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Germany’s cartel office reviews brewers’ plan for a Stuttgart beer joint venture

The proposed company would keep producing and selling local brands now owned by Radeberger’s Stuttgarter Hofbräu and Dinkelacker-Schwaben Bräu

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Germany’s Federal Cartel Office has opened a merger-control review of a plan by brewers linked to Radeberger Group and Dinkelacker-Schwaben Bräu to form a joint venture for Stuttgart beer brands.

The authority said on Tuesday, November 17, that it was examining the creation of Stuttgarter Brauereien GmbH & Co. KG. According to the filing, the new company would continue the production and distribution of the Stuttgart beer brands of Stuttgarter Hofbräu AG, which belongs to Radeberger Group, and of Dinkelacker-Schwaben Bräu GmbH & Co. KG.

The case was formally notified on Monday, November 16, under file number B4-76/26. The product market named in the filing is beer.

The published notice gives only a brief description of the transaction and does not indicate when the authority will decide whether to clear the deal, seek remedies or move to a deeper review. It also does not set out any competition concerns at this stage. In Germany, the Federal Cartel Office regularly lists ongoing merger-control proceedings after they are filed.

The planned venture would bring together production and sales activities for beer brands tied to two established brewers in Stuttgart. That makes the case relevant beyond the companies involved. For the beverage sector, the review is likely to be watched as a sign of how German regulators view closer operational ties between competing brewers, especially when a deal could concentrate manufacturing and distribution of regional beer brands under one structure.

Radeberger Group is one of Germany’s large brewing groups, and Stuttgarter Hofbräu is one of the best-known brewery names in Stuttgart. Dinkelacker-Schwaben Bräu is another longstanding brewer in the same city. Based on the filing summary, the joint venture is meant to continue, rather than discontinue, the production and marketing of those local brands. Even so, combining those functions can draw scrutiny because it may change how competitors operate in supply, sales and routes to market.

The authority’s notice does not include financial terms, ownership percentages or operational details such as where production would take place, how governance would be divided, or whether any assets or employees would move into the new company. It also does not say whether the transaction involves only regional activities in Baden-Württemberg or has broader implications for national beer distribution.

For distributors, retailers and other brewers, those details could matter. A shared vehicle for production and sales may create efficiencies, but it can also alter bargaining positions in local markets and affect shelf space, logistics and brand competition. In a beer market where regional identity remains important, any consolidation involving established city brands can have effects that go beyond simple corporate restructuring.

At this point, the only confirmed step is that the transaction has entered the German merger-review process. The Federal Cartel Office has not announced a final outcome.