



Catena-X Launches World's First Cross-Border Automotive Industry Data Ecosystem Between China and Europe

New infrastructure enables secure, sovereign data exchange as regulatory pressure reshapes global supply chains

- Catena-X, in partnership with CAAM and VDA China, has established the world's first trusted, cross-border automotive data ecosystem that now extends to China
- Zhonglian, as Catena-X's operating partner in China, will serve as the network's first presence outside Europe – a milestone enabled by Cofinity-X's strategic support for interoperability
- The new infrastructure enables trusted, sovereign data exchange between China and Europe and all relevant automotive markets worldwide, at scale, addressing the growing regulatory requirements facing the global automotive industry
- Achieving this milestone will start by supporting compliance with the EU Battery Regulation, which mandates battery passports for EV and PHEV battery packs entering Europe from February 2027 and requires full supply chain traceability as well as CO₂ data – and will be extended to every regulatory data requirement in automotive supply chains
- Together, all partners are building an open, interoperable data ecosystem in China – not a walled garden and not a vendor lock-in. Any qualifying technology provider, app developer, or service partner can join through the certification process and offer their solutions on the open marketplace on equal, non-discriminatory terms. New use-cases can be added by the industry, for the industry

Berlin, Germany, 22 July 2026 – Catena-X Automotive Network e.V., the industry's only self-governed ecosystem for exchanging industrial data, in partnership with the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers (CAAM) and VDA China, today announced the launch of the world's first trusted, cross-border automotive data ecosystem linking Europe and China.

To enable seamless operation and close alignment with the Chinese automotive industry's requirements, the new ecosystem will be run from within China by Zhonglian – Catena-X's second operating partner, and its first outside Europe.

The milestone establishes the infrastructure that is now essential for secure, sovereign data exchange between China, Europe, and other markets worldwide, at a time when regulatory pressure is intensifying across global supply chains. Compliance with the EU Battery Regulation is the starting point: from February 2027 this will make battery passports mandatory, requiring verifiable, end-to-end supply chain data and carbon footprint data for batteries used in electric vehicles and plug-in hybrids. Without a battery passport, there is no market entry.

In parallel, China's own data regulations govern how strategically important industrial data – including categories defined as “important data” – can be transferred. Without shared, trusted infrastructure for the exchange of such sovereign data, the burden of reconciling these two different sets of requirements means companies in China must submit a cross-border transfer application to the Cyberspace Administration of China – this process can take up to five months, and with no guarantee of approval.

Catena-X enables battery passports to be generated once, from real supply chain data, and have it accepted on both sides of the border – under Chinese rules and European regulations at the same time. This sovereign data exchange has already been proven in a pilot project and starting now, with Zhonglian as the driving force, will be rolled out at scale.



Operations are due to start in mid-November 2026. Companies across China's automotive industry are encouraged to join, helping to collaboratively shape the ecosystem and ensure that it meets real operational requirements and the most important business use-cases.

Oliver Ganser, Chairman of the Board, Catena-X, said: "Global automotive supply chains are increasingly reliant on trusted data exchange. Without it, compliance becomes more complex, more costly, and more fragmented. By establishing a dedicated operating partner in China, we are putting the infrastructure in place to enable secure, sovereign data exchange at scale, allowing companies to meet regulatory requirements such as the EU Battery Regulation while protecting intellectual property.

"This is how the industry moves from fragmented data flows to a shared, operational standard that works globally. And crucially, this is an open, interoperable ecosystem – not a walled garden – so any qualifying, certified company can offer their solutions on the open marketplace. Working in partnership like this ensures we have the ability to meet regulatory pressures with confidence, and quickly develop new use-cases which will deliver even greater value because they are designed by the industry, for the industry."

The global automotive industry faces a fundamental challenge: without shared, trusted infrastructure, companies must manage cross-border data compliance individually, often through lengthy approval processes with no guarantee of success. Catena-X and Zhonglian will overcome this by enabling the seamless exchange of trusted data at scale, across markets and throughout all tiers of the value chain.

Data sovereignty is a defining principle of this model. Each participant retains full control over its data, and defines access rights before any exchange takes place, ensuring that data cannot be accessed by unauthorised third-parties. This enables compliance with regulatory requirements without exposing intellectual property or commercially-sensitive information.

Two agreements underpin the launch: Zhonglian will be formally established as the operating partner in China, while Zhonglian and Cofinity-X – Catena X's first operating partner – will provide technical licensing and support. Zhonglian will run the core market services and act as the regulatory interface, while Catena-X, CAAM and VDA China will continue to lead on strategy, standards and governance. Cofinity-X remains the technology licence holder and will directly support ramp-up and interoperability through financial support and its expertise as core service provider in the Catena-X ecosystem.

The milestone builds on nearly four years of work and significant investment by Catena-X in China with the ambition to become the country's leading automotive data ecosystem. It has already established a partnership with the China Automotive Technology & Research Centre (CATARC) Lin-Gang – which holds the national mandate to define China's data whitelists – to provide the foundation for transfer of sensitive data, and established a Digital Clearing House operated by Sungent Digital at the Suzhou International Data Port, supported by CAICT.

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Note to editors

Catena-X is a non-commercial organisation governed by the Catena-X Automotive Network e.V. association and brings together a coalition of OEMs, suppliers, technology providers, and industry bodies, including ADAC, AIAG, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, Renault, Volkswagen Group companies, Volvo, VDA, TÜV SÜD, Fraunhofer, Amazon Web Services, Huawei, Microsoft, Magna and others. For a full list of association members please visit [Catena-x.net](https://catena-x.net)

About Catena-X

Catena-X is the first end-to-end, collaborative and open data ecosystem for the automotive industry, connecting players along the value chain. The Catena-X association provides neutral governance to enable standardised, interoperable and data-sovereign collaboration and support efficiency, innovation and compliance across the entire data ecosystem. Catena-X is Gaia-X compliant and also serves as a model for Manufacturing-X initiatives,



supporting the development of standardised data ecosystems in other industries. Founded in 2021, the association has hubs in the USA, China, Spain, Sweden and France and more than 300 individuals work in more than 40 expert groups to develop future standards