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PUBLIC VERSION

In the published version of this decision, some information has been omitted pursuant to Article 17(2) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 concerning non-disclosure of business secrets and other confidential information. The omissions are shown thus […]. Where possible the information omitted has been replaced by ranges of figures or a general description.

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Subject: Case M.12394 – CPPIB / EQUINIX / ATNORTH
Commission decision pursuant to Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation No 139/2004 ([1]) and Article 57 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area ([2])

Dear Sir or Madam,

(1) On 6 July 2026, the European Commission received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of the Merger Regulation by which Canada Pension Plan Investment Board ('**CPPIB**', Canada) and Equinix EMEA BV (Netherlands) ultimately controlled by Equinix, Inc. ('**Equinix**', United States,

([1]) OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1 (the 'Merger Regulation'). With effect from 1 December 2009, the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ('TFEU') has introduced certain changes, such as the replacement of 'Community' by 'Union' and 'common market' by 'internal market'. The terminology of the TFEU will be used throughout this decision.

([2]) OJ L 1, 3.1.1994, p. 3 (the 'EEA Agreement').

and, together with CPPIB, the '**Notifying Parties**') will acquire within the meaning of Articles 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation joint control over Green DC LuxCo S.à r.l. (Luxembourg), SEKCO AB, SEKCO2AB and Green DC AB (all of Sweden and, with Green DC LuxCo S.à r.l., collectively referred to as '**atNorth**' or the '**Target**') (the '**Transaction**') ([3]). CPPIB, Equinix and atNorth are designated hereinafter as the '**Parties**'.

1. THE PARTIES

(2) **CPPIB** is an investment management organisation that invests the funds transferred to it by the Canada Pension Plan fund. CPPIB owns a portfolio of companies across a variety of sectors, including in the operation of data centres. In 2024, CPPIB generated revenues of approximately EUR [financial information] worldwide, of which EUR [...] in the EU. ([4])

(3) **Equinix** is a publicly traded company listed on NASDAQ whose primary business is the design, build-out and operation of colocation data centres. ([5]) Equinix also provides interconnection and managed IT infrastructure services to its data centre customers. The company operates 270 data centres globally. In 2025, Equinix generated revenues of approximately EUR 8.3 billion worldwide, of which approximately EUR [...] in the EU.

(4) **atNorth** is a data centre owner and operator with sites in Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden, and planned sites in Norway ([6]). atNorth currently services approximately 100 clients focusing on retail and wholesale demand (with a specific focus on high-density needs within the retail and wholesale space), but its sites are configured for high-capacity deployments. In 2025, atNorth generated revenues of approximately EUR [...] worldwide, of which EUR [...] in the EU (Denmark, Finland and Sweden) and EUR [...] in Iceland. atNorth is currently controlled by private individuals and funds and access vehicles managed by Partners Group, a public company incorporated in Switzerland and traded on the SIX Swiss Exchange.

2. THE OPERATION AND CONCENTRATION

(5) On 26 February 2026, CPPIB, Equinix and atNorth's current shareholders entered into a Share Purchase Agreement according to which CPPIB and Equinix, via a joint venture (Avalon Topco Limited, '**JVCo**'), will acquire 100% of the shares in the Target. Although the exact ownership interests may still change due to some possible reinvestments by the Target's current shareholders, CPPIB and Equinix intend to own 60% and 40% of the shares in JVCO respectively. ([7])

(6) According to a JV Equity Terms Agreement entered into between CPPIB and Equinix, [details of the corporate structure of the Transaction]. ([8])

([3]) OJ C, C/ 2026/3797, 15.7.2026.
([4]) CPPIB's FY25 turnover is not yet available.
([5]) Equinix is also active in the operation of data centres via xScale, a joint venture in which it holds [details of business holdings].
([6]) [Details of planned future investments].
([7]) As part of the Transaction, Equinix and atNorth will enter into an offtake agreement [details of the corporate structure of the Transaction].
([8]) [Details of the corporate structure of the Transaction].

(7) Therefore, CPPIB and Equinix will acquire joint control over the Target and the Transaction constitutes a concentration within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation.

3. UNION DIMENSION

(8) The undertakings concerned have a combined aggregate world-wide turnover of more than EUR 5 000 million (EUR [...]) and two of them have a EU-wide turnover of more than EUR 250 million (CPPIB: EUR [...]; Equinix: EUR [...]) ([9]). None of them achieve more than two-thirds of their aggregate Union-wide turnover within one and the same Member State. The notified operation therefore has a Union dimension.

4. RELEVANT MARKETS

4.1. Introduction

(9) Equinix and atNorth both provide third-party data centre colocation services in the EEA. Equinix operates data centre facilities in many countries in the EEA, with limited presence in the Nordic region in Sweden and Finland, ([10]) while atNorth owns and operates data centres exclusively in the Nordic region, namely Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden, and has planned sites in Norway.

(10) Third-party data centre colocation services allow customers to rent space in a data centre to install their own IT equipment, while also paying for the electricity and services used to operate that equipment. These services are referred to as "colocation services" because several customers use the same data centre. Traditionally, colocation services have been used by cloud and IT services providers, content and digital media providers, network providers and financial services providers and enterprise customers. However, in light of technological advances, colocation services are also increasingly serving very large technological companies to run very large cloud platforms, AI workloads, content distribution systems and global-scale digital services.

