



press release

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HERA GROUP AND ASCOPIAVE FINALISE 92% ACQUISITION OF ASCO TLC

The transaction represents a strategic step in the business portfolio evolution of both the groups in the IT-TLC sector, in line with their respective industrial plans.

Today, the Hera Group, through its subsidiary Acantho, and the Ascopiave Group finalised the acquisition of 92% of the shares of Asco TLC at the headquarters of Asco Holding in Pieve di Soligo (TV), with stakes of 36.8% and 55.2% respectively.

The closing follows the award, at the end of November 2022, of the public tender procedure called by Asco Holding for the sale of 92% of the shares of Asco TLC, held by Asco Holding itself and by the Treviso-Belluno Chamber of Commerce, and the subsequent signing on 29 December 2022 of the related contract documentation between the Hera Group and the Ascopiave Group.

The cash-settled acquisition price is EUR 37.2 million.

Asco TLC, a company that has been active since 2001 in the provision of ICT services mainly to corporate customers and public administrations, has a significant proprietary territorial network, located in the Veneto and Friuli-Venezia Giulia regions for over 2,200 km of fibre optic backbone infrastructure, 56 radio links and 24 xDSL exchanges in unbundling, and provides its services to more than 2,700 customers.

For the two groups, the transaction represents a strategic step in the evolution of the business portfolio in the IT-TLC sectors, in line with their respective industrial plans. Moreover, it is the first step of a broader operation that would lead, through the merger of Asco TLC into Acantho, to the birth of a multi-regional operator with significant operational synergies compared to the stand-alone companies, and benefits for customers as well.

"The partnership with Ascopiave in Asco TLC is part of Hera Group's broader development mission, whose goal is to provide its customers with increasingly efficient, innovative and competitive solutions in terms of both costs and sustainability. Thanks to Asco TLC's infrastructure assets, we anticipate an expansion of the Group's services and new synergies in the information technology and telecommunications field. This is a very strategic area for the country's innovation, because IT-TLC is crucial for the competitiveness of companies. It is, however, a sector that calls for continuous investment. On these grounds, we have envisaged significant investments in digitalisation in our industrial plan to 2026, to ensure ever greater excellence in the services provided, thanks also to the development and use of artificial intelligence, data analytics and process digitalisation," said **Donato Rocchi, Chief Executive Officer** of Acantho, the digital company of the Hera Group.

"The partnership with the Hera Group, thanks to the potential industrial synergies, will allow Asco TLC to strengthen its position in an increasingly competitive market, improving its offer in favor of local authorities, businesses and users", said **Nicola Ceconato, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer** of Ascopiave.

The Hera Group is one of Italy's largest multi-utility companies and operates in the environment, energy and water sectors, with more than 9,000 employees, working every day to meet the multiple needs of around 5 million citizens located mainly in Emilia-Romagna, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Marche, Tuscany and Abruzzo. Listed since 2003, it is among the top 40 Italian companies in terms of capitalisation (it is part of the Ftse Mib index) and since 2020 has entered the Dow Jones Sustainability Index, World and Europe.



Acantho, a telecommunications operator, is the Hera Group's digital company that for over 20 years, thanks to the development of a proprietary ultra-wideband fibre optic network of over 230,000 kilometres and its Data Centres in Imola and Sizzano, has been offering ICT services and tools in the fields of Data & Voice Communication, Hybrid MultiCloud, Cyber & Physical Security and Smart City to contribute to the competitiveness of small and large companies and to the development and innovation of the territory.

www.gruppohera.it - www.acantho.it

The Ascopiave Group is one of the main national operators in the natural gas distribution sector. The Group holds direct concessions and assignments for the management of activities in 308 municipalities, providing services to over 890,000 consumers through a network of approximately 14,500 kilometres. Ascopiave is also a partner of the Hera Group in the marketing of gas and electricity, holding a 48% stake in Est Energy, a leading operator in the field with a portfolio of over 1 million sales contracts to end users, mainly in the Veneto, Friuli Venezia-Giulia and Lombardy regions. Ascopiave also operates in the water sector, being a shareholder and technological partner of the company Cogeide, which manages the integrated water service for 15 towns in the Province of Bergamo, serving a basin of over 100 thousand inhabitants through a network of 880 km. Ascopiave is also present in the renewable energy sector, owning 28 hydroelectric and wind power plants with an installed nominal capacity of 62.5 MW. Through its subsidiary Salinella Eolico S.r.l., it is now in the process of starting up a new wind power plant. Ascopiave has been listed on the Euronext Star Milan segment of the Italian Stock Exchange since 12 December 2006.

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