



## PRESS RELEASE

### Plus GSM to be consolidated into Fonomat portfolio

## **GED acquires the Romanian retail chain Plus GSM, a specialist in mobile telephone services**

- *With this investment, Fonomat becomes mobile operator Orange's largest network of Romanian GSM retailers.*
- *Plus GSM is the fifth acquisition of this type of chain that GED has carried out since 2006.*

**31 January, 2008.** Fonomat, a network of GSM services retailers controlled by the private equity firm GED, has acquired the Plus GSM chain. The operation has been carried out through the GED Eastern Fund II for Eastern Europe following the approval of the Competition Council of Romania.

Plus GSM is the mobile operator Orange's third chain of retailers in Romania, with a total of 54 establishments in the Transylvania and Muntenia regions. With 240 employees and an estimated turnover of more than €12 million for 2007, the company forecasts a growth of over 20% in comparison with 2006.

Arising from the consolidation of various Romanian companies, Fonomat was already one of the chief retail networks in Romania, with over 100 points of sale before the acquisition. In 2007, the companies acquired by GED underwent rebranding to be able to address the market as a unified brand: Fonomat. According to the company's director-general (insert director's name), "Fonomat intends to become the market leader of Orange services and will offer customers easy access to all GSM products and services, as well as communication solutions for the business sector and quality post-sale services. The goal is to create a solid and professional network that has the capability of sustaining Orange's development in the Romanian market."

The transaction forms part of the strategy followed by GED to "buy and build", given that the Romanian GSM retail market is now in the ongoing process of consolidation. "We are pleased with the transaction and the consolidation of Plus GSM and Fonomat. We are convinced that we will achieve great synergies thanks to the experience and know-how of both companies, thus improving not only the national coverage but also the quality of services offered in stores," noted GED representatives.



*GED is one of the largest Spanish private equity firms in the “middle market” segment. The group manages a total fund volume of around €350 million through several vehicles: GED Eastern Fund II, GED Iberian Fund I, GED Sur, and GED Real Estate Eastern Investments. Their area of operation is south-east Europe and the Iberian Peninsula.*

*GED has been one of the leading private equity firms in south-east Europe since its founding in 1996. It currently manages the GED Eastern Fund II private equity fund. The first GED fund in the region obtained fairly satisfactory results, multiplying investment by 2.5 and achieving a gross internal rate of return of 25% in U.S. dollars. Their second fund in the region, GED Eastern Fund II, with resources of some €150 million, was established in April of 2005 and has undertaken 4 operations: ROSEGUR (Dragon Star Guard) with Prosegur; ROMANIAN REAL ESTATE PARTNERS with Warburg Pincus; Fonomat, an operation merging several mobile service retail chains; and the dairy company FAMA and HAPPY TOUR.*

*In the Iberian Peninsula, the Group operates the GED Iberian Fund I, which has invested in 9 companies, among them Corporación Dermoestética, Rioglass, Cardboard Printing (Nekar, ICESA), Azulev and Sendal. The Group’s investment strategy focuses primarily on buy-outs of companies with high expansion potential, opportunities for growth through acquisition and internationalisation possibilities. In such cases, GED provides financing, expertise and a wide network of Spanish and international contacts.*

**For further information:**

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