

The Belgian Competition Authority confirms having opened an investigation into the Batopin project

The Investigation and Prosecution Service of the Belgian Competition Authority is currently investigating the agreement to pool the ATMs of the four largest banks in the country into a single network managed by the company Batopin.

The purpose of the investigation is to determine whether and to what extent the Batopin project affects the quality of cash distribution and deposit services, as well as competition between retail banking service providers, in the light of Article IV.1 of the Code of Economic Law and Article 101 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, which prohibit anti-competitive agreements between companies.

The opening of an investigation does not mean that the companies involved are guilty of anti-competitive behaviour and does not prejudice the course and outcome of the investigation, which is still at a preliminary stage.

The duration of the investigation depends on a number of factors, including the degree of complexity of the case, the cooperation of the undertakings concerned and the exercise of the rights of defence.

For more information you may contact:

Damien Gerard

Prosecutor-general

Tel: +32 (2) 277 76 57

E-mail: damien.gerard@bma-abc.be

Website: [www. www. belgiancompetition.be](http://www.belgiancompetition.be)

The Belgian Competition Authority (BCA) is an independent administrative authority that contributes to the definition and implementation of competition policy in Belgium. Concretely, the BCA pursues anti-competitive practices, such as cartels and abuses of a dominant position, and reviews the main merger operations. The BCA cooperates with the other competition authorities of the member states of the European Union and the European Commission within the European Competition Network (ECN)