

The GVH imposed a fine of almost half a billion on Viagogo

27 December 2021, Budapest – The GVH imposed a fine of HUF 472 million on the Swiss operator of the Viagogo ticket sales platform for unfair commercial practices that mislead consumers and put them under psychological pressure.

The GVH had been investigating the operator of the Viagogo global ticket sales platform since the end of 2019 as [a number of complaints have been received](#) from Hungarian consumers about the service. Based on the market signals, the GVH warned everyone of practising due diligence when purchasing tickets in its [press release](#) and a [consumer brochure](#), especially in the pre-holiday period. The recently concluded competition supervision proceeding found that the Viagogo portal has engaged in unfair commercial practices against consumers in several respects.

The investigation revealed that the Viagogo platform had failed to inform its users in a timely manner about the purchase price to be paid and the exchange rates. During the purchase, there were numerous other, partly overlapping items on the ticket prices, which consumers could face in a confusing way. In addition, in some cases, the actual exchange rate used was only revealed to users when the service provider debited their credit card with the final amount.

This is due to the fact that during the process of purchasing tickets, several additional, partially overlapping items were added to the ticket prices, about which consumers learned in increments and in a confusing manner. Furthermore, in certain cases, the actually applied exchange rate was only revealed to users when the service provider charged the sum to their bank card.

It was also established during the proceeding, that the portal constantly put psychological pressure on consumers with urgent messages during the process of purchase (e.g. *'Only 2 minutes 17 seconds left to finish the purchase. After that, prices may increase or these tickets might no longer be available.'*). This method is considered as an illegal, aggressive commercial practice as it disturbs the calm and deliberate decision-making process.

It was also considered infringing that the role of the platform in ticket sales was not revealed to consumers. As the portal did not make it clear that it was acting only as intermediary and consumers were not given adequate information of on who exactly was concluding the contract for the purchase of the ticket. Similar to the role of the platform, users may have encountered conflicting information about the operator's impact on the prices charged on the website. All of this is contrary to the requirement of professional diligence and may distort the transactional decisions of consumers.

The competition council of the GVH imposed a competition supervision fine of HUF 472 million on the operator of the platform, Viagogo AG, based in Switzerland. The decision also prohibited the continuation of the infringing practices and obliged the undertaking to provide proof of their liquidation to the Authority within 100 days.

The official registration number of the case is: **VJ/42/2019**.

