Since its opening on April 1992, Disneyland Paris has struggled with socio-cultural differences and barriers that limited profitability. The dismal performance was partly attributed to resistance by the French to what they considered "American cultural imperialism" and stated publicly they hoped the Disney Park would be a failure. In 2017, Disney bought out other investors to make Euro Disney (the French parent company) a wholly owned subsidiary.[58]

During Iger's reign, Walt Disney International has implemented integrated structures in foreign markets that have "greatly accelerated revenue in China, produced growth across Japan and Europe and provided unparalleled access to emerging markets throughout Latin America and South East Asia."[59]

Mao and Mickey - Disney in China

CEO Robert Iger expended significant effort in the past ten years to establish Shanghai Disney Resort in China. Iger related the importance of China for Disney's international expansion efforts.

> Well, the negotiations and the process to put a shovel in the ground of Shanghai Disneyland was more than a decade long. It redefines the word "patience" in many respects. But the reason we were so patient, or tenacious, or intent on getting something done, is that we believe this is a fantastic opportunity—perhaps the company's biggest in the long term.[60]

In the process of building Shanghai Disney, Iger stressed how important it was to adjust to local culture tastes and preferences, "pride in local culture, particularly in a place like China, has never been greater...that needs to be ref lected at Shanghai Disneyland."[61] As a result, the Park was built with unique rides and features that incorporated Chinese elements such as the "Tron" light cycle roller coaster, vast central garden for older visitors, and the Wandering Moon Teahouse.

Shanghai Park opened in the summer of 2016 to great fanfare. Iger hoped that Shanghai Disneyland will create an ecosystem of demand in China for movies, merchandise, apps, and video games. In its first year of operations, Shanghai Disneyland had over 11 million visitors, exceeding the company's most optimistic expectations. However, Disney lowered ticket prices in 2018 to boost park attendance.[62] Competition in the Chinese market for entertainment parks is also heating up as Comcast's Universal Studios is building a theme park in Beijing, and Dreamworks Animation is opening a film studio and entertainment complex in Shanghai. In addition, there are local competitors such as Songcheng Park in Hangzhou and Chimelong Ocean Kingdom in Hengqin.