

European vehicle logistics under pressure – ECG



Rising fuel costs and Strait of Hormuz disruptions drive a sharp increase in FVL Cost Index for Q1 2026 at an all-time high level

The persistent increase in oil and diesel prices, triggered by reduced traffic through the Strait of Hormuz and highlighted in the Press Release issued on 9th March 2026, resulted in an extraordinary **Q1 Update on the FVL Cost Index for Europe**. The negative impact on the FVL industry does not seem to have a short-term solution, and market capacity is at risk.

Key findings from surveys conducted across members of the Association of European Vehicle Logistics (ECG) in April highlight mounting operational pressure across the European vehicle logistics sector. Most operators report severe exposure to fuel cost volatility, with nearly all companies engaging with customers to revise fuel clauses and 54% experiencing difficulties in covering fuel costs.

Operational performance and capacity are increasingly strained, with 46% of respondents indicating a significant impact on their ability to meet contractual obligations and 49% already reducing or considering reducing their truck fleet. The Finished Vehicle Logistics (FVL) Cost Index for Q1 2026, released by PwC Austria, confirms the negative impact on industry costs, reflecting the influence of prevailing geopolitical circumstances and the recent rise in diesel prices.

The European FVL Cost Index for Q1 2026 stands at 159.7, up 8.6 points from Q4 2025 (151.1). All four segments increased in Q1 2026, with the development driven primarily by the rise in the FVL Road Cost Index. In particular, the FVL Road Cost Index is 145.3 in Q1 2026, up 15.9 points from Q4 2025 (129.4), mainly due to higher fuel costs. This one-time update was deemed necessary considering the current circumstances; the Q2 2026 Update will be released as usual in October 2026.

As the war continues, severe damage has been inflicted on the industry, though some OEMs and shippers have already taken steps to preserve logistics companies' cash flow. The high fuel price is forecasted to likely continue for a while. Even if the war could be ended quickly, it will take some time for supplies to return to pre-war levels.

Given the current macroeconomic environment, it is also to be expected that inflationary pressures will further drive up costs across all segments of the industry in the coming months, further intensifying the financial strain on operators.

"As cost pressures continue to escalate, it is essential that all stakeholders act decisively and collaboratively," said Wolfgang Göbel, President of ECG. "Only through more responsive fuel adjustment mechanisms and greater contractual flexibility can we ensure the financial stability of operators and safeguard the long-term resilience of the European vehicle logistics network."

OEMs and shippers are encouraged more than ever to increase the frequency and responsiveness of fuel adjustment mechanisms and adopt more flexible contractual practices to safeguard operators' financial health, maintain transport capacity and preserve the resilience of the European vehicle logistics network.

