

E-COMMERCE

## Alibaba pledges to invest US\$2b in Turkey via online retail platform Trendyol

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Alibaba Group Holding has said it plans to invest US\$2 billion in Turkey as the e-commerce giant pursues fast growth after its online retail platform, Trendyol, made an operating profit in the country for the first time between April and June this year.

In a meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Alibaba president Michael Evans said the company planned to invest US\$2 billion in Turkey via Trendyol, according to a statement by the Turkish platform.



Alibaba owns an 86.5 per cent stake in retail platform Trendyol.

Between April 1 last year and March 31 this year, Trendyol's order growth jumped by 47 per cent year on year, while its gross merchandise volume climbed by 110 per cent in local-currency terms, according to an article on the platform's news website.

The Istanbul-headquartered unit continues to expand globally, with a move into Azerbaijan in May following a launch in Germany last year, according to the article.

Trendyol was founded by Turkish entrepreneur Demet Mutlu in 2010. Alibaba made a

US\$728 million investment in the platform in 2018. It later invested a further US\$350 million, taking its stake to 86.5 per cent. The company serves more than 30 million consumers and hosts over 250,000 merchants, who sell around 200 million products on the platform in Turkey.

In May last year, Trendyol opened an office in Berlin, its first outside Turkey. The firm attracted 1 million customers in its first year of operation in Germany, according to its website.

Alibaba's international commerce unit has become the fastest-growing operation of the Hangzhou-based e-commerce giant. The unit reported 41 per cent revenue growth for the quarter to June 30, much faster than overall group revenue growth. Alibaba owns the Post.

Jiang Fan, previously demoted after an investigation into an alleged extramarital affair turned into a major public relations crisis, now leads the international commerce unit.

He cemented his status as one of the firm's most promising executives with his return as the youngest member of its partnership – a supreme corporate governance body with the right to nominate directors – earlier this year.

Alibaba is also ratcheting up efforts to expand its business in the United States by adding features such as an updated image search on its cross-border wholesale platform.

Alibaba.com, the company's original cross-border business-to-business platform, will hold a "Co-Creat" event in Las Vegas on Thursday and Friday, which will be attended by chief technology officer Yang Zhou and vice-president Andrew Zheng.