(11) On this basis, the Commission has primarily assessed the horizontal relationship arising between atNorth and Equinix for the supply of third-party data centre colocation services, where the Transaction gives rise to one horizontally affected market for the supply of third-party data centre colocation services in Helsinki. ([11])

(12) Third-party data centre colocation services typically include interconnection services, which comprises cross-connects within a data centre or between data centres. The Commission considers that the provision of interconnection services is a relevant element to take into account to assess the competitive impact of the Transaction.

(13) Cross-connects can be used in data centres to connect customers to Internet Exchange Points ('**IXPs**'). Data centre customers require connectivity to the Internet and to other networks and therefore typically purchase connectivity

([9]) Turnover calculated in accordance with Article 5 of the Merger Regulation.

([10]) Equinix [details of business strategy] following the implementation of the Offtake Agreement with atNorth, as further described below.

([11]) Even if the Parties are both present in Stockholm, their combined market shares are under 25%. Hence, the flexibility clause under point 8 of the Notice for Simplified Procedure applies.

services from network providers, which they access through cross-connects. IXPs are facilities that enable multiple network operators, Internet service providers, cloud providers, and content providers to interconnect and exchange internet traffic directly through peering.

4.2. Market for supply of third-party data centre colocation services

4.2.1. Product market definition

4.2.1.1. The Commission's previous practice

(14) The supply of third-party colocation services entails the supply of building, power, cooling, connectivity and security services in data centres (dedicated facilities, sometimes purpose-built) in which companies house and operate IT equipment that supports their business (such as servers and data storage). Colocation services can be provided in-house or by third-party providers. ([12])

(15) The Commission previously identified a relevant market for the supply of third-party colocation services (*i.e.*, excluding in-house data centres), without segmenting between (i) carrier-neutral and carrier-owned data centres, (ii) wholesale and retail colocation services, or (iii) by customer type. ([13])

(16) Further, the Commission has considered whether interconnection services (*i.e.*, connections via physical cable between the IT equipment of a data centre customer and that of another customer of the same data centre) and managed IT services (*i.e.*, simple operations or maintenance tasks on behalf of data centre customers) could constitute separate markets. The Commission noted, in that respect, that interconnection services and managed IT services are part of the services that are typically provided by data centres operators on top of and in addition to colocation services; hence, the Commission considered that it was not necessary to assess the existence of possible separate markets for the provision of these services. ([14])

4.2.1.2. The Notifying Parties' views

(17) The Notifying Parties agree with the Commission's precedent that there is a single product market for the provision of retail and wholesale colocation services, without segmenting between carrier-neutral and carrier-owned data centres, between wholesale and retail colocation services, or by customer type. ([15])

(18) Furthermore, the Notifying Parties consider that the supply of traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services should be distinguished from the supply of high-capacity data centre services (defined as data centres able to offer 10 MW of deployment requirement per customer). Specifically, the Notifying Parties argue (i) limited demand-side substitutability due to materially different customer requirements for power, scalability, latency, location and level of services,

([12]) *See* Commission decision of 13 November 2015 in M.7678 – *Equinix / Telecity,* para. 6.

([13]) *See* for example Commission decision of 13 November 2015 in M.7678 – *Equinix/Telecity*, paras. 15-26 and 30-37, Commission decision of 19 July 2017 in M.8251 – *Bite / Tele2/Telia Lietuva/JV*, paras. 47 and 72, Commission decision of 7 July 2020 in M.9843 – *Colony Capital/PSP/NGD*, paras. 22 and 27, and Commission decision of 11 November 2022 in M.10875 – *AXA IM/Swiss Life/Morrison & CO/Lyntia Networks*, paras. 25 and 28.

([14]) *See* for example Commission decision of 13 November 2015 in M.7678 – *Equinix/Telecity* paras. 7-8 and Commission decision of 7 July 2020 in M.9843 – *Colony Capital/PSP/NGD*, paras. 20 and 22.

([15]) Form CO, paras. 6.69 et seq.

(ii) limited supply-side substitutability as high-capacity data centres require much higher power capacity, and necessitate higher upfront capital commitments and costs, (iii) different contracting practices as high-capacity sites are generally contracted in advance for the entire site or large phases of a campus with future customers often involved in the design/specifications of the data centre (whereas capacity at data centres targeting traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services is negotiated only after the data centre has started to be built), and (iv) different construction requirements as data centres aimed at high-capacity demand are designed and built specifically to meet the distinct requirements for the provision of high-capacity services and high-capacity services can be provided by on-premises and in-houses data centres, which is not the case by traditional (retail and wholesale) services (as stated by the Commission in *Equinix/Telecity*). ([16])

(19) The Notifying Parties submit that the 10 MW threshold for categorising data centres as offering high-capacity services is only indicative, ([17]) and relates to the amount of IT power an individual customer requires under a particular contract, it is not measured in terms of the overall IT capacity of a site. Therefore, the Notifying Parties submit that the categorising of data centres should be done on the basis of the type of services it offers to customers as opposed to the overall size and IT capacity of a site (a data centre with an overall site capacity of 20 MW but servicing 20 customers each requiring 1 MW of IT power would thus be classified as providing traditional (retail and wholesale) services).

