



AI takes action while people remain at the center of logistics, finds DHL Logistics Trend Radar

- AI begins planning, coordinating and acting across supply chains, working alongside people
- Logistics will remain a people business, even as new technologies are reshaping jobs, skills, safety, and employee experience
- Agentic AI, AI Commerce, Compute Economy, and Humanoids added as new trends
- The eighth edition maps the societal, technological, and business trends shaping logistics over the next decade

Bonn, September 24, 2026: Artificial intelligence (AI) is moving beyond its role as a digital assistant and beginning to take action across supply chains, according to the new DHL Logistics Trend Radar 8.0. The report finds that advances in AI, robotics, and automation are transforming not only logistics operations, but also the workforce itself. As intelligent systems become increasingly capable of planning, deciding and acting autonomously, organizations must rethink skills, safety, governance and employee experience while building more resilient and sustainable supply chains.

“Supply chains are changing faster than ever as AI and workforce trends increasingly influence one another,” said Katja Busch, Chief Commercial Officer DHL and Head of DHL Customer Solutions & Innovation. “The organizations that succeed will be those that understand these shifts early and are able to turn them into practical advantages for their business and their people. The Trend Radar helps them focus on the developments that will matter most.”

AI becomes an operating layer across logistics

AI in logistics is evolving from assistance to autonomy. Among the most significant findings of the Logistics Trend Radar 8.0 is the emergence of Agentic AI, identified as one of the report's most impactful trends. Unlike earlier generations of AI that primarily respond to prompts or analyze information, Agentic AI can autonomously plan, decide, and act toward defined goals, enabling closer collaboration between intelligent technologies and human expertise.

Alongside this development is AI Analytics, which enables organizations to uncover patterns, anticipate disruptions, forecast outcomes, and recommend actions at unprecedented speed and scale. Together, these developments are creating increasingly autonomous and adaptive supply chains, enabling tasks



such as anticipating inventory shortages, rerouting shipments around disruptions, and dynamically adjusting transport capacity in real time.

The Radar also introduces new trends reflecting AI's influence in expanding beyond operational efficiency. AI Commerce is transforming how consumers and businesses discover and purchase products, Compute Economy highlights the strategic importance of computing infrastructure and data center logistics, and Humanoids represent an emerging, longer-term trend that could redefine AI-enabled automation in physical environments. Together, these trends signal further transformation across digital and physical supply chains, from AI-assisted purchasing journeys to AI-enabled automation in warehouses.

“Until now, AI has helped people perform tasks more efficiently. The next chapter is about action,” said Klaus Dohrmann, Vice President of Innovation and Trend Research, DHL Customer Solutions & Innovation. “We're entering an era of autonomous and physical AI, where intelligent systems can actively perceive the world, navigate complex environments, and make decisions with minimal human intervention.”

The future of logistics remains a people business

The Logistics Trend Radar 8.0 places a major focus on how work is changing as AI, automation, and robotics become increasingly integrated into logistics operations. The report highlights technologies such as wearable sensors, remote operations, collaborative robotics, and AI-powered workplace assistants that help create safer, more productive, and more engaging work environments. By reducing repetitive tasks and supporting day-to-day decision-making, these technologies allow employees to focus on higher-value activities such as problem-solving, customer service, and operational oversight.

Employee Belonging and the Augmented Workplace emerge as key trends as employees increasingly work alongside AI assistants, collaborative robots, and digital tools. The impact of these technologies will reshape hundreds of roles spanning frontline operations, technical professions, and knowledge-based functions, creating demand for new skills and new ways of working. For business leaders, the challenge is no longer simply introducing new technologies, but ensuring employees have the skills, confidence, and support to use them effectively.

Thomas Ogilvie, Chief Human Resources Officer and Labor Director at DHL Group, said: "Technology is transforming the way we work, but people remain the driving force behind every successful supply chain. We're already seeing AI assistants, wearable devices, and collaborative robots helping employees



work more safely, reduce repetitive work, and focus on higher-value tasks. The future of logistics will not be defined by human versus AI, but by how effectively organizations combine human expertise with increasingly capable technologies.”

Responsible AI becomes a business imperative

As AI systems take on more autonomous responsibilities, organizations must ensure they are deployed responsibly, securely, and transparently. The report highlights trends including AI Ethics and Cybersecurity 2.0, which help organizations balance innovation with governance, resilience, and security. As intelligent systems become increasingly embedded in critical operations such as demand forecasting, inventory planning, and transport decision-making, robust safeguards and human oversight are becoming as important as the technologies themselves.

Sustainability remains a long-term business priority

As in previous editions, sustainability continues to be a core driver of logistics innovation. Trends such as Decarbonization, Sustainable Fuels, Circularity, Heavy Vehicle Electrification, and Light Vehicle Electrification demonstrate how organizations are deploying electric delivery fleets, scaling alternative fuels, and redesigning supply chains for reuse and resource efficiency while pursuing lower-carbon operations.

About the DHL Logistics Trend Radar

Developed by DHL Customer Solutions & Innovation in collaboration with business, technology, and academic thought leaders across industries, the Logistics Trend Radar is DHL's biennial flagship research initiative. It tracks, analyzes, and evaluates the technological, business, and social trends most likely to shape logistics, supply chains, and global trade over the next decade. The report helps customers, partners, and industry leaders understand emerging developments and identify opportunities for innovation and growth.

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Explore the DHL Logistics Trend Radar 8.0 [online](#) or download the full DHL Logistics Trend Radar 8.0 report as a [PDF](#).

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