

The Belgian Competition Authority approves the acquisition of sole control of Visser & Smit Hanab NV by Verbraeken Drilling Infra NV

On 19 April 2023, the Belgian Competition Authority (BCA) approved the acquisition of sole control of Visser & Smit Hanab NV (hereinafter “Visser & Smit”) by Verbraeken Drilling Infra NV (hereinafter “Verbraeken”).

The proposed transaction was notified on 29 Mars 2023 and the application of the simplified procedure was requested.

Verbraeken belongs to the group whose central holding company is We Connect Infra NV (hereinafter "We Connect Infra Group"). The We Connect Infra Group operates in the market for the construction of civil engineering works for utilities, which is a subdivision of the wider construction market. We Connect Infra Group thus mainly provides civil engineering construction services for utilities in Belgium and also operates in France, the Netherlands and Germany.

Visser & Smit is a provider of engineering, construction and maintenance of above-ground and underground infrastructure and is mainly active in the installation and maintenance of pipes and installations for sewage/water, industrial pipes and installations, gas and district heating. Visser & Smit is mainly active in Flanders and to a lesser extent in the Brussels Region and Wallonia.

In its decision of 19 April 2023, the BCA finds that the conditions for the application of the simplified procedure are met, that effective competition in the relevant markets is not significantly impeded and that the notified concentration does not raise any objections.

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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)