4.2.1.3. The Commission's assessment

(20) The majority of customers and competitors who replied to the market investigation indicated that the Commission's previous market definition on colocation services provided by third-party data centres (excluding in-house data centres) which would comprise all type of deployments (MW) and in-colocation services does not reflect the current market reality (hereinafter, the '**overall market for colocation services**'). ([18])

(21) The majority of respondents who responded to the market investigation indicated that they consider that a market segmentation exists between (i) third-party data centre traditional colocation services (comprising retail and wholesale colocation services, hereinafter the '**traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services**') and (ii) third-party data centre high-capacity colocation services (hereinafter, the '**high-capacity colocation services**'). ([19]) As one respondent notes "*traditional and high-capacity colocation services address materially different customer requirements and are not readily substitutable*". ([20])

(22) This market segmentation is supported by traditional and high-capacity colocation services' differing use cases and requirements. Respondents note that **traditional colocation services (comprising retail and wholesale colocation services)** continue to serve conventional enterprise, network and cloud workloads. ([21]) Whereas conversely, **high-capacity colocation services** comprise colocation

([16]) Form CO, paragraphs 6.84 et seq.
([17]) [Identity of a market participant] uses a 15 MW threshold to define high-capacity services. Form CO, para. 6.39.
([18]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.1.
([19]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.2.
([20]) Reply to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.2.1.
([21]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.2.

services designed to accommodate very large-scale deployments (typically multi-MW), characterised by requirements such as substantial power capacity, high-rack densities, dedicated infrastructure and significant expansion capability. ([22])

(23) As one respondent notes, "*high-capacity deployments differ from traditional colocation services in power scale, rack density, cooling technology and commercial structure*" and that *"multi-MW AI and HPC deployments require direct liquid cooling, dedicated data halls and secured grid capacity, with latency and interconnection secondary*" while "*traditional colocation is driven by proximity, connectivity and flexibility*". Another respondent explains that the distinction between traditional colocation services and high-capacity colocation services is technical as "*high-capacity colocation for AI/HPC is built around far higher rack densities and liquid cooling*", operational as "*multi-MW deployments require dedicated infrastructure (large contiguous power blocks, grid connections, expansion headroom) (...) rather than the interconnection density and latency that drive traditional colocation demand*" and commercial as "*high-capacity involves long-term, build-to-suit, per-MW contracts (...) whereas traditional colocation uses shorter standardised per-rack/kW contracts across a broad enterprise base*". ([23])

(24) This market segmentation is also supported by the differing factors driving customers to traditional or high-capacity colocation services. Other than price and contract length and flexibility, the main factors driving **traditional colocation (retail and wholesale)** services are location, low-latency, expansion possibilities, connectivity to network providers, direct internet access, and interconnection services. On the other hand, beyond price and contract length and flexibility, **high-capacity services** are mostly chosen based on cooling capabilities, high power densities, dedicated data halls, and expansion possibilities.

(25) Nevertheless, the market investigation has yielded mixed results as regards the project capacity threshold distinguishing traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services from high-capacity data centre colocation services. Respondents identified a variety of project capacity thresholds. Among the proposed ranges, thresholds between 5 MW and 20 MW were frequently identified, with responses clustered around the 10 MW mark. Nevertheless, some respondents also considered lower thresholds (1-5 MW) or higher thresholds (above 20 MW) to be appropriate. Finally, some respondents indicated that criteria other than project power capacity may be more appropriate for distinguishing between the two types of services, such as rack power density. ([24]) As one respondent notes "*the boundary is one of degree rather than a bright line*". ([25])

(26) As regards **interconnection service**s, there is no evidence on the file to support a departure from the Commission's previous decisional practice. In particular, interconnection services are considered by many respondents as one of the key features of colocation services and in particular, traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services. As one respondent notes "*interconnection density and latency (...) drive traditional colocation demand*". Other respondent states that "*traditionally, data centres were used to carry individual customer connections*

([22]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.2.
([23]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.2.1.
([24]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.3.
([25]) Reply to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.2.1.

not interconnections between operators". ([26]) Accordingly, interconnection services are considered to form part of the market for colocation services.

(27) For the purposes of this Decision, the Commission concludes that it can be left open whether the market for colocation services provided by third party data centres (excluding in-house data centres) should be further divided between traditional (retail and wholesale) and high-capacity colocation services, as the assessment of the Transaction remains the same irrespective of the exact product market considered.

4.2.2. Geographic market definition

4.2.2.1. The Commission's previous practice

(28) The Commission previously considered the geographic scope of the market for the supply of third-party overall colocation services to correspond to a radius of around 50 km from the centre of the relevant city. ([27])

4.2.2.2. The Notifying Parties' views

(29) The Notifying Parties submit that the market for the supply of traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services should not have a strict 50 km radius. While demand continues to be sensitive to geographic proximity, improved fibre infrastructure, in particular in Nordic countries, means that certain data centres can compete for customers even if located further away than 50 km (for example at 90 km). ([28])

(30) For the potential market for the supply of high-capacity data centre services, the Notifying Parties submit this should be at least national in scope because (i) the type of large compute workloads for which such data centres are designed do not demand low-latency external connectivity, and (ii) geographic proximity to facilitate physical access to carry out equipment installation or replacement is a lower priority. ([29])

4.2.2.3. The Commission's assessment

(31) As regards the overall market for colocation services, the market investigation yielded mixed results, with respondents identifying geographic markets ranging from a 50 km radius around the Helsinki metropolitan area to a radius of 200 km. The mixed results appear to reflect the fact that respondents' views cover both traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services and high-capacity data centre colocation services, for which the geographic market may differ. ([30]) The most selected options by the respondents that expressed a view were the 50 km radius and 100 km radius. However, respondents that selected the 100 km radius also

([26]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.A.2.1.

