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## Competitors seen seeking EU probe of Hypo Alpe Adria sale to BayernLB - report

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VIENNA (Thomson Financial) - Competitors in the banking sector are likely to urge the EU to investigate if a majority stake in Hypo Group Alpe Adria (Hypo) is sold to Bayerische Landesbank without a public tender, according to Austrian business daily Wirtschaftsblatt.

Wirtschaftsblatt writes that banks in France, Italy, Germany and Turkey would also be interested in bidding for Hypo, and it quotes unnamed sources as saying that a higher price could be achieved if Hypo were sold via a public tender.

According to legal expert Meinhard Novak, the fact that the Austrian province of Carinthia exerts a controlling influence in Hypo's current ownership structure makes a public tender obligatory, Wirtschaftsblatt reports.

Representatives of Kaerntner Landesholding, which administers the state of Carinthia's stake in Hypo, were not immediately available for comment.

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