

Shaping Balkans urban development: FOREL and VAKEFI GLASS

At the heart of VAKEFI GLASS' rise lies its partnership with FOREL - a company with advanced technology and engineering excellence that has powered Vakefi Glass' evolution into a regional leader. Through FOREL's cutting-edge systems, it can now meet ambitious architectural demands - consistently delivering precision, performance and innovation across the Balkans and beyond.

With Albania's economy initially driven by the expanding tourism sector over the last decade, the resulting demand for accommodation has since stimulated growth - fuelling demand for new housing and public infrastructure, including

hospitals, roads, schools, airports and essential facilities for emerging urban settlements.

Vakefi Glass' story is one of vision, tenacity and the relentless pursuit of excellence. In 1995, Shpëtim Protoduari, better known as 'Cimi,' embarked on his en-

trepreneurial adventure with the purchase of the first glass panes in Bulgaria. Since then, he has transformed a small trading business in the region between Albania, Kosovo, and North Macedonia into a family-run company. Today, Vakefi Glass employs approximately eighty people and is a benchmark in the trade and processing of flat glass in the Balkans.

After establishing a strong client base in Albania and neighboring countries, Protoduari recognized the opportunities in glass processing. In 1998, he opened a

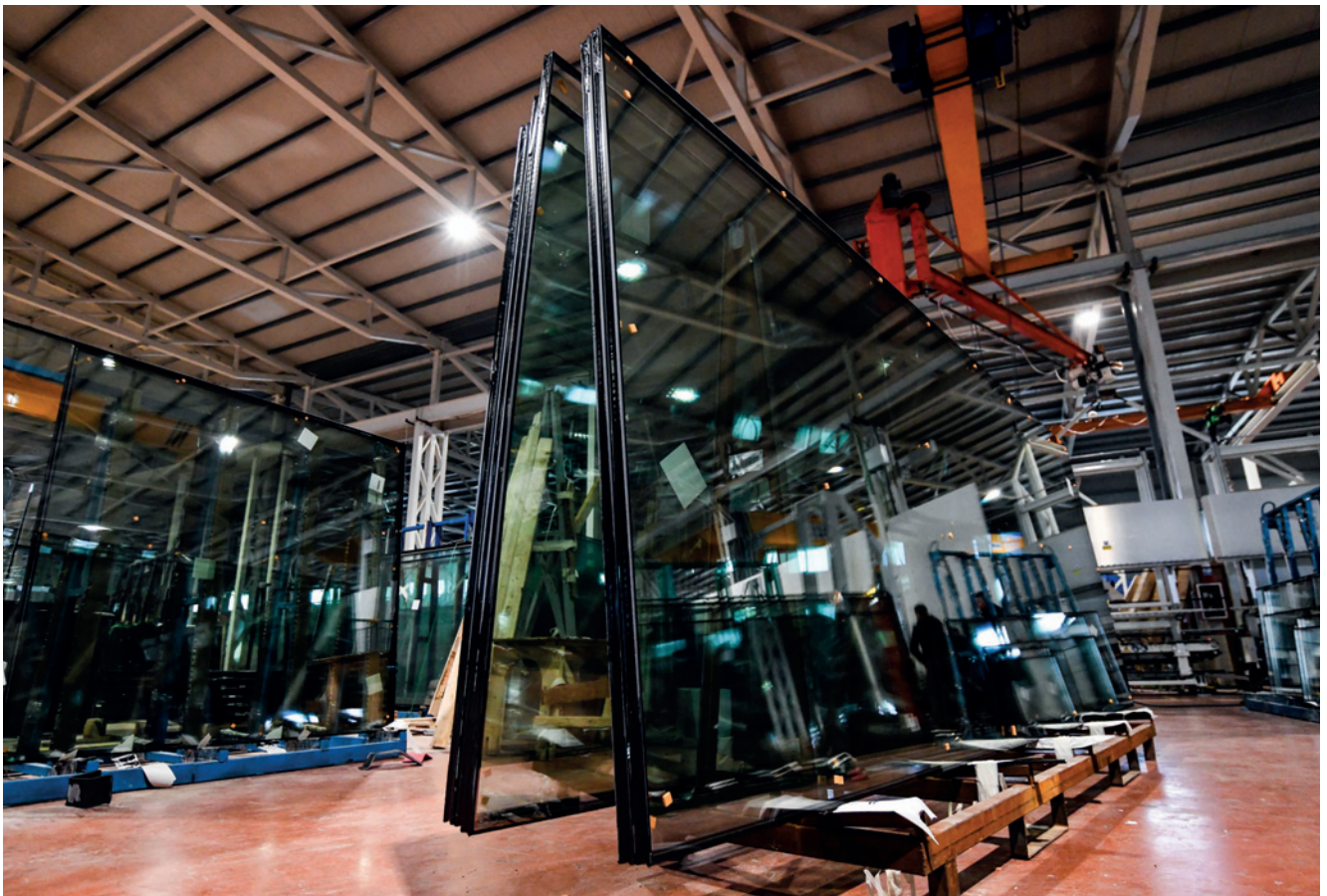
small factory in Berat, enabling the company to begin its initial cutting and grinding operations.