([27]) *See* for example Commission decision of 13 November 2015 in M.7678 – *Equinix/Telecity*, paras. 15-26 and 30-37, Commission decision of 19 July 2017 in M.8251 – *Bite/Tele2/Telia Lietuva/JV*, paras. 47 and 72, Commission decision of 7 July 2020 in case M.9843 – *Colony Capital/PSP/NGD*, paras. 22 and 27, and Commission decision of 11 November 2022 in M.10875 – *AXA IM/Swiss Life/Morrison & CO/Lyntia Networks*, paras. 25 and 28.

([28]) Form CO, paras. 6.81-6.83.

([29]) Form CO, paras. 6.93-6.96.

([30]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.B.1.

signalled that the 100 km radius is relevant with regard to potential back-up sites (while "*active data [needs to be] inside the low-latency (within 50 km)*"). ([31])

(32) In conclusion, for the purposes of this Decision, the Commission considers that the relevant geographic market for the overall market for colocation services is a 50 km radius around the Helsinki metropolitan area. This is because most respondents expressing a view identified a 50 km radius as the relevant geographic market. While some respondents indicated that the geographic market could extend up to 100 km, this appears to relate primarily to back-up or disaster recovery sites rather than customers' primary colocation requirements.

(33) Distinguishing between traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services and high-capacity colocation services, the majority of respondents expressing a view considered a 50 km radius around the Helsinki metropolitan area to constitute the relevant geographic market for traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services. ([32])

(34) For the purposes of this Decision, the Commission considers that the relevant geographic market for the narrower market for traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services is a 50 km radius around the Helsinki metropolitan area.

(35) As regards high-capacity colocation services, the market investigation yielded mixed results. Nevertheless, among respondents expressing a view, the most frequently identified geographic markets were national and regional in scope, with an equal proportion of respondents considering each to be the relevant geographic market. ([33])

(36) For the purposes of this Decision, the Commission considers that even if the market investigation indicates that the relevant geographical market for high-capacity colocation services is at least national, and may be regional, the exact geographic market definition can be left open, as the Transaction does not raise serious doubts as to its compatibility with the internal market under any plausible geographic market definition, including the narrowest plausible market definition (national markets). ([34])

5. COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT

5.1. Introduction

(37) The Transaction results in a horizontally affected market as regards the overall market for the supply of colocation services in Helsinki metro area (50 km), or the potentially narrower segment for the supply of traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services in Helsinki metro area (50 km). ([35]) While both

([31]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.B.1.
([32]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.B.1.
([33]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question D.B.1.
([34]) The Commission notes that the Parties are currently not active in the potential market for high-capacity colocation services in Finland and will only enter the market in 2027. Hence, the potential market for high-capacity colocation services in Finland is not an affected market and will not further be discussed in this decision.
([35]) The Commission notes that Equinix provides its own IXPs and hosts third-party IXPs in its data centres in Finland while atNorth does not supply its own Internet Exchange services nor does it host any third-party Internet Exchange points in its data centres. Instead, atNorth's customers select third-party carriers that provide direct internet access. Therefore, the Transaction could also give rise to conglomerate links as a result of Equinix's activities in the supply of IXPs, which is closely related to the neighbouring market for the supply of overall colocation services. The Commission

Parties are also present in Sweden, the Transaction does not give rise to affected markets due to the limited horizontal overlaps in this country. Further, atNorth also supplies colocation services in Denmark and Iceland but the Transaction does not give rise to any affected markets in these countries as Equinix currently does not supply colocation services in these markets, [details of business strategy]. ([36])

(38) atNorth operates two data centre sites in Helsinki metro area – FIN01-03 (installed capacity [capacity figure] IT MW, available capacity [capacity figure] IT MW) and FIN02 (installed capacity [capacity figure] IT MW, available capacity [capacity figure] IT MW). ([37]) atNorth has recently increased its installed capacity at FIN02 (from [capacity figure] IT MW in Q1 2025 to [capacity figure] IT MW in Q1 2026) and is continues to expand this installed capacity in order to bring an additional [capacity figure] MW of capacity to market by 2027-year-end, and a further [capacity figure] MW of capacity after January 2028. ([38])

(39) Equinix operates five data centre sites in Helsinki metro area – HE3 (installed capacity [capacity figure] IT MW, available capacity [capacity figure] IT MW ([39])), HE4 (installed capacity [capacity figure] IT MW, available capacity [capacity figure] IT MW), HE5 (installed capacity [capacity figure] IT MW, available capacity [capacity figure] IT MW), HE6 (installed capacity [capacity figure] IT MW, available capacity [capacity figure] IT MW) and HE7 (installed capacity [capacity figure] IT MW, available capacity [capacity figure] IT MW). ([40]) [Details of business strategy]. ([41])

5.2. Transaction rationale

(40) The stated rationale on the part of Equinix is to serve demand for high-capacity services in the Nordics. Specifically, as demand for data centre colocation services is expected to grow, and in light of a recent strategic shift of atNorth's to focus on high-capacity services, Equinix states that the Transaction would fill a significant gap in its current offering. For CPPIB, the Transaction represents an investment opportunity.

