



ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ



ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΗ ΠΡΟΣΤΑΣΙΑΣ  
ΤΟΥ ΑΝΤΑΓΩΝΙΣΜΟΥ

Decision CPC: 19/2020

Case Number: 8.13.020.11

**THE CONTROL OF CONCENTRATIONS BETWEEN ENTERPRISES LAW  
No. 83(I)/2014**

**Notification of concentration regarding the acquisition by Astrobank Public  
Company Ltd of the assets, liabilities and operations of the branch of Arab Jordan  
Investment Bank in Cyprus**

Commission for the Protection of Competition:

Mrs. Loukia Christodoulou	Chairperson
Mr. Andreas Karidis,	Member
Mr. Panayiotis Oustas,	Member
Mr. Aristos Aristidou Palouzas,	Member
Mr. Polinikis Panayiotis Charalambides	Member

Date of decision: 15 April 2020

**SUMMARY OF THE DECISION**

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2020, the Commission for the Protection of Competition (hereinafter the "Commission") received on behalf of AstroBank Public Company Limited (hereinafter "AstroBank ") a notification of a proposed concentration. The notification was filed according to Section 10 of the Control of Concentrations between Enterprises Law 83(I)/14 (hereinafter the "Law").

The notification concerns the acquisition by AstroBank of the assets, liabilities and operations of the branch of Arab Jordan Investment Bank in Cyprus (hereinafter the "AJIB" or the "Target").

AstroBank Public Company Limited is a credit institution that is supervised by the Central Bank of Cyprus. AstroBank Public Company Limited is active in the provision of banking services and insurance intermediation services. It is noted that on the basis of the Commission's Decision No 44/2018, AstroBank acquired the assets, liabilities and operations of USB Bank PLC (hereinafter 'USB'). Furthermore, on the basis of the Commission's Decision No 10/2020, AstroBank acquired the share capital of the National Bank of Greece (Cyprus) Ltd.

AJIB, which operates in Cyprus as a licensed branch of a foreign credit institution, of Arab Jordan Investment Bank SA, in accordance with the provisions of the Business of Credit Institutions Laws of 1997 to 2018, which is supervised by the Central Bank of Cyprus. The activity of this branch is the provision of banking services.

The transaction is based on a share sale and purchase agreement between AstroBank and National Bank of Greece S.A. dated 26/11/2019, (hereafter the "Agreement"). According to the Agreement, AstroBank will acquire the assets, liabilities and operations of the branch of Arab Jordan Investment Bank in Cyprus.

The Commission, taking into account the facts of the concentration, has concluded that this transaction constitutes a concentration within the meaning of section 6 (1)(a)(ii) of the Law, since it leads to a permanent change of control of the Target.

Furthermore, based on the information contained in the notification, the Commission found that the criteria set by section 3(2) (α) of the Law were satisfied and therefore the notified transaction was of major importance under the Law.

The Commission, for the purposes of evaluating this concentration, defined the relevant product/service market as (1) the provision of loan services, (2) the provision of deposit services, (3) the provision of insurance mediation services. For the purposes of the present case, the geographic market of the relevant markets was defined as that of the Republic of Cyprus.

According with the undertaking concerned, this concentration leads to a horizontal overlap in the markets (1) and (2). The post transaction market share in Cyprus for the (1) and (2) markets is less than 15%.

As regards to the relevant markets for the provision of insurance mediation services, this is a neighboring market, closely related to the provision of loan services, since these products belong to a range of products that are purchased by rule from the same customer group. Specifically, the client who will get a loan, in most cases, and certainly in the cases of a mortgage will need at the same time to purchase a life insurance and/or a general insurance to secure the loan.

The market shares of the parties in each one of the above relevant markets are below 25% and therefore do not constitute an affected market according to Annex I of the Law.

The Commission, on the basis of the factual and legal circumstances, unanimously decided that this concentration does not create or strengthen a dominant position and therefore the concentration does not raise serious doubts as to its compatibility with the operation of the competition in the market.

Therefore, the Commission, acting in accordance with section 22 of the Law, unanimously decided not to oppose the notified concentration and declare it as being compatible with the operation of the competition in the market.

LOUKIA CHRISTODOULOU  
Chairperson of the  
Commission for the Protection of Competition