



## Digital transformation key for future development - Farplas

By Simon Warburton | 9 April 2018

Turkish supplier, Farplas says it views digitalisation as a positive development to increase traceability and cut down on human error in production.

Some have expressed concern increasing use of automation and new technology could lead to implications for jobs, but Farplas innovation director, Iffet Iyigun Meydanli believes the move will improve production techniques.

"Customisation and the shared economy are drivers as well as electric vehicles; connected cars and the industrial internet of things are coming with a great impact," Meydanli told *just-auto* in Farplas' headquarters on the Asian side of Istanbul.

"So we decided we should develop some strategies for that. For electric vehicles and the environmental side we decided we should look for lightweight production and increase design capabilities. We [also] believe 3D printing could be a good opportunity for customisation.



"We have to be a technology knowledge creator – I believe we can still catch this train" - Farplas innovation director Iffet Iyigun Meydanli in Istanbul

"We follow [Industry] 4.0 [and] established that programme last year with digital transformation...whatever we implement we are synchronising our knowledge. Which areas could be opportunity areas for us, for example traceability.

"We suffer from some human mistakes sometimes. So we would like to prevent this kind of mistakes. Some people are arguing this means the employment rate will change. Everybody is still arguing on it. Government is establishing a specific office for it."

Farplas – a wholly Turkish company set up in 1968 and employing around 1,750 staff – focuses mainly on injection moulding and painting with primary customers being Toyota, Renault and Hyundai.

Farplas notes it is not just a supplier for Renault, but also what it refers to as a co-designer, while it recently established an office in South Korea to work more closely on Hyundai projects.

"We have to be a technology knowledge creator – I believe we can still catch this train," added Meydanli. "We still need people, we still need workers. We joined Horizon 2020 programmes and one of them is to do with collaborative robots. How can we make better conditions for human workers in factories?"

"We prepared some return on investment calculations; of course it is not so cheap, however, we believe it is the [right] way. We [also] joined the Aachen Lightweight Centre...to know what is the trend.

"We need to redesign the inside of our facility, otherwise some internal logistics problems could cause some time loss or injuries. We are preparing some training, not just for white collars, but blue collars."

Farplas has also started a digitalisation transformation committee to look at product lifecycle management, factory simulation and e-training, among other areas. The supplier has also set up F+ Ventures to look for new opportunities.

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