(41) For atNorth, the Transaction stated rationale is to obtain financial backing and access to Equinix's global expertise in delivering data centre solutions which would enable it to compete more effectively with rivals active across the Nordics.

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does not consider that the Transaction gives rise to serious doubts as to its compatibility with the internal market as a result of this conglomerate link given that the merged entity would not have market power in the market for the supply of third-party data centre colocation services in Helsinki metro area, (overall and traditional (retail and wholesale)) (see Section 5.3.3), and Equinix's market share remains below 30% for the supply of IXPs on any possible geographic market in Finland, as stated in the Form CO, Annex 11, paragraph 1.11.

([36]) Form CO, paragraph 6.19 and footnote 70.

([37]) Form CO, Table 6.19.

([38]) Form CO, Tables 6.20 and 6.21. atNorth also has a data centre site under active development, FIN04, which is approximately 137km from Helsinki and which has a planned capacity by end of 2027 of [capacity figure] MW (and a potential [capacity figure] MW on a longer basis). Form CO, paragraph 6.229.

([39]) All capacity referred to relates to the situation in Q1 of 2026.

([40]) Form CO, Table 6.18.

([41]) Form CO, paragraph 6.224.

5.3. Horizontal assessment

5.3.1. Legal framework

(42) The Horizontal Merger Guidelines describe two main ways in which horizontal mergers may significantly impede effective competition. In particular, the proposed concentration might be creating or strengthening a dominant position: (i) by eliminating important competitive constraints on one or more firms, which consequently would have increased market power, without resorting to coordinated behaviour (non-coordinated effects); and (ii) by changing the nature of competition in such a way that firms that previously were not coordinating their behaviour, are significantly more likely to coordinate and raise prices or otherwise harm effective competition (coordinated effects). ([42])

(43) A merger giving rise to horizontal non-coordinated effects might significantly impede effective competition by creating or strengthening the dominant position of a single firm, one which, typically, would have an appreciably larger market share than the next competitor post-merger. Moreover, also mergers that do not lead to the creation or the strengthening of a single firm's dominant position may create competition concerns under the substantive test set out in Article 2(2) and Article 2(3) of the Merger Regulation. Regarding mergers in oligopolistic markets, the Merger Regulation clarifies that "*under certain circumstances, concentrations involving the elimination of important competitive constraints that the merging parties exerted upon each other, as well as a reduction of competitive pressure on the remaining competitors, may, even in the absence of a likelihood of coordination between the members of the oligopoly, result in a significant impediment to effective competition*". ([43])

(44) The Horizontal Merger Guidelines list a number of factors which may influence whether or not significant horizontal non-coordinated effects are likely to result from a merger, such as the large market shares of the merging firms, the fact that the merging firms are close competitors, the limited possibilities for customers to switch suppliers, the unlikeliness of competitors to increase supply, the inability of competitors to expand, or the fact that the merger would eliminate an important competitive force. Not all those factors need to be present to make significant non-coordinated effects likely and it is not an exhaustive list. ([44])

5.3.2. Market shares

(45) In the assessment of the effects of a merger, market shares constitute a useful first indication of the structure of the markets at stake and of the competitive position of the relevant market players. ([45])

(46) In the following tables, the Commission presents the market shares of atNorth and Equinix to the extent these are relevant to the Commission's horizontal assessment.

([42]) Horizontal Merger Guidelines, paragraph 22.
([43]) Merger Regulation, recital 25. Similar wording is also found in paragraph 25 of the Horizontal Merger Guidelines.
([44]) Horizontal Merger Guidelines, paragraph 26-36.
([45]) Horizontal Merger Guidelines, paragraph 14.

(47) Table 1 provides an overview of market shares by revenue in 2024-2026 for atNorth, Equinix and their main competitors in the overall market for colocation services 50 km around Helsinki metro area. ([46])

Table 1: Market shares for the overall market for colocation services by revenue and by total installed capacity in 50 km radius around Helsinki 2024-2026

	2024 revenue	**2024 installed capacity**	**2025 revenue**	**2025 installed capacity**	**2026 installed capacity**
atNorth	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[10-20]%
Equinix	[30-40]%	[30-40]%	[20-30]%	[20-30]%	[20-30]%
Combined	**[30-40]%**	**[30-40]%**	**[30-40]%**	**[30-40]%**	**[30-40]%**
Telia	[10-20]%	[10-20]%	[10-20]%	[20-30]%	[30-40]%
Hetzner Online	[0-5]%	[20-30]%	[0-5]%	[20-30]%	[10-20]%
Elisa	n/a	[5-10]%	n/a	[5-10]%	[0-5]%
Verne Global	[5-10]%	[10-20]%	[5-10]%	[5-10]%	[5-10]%
Vivicta/Tietoevry	n/a	[0-5]%	n/a	[0-5]%	[0-5]%
Digita	n/a	[0-5]%	n/a	[0-5]%	[0-5]%
Datalahti	n/a	[0-5]%	n/a	[0-5]%	[0-5]%
DNA	n/a	[0-5]%	n/a	[0-5]%	[0-5]%
GlobalConnect	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%

Source: Form CO, Annex 19

(48) Table 2 provides an overview of market shares based on expected total capacity in 2027 and 2028, both for the narrower market for the supply traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services as well as the overall market for colocation services as forward-looking market shares differ between the two potential markets.

