EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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PUBLIC VERSION

To the notifying parties

Subject: **Case M.9882 – SAZKA GROUP / ÖBAG / CASINOS AUSTRIA**
Commission decision pursuant to Article 6(1)(b) of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004[1] and Article 57 of the Agreement on the European Economic Area[2]

Dear Sir or Madam,

1. On 20 October 2020, the European Commission received notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of the Merger Regulation by which SAZKA Group a.s ("SAZKA Group", Czechia), belonging to the KKCG Group, and Österreichische Beteiligungs Aktiengesellschaft ("ÖBAG", Austria), owned by the Austrian state, acquire within the meaning of Articles 3(1)(b) and 3(4) of the Merger Regulation joint control of Casinos Austria Aktiengesellschaft ("CASAG", Austria), currently solely controlled by SAZKA Group. The concentration is accomplished by way of contract.[3]

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:

   – for SAZKA Group: the parent company of a European lottery group. It is principally a holding company, but also provides gaming consulting services. Its subsidiaries provide lottery, gaming and betting services (as well as other services) in Czechia, Greece, Cyprus and Italy;

   – for ÖBAG: an autonomous state-owned holding company, which administers state investments and is mainly active in (i) active participation management, (ii) acquisition of share rights in existing investments and in third companies, (iii) measures to promote the development of Austria as an economic location, (iv) external participation management and (v) privatisation management;

   – for CASAG: active in the gaming area in Austria through the operation of (i) casinos; (ii) lotteries; (iii) Video Lottery Terminals; (iv) sports betting and (v)

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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').

3 Publication in the Official Journal of the European Union No C 365, 29.10.2020, p. 8.

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online gaming. In addition, CASAG operates, through its subsidiaries, casinos in Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Egypt, Liechtenstein, Germany, Hungary, Palestinia and Switzerland, as well as a video lottery terminal operation in North Macedonia.

3. After examination of the notification, the European Commission has concluded that the notified operation falls within the scope of the Merger Regulation and of paragraph 5(b) of the Commission Notice on a simplified procedure for treatment of certain concentrations under Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004.[4]

4. For the reasons set out in the Notice on a simplified procedure, 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)
Olivier GUERSENT
Director-General

4 OJ C 366, 14.12.2013, p. 5.