

Case Number 8.13.014.14

**THE CONTROL OF CONCENTRATIONS
BETWEEN ENTERPRISES LAWS 1999 TO 2000**

Notification of concentration regarding the acquisition of a sector of CITIBANK
INTERNATIONAL PLC in Greece and the share capital of Diners Club of Greece Finance
Company SA, by Alpha Bank A.E.

Commission for the Protection of Competition:

Mrs. Loukia Christodoulou,	Chairperson
Mr. Andreas Karidis,	Member
Mrs. Eleni Karaoli,	Member
Mr. Charis Pastellis,	Member
Mr. Christos Tsingis,	Member

Date of decision: 18 July 2014

DECISION SUMMARY

On the 20th of June 2014, the Commission for the Protection of Competition (hereinafter the «Commission») received a notification on behalf of Alpha Bank A.E. (hereinafter «Alpha») in accordance with Section 13 of the Control of Concentrations between Enterprises Law (Number 22(I)/99) (hereinafter the «Law»).

The concentration was based on an agreement concerning the acquisition of a sector of CITIBANK INTERNATIONAL PLC (hereinafter « CITIBANK ») in Greece as well as the 100% of the share capital of Diners Club of Greece Finance Company SA (hereinafter the «Diners CO») by Alpha.

Alpha is a company duly registered under the laws of Greece. The said company is the mother company of Alpha Bank group of companies and is active in the banking and financial services sector. In Cyprus, Alpha is mainly active in the financial services sector through its subsidiaries, Alpha Bank Cyprus Ltd and Emporiki Bank Cyprus Ltd, as well as in the insurance sector through its subsidiary Alpha Insurance Ltd.

The sector of CITIBANK which consist one of the targets in this transaction includes the following:

- a) The activities related to payment cards, credit and debit,
- b) Retail banking and banking for small and medium enterprises,
- c) mediation in insurance products.

Diners CO which is the other target in this transaction is a company duly registered under the laws of Greece. The company operates in issuing and clearing cards with the International brand Diners and is licensed to carry out these transactions by Diners Club International Ltd.

The transaction is based on a business sale and transfer and shares sale and transfer agreement (hereinafter the «Agreement») between CITIBANK, Citibank Overseas Investment Corporation and Alpha Bank A.E. According to the said Agreement, Alpha will acquire the activities of retail banking of CITIBANK in Greece and the 100% of the share capital of Diners CO.

The Commission, taking into account the above facts and events concerning this concentration has concluded that this transaction constitutes a concentration within the meaning of section 4(1)(b) of the Law, since Alpha will acquire the control of Diners CO and the retail banking sector of CITIBANK in Greece.

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

The relevant product market in this case was defined as the provision of banking services which is divided into the following sub-markets: (1) banking products/services for individual customers (retail banking) (2) banking products/services for enterprises (corporate banking) (3) payment cards (4) mutual funds (5) mediation in insurance products. The geographic market for all the relevant product/services markets in this case was defined as the Republic of Cyprus.

The target sector of CITIBANK as well as Diners CO do not have any activities in Cyprus. Alpha is active in Cyprus through its subsidiaries. Therefore there is no horizontal or vertical overlap in Cyprus and thus there is no affected market.

The Commission, on the basis of the factual and legal circumstances, unanimously decided that this concentration does not create or strengthen a dominant position as there is no affected market and therefore the concentration does not raise serious doubts as to its compatibility with the competitive market.

Therefore, the Commission, acting in accordance with section 18 of the Law, unanimously decided not to oppose the notified concentration and declare it as being compatible with the requirements of the competitive market.

Loukia Christodoulou

Chairman of the Commission for the Protection of Competition