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Gimv sells stake in thinkstep AG, the Stuttgart-based specialist in sustainability software

Gimv, together with all other shareholders, is selling its stake in Stuttgart-based software firm thinkstep AG (www.thinkstep.com) to US software provider Sphera Solutions. Thanks to the long-term support of all investors, thinkstep has grown substantially and successfully transformed its business model into a software-as-a-service solution (SaaS).

Headquartered in Leinfelden-Echterdingen near Stuttgart, thinkstep was founded in 1991 as a provider of software and consulting services supporting companies globally in sustainability management and reducing their environmental footprint. In the last few years, thinkstep has continuously expanded its impressive customer base and now serves over 2,000 clients in 20 industries, including a large number of Fortune 500 companies in Germany and around the world.

thinkstep AG operates in three fields. Corporate Sustainability introduces and implements sustainability processes, such as enterprise-wide energy management, corporate social responsibility management and active resource optimization. Product Sustainability helps clients take account of environmental issues early in the design stage in order to fully integrate adequate measures into product management and production processes. thinkstep's Product Compliance solution identifies and mitigates compliance and reputation risks at an early stage.

Gimv first invested in thinkstep in 2010, acquiring a minority stake alongside Next47 with the aim to provide capital, know-how and connections to help the firm expand globally, strengthen its operations, and switching from a licence-based model to SaaS. Over time, Gimv and Next47 gradually increased their investment while some of the founders remained on board as minority shareholders. In this way, thinkstep has expanded to become a world-leading software provider in enterprise sustainability and compliance solutions. The exit of the current shareholders and the planned integration of the business into the operations of Sphera marks the next step in the company's successful development.

Dr. Sven Oleownik, Partner and Head of Germany at Gimv, says, *"Over the past few years, thinkstep has undergone a remarkable transformation and fundamentally converted its business model. Global activity and technological development have been driven forward, all on the back of an extremely loyal customer base. Rising expectations among both investors and consumers for companies to do business in an ethical and environmentally conscious way result in a highly attractive and rapidly expanding market for sustainability solutions. thinkstep is therefore ideally positioned for the future and will continue to extend its market leadership under its new owners."*

Lisa Hengerer, Associate at Gimv's Smart Industries platform in Munich, adds: *"thinkstep has been another success within the software segment of Gimv's Smart Industries platform. This sale to a global industrial player from the US is an excellent example how Gimv Smart Industries supports its portfolio companies in their strategic development and on their growth path to become attractive for an international renowned industrial player like Sphera Solutions."*

This exit has no major impact on the Net Asset Value of Gimv as of 31 March 2019. The transaction is subject to the usual conditions, including approval by the competition authorities. No further financial details on this transaction are being published.

ABOUT GIMV

Gimv is a European investment company, listed on Euronext Brussels, with almost 40 years' experience in private equity. The company currently has a portfolio of EUR 1.1 billion of investments in around 50 portfolio companies, with combined turnover of EUR 2.75 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.

Further information on Gimv can be found on www.gimv.com.

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