

# Turkey and the Middle East

## East still holds promise for retail expansion

**Turkey's shopping-centre market has tracked the country's economic growth, with 81% of its entire stock delivered in the last decade. Mark Faithfull reports**

**I**N THE first half of 2015, the number of completions in Turkey began to slow dramatically, with 84,200 sq m GLA resulting in only 11% of the planned new openings for the first half of the year actually happening, according to CBRE. In most cases, the current economic climate has seen the delivery dates of many projects strategically extended until the fourth quarter, in line with the forecast stabilisation of the Turkish lira towards year-end.

In June Forum Diyarbakır, Multi's 15th shopping centre in Turkey, opened its doors in the country's south-eastern Anatolia region. The centre includes 135 local and international brands, social and cultural activities, and entertainment areas in some 54,000 sq m of leasable space. Multi has developed Forum Diyarbakır in a 50:50 partnership with Turkish developer Altindag Gayrimenkul and together they have invested €120m in the project.

Multi Turkey board member Hulusi Belgu says: "Forum Diyarbakır will boost the city's cultural, social and economic development. The shopping and retail industry is growing in line with the Turkish economy and the



Koton, on a growth curve in Turkey

demand for shopping centres in Anatolia continues to grow."

Meanwhile, Turkey's retailers remain active, with Koton and Mavi growing their store estates

and Tesco continuing to hold its Turkish Kipa outlets after looking to offload stores last year. Around 20 Turkish retail brands will be represented at a Turkish Pavilion at MAPIC this year.



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## The Gulf markets

In the Middle East, Majid Al Futtaim's ongoing investments in Dubai continue with phase one of City Centre Me'aisem. The sixth City Centre in the UAE is located in the International Media Production Zone (IMPZ) and scheduled to open this autumn. The seventh — City Centre Shindagha — is also planned to open by the end of the year, according to Alain Bejjani, CEO of Majid Al Futtaim Holding.

Meanwhile, the second phase of the 25,000 sq m expansion at Mall of the Emirates is on track for completion in the fourth quarter of 2015, and will include a new VOX Cinema. And in Egypt, Majid Al Futtaim's investment plans include Ski Egypt at the Mall of Egypt, as well as the introduction of VOX Cinemas to the Egyptian market.

There are also plans to bring Lululemon, Athletica and Peacocks to the MENA region, while Majid Al Futtaim Retail plans to open an additional 18 Carrefour stores before year-end.

United Developers is pushing ahead with Place Vendôme in Qatar. The project began on March 17 last year and is due to open in the third quarter of 2017. The 800,000 sq m development will host two five-star luxury hotels, serviced apartments, a mall featuring up to 400 different retail outlets with a luxurious wing dedicated to top designer labels, and a central entertainment component.

## "The shopping and retail industry is growing in line with the Turkish economy"

Hulusi Belgu

The development will be reminiscent of the well-known high-end shopping street in Paris, Rue de la Paix. Place Vendôme will also feature a canal running through it directly from the sea, creating an open plaza with cafes and restaurants overlooking the water.

In addition, The giant Mall of Qatar will open on 23 August next year, creating the largest shopping destination in the country with over 500 retail, food and entertainment outlets across a GLA of 256,000 sq m. The mall will be anchored by a premium 14,000 sq m Carrefour hypermarket, a 19-screen cinema, a KidzMondo edutainment centre and an entertainment area, plus a Salam department store and two more department stores "to be announced in the next couple of weeks," says project managing director Shem Krey.

"We have 85% of the space leased or committed and the centre will include a luxury village connecting directly to a five-star Hilton Hotel," he says. "We are aiming to attract around 20 million visitors annually, with 75% of the 2.3 million population living within 20km of the Mall of Qatar."

## BRANDS FLOCK TO TURKISH PAVILION

A host of Turkish fashion brands will join together on a 300 sq m Turkish Pavilion this year at MAPIC, showcasing the design, manufacture and distribution capabilities of one of the world's most active textiles sectors. Supporting the exhibition space will be a number of network events. Brands and retailers taking part include: Birlesmis Markalar Dernegi, Damat Tween Orka, Kigili, Penti, Faik Sonmez Tekstil, Karaca, Kocaer Tekstil Santic/Chakra, Mavi, Mudo, Sezgin Mucevherat – Sochic, Hatemoglu, Avva and Collezione.

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