

Prior notification of a concentration**(Case COMP/M.5222 — Sofinco/Banco Popolare/Agos/Ducato)****(Text with EEA relevance)**

(2008/C 296/12)

1. On 12 November 2008, the Commission received a notification of a proposed concentration pursuant to Article 4 of Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 ⁽¹⁾ by which the undertaking Sofinco SA ('Sofinco', France), controlled by undertaking Crédit Agricole SA ('CASA', France) and undertaking Banco Popolare Soc. Coop. ('Banco Popolare', Italy) acquire(s) within the meaning of Article 3(1)(b) of the Council Regulation joint control of their respective subsidiaries Agos SpA ('Agos', Italy), and Ducato SpA ('Ducato', Italy) by way of purchase of shares.

2. The business activities of the undertakings concerned are:

- for undertaking Sofinco: products and services associated to the consumer credit in France and internationally,
- for undertaking Banco Popolare: undertaking at the head of the banking group 'Gruppo Banco Popolare', active in the financial and banking intermediation,
- for undertaking Agos: subsidiary of Sofinco, specialized in consumer credit in Italy,
- for undertaking Ducato: subsidiary of Banco Popolare, specialized in certain types of consumer credit in Italy.

3. On preliminary examination, the Commission finds that the notified transaction could fall within the scope of Regulation (EC) No 139/2004. However, the final decision on this point is reserved.

4. The Commission invites interested third parties to submit their possible observations on the proposed operation to the Commission.

Observations must reach the Commission not later than 10 days following the date of this publication. Observations can be sent to the Commission by fax ((32-2) 296 43 01 or 296 72 44) or by post, under reference number COMP/M.5222 — Sofinco/Banco Popolare/Agos/Ducato, to the following address:

European Commission
Directorate-General for Competition
Merger Registry
J-70
B-1049 Brussels

⁽¹⁾ OJL 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1.