

Hungary is the heart of the competition policy development of the region for 20 years

The GVH-OECD joint competition education centre in Budapest has been operating for two decades.

Budapest, 28 February 2025 - In February 2005, the Regional Centre for Competition Budapest (RCC) was jointly established by the Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which has become a centre for competition policy sharing knowledge for the Eastern European and Western Asian regions over the past two decades. Over its lifetime, the training centre has organised nearly 160 events, with some 6,700 experts participating and sharing their expertise. The event was opened by Csaba Balázs Rigó, President of the GVH, and Bence Gerlaki, Ministry for National Economy, Deputy State Secretary for Economic Development Strategy, Outward Direct Investment, Consumer Protection and Trade.

The Regional Centre for Competition Budapest jointly operated by the GVH and the OECD, organised a conference entitled "ROK 20" on 28 February at the GVH headquarters. One of the aims of the anniversary event was to look back on the professional activities and achievements of the ROK over the past two decades and to provide guidance for cooperation in the coming years. The event was also attended by distinguished guests such as Benoît Cœuré, President of the French Competition Authority and also Chairman of the OECD Competition Committee, and Carmine Di Noia, Director for Financial and Enterprise Affairs at the OECD.

The Regional Centre for Competition Budapest, established by the GVH and the OECD in 2005, aims to build on the expertise of the two institutions to provide support in the field of competition law and policy to competition authorities in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia by organising training courses and other professional programmes in competition law. There are only three similar training centres in the world: in Hungary, Peru and the Republic of Korea.

The centre in Hungary currently has 17 beneficiaries: Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine, Northern Macedonia, Serbia, Moldova, Montenegro, Uzbekistan and Armenia. The conference was attended by the presidents and heads of the competition authorities of the countries concerned.

Since its foundation in 2005, the RCC has organised 158 events, with nearly 5,700 participants and more than 1,000 speakers sharing their expertise and knowledge.

The event was opened by **Csaba Balázs Rigó**, President of the GVH. *"We are proud that over the past 20 years the Hungarian Regional Centre for Competition has become a key player in the professional knowledge sharing and cooperation between the beneficiary competition authorities. The annual training courses and seminars have shaped the region's competition policy orientations and provided an opportunity to share and discuss best practices."*

During the workshop, participants discussed several important issues. They also focused on market liberalisation trends in the European region, the relationship between competition policy and industrial policy, and competition policy developments in the Caucasus and Central Asian regions.

In his speech, **Bence Gerlaki**, Ministry for National Economy, Deputy State Secretary for Economic Development Strategy, Outward Direct Investment, Consumer Protection and Trade stressed that *"the joint OECD and GVH Regional Centre for Competition Budapest plays a key role in the professional development of the competition authorities in the region. Through its trainings and knowledge sharing activities, it helps competition authorities, strengthens the fair functioning of markets and contributes to the economic development of the region."* He underlined the importance of cooperation between Hungary and the OECD, particularly in the areas of economic growth, competition policy, development of small and medium-sized enterprises, digital transition and addressing demographic challenges.

The RCC is also preparing for the year of 2025 with a full range of programmes, including newsletters, educational videos and a total of seven international seminars. More information on the activities of the GVH and the OECD's Regional Centre for Competition is available on their websites.

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