

GVH: faster and more efficient merger control, Cartel Chat for the fight against cartels

In the name of the Parliament, the Economic Committee approved the Annual Report of the Gazdasági Versenyhivatal (GVH – the Hungarian Competition Authority) on its activity in the year 2015 and on its experience with the application of the Competition Act.

In 2015 the fast and efficient conclusion of merger authorisation proceedings was still regarded by the GVH as a main priority, despite the fact that the number of such proceedings has been significantly increasing since the passing of the economic crisis. In the committee meeting the president of the GVH, dr. Miklós Juhász, confirmed that last year the GVH delivered decisions in all **merger** cases in a shorter period of time than that provided for in the Competition Act, thereby eliminating as quickly as possible the uncertainty stemming from the proceedings of the Authority.

In addition, Miklós Juhász stated that it is an explicit intention of the GVH to continually enhance the **user-friendly** nature of its activity. The GVH assists market actors to behave in a way that is compatible with the Competition Act by publishing user-friendly guidelines, handouts and notices on the Act's requirements. With this in mind, the GVH has published a [Commentary](#) on the Competition Act. As a further step in its user-friendly approach, the GVH has also modified its webpage to enable parties to easily [book appointments online for access to the file](#).

One of the most important activities of the GVH, which is responsible for competition supervision, competition advocacy and the development of competition culture, is still its activity concerning the **fight against cartels**. The newest tool in this fight is the [Cartel Chat](#), which was introduced last year. This is an anonymous contact system for providing information and asking questions about cartels.

More than two-thirds of the cartel cases that were investigated by the GVH between 2002 and 2013 involved small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Consequently, the GVH sought to increase the SMEs' competition awareness through its campaign against cartels entitled '[It cannot be kept secret](#)', which was launched on the 1st of December last year.

The President confirmed that the protection of vulnerable consumers who are easily influenced by advertisements and offers due to their health age or difficult financial situation was an essential part of the GVH's **consumer protection activity** in 2015 too. On the basis of the complaints and market notices that were addressed to the GVH, it ran an information campaign, entitled '[Think Through Calmly](#)' which concerned [6](#)

[issues](#). The GVH has also drafted suggestions to solve the problems that arose in connection with product presentations.

The GVH celebrated **two anniversaries** last year:

1. 25 years ago, the GVH began to operate in January 1991, on the basis of the Competition Act passed in 1990;
2. The OECD-GVH Regional Centre for Competition in Budapest (RCC) was set up 10 years ago, in 2005. Relying on the Competition Department of the OECD and on the professional expertise of the GVH, the RCC provides capacity building assistance through seminars and professional training programmes on competition law and policy for competition enforcement agencies in the Central, East and South-East European region.

The annual report (in Hungarian) is available on the [website](#) of the GVH.

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