B4INVESTIMENTI

FERPER SPRINGS

B4 Investimenti enters the "safety critical" components segment for the automotive sector, supporting Fernando Perillo in the international expansion of Ferper Group

- *The investment involves a majority stake in Ferper Group, active in the production and commercialisation, on an international scale, of metal components with applications mainly in "safety critical" products for the automotive sector.*
- *The partnership with the entrepreneur Fernando Perillo and the management team led by the new Chief Executive Officer (and co-investor) Enrico Pilat aims at a further "step up" in Ferper Group's growth path, to be realised through the consolidation of the international footprint, leveraging especially Group's branches already operating in Mexico and in the United States.*
- *Through this fifth direct investment, B4 Investimenti SGR S.p.A. concludes the investment cycle of B4 H II - Fondo EuVECA, an AIF promoted and managed by the same and prepares for the launch of the third fund.*

Milan, 20 September 2024 – **B4 Investimenti SGR S.p.A.**, through B4 H II - Fondo EuVECA, **invested in Ferper Group** within a **growth capital transaction**, structured as a buy-out, conceived and realized **in partnership with** the **entrepreneur** and **founder Fernando Perillo**.

The transaction aims at **supporting the growth of Ferper Springs S.r.l.** and of the subsidiaries **Ferper Springs de Mexico S.r.l. de CV** and **Ferper Springs USA Inc.**, both nationally and internationally. The project includes a **significant investment plan** to increase the production capacity and to promote the commercial development, as well as the **strengthening** of the **management team**.

Enrico Pilat, top manager with a consolidated background in both corporate and M&A fields, will join the shareholders' structure and the management team to support the implementation of Ferper Group's development project as **Chief Executive Officer**.

With this **fifth direct investment of B4 H II - Fondo EuVECA**, B4 Investimenti **concludes** the **investment cycle of B4 H II** - Fondo EuVECA (second Alternative Investment Fund promoted and managed by itself) and prepares for the forthcoming **launch** of its **third fund**.

The **Closing** of the transaction occurred on **18 September 2024**, at Gianni & Origoni law firm offices in Milan, before the Notary Fabio Gaspare Pantè.

Ferper, established in 1994 in Bosisio Parini (LC), **produces and commercialises metal components such as springs, bars, pins and rods, mainly addressed to the automotive sector**. Its products are designed for "Tier 1" players active in the supply to OEMs of seats, brake systems, doors, seat belts and airbag systems (so-called "safety critical" components).

Ferper Group operates through **two production plants** in **Italy** and in **Mexico**, besides a **logistic and commercial facility close to Detroit (Michigan - USA)** for the North American market.

The Group can rely on a technically advanced production equipment, with about **100 machines installed** in Italy and Mexico, being constantly upgraded thanks to productive and technological investments (often carried out directly with the support of internal resources). With a **global workforce** of about **50 employees**, the Group realizes more than **150 million** "**components**" **annually**, based on design developed in direct coordination with customers.

The **partnership** between **Fernando Perillo** and **B4 Investimenti SGR S.p.A.** aims at **accelerating Ferper Group's growth**, promoting an important step up in terms of **size**, **management**, **organization and strategy**, with the possibility of **expanding in new markets** (e.g. electronics, electromechanical, medical and aerospace). In the medium term, the goal is to significantly **increase** the **business turnover**, benefiting both from a **favourable trend** in the specific niche and from **multi-year production plans** (so-called "**nominations**") **already defined** with the main customers, while maintaining a focus on the **historically high marginality**.

The shared **industrial plan**, one of the pillars at the basis of the partnership project, foresees an **investment plan of more than 5 million Euro**, functional to support the productive, strategic, commercial and operating development of the Group. This is flanked by the **strengthening of the management team** – through the entry of the **new CEO Enrico Pilat** and the valorisation of some key internal resources – and the **implementation** of a **corporate governance**, a **management-operating model** and **more** structured **company processes**. The project does not rule out the hypothesis of **growth by external lines**, with particular reference to the **US market**, also in light of some **contacts already initiated in the past months**.

Assuming partial growth by external lines, the **objective of the industrial plan** is to **triple** Group's **turnover** in the medium term, **targeting** a **turnover** potentially in the order of **40/50 million Euro** with an **EBITDA** close to **10 million Euro**.

Fabrizio Baroni, **Founding & Managing Partner** of **B4 Investimenti SGR S.p.A.**, underlines «the Ferper Group represents a true pocket-sized multinational, able to offer, to a notoriously demanding international customer base, a tailor-made approach, high quality standards, as well as speed of reaction and flexibility in facing changing operational needs, with a typical "problem solver" approach, which is particularly important in a niche such as "safety critical" components». Baroni continues: «we are thrilled to support Fernando, Enrico and the Ferper Group team in this new phase of a development path that has the ambitious goal of consolidating an Italian excellence as a leader on a global scale in its niche. This partnership model between entrepreneurship and private equity represents the authentic essence of B4's investment philosophy, which is clearly evident, moreover, in all the deals carried out over the years through our Funds».

