

Residual Value in 2026: Why stability is the wrong word?



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When we look at Europe at an aggregated level, the market looks stable. But when we go market by market, brand by brand, model by model, nothing is stable.

Across Europe, 2025 closed with a broadly positive signal: new and used car markets are slowly recovering, stocks remain controlled, and demand is still present.

But this apparent stability hides a much more complex reality for residual values. Residual value is not a European exercise. It's a market-by-market, model-by-model exercise. Behind the averages, micro-movements are multiplying:

- different stock rotation speeds,
- uneven BEV absorption,
- diverging depreciation patterns between brands and powertrains.

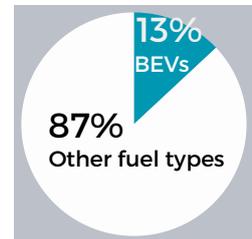
BEVs: a structural challenge, not the whole market

BEVs are clearly the most challenging energy today, but they are not the whole story. In 2025, BEVs represented around **13% of used car stock across Europe**. Yet they account for a disproportionate share of residual value pressure:

- slower stock rotation, as you can see on the graph,
- higher capital tied up in dealerships,
- depreciate around **50% faster** than ICE vehicles on average,
- facing in most countries residual value gaps between RV book value set in 2022-2023 and actual used car value today

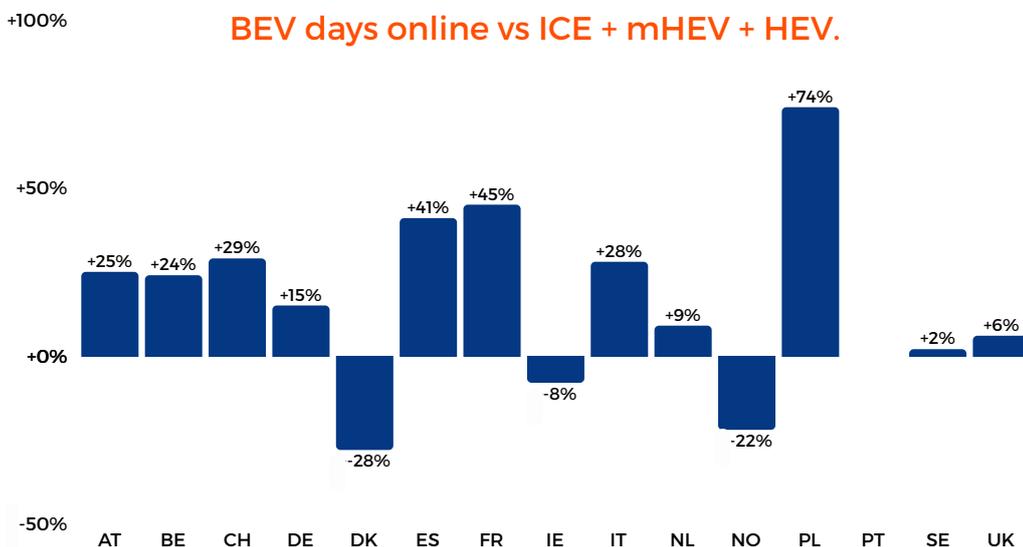
Online stock share of BEVs

Europe - Dec 2025



Source : autobiz

The graph below shows the stock age situation with a very different view from one country to the other. In DK & NO, far more advanced in the EV transition, EV cars sell faster than ICE cars. Some countries like Sweden the Netherlands, or the UK face a quite balanced situation. France and Spain are the most impacted among the biggest markets.



Source : autobiz, December 2025

Still, **87% of used car volumes remain non-BEV.**

If you focus only on BEVs, you miss where you can actually recover value.

From RV setting to pricing execution

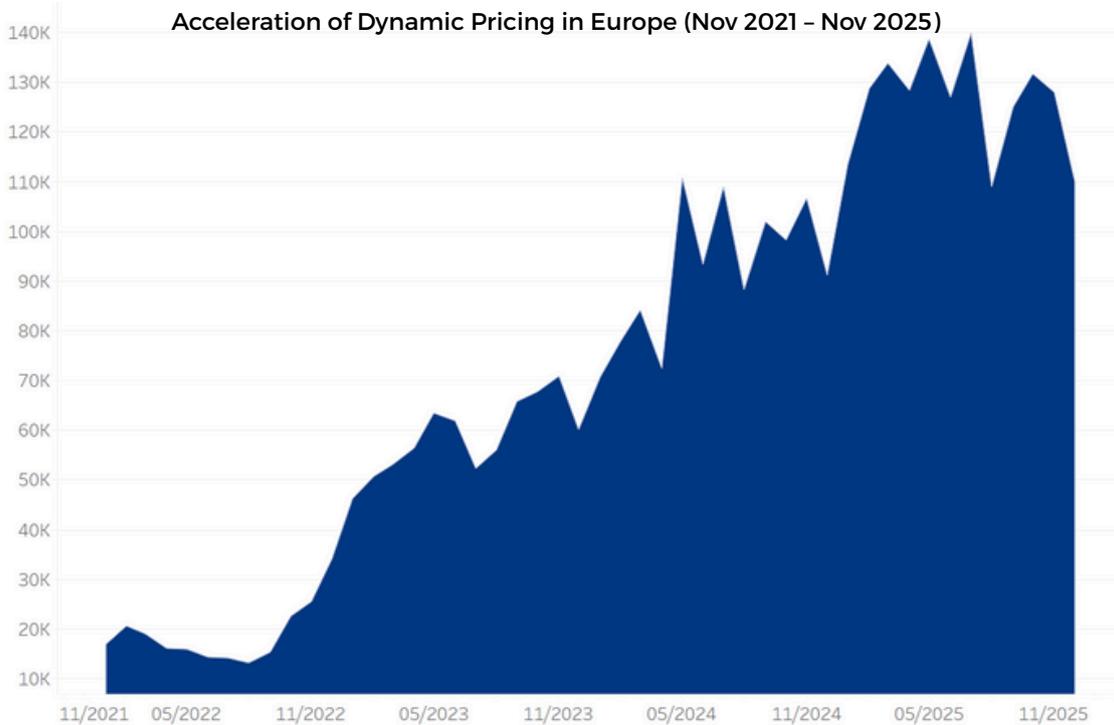
One major shift is now clearly visible across Europe: **Pricing dynamics have accelerated.** Prices change more often, by smaller steps. That's not a detail, it's a **structural change.**

Since 2021, pricing activity has increased sharply:

- **more frequent repricing,**
- **faster reactions to market signals,**
- **less tolerance for static pricing strategies.**

Starting at the right price and repricing regularly is now far more effective than waiting and cutting heavily at the end.

Volume of pricing activity in Europe.



Source: autobiz

In 2026, the market will confront the residual value strategies defined three or four years ago. During the post-pandemic period, depreciation levels were abnormally low. For many vehicles, especially BEVs, this creates a reality gap today.

Residual value is not a value. It's a process.

Reforecasting, repricing and retention within dealer networks are becoming essential tools to:

- **limit losses on BEVs,**
- **secure value on ICE and hybrids,**
- **and prepare the next vehicle lifecycle.**

The next editions will focus on the retention and reforecasting actions automotive players can take to secure residual values in an increasingly volatile market.



Learn more 

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