



Oaklins

International food logistics expert **joins forces with private equity investor**

DEAL FLASH | LOGISTICS, PRIVATE EQUITY | JANUARY 2022

DEAL SNAPSHOT

Sitra Group, one of Europe's most prominent food logistics experts, offering tailored and flexible logistic and supply chain solutions to its clients, has joined forces with Creafund, a Belgian private equity investor operating since early 2001 and focusing on growth financing as well as buy-out capital.

Sitra manages the ingredient and product flows of Europe's major blue chip food producers throughout the value chain. It is active as a one-stop-shop solution provider, offering food transport solutions and added-value services such as storage on wheels, cross docking and truck cleaning. Sitra has been a sustainable, strategic and proactive partner for its recurring customers for many years, among other ways through the thorough implementation of telemetry, track&trace and EDI connectivity as elements of digitalization, integration, automation and premium service.

By engaging in a 50/50 partnership between Creafund and the Saelens family, Sitra is ready to take the next step in its growth trajectory. Based on its entrepreneurial spirit, long-term value creation focus, experienced team and good fit with Sitra's family values, Creafund is a perfect match for Sitra to realize its ambitious goals. With Creafund, Sitra will actively pursue acquisition opportunities and leverage its food logistics expertise to strengthen its position as the benchmark in the European food logistics market.

“Oaklins guided us and our team throughout the process and advised us on the various aspects and transaction structure involved in finding the right partner for Sitra. Their financial expertise, market understanding and process management were instrumental in providing us comfort and support, but also helped us to stay on top of things and focus on what matters.”

**DAVID AND NICOLAS
SAELENS**
SHAREHOLDERS
SITRA GROUP, BELGIUM

OAKLINS PLAYED A **KEY ROLE IN FINDING THE RIGHT PARTNER**

Oaklins' team in Belgium acted as the exclusive M&A advisor to the shareholders of Sitra. The team gained a thorough understanding of the business through a comprehensive preparation stage. This enabled them to position Sitra as a trusted premium food logistics provider with highly differentiated customer propositions, all underpinned by robust financial and market fundamentals.



MARKET TRENDS & DEAL DRIVERS

The European logistics market is fragmented as most of the actors lack scale. Going forward it is bound to consolidate and offer numerous opportunities as a result of:

- international customers reducing the number of logistic partners that can support them on a pan-European scale
- evolution towards one-stop logistic solution providers
- significant investments required in IT and operations which favor larger-scale players
- increasing complexity of regulation and compliance, especially in a post-Brexit era.

M&A VALUATION ASPECTS

Financial details of the transaction have not been disclosed.

The transaction was conducted under extraordinary circumstances due to COVID-19 and Brexit, which disrupted the supply chain of the global economy.

TALK TO OUR ADVISOR



✉ **TOM VAN DE MEIRSSCHE**

Director
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Tom mainly focuses on M&A and ECM transactions. Recent deals Tom has advised on include: the sale of Eutraco, the acquisition of Light&Living by BlueGem, the sale of Rima to Teugels, and the acquisition of Van Bogaert by Belgian Pork Group.

“It has been a pleasure working with David and Nicolas Saelens and the team at Sitra. By joining forces with Creafund, they are ready to strengthen its position as the number one food logistics expert and will be able to roll out an attractive buy-and-build program. We wish the team every success in the coming years.”



OAKLINS HAS CLOSED 184 DEALS IN LOGISTICS

Oaklins is the world's most experienced mid-market M&A advisor, with over 850 professionals globally and dedicated industry teams in more than 45 countries. We have closed 1,700 transactions in the past five years.

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