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## Melijoe and Gimv join forces with The Babyshop Group to strengthen global leadership in high-end children's fashion

**Melijoe, a leading multi-brand website for premium children's fashion, announced today that it has joined forces with The Babyshop Group (BSG), a Swedish high-end children's fashion group. The merger with BSG fits Melijoe's ambition to further expand its vision and international presence to become the largest and most professional e-tailer for premium children's fashion. Gimv and the Melijoe founder remain shareholders and join a group of recognized investors led by Verdane Capital.**

Melijoe (Paris, [www.melijoe.com](http://www.melijoe.com)) was founded in 2007 when Parisienne Nathalie Genty, mother of five, launched a website offering some of the world's most coveted children's fashion brands.

Founded in 2007 by Nathalie Genty, mother of five with a passion for fashion and the internet, Melijoe (Paris, [www.melijoe.com](http://www.melijoe.com)) has in just a few years become the privileged partner of major fashion houses. Today, the company offers more than 150 of the world's most coveted children's fashion brands on its website, with highly inspiring and aesthetic choices.

Gimv acquired a stake in Melijoe in November 2014, mainly to support the company in its international development towards market leadership in a global and at the same time fragmented fashion market in digital transformation.

To meet the desire of major brands to collaborate with a limited number of professional partners in a consolidating market, Gimv, as majority shareholder, has fully supported Melijoe's strategy. A high-end positioning for an international customer base, a high-quality customer experience, an original product range and strategic partnerships with leading brands were key in this, more than a growth strategy based on volume. Thanks to this shared vision, the company was able to record sustainable international growth and is now ready for the next step, through the collaboration with BSG.

The complementarity between BSG and Melijoe is attractive: BSG's well-developed back office (data management, acquisition marketing, retail logistics, etc.) can be deployed on a broader scale and enables the group to build further on an ambitious plan for the future.

*"From my perspective, clothes are a reflection of children's emerging personalities. When I created Melijoe, I dreamt of an online store where parents could be free to pick and play with fashion for their kids. Joining Babyshop Group will give me the opportunity to further expand my vision of what Melijoe and our new sister sites should be and represent globally."* comments **Nathalie Genty, founder and CEO of Melijoe.**

*"Combining scale and deep sector expertise within an established but fragmented global niche market such as children's fashion ensures the continued potential of the new Stockholm-London-Paris team. In the new group, operational capabilities and privileged relationships with consumers and A-brands should enable the very best customer experience in the business."* add **Guillaume Bardy, Partner and Gert Kerkstoel, Associate Partner at Gimv.**

Through this transaction Melijoe founder Nathalie Genty and Gimv join a solid group of shareholders, with Swedish Verdane Capital as main investor and benchmark investor for consumer internet companies in Northern Europe.

For more information, we refer to the press release of The Babyshop Group in attachment. No further financial details on this transaction are being published.

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## ABOUT GIMV

Gimv is a European investment company, listed on Euronext Brussels. With 40 years' experience in private equity, Gimv currently has EUR 2 billion of assets under management. The portfolio contains around 50 portfolio companies, with combined turnover of EUR 2.5 billion and 14,000 employees.

As a recognized market leader in selected investment platforms, Gimv identifies entrepreneurial, innovative companies with high growth potential and supports them in their transformation into market leaders. Gimv's four investment platforms are Connected Consumer, Health & Care, Smart Industries and Sustainable Cities. Each platform works with an experienced team across Gimv's home markets of Benelux, France and DACH, supported by an extended international network of experts. - [www.gimv.com](http://www.gimv.com)

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\*\*\*\*\*EMBARGOED UNTIL WEDNESDAY 19TH AUGUST\*\*\*\*\*

## **THE BABYSHOP GROUP ACQUIRES MELIJOE - CREATING THE GLOBAL LEADER WITHIN PREMIUM AND LUXURY KIDSWEAR**

Swedish premium children's e-commerce group, The Babyshop Group has announced today they have acquired 100% of the shares in iconic French childrenswear retailer, Melijoe, from the Belgian investment company, GIMV and Melijoe founder, Nathalie Genty. GIMV and Nathalie Genty will stay on board, and join an already strong and broad base of shareholders led by Verdane, a specialist growth equity firm that has invested in 75 Northern European consumer internet companies since 2003. The Babyshop Group, comprising the four market-leading children's e-commerce brands, AlexandAlexa, Babyshop, Lekmer, and Oii Design, totalled over €100m sales in 2019. The deal further establishes the group as a leading player within luxury and premium children's fashion globally.

Babyshop was founded in 2006 by Swedish couple Linn and Marcus Tagesson. Aiming to revolutionise the way of shopping for children's fashion online by offering an unparalleled assortment of high-quality products, the business has grown to become one of Europe's largest retailers within its segment. A key success factor has been a number of strategic acquisitions made, including Swedish competitor Oii, UK based premium and luxury kidsweat retailer AlexandAlexa and major Nordic toy vendor Lekmer, leading up to this deal, creating The Babyshop Group as it's known today.

Meanwhile Melijoe was born just one year later, in 2007, when Parisienne founder Nathalie Genty launched what's become the site of her dreams. Now offering over 150 of the world's most coveted fashion brands, with a revenue in excess of €20m, Melijoe is one of the leading children's luxury fashion e-tailers worldwide. Melijoe's online presence is recognised within the industry as the most accomplished and aesthetically cohesive one in their niche. Customer experience is tailored to match and exceed premium expectations through rich editorial content across the site and a high-end customer experience with packaging and service at the level of adult luxury sites, all with a French touch.

"From my perspective, clothes are a reflection of children's emerging personalities. When I created Melijoe, I dreamt of an online store where parents could be free to pick and play with fashion for their kids. Joining Babyshop Group will give me the opportunity to further expand my vision of what Melijoe and our new sister sites should be and represent globally." **Nathalie Genty, Founder & CEO of Melijoe**

”The work of Nathalie and the Melijoe team has been on our radar for many years and with this, we’re taking another step towards realising our vision of becoming THE global leader in premium and luxury kidswear online. They have established a very high standard for customer experience in everything they do – a standard we can learn from. In turn, I’m positive that Melijoe will benefit from our scale, logistical capabilities, data science and e-commerce experience. We’re very excited to be a part of the next steps for Melijoe, preserving their unique market position.” **Marcus Tagesson, Co-founder & CEO of Babyshop Group**

Melijoe will continue to trade separately and benefit from the capabilities of the group. Carnegie Investment Bank acted as sole financial advisor in connection with the transaction.

### **Notes to editors**

The Babyshop Group is a leading luxury and premium online retailer group for baby and children’s fashion and products. The Group operates [alexandalex.com](http://alexandalex.com), [babyshop.com](http://babyshop.com), [lekmer.se](http://lekmer.se) and [oiidesign.se](http://oiidesign.se) as well as a number of retail stores, along with private labels designed and developed in-house. With an annual sales run rate of over €100 million, catering 140 countries and reaching over 1,000,000 customers monthly, The Babyshop Group headquarters is located in Stockholm with additional offices in London, Oslo, Paris and Seoul.

Based in Paris, with customer service teams also located in New York and Hong Kong, Melijoe serves over 300,000 customers monthly. Stocking a highly curated edit from over 150 brands, and sales annually of over €20m, Melijoe has a reputation for leading design, quality and luxury.

For additional information:

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