

Mr. Salim Haffar,
President at Eurotrans



– Adaptive measures help drive the European Power Transmission industry forward



EUROTRANS is the leading organization that represents the interests of the European power transmission industry. The federation supports a network of more than 600 enterprises that combined account for an annual production of over 40 billion euro and employ more than 160,000 people. At the forefront of this esteemed group is elected President, Mr. Salim Haffar.

Motion + Drives magazine had the distinct pleasure of interviewing Mr. Haffar in an effort to gain key insights into EUROTRANS' efforts to support of the Power Transmission industry, future trends, dynamics, as well as perspective surrounding the impact of current events, such as COVID-19.

First of all, we would like to congratulate you on your role within EUROTRANS. Can you tell us more about your history at EUROTRANS, as well as your background and current activities?

I am of French / Moroccan nationality, having lived seven years now in Turkey and working as the International Sales & Strategy Manager at I-MAK Gearbox manufacturer in Istanbul. EUROTRANS is the Federation of European Power Transmission Associations and Industries. I have been representing the MIB (Turkish Machinery Association) and Turkey at EUROTRANS for the past three years.

I had the chance to attend the EUROTRANS meeting in Belgium and Germany before the start of the pandemic. Last year I was elected president, and Mr. Andre Thuswaldner from Switzerland was elected as the Vice-President, by the Board of Directors of EUROTRANS. Due to my activities at EUROTRANS and I-MAK, I have the opportunity to interact with associations, organizations, universities and companies all around the world. This is a unique opportunity to follow the trends and dynamics of our sector on a global level, gaining key knowledge to serve the interests of our members.

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How did the pandemic impact the activities at EUROTRANS so far? Which challenges have been faced since the start of the outbreak?

Thanks to the very high-profile professionals attending our meetings at EUROTRANS, we had the chance to switch immediately to online meetings. We could adapt and organize at an early stage. Our first online board meeting and even my election was done online. The main challenge with the virtual meetings was to adapt the training programs to the virtual world. One of the main missions of EUROTRANS is to prepare high level trainings for our member associations and member companies. We could manage to organize our first online trainings this year as well, with professionals attending from several countries.

The other challenge regarding online meetings for EUROTRANS is the annual meeting and networking events, where we discuss the latest trends and dynamics of our industries. The EUROTRANS International Drive Technology Meeting will be held for the first time online, this year on 30th September, with the participation of member companies, associations, and institutions from all around the world.

Did the recovery from the pandemic already start for the power transmission companies? What are the biggest challenges that companies will face during this process?

As per our regular discussing and internal surveys, the recovery already started for the majority of our member companies. Most of them are currently full of orders, production, and a positive provision for the future. Despite the travel restrictions, most of the companies continued their international sales operations. Most of our members show a great adaptability to the new digital reality.

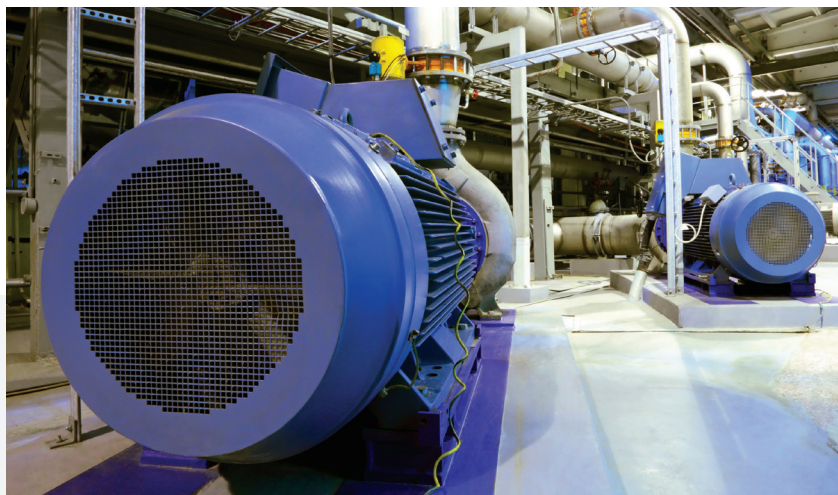
As per today, the biggest challenge for the PT industry is the lack of raw materials and general cost pressure. As mentioned in our reports, many member companies struggle to receive their raw materials on time. The second challenge is from the logistics perspective, as the shortage of containers continues to impact multiple industries.

How do you see the future of the power transmission and motion control industries for the coming years ahead?

We are very positive for the future of the Power Transmission industries, as our sector continues to power, drive and contribute to many other industries



and sectors worldwide. Most of the EUROTRANS member companies manage to gain a good share in the changing energy sector, securing a new pool of growth for the future. It is also important to remember that Power Transmission components and equipment are used in most of the products in our daily life. When the growth is back again, as in the post-pandemic world, our member companies will benefit from the boost again. Wherever there is movement, there will be Power Transmission.



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Do you see the reshoring of manufacturing back in Europe speeding up with the current economic conjuncture?

The pandemic, with the travel restrictions and the increases in logistics costs, has forced many industries to either look for an alternative, or reactivate the local European supplies. Many of our members are rebuilding some old links and synergies with other Europeans companies to face together the current market pressures. Yet most of the power transmission companies are present on a worldwide level and act global. Their relocation seems too complicated or unnecessary as they already have their own production facilities spread around the world. They will continue to develop their presence in these countries and develop new chains of values.

On a local and European level the main change is felt by smaller manufacturers and workshops that are facing a unexpected boost after many years of difficulties. The relocation and market difficulties is a unique opportunities for smallest players as major companies struggles to match with delivery time schedules.

You said in an earlier interview that digitalization and sustainability are the two key challenges for companies in the power transmission industry. What can you suggest for companies in regard to the implementation of those two key points?

It's very hard to suggest these to most of our members, since in our network and sector, most companies took very early steps in sustainability. Located in Europe, our members adapted both



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the production and facilities to more green and sustainable method / style. Some even reached very advanced levels and are shown as example around the world. At the same time, our members also adapted their products to achieve higher energy efficiency and longer product life. This change started years before the new regulations and laws regarding motors efficiency(Eco design / European regulation (EC 640/20009), showing one more time that the European power transmission sector is in advance and keep being a leader on the international level.

Regarding digitization, most of our member companies also already took the digitization path. We can suggest to remaining companies that digitization is the key to create added value and that they can become integrated and combine with the products of other companies and industries.

What are your thoughts on the electrification of power transmission components and systems?

Electrification of power transmission equipment actually started more than ten years ago, when the first companies started to propose solutions to track up and follow the performance of their products. Nowadays the electrification of power transmission products become more and more important with the IOT and the necessity to combine all products and components into a whole system that can be managed, optimized and monitored on a single platform. The electrification is also a unique opportunity to create extra added value on products and keep the technological leadership of our members.