As turnover increased, so did the complexity of orders and processes. To accommodate this growth, Cimi expanded the production site and invested in a more structured machine park. Production was moved to the outskirts of the city, and after a decade, these investments became even more substantial.

In 2018, Vakefi Glass reached a turning point with the construction of a



Shpëtim Protoduari, owner Vakefi Glass





10,000 sq m production area in the Durrës region. Located strategically on the road connecting the coastal city and Tirana, this facility has been progressively equipped with cutting-edge machinery for processing high-quality glass panes.

TECHNOLOGY AND PASSION: THE FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

In this phase, Protoduari expanded ambitiously, investing in the latest machin-

ery to offer customers comprehensive glass processing services - from tempering and lamination to digital printing. The company enhanced its capabilities with the Forel DM drill-milling machine and the new Forel High Tech Jumbo line, which processes panels up to 6,000 x 3,300 mm in size.

This new plant allows Vakefi Glass to produce large format insulated glass with double, triple, or quadruple glass units, create staggered /



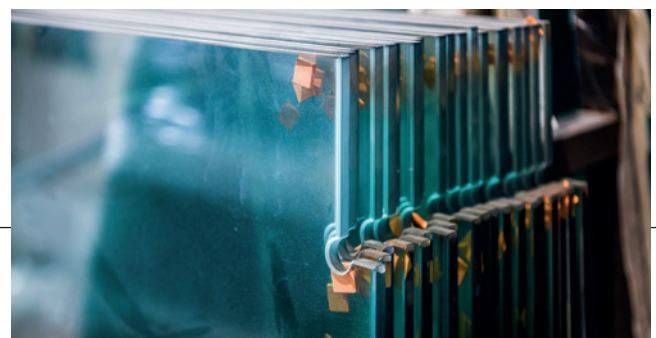
stepped glass solutions, and manufacture large custom designed glass panels, fully supporting both residential and commercial construction projects.