Table 2: Market shares for market for overall colocation services and traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services in Helsinki metro area by expected total installed capacity 2027-2028

	Overall market for colocation services		**Traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services**	
	2027E	**2028E**	**2027E**	**2028E**
atNorth	[20-30]%	[10-20]%	[5-10]%	[5-10]%
Equinix	[10-20]%	[5-10]%	[10-20]%	[10-20]%
Combined	**[40-50]%**	**[20-30]%**	**[20-30]%**	**[20-30]%**
Prime Data Centers	n/a	[20-30]%	n/a	n/a
Heim Data Centers	n/a	[20-30]%	n/a	n/a
Telia	[20-30]%	[10-20]%	[20-30]%	[20-30]%
Hetzner Online	[20-30]%	[10-20]%	[20-30]%	[20-30]%
Elisa	[5-10]%	[0-5]%	[10-20]%	[10-20]%
Verne Global	[5-10]%	[0-5]%	[5-10]%	[5-10]%
Viviicta/Tietoevry	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%
Digita	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%
Datalahti	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%
DNA	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%
GlobalConnect	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%	[0-5]%

Source: Form CO, Annex 19

([46]) According to the Notifying Parties' submission, atNorth and Equinix's market shares 2024-2026 would be the same on the narrower potential market for traditional (retail and wholesale) data centre colocation services in Helsinki metro area. Form CO, Annex 19.

(49) Table 3 below provides an overview of the Notifying Parties' best estimate market shares for atNorth, Equinix and their main competitors' looking at spare power. ([47]) Spare power represents the capacity each provider has available to supply to customers.

Table 3: Market shares for the overall market for colocation services and traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services in Helsinki metro area by spare power 2026

	Spare power
atNorth	[20-30]%
Equinix	[10-20]%
Combined	**[30-40]%**
Telia	[20-30]%
Verne Global	[5-10]%
Elisa	[10-20]%
Vivicta	[10-20]%

Source: Form CO, Annex 9

5.3.3. Horizontal non-coordinated effects

5.3.3.1. The Notifying Parties' view

(50) The Notifying Parties submit that the Transaction will not give rise to competition concerns on the overall market for colocation services or a potentially narrower segment for the traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services for the following reasons.

(51) **First**, the Notifying Parties submit that atNorth and Equinix's combined market share in terms of current (2026) installed capacity is modest ([30-40]%) and several competitors will continue to exert competitive pressure on the merged entity post-Transaction (including Telia with [30-40]%, Hetzner Online with [10-20]%, Verne Global with [5-10]% and Elisa with [5-10]%, followed by a tail of smaller competitors that are also able to compete). ([48])

(52) **Second**, as a result of competitors' future capacity expansions, these competitors will continue to pose competitive constraints on the combined entity post-Transaction. In response to a high growth in demand for capacity, significant new supply is coming to the market, as a result of which those competitors could absorb any demand diverted from the combined entity if it attempts to increase prices post-Transaction. ([49])

(53) **Third**, the Notifying Parties argue that they are not each other's closest competitors in the market for the supply of third-party traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services in Helsinki as they focus on different service offerings. Whereas Equinix targets retail customers seeking smaller deployments (therefore also providing more expansive managed solutions and connectivity), atNorth is focused on larger retail and wholesale customers who have higher

([47]) While the Commission previously considered that shares based on revenue and installed capacity were the most appropriate starting point for as regards colocation services, it has also taken into account market shares based on spare power capacity in its competitive assessment. *See* for example Commission decision of 13 November 2015 in case M.7678 – *Equinix / Telecity,* paragraph 48. The Notifying Parties refer to significant challenges in estimating competitors' spare capacity and market shares on this basis due to a lack of reliable third-party data. The Commission nonetheless considers these figures as a useful indicator.

([48]) Form CO, paragraphs 6.246-6.248 and 6.284-6.285 and Tables 6.21 and 6.25.

([49]) Form CO, paragraphs 6.252-6.253 and 6.264-6.266.

density requirements and therefore also provides a more limited services offering. ([50])

(54) **Fourth**, recent new and announced future entries show that there are low barriers to entry and expansion. ([51])

(55) **Fifth**, high-capacity data centres can compete for traditional (retail and wholesale) data centre demand in Helsinki and pose an out-of-market constraint to the extent that the relevant data centre site is left with unutilised pockets of capacity. ([52])

5.3.3.2. Commission's assessment

(56) The Commission considers that, for the reasons set out below, the Transaction does not raise serious doubts as to its compatibility with the internal market as a result of non-coordinated horizontal effects, either in the overall market for colocation services or in a narrower market for traditional (retail and wholesale) supply of such colocation services, in the metro area around Helsinki (50 km).

(57) **First**, while atNorth's and Equinix's combined shares exceed 30%, the increment resulting from the Transaction is not consistently high.

(58) atNorth and Equinix's combined share on the overall market for the supply of third-party data centre colocation services in Helsinki metro area in 2025 amounts to [30-40]% on the basis of installed capacity and [30-40]% on the basis of revenues while the increment resulting from the Transaction is small ([0-5]% and [0-5]% respectively).

