6. Share capital

Ordinary shares are classified as equity and the shares are fully paid up.

Shares acquired by Blue Label Telecoms for its own employees' equity compensation benefit scheme, as well as the shares procured by the subsidiaries in terms of this scheme, are accounted for as treasury shares in the Group statement of financial position.

	2016 Number of shares	2015 Number of shares	**2016 R'000**	2015 R'000
Authorised				
Total authorised share capital of ordinary shares (par value of R0.000001 each)	**1 000 000 000**	1 000 000 000	**1**	1
Issued				
Balance at the beginning of the year	**665 463 346**	663 896 358	*****	*
Shares acquired during the year	**(2 383 471)**	(2 252 420)	*****	*
Shares vested during the year	**3 163 359**	3 819 408	*****	*
Balance at the end of the year	**666 243 234**	665 463 346	*****	*****

** Less than R1 000.*

All issued shares are fully paid up.

The total number of shares in issue including shares held as treasury shares as at 31 May 2016 is 674 509 042 (2015: 674 509 042).

The Company acquired 2 383 471 (2015: 2 252 420) shares at an average price of R9.67 (2015: R8.49) on the JSE in order to grant forfeitable shares to employees and directors as part of the Group's forfeitable share plan.

The amount paid to acquire these shares was R23 052 001 (2015: R19 131 983) and has been deducted from shareholders' equity. These shares are held as treasury shares.

Refer to note 5.1 for details on the forfeitable shares.