

# Alloy Frame Production Also Started in Turkey

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**ESKISEHIR, Turkey – Next to Triangle’s in Portugal a second major producer of aluminium frames for sports bikes as well as e-bikes is emerging in Europe. Korel Elektronik Sanayi ve Ticaret AS is now also stepping into large-scale robotized alloy frame making. The company located some 300 km southeast of Istanbul; claims to have a production capacity of about one million frames annually and started production already.**



*Made in Turkey alloy frames presented by Korel owner Ali Korkmaz (left) and plant manager Tolga Yilmaz. – Photo Korel*

In Bike Europe’s December 2016 edition this trade journal reported that large-scale aluminium frame manufacturing started in Turkey. **On January 10 this was also announced at [bike-eu.com](http://bike-eu.com).**

This news attracted a big number of views; **in particular the article that was published in Chinese at the Chinese new section.**

The interest alloy frame making in Europe is getting from Bike Europe’s readers in Asia makes clear that they are eying such initiatives with huge interest. Up to October 2016 all alloy frame making for electric and sports bikes took place in Asia. Last October Triangle’s – Cycling Equipments SA located at Bike Value Portugal produced its first alloy frames. Beginning 2018 the factory will be in full operation mode with an annual production of some half a million frames annually.

## Production start

Korel Elektronik Sanayi ve Ticaret started its alloy frame making as well as aluminium parts last year. The frames were used for the first bicycles that Korel Elektronik produced under their brand name Corelli. The company is selling these bikes exclusively on its home market. For this year Korel Elektronik also wants to offer its alloy frames to OEM customers and in particular to the ones based in the EU member states to where it can export (import) duty free.

## **Specialist manufacturer**

Korel is since its founding in 1988 producing aluminum parts and products for the white goods industry as well as the automotive sector. Based in Eskişehir the company claims to be, “One of Europe’s leading specialist manufacturers of special applications for heating and cooling.” Currently Korel processes annually about 20,000 tons of aluminum material through its 15 or so extruders. About 50% of the company’s production is exported.

## **Start in 2015**

Relying on its background in and know-how on processing aluminium Korel decided to invest into the production of aluminum bicycle frames and parts. “That started in 2015 and our initial plans were focused on the local Turkish industry,” explains Korel plant manager Hasan Ekim. “First we produced frame tubes. Then we thought about the possibilities of producing frames and even to assemble complete bicycles.”

## **Welding robots and more**

Currently a total of 12 robots, which are made by Korel, do the frame welding. Next to 6061 aluminum bicycle and e-bike frames as well as parts the Turkish company also has its own painting facility. At the start in 2015 Korel lacked bicycle-know-how. Since then that knowledge was hired and is now on board.

Current frame making capacity stands at one million units annually. This as well as bicycle parts production takes place at the company’s HQ and factory in Eskişehir. “Our 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> bicycle facility houses the aluminum welding department with T6 oven department, paint shop, transfers application, test laboratory and assembly line,” adds Ekim.

## **Corelli and Dacron**

Last June the first bikes with Korel-made aluminum frames were shipped to the Turkish market. A complete range under Korel’s own Corelli brand name ([www.corelli.com.tr](http://www.corelli.com.tr)) has been developed. Next to Corelli bicycles Korel is also offering aluminum parts like rims, handlebars, seat posts, forks and rear carriers. These are marketed under the brand name Dacron.

## **OEM possibilities**

Last year’s start of the production of Corelli bikes and Dacron parts was Korel’s first step on the bicycle market. This year the Turkish company is taking its second step. That’s with reaching out to OEM potential customers based in the European Union. First contacts are established with Europe’s leading premium bicycle and e-bike supplier Accell Group.

The contacts with Accell were quickly made as the Dutch holding owns Accell Bisiklet in Turkey. Here the bike assembly takes place for various Accell brands. For them aluminum frames and parts made by Korel could be an attractive alternative for the frames made in China and/or Vietnam. In particular as it would enhance Accell's speed to market ability and lowers its working capital requirements.

## **Turkish lira**

Next to a close to Europe production there's another factor that's favourable for Korel. That factor is the Turkish lira. In recent months the Turkish currency depreciated strongly in value. This makes the procurement of parts like aluminium frames in euro's attractive. And what also counts is that manufacturers based in Turkey can export duty free to the EU member states.

The only question left for Korel is whether its frames are quality wise at the same level as what's coming from the Far East. But as Hasan Ekim says, "We can compete with China," this issue must have been tackled also.

## **Inside the Korel factory (in Turkish only)**



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