

Second-hand site Vinted happy to scare clothing retailers

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With more than 1.3 billion euros (\$1.5 billion) in sales last year on its platform and a new acquisition under its belt, second-hand clothes innovator Vinted believes it is starting to scare fashion retailers—for the good of the planet.

The group, founded in EU member Lithuania and a standard-bearer of the so-called "[circular economy](#)", announced a new takeover on Tuesday of a Dutch competitor, United Wardrobe, for an undisclosed sum.

Once completed, the merged group says it will bring together 34 million users who buy and sell clothing online—from vintage to designer labels, as well as used high-street brands at knock-down prices.

Vinted chief executive Thomas Plantenga said the acquisition would "help us accelerate faster within Europe and I think that people who are trying to grow the new sales of [fashion](#) are afraid of us. I think that's great."

The company's philosophy is that the [fashion industry](#), long criticised by environmentalists for encouraging [excessive consumption](#) and producing waste, "needs to change... needs to be more circular and that will benefit society," Plantenga told AFP.

The group became Lithuania's first tech unicorn in November 2019—an industry term for a start-up valued at more than \$1.0 billion.

It raised 128 million euros from investors in a funding round that it said would allow it to double its then 300-strong staff and fund [acquisitions](#).

This year's coronavirus-related lockdowns in major European markets such as France and Spain dealt a severe economic blow when the group was forced to shut down its operations.

But Vinted believes it is well-placed to benefit from long-term trends driven by young, more environmentally conscious consumers shunning established retailers and so-called "[fast fashion](#)".

And difficult economic conditions in Europe could lead more consumers to clear out their wardrobes to raise some money—the original idea of founders Justas Janauskas and Milda Mitkute who started the site in 2008.

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