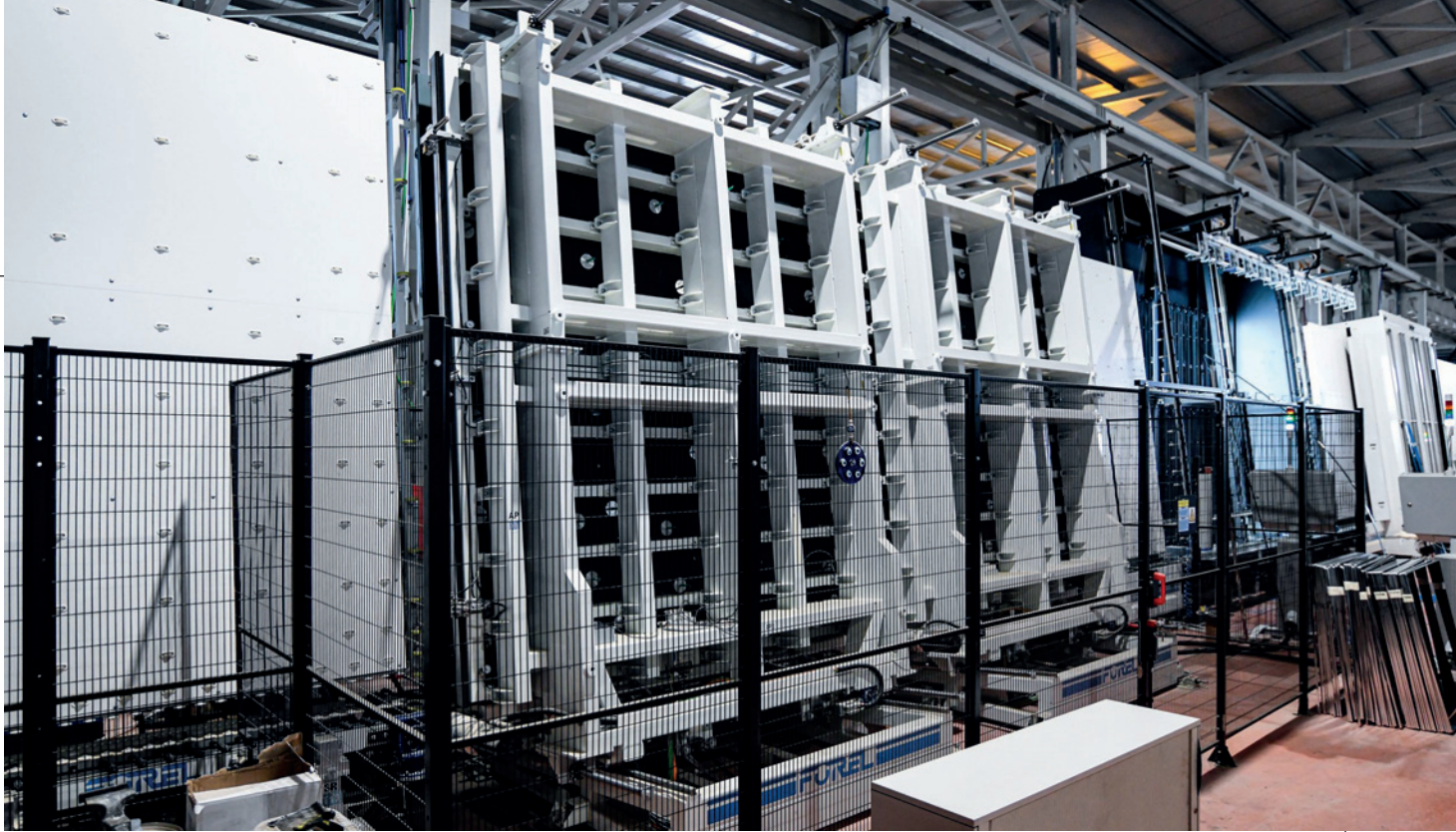
Vakefi Glass' success is rooted in a corporate culture that prioritizes problem-solving and provides robust support for customers facing critical challenges.

As the CEO of Vakefi Glass notes: "We must always be at the service of the market. When customers face challenges in managing structured projects, we see it as an opportunity to provide innovative products and services through our commitment and technology." Protoduari continues: "Work organization and production planning present our biggest challenges. It's not just about the machines; our people are key to production."

He emphasizes that market feedback serves as our

fundamental guideline: Introducing a successful product requires leveraging advanced technology, developed from the challenges others have faced. Machine design embodies a wealth of experiences, solved problems, and insights that materialize into technology, solutions, and patents." Vakefi Glass has built its reputation on delivering quality products through a combination of technology and teamwork. Protoduari explains, "We chose Forel because we were familiar with the brand and their machines have a proven track record in European and international markets. Forel creates its machines by listening to customers, integrating expertise, engineering, and customization. When selecting a plant, we recommend focusing on its potential capabilities rather than solely on the initial investment cost."





THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE WITH FOREL

Vakefi Glass' new Forel High Tech Jumbo insulated glass line is enabling ambitious, cutting-edge architectural projects. The Marigona Tower in Pristina exemplifies this potential and is set

to become one of Kosovars urban landmarks.

The twenty-four-story skyscraper incorporates insulated glass panels with a 30 mm sealing depth, manufactured at the Vakefi Glass plant, reflecting an architectural focus on glass and

energy efficiency. These advanced solutions deliver exceptional thermal insulation, substantially decreasing the building's overall energy consumption.

The outstanding quality of Vakefi Glass is showcased again in the Skylight Marriot building in Pristina, where uniquely shaped glass produced on the Forel insulated glass production line has been installed. Additionally, Vakefi Glass has several significant projects underway in Albania and the United Kingdom, featuring large glass panels and innovative designs, including staggered/stepped glass and triple-pane units. In today's rapidly evolving

economic landscape, this company is proving that it isn't simply keeping up with market trends, but actively shaping them. It's focused on continuous innovation, technological advancement and sustainable growth - which are all essential to becoming a leader in both the Balkans and the broader European market.

FOREL

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