, transparent and non-discriminatory, or becomes a financial barrier to competition in the Aftermarket.

FIGIEFA submitted important input to defend the interests of the Independent Aftermarket, aiming to ensure that compensation principles are cost-based, proportionate and enforceable, so that access rights under the Data Act translate into real, workable opportunities for independent service providers.

[Read the draft guidelines here](#)

FOCUS: COMPETITION & COMPETITIVENESS



"Made in Europe": Discussions Gain Momentum in Brussels

Discussions around a “Made in Europe” requirement are rapidly gaining traction in Brussels - an initiative which could have potential far-reaching implications for the Independent Aftermarket as well.

As part of the Industrial Accelerator Act, the European Commission is considering introducing **EU local content requirements in strategic sectors**, including the automotive industry. The concept is already referenced in published EU proposals affecting the automotive sector, such as the Clean Corporate Vehicles initiative, where only zero- and low-emission corporate vehicles that qualify as ‘Made in the EU’ would be eligible for financial support

from Member States.

Current reports indicate that these **measures could apply to key electric vehicle components**, including a possible 70% EU origin threshold for non-battery components and minimum requirements for EU-produced battery elements. There are also reports that public support in strategic sectors, including automotive manufacturing and parts production, could be exclusively granted to producers established in the Union.

This initiative also reflects the broader geopolitical context. On 2 February, Commission Vice-President, Stéphane Séjourné, published an **opinion piece calling for a European preference**, arguing that Europe must strengthen its strategic industries in the face of increasing international competition. The piece has received strong support with **over 1,140 signatories** from companies and associations, including automotive stakeholders. At the same time, debate continues within industry between advocates of European content requirements and those calling for a more cautious approach to protect global supply chains.

For the Independent Aftermarket, clarity on the final **definition of ‘Made in EU’ will be essential** to understand its scope, the supply chain impact, and whether third-party countries will be included. While a European preference could support local production and strengthen industrial competitiveness, there is also a risk that narrowly applied criteria could disrupt global sourcing and create unintended barriers for the Aftermarket.

Based on the first feedback received, FIGIEFA will advocate for a pragmatic and inclusive approach to ensure that the Automotive Aftermarket remains a robust and resilient supply chain.



European Industry Summit 2026: A strong call to restore Europe's industrial competitiveness

On 11 February, European industrial and political leaders gathered in Antwerp for the **European Industry Summit 2026**, issuing a united call to strengthen Europe's industrial base at a time of mounting global competitive pressure.

More than 500 business leaders, factory workers, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever stood together to warn that **Europe's competitiveness crisis is no longer theoretical**: investment is leaving, energy costs remain high and industrial sites are under pressure.

Their message was clear: **Europe cannot be resilient, safe or competitive without a strong European industry**. With automotive ecosystem at the centre of Europe's industrial strength, the sector now stands at a turning point, and EU leaders must move from words to action and create the conditions for industry to thrive.

For the Independent Automotive Aftermarket, the messages from Antwerp are highly relevant. A strong industrial base is essential for maintaining diverse, reliable supply chains, ensuring access to affordable parts, and supporting the many SMEs that keep Europe's mobility running every day. The future

competitiveness of the Aftermarket depends on an industrial environment where companies can invest confidently and operate on a level playing field.

OTHER FIGIEFA NEWS



FIGIEFA presents to Svenska Fordonsbranschen Members at Automässan 2026

Our Head of Communications, Álvaro de la Cruz, travelled to Gothenburg in January to connect with Sweden's leading Independent Aftermarket players and present FIGIEFA's recent work to Svenska Fordonsbranschen members during Automässan 2026.

The largest automotive service and Aftermarket exhibition in the Nordics brought together 220 exhibitors and offered a prime opportunity to discuss

key trends, from digitalisation and vehicle electrification to repairability and the right to vehicle data.

Álvaro highlighted FIGIEFA's ongoing efforts at EU level to ensure fair competition, sustainable services, and a strong role for independent distributors and workshops in shaping the future of Europe's Automotive Aftermarket.