Fernando Perillo, **entrepreneur** and **founder** of **Ferper Group**, highlights: «I express my utmost satisfaction for having identified in B4 a partner that will make it possible to complete the industrial project that started 35 years ago. Through the expansion and consolidation in the markets where Ferper Group is already present, with the support of the new partners there is the opportunity to accelerate expansion also through strategic acquisitions of companies active both in the sectors already covered and in adjacent areas. I would particularly like to thank the many employees who have believed in the industrial plan conducted so far, and to whom I am extremely grateful for the successes achieved so far. The challenge continues…».

Enrico Pilat, **Chief Executive Officer** of **Ferper Group**, highlights: «I am convinced that our partnership will make it possible to consolidate the solid market positioning and the undisputed reputation that Ferper Group already enjoys with the world's leading automotive players, enhancing them through a strategic development plan that could count on significant financial resources and a further strengthened operating team, with the ambitious objective of combining the distinctive qualities typical of excellent small and medium-sized Italian entrepreneurship with the skills and the managerial approach typical of the multinational contexts that Ferper Group will increasingly have to deal with».

For B4 Investimenti SGR S.p.A. the transaction was led by Fabrizio Baroni (Managing Partner), Beniamino Viscogliosi (Partner) and Jacopo Santin (Investment Manager).

B4 Investimenti SGR S.p.A. was advised by (i) Gianni & Origoni law firm (Andrea Mazziotti di Celso, Vittoria Sciarroni, Alessandro Magnifico, Roberta De Girolamo, Martina Maltese, Luca Porcu, Cristina Capitanio and Veruska Crucitti) for the legal due diligence and the legal aspects related to the negotiation of the contractual documents as well as the financing, (ii) PwC financial due diligence team (Federico Mussi, Sara Romani and Edoardo Prili) for accounting and financial aspects, (iii) Studio Gusmitta & Associati (Paolo Gusmitta, Cristina Gusmitta, Luca Ranieri and Silvana Iungo) for the tax & payroll due diligence on Ferper and the tax-corporate structuring of the deal, (iv) PWC Mexican tax due diligence team (Yazmin Caceres, Ludwin Cabrera, Brenda Nunez Velasco and Carla Sanchez) for the tax and labour-law aspects related to Ferper MEX and (v) Basham, Ringe y Correa law firm (Jesus Colunga, Monica Paulina Mora Avila, Arturo Carus Busto and Juan Jose Lopez) for the legal aspects related to Ferper MEX.

Ferper Group and its shareholders were advised by (i) LABS (Augusto Lippi, Angelo Facciolo and Matteo Verzicco) as financial advisor, (ii) Deloitte (Luca Zesi and Luca Furlotti) for the aspects related to the preparation of the financial vendor factbook, (iii) Valla, Morrison & Schachne (Antonio Valla and Daniela Morrison) for the aspects related to the preparation of the legal vendor due diligence on Ferper USA and (iv) LTA US Advisors (Filippo Amoroso) for the tax vendor due diligence on Ferper USA.

Banco BPM S.p.A. – advised by Greco, Vitali e Associati law firm (Chiara Langè, Matteo Miramondi, Dalila De Salvo and Silvia Massardo) – provided the financing functional to the realization of the transaction and the implementation of the related industrial plan.

***

B4 Investimenti
B4 Investimenti SGR S.p.A. is an independent asset management company operating in the private equity industry, established in 2012 in order to identify and invest in Italian SMEs characterized by good profitability, clear development prospects, strong vocation for internationalization and leading positioning in specific market (sub)segments in which "being Italian" represents a distinctive factor. B4 Investimenti invests the capital raised from Italian and international investors, including important entrepreneurs, managers and professionals, who share its investment strategy, characterized by a "hands-on" investment approach, which aims at actively contributing to the growth of portfolio companies, leveraging on certain characteristic development drivers such as the strengthening of the organizational and managerial structure, specific investment plans, the start (or the consolidation) of international expansion and the implementation (or the acceleration) of aggregative paths. The objective of B4 Investimenti is essentially to transform “small Italian excellences” from companies “with a mainly family and / or artisanal dimension” to “structured” companies, able to compete “at 360 degrees” – with the appropriate financial and managerial resources – in the global contexts of their relevant reference markets.
www.b4investimenti.it
LinkedIn B4

Ferper Springs
www.ferper.it
LinkedIn Ferper Springs