(59) While the Parties' combined installed capacity-based shares on the market for the supply of data centre colocation services in Helsinki metro area have a generally decreasing trend between 2024 and 2026 (going from [30-40]% to [30-40]%), the increment resulting from the Transaction is expected to be higher in 2026 ([10-20]%) compared to both 2025 and 2024 (below [0-5]% for both years). This is the result of atNorth's recent capacity expansion in Helsinki metro area – increasing its total installed capacity from [capacity figures] IT MW in Q1 2025 to [capacity figures] IT MW in Q1 2026. ([53]) However, the increment resulting from the Transaction is not consistently this high, as evidenced by the data for 2027 and 2028. Specifically, the increment resulting from the Transaction is expected to decrease again ([5-10]%) in 2027 and 2028 in light of expected capacity increases by competitors, as further described below.

(60) The highest combined market share and increment result from assessing spare power. Based on such metric, in 2026, atNorth's and Equinix's combined share in Helsinki would be [30-40]% (with an increment of [10-20]%), compared to [30-40]% on the basis of installed capacity. ([54]) However, even from this perspective, the Commission notes that current spare capacity needs to be assessed taking into account expected entry in the Helsinki metro area by competitors, therefore increasing the overall spare power available in the market, as described below in para 72. Further, as stated in *Equinix*/*Telecity*, the Commission notes that while spare power is an important indicator that should be taken into account when assessing the market power of players and their ability

([50]) Form CO, paragraphs 6.255-6.259 and 6.285.
([51]) Form CO, paragraphs 6.260-6.263 and 6.285.
([52]) Form CO, paragraphs 6.267.
([53]) Form CO, Table 6.21 and footnote 399, and Annexes 9 and 19.
([54]) Form CO, Annex 9.

to compete, revenue market shares are the most appropriate starting point. ([55]) On revenue market shares, as stated above, the Commission notes that in 2025 the Parties held a combined market share of [30-40]% with a small increment of [0-5]%. ([56])

(61) Furthermore, as seen from Tables 1 and 2 above, when looking at total installed capacity in Helsinki metro area, while atNorth and Equinix's combined shares are initially expected to increase in 2027 on a potential overall market for colocation services to approximately [40-50]%, the expectation is for their combined shares to decrease by 2028 on both the potential overall market for data centre colocation services (to [20-30]%) and the potential market for retail/wholesale data centre colocation services (to [20-30]%) due to expected increased supply by competitors, as further described below.

(62) **Second**, a sufficient number of competitors will remain post-Transaction to exert competitive pressure on the merged entity.

(63) This is demonstrated by the responses to the Commission's market investigation, in which the large majority of respondents that expressed a view indicated that sufficient alternative providers remain active in the Helsinki metro area post-Transaction. This applies both for traditional (retail and wholesale) data centre colocation services as well as for the overall market for data centre colocation services. ([57]) The majority of respondents to the market investigation identified Telia ([20-30]%) as alternative to atNorth and Equinix, but many respondents also identified others including Hetzner Online ([20-30]%), Verne Global ([5-10]%), Elisa ([5-10]%), Digita, Vivicta, Global Connect ([0-5]%), Pure DC and DNA ([0-5]%). ([58])

(64) **Third**, while many market players consider that there are high barriers to entry for the supply of colocation services in Helsinki metro area (overall), ([59]) in particular as regards the need to obtain grid connection and land availability, ([60]) the market has nonetheless seen (actual or announced) new entrants or expansions by incumbents in recent years.

(65) Service providers that have entered or expanded their existing colocation capacity in Helsinki metro area in recent years include at least atNorth as well as Digita Data Centers ([61]), Verne ([62]) and Hyperco ([63]).

([55]) Commission Decision of 13 November 2015 in M.7678 – Equinix/Telecity para. 48

([56]) Form CO, Annex 19.

([57]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question F.A.1.

([58]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question F.A.1. One respondent to the Commission's market investigation noted that, post-Transaction, European data centre provider atNorth will fall under the control of US and Canadian companies. The Commission notes, however, that various of the competitors remaining in Helsinki metro area post-Transaction continue to be European-controlled, such as Telia, Hetzner Online, Elisa, Verne Global, Digita, Datalahti, DNA Oy, GlobalConnect and Heim Data Centre (Reply to RFI 5).

([59]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question F.C.1.

([60]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question E.B.3.

([61]) Pieni Paja facility opened in Helsinki in March 2023, *see* for example: https://www.digita.fi/en/news/digitas-new-pieni-paja-data-center-offers-data-security-and-communication-links-fit-for-the-most-demanding-applications/.

([62]) Reply to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question F.C.4.

([63]) HyperCo acquired its data centre in Vantaa in June 2022 and announced in December 2022 its intention to develop two data centre campuses in Helsinki region. *See* for example: https://www.datacenterdynamics.com/en/news/hyperco-to-build-two-50mw-sites-in-helsinki-finland/ .

(66) Furthermore, when asked about how they expect the supply for colocation services in Helsinki metro area to develop, nearly all respondents to the market investigation consider that supply will increase in the next three years to meet increased demand. ([64]) For example, one competitor noted that "*existing providers are expanding and new entrants are likely in the metro area". ([65])* Furthermore, when asked specifically about their own current or future plans to expand, several competitors indicated that they are currently expanding their installed capacity in Helsinki metro area or at least have concrete plans to do so. ([66])

(67) **Fourth**, atNorth and Equinix's activities have a different focus. They are not close competitors.

