



Photo © ECG : Wolfgang Göbel, ECG President, General Assembly & Spring Congress 2025, Cascais, Portugal

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**With a trade war followed by a decline in exports, reduced plant utilisation, and challenges of globalisation, companies need to strengthen trade relations with other partners.**

That is one conclusion from the General Assembly & Spring Congress arranged by ECG – the Association of European Vehicle Logistics.

Brussels, 27 May 2025

This year's General Assembly & Spring Congress was held in Cascais, Portugal, on 22-23 May, with over 300 delegates from member companies and partners. The event reflected the impact of the geopolitical challenges, the ongoing crisis in the automotive industry and the demanding journey toward green transformation.

*"We must not remain trapped in European thinking. Our industry's challenges are global, and our responses must be just as global. ECG is positioning itself as a driving force for connected collaboration across continents", says Wolfgang Göbel, President of ECG.*

A key step in this direction is through the strategic cooperation agreement with CALA, the China Automotive Logistics Association, ECG signed in April to promote efficiency,

quality, and best practices within the sector. The industry is adapting to the new challenges by embracing a global perspective, driven by declining plant utilisations all over the world and shift of production to local markets.

Justin Cox, Director of Global Production, GlobalData, concluded that logistics service providers had to adapt to losing 5 million cars in production.

Prof. Dr Alexander Sandkamp, Fellow, Kiel Institute for the World Economy, one of the key speakers, emphasised that the impact of US tariffs on production in Europe is not as significant as one might expect.

*"Considering internal EU trade, the EU absorbs more than 60% of its exports. The US only accounts for around 8%", says Alexander Sandkamp. "The EU should thus further strengthen its internal market by reducing internal trade barriers – specifically with respect to services, ensuring a consistently high quality of its transport infrastructure and monitoring new legislation such as the CSDDD (Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive) with respect to its trade dampening potential. This helps reduce dependence on the US."*

One way of increasing the efficiency of companies in the FVL sector is by digitalising and using AI. ECG Academy representatives showed how AI can be used in the FVL sector to increase efficiency and save costs. Another way to improve efficiency is with the Green Cost Calculator (GCC), which helps FVL companies manage the complexity of changing cost drivers over the investment period. Sharing data in a trusted calculator will facilitate the determination of the most suitable pricing model and make the shift transparent from when costs change to savings.

ECG is growing with more members, now representing the interests of over 200 member companies, covering more than 90% of the FVL sector in Europe.

*"Despite ongoing market uncertainties, this year's ECG General Assembly sent a clear signal of determination; the finished vehicle logistics sector is setting the course for digital transformation, CO2 transparency and enhanced global cooperation", says Wolfgang Göbel.*

During the General Assembly, two new members were elected to the ECG Board: Ceren Eker from ANT Lojistik and Artur Allende from Noatum Automotive. All other board members were re-elected. Xavier Vázquez, who had served on the board since 2019, did not stand for re-election. The combination of continuity and fresh perspectives strengthens the Board in addressing the complex challenges currently facing the finished vehicle logistics sector.

#### **Note to editors:**

ECG is the established European platform for the outbound automotive logistics sector bringing together logistics service providers, manufacturer logistics managers and suppliers to the sector. ECG aims to facilitate non-commercial collaboration between member companies and assist them in sharing best practices in many operational areas, especially the harmonisation of operational standards.

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## About ECG

ECG, the Association of European Vehicle Logistics, has been the voice of the Finished Vehicle Logistics industry in Europe since 1997. ECG represents the interests of more than 200 member companies and partners, from family-owned SMEs to multi-nationals, and is the major champion of the European vehicle logistics sector.

ECG represents all transport models at EU level- road, rail, maritime and fluvial. ECG members provide transport, distribution, storage, preparation, and post-production services to manufacturers, importers, car rental companies, and vehicle leasing operators in the 27 Member States of the European Union as well as Norway, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and beyond. They own or operate more than 470 car-carrying ships, 14,000 purpose-built railway wagons, 23 river barges, and 26,000 road transporters. As a major employer, the finished vehicle logistics sector plays an important role in contributing to the economic success of the European Union. Today, ECG members have an aggregate turnover of €21.3bn and their economic impact on companies associated with the sector is estimated at €56bn. **More than 210,000 Europeans are employed directly by our members.**

