

# On the up and up

European vehicle logistics has brighter days ahead thanks to improving sales, however ECG president **Costantino Baldissara** wants the sector to work together on making key regulatory changes in the European Parliament



“**T**he last time I wrote for this column I said it felt as though we had finally reached the bottom of the downturn in Europe. Well, after our recent ECG Spring Congress and General Assembly in Athens (see p7), which brought together our members and sponsors to assess the prospects for the sector, we definitely found the mood encouraging. We added some professional economic forecasting to the mix with LMC Automotive, which confirmed the growth outlook for Europe. Yes, we know that recovery is occurring at different rates country by country and some have suffered far worse than others – our Hellenic hosts for one – but the industry is, without doubt, more upbeat at last.

Aside from the improving economy, this event was positive in many ways. Along with welcoming new members to the association, we went through the necessary requirements of our annual assembly. Even though our association's statutes allow for up to 15 full members to sit on the ECG Board, we were oversubscribed with a record 18 applicants. This level of interest and commitment is good news for the sector and good news for ECG. The result is a full board (see the complete list below) with some new faces bringing fresh ideas. Both Wolfgang Göbel and I were persuaded to stand again as president and vice-president, respectively, and are proud to have duly been elected for another two years. We will all be doing our best for our members and the industry at large in the months ahead.

The assembly also unanimously voted in a code of conduct for ECG members. This is a first for the association and should become a recognised and respected form of commitment to policies and regulations with respect to compliance. We see this as something that will evolve over time and will enhance the status of our members through commitment to an established set of guiding principles, while reassuring our customers of compliance.

The assembly also featured the graduation ceremony of the eighth ECG Academy, awarding 19 students certificates in Automobile Logistics Management. The top-performing student, Lukasz Szutenberg of Adampol, also received the Giovanni Paci Award in recognition of his hard work. We can be very proud of the fact that we have 151 alumni of our Academy and are recruiting now for the ninth course, which starts this October (see [www.ecgassociation.eu](http://www.ecgassociation.eu) for more).

During the course of the meeting we discussed two areas critical for the future of the industry. The first of these was the progress of our campaign for harmonisation of loaded lengths for vehicle transporters across the EU. After passing several votes in Brussels, we are entering the crucial final phase as we head into the ‘trialogues’ in September (which is Eurospeak for meetings between representatives of the European Parliament, Commission and Council).

We have made great progress, but the battle is far from won. Following the European election this past spring, there will be a great many new MEPs in town, which will not help our efforts.

However, we have secured the backing of the Parliament, while the Commission is largely ‘on side’. What we now need is as much local support as possible from our members and OEMs, in particular for lobbying their national transport ministers. These are the people who form the Transport Council and are thus the third party in the triologue process. So, if you are well connected and want to help, contact the ECG Secretariat.

The second point was the relationship with the ACEA Working Group for Automotive Logistics, which has been providing a means for the suppliers and customers to come together regularly, but which is currently stalled. We believe very strongly at ECG that a forum like this is essential for the health of the industry and we will do all we can to achieve an on-going dialogue in some way.

As we head into the summer period, I hope you find the opportunity to take a break with your family and recharge your batteries and look forward to greeting you again after the holidays, especially for the ECG Conference in Amsterdam, October 16-17. ◻”

ECG's newly elected board: Maximilian Altmann, ARS Altmann (Germany); Costantino Baldissara, Grimaldi Group (Italy); Peter Borrmann, STVA (Germany); Michael Bünning, BLG Automobile Logistics (Germany); Krzysztof Dakowicz, Adampol (Poland); Marcos Duato, Flota Suardiaz (Spain); Mats Eriksson, Skandiatransport (Sweden); Wolfgang Göbel, Horst Mosolf (Germany); Ömer Gürsoy, Me-Par (Turkey); Christian Lang, DB Schenker Rail Automotive (Germany); Ray MacDowall, ECM (Vehicle Delivery Services) (UK); Kirill Petrunkin, FTC Autotechnoimport (Russia); Antoine Redier, Gefco (France); Roberto Volpato, Eliambrosetti (Italy); Konrad Zwirner, Hödlmayr International (Austria).