(68) Equinix currently provides more expansive managed solutions and connectivity, as a result attracting smaller clients seeking services characteristic of traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services, in which connectivity and managed solutions are central to the offering. On the other hand, atNorth's services offering is more limited and consequently targets larger customers with higher power density requirements. This was also acknowledged by the responses to the Commission's market investigation, in which there were no substantiated submissions indicating that atNorth and Equinix are close competitors. ([67]) Furthermore, some respondents highlighted the different focuses of atNorth and Equinix, including in terms of prices and services. For example, one competitor stated that "*Equinix has traditionally focused on smaller, connectivity-intensive colocation customers, whilst atNorth have focused on larger colocation customers*". ([68])

(69) atNorth's focus on larger colocation customers is also evident from its future capacity expansions, with its largest expansion (approximately [capacity figure] MW, more than all of its current capacity in Finland combined) at its FIN04 site. This site is located at approximately 137 km from Helsinki and targets customers with high-capacity demands rather than connectivity needs, by for example renting out entire modules or buildings on the site to an individual customer. ([69])

(70) **Fifth**, the Commission considers that customers have a certain level of countervailing buyer power in light of their ability to switch between different colocation services providers.

(71) Specifically, while generally the majority of respondents to the market investigation acknowledge a certain level of network effects resulting from established customers and/or network providers, ([70]) the majority of customers to the Commission's market investigation that expressed a view indicate that switching from one data centre colocation provider may be technically complex and require some time but nonetheless remains a real option. ([71])

(72) Furthermore, the responses to the market investigation do not provide evidence that network effects resulting from the merged entities' broader EEA-wide or

([64]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", questions E.2.
([65]) Reply to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question E.2.
([66]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question E.B.2.
([67]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question F.B.1.
([68]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question F.B.1.
([69]) Form CO, paras. 6.86-6.87.
([70]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", questions F.C.7 and F.C.8.
([71]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question F.C.5.

global footprint would increase the merged entities' attractiveness to customers thereby increasing barriers to entry/expansion post-Transaction. Specifically, when asked how important it is in a customer's choice of colocation service provider in Helsinki metro area that this provider can also offer colocation services in metro areas elsewhere within the EEA or globally, the vast majority of respondents that expressed a view consider this not to be important as data centre providers generally offer virtual interconnection services to other customers and-or network providers. This is the case irrespective of the type of colocation services provided (overall, traditional (retail and wholesale) or high-capacity). ([72])

(73) **Sixth**, the large majority of respondents to the Commission's market investigation that expressed a view consider that the Transaction will have either a positive or neutral impact on their company. All respondents that considered the Transaction would have a negative impact on their company currently supply colocation services in Finland, and reasons for the negative impact refer to increased competition post-Transaction. ([73])

(74) When asked about the impact on the market for the supply of traditional (retail and wholesale) colocation services in Helsinki metro area, all respondents who expressed a view consider that the Transaction will have a neutral impact. Similarly, when asked about the impact on the overall market for colocation services in Helsinki metro area or in Finland more broadly, the vast majority of respondents that expressed a view consider that the Transaction will have a neutral impact. ([74]) For example, certain competitors indicated that they do "*not anticipate that the transaction will materially affect [their] ability to compete, develop new data centre projects, attract customers, or obtain access to key inputs such as power, land, connectivity or capital*." ([75]) The respondents that considered the Transaction may have a negative impact in the overall market for the supply of colocation services in Helsinki metro area or in Finland more broadly refer to the removal of a competitor on a market with "*few main players*" or Equinix's strong position as regards interconnection services between operators. ([76]) However, and as set out above, the large majority of respondents consider that sufficient competitors will remain post-Transaction. As regards interconnection services, as mentioned above at paragraph (26) the market investigation has not yielded any evidence to depart from the Commission's previous decisions ([77]) by which these services are part of the market for the supply of colocation services, therefore any specific impact on interconnection services, different from the impact on the general market(s) of colocation services, appears unlikely. Further, the Commission notes that interconnection services are a standard product offered by competitors of atNorth and Equinix in the Helsinki metropolitan area by players such as Telia, Hetzner Online and DNA Oy. ([78])

([72]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question F.C.10.
([73]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question G.1.
([74]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question G.1.
([75]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question G.1.
([76]) Replies to Questionnaire "M.12394 – Phase 1 – Customers and competitors", question G.1.
([77]) *See* for example Commission Decision of 13 November 2015 in M.7678 – Equinix/Telecity paras. 7-8 and Commission decision of 7 July 2020 in case M.9843 – Colony Capital/PSP/NGD paras. 20 and 22.
([78]) Reply to RFI 5.

5.3.3.3. Conclusion

(75) In view of the above considerations and in light of the results of the market investigation and the evidence and information available to it, the Commission concludes that the Transaction does not raise serious doubts as to its compatibility with the internal market as a result of horizontal non-coordinated effects in the market for the supply of data centre colocation services, or on a potentially narrower market for the supply of traditional (retail and wholesale) data centre colocation services, in the Helsinki metro area.

6. CONCLUSION

(76) For the above reasons, the European Commission has decided not to oppose the notified operation and to declare it compatible with the internal market and with the EEA Agreement. This decision is adopted in application of Article 6(1)(b) of the Merger Regulation and Article 57 of the EEA Agreement.

For the Commission

(Signed)
Teresa RIBERA
Executive Vice-President