

Do not fall for timeshare scams

13 September 2021, Budapest – The Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) warns everyone to be careful if they wish to dispose of their timeshare since timeshare owners are being contacted with misleading information once again. Those who do not proceed with care when selling their timeshare can fall into a serious trap.

The recurring competition authority cases of the second half of the 2010s include the so-called timeshare cases, as part of which undertakings promised assistance to consumers in selling their existing, unused timeshares with misleading information. The GVH has [called attention](#) to some unfair methods on multiple occasions in recent years, in addition to conducting competition supervision proceedings and imposing several fines. Holding similar undertakings that conduct such illegal activities responsible is always difficult for the authorities since they use a variety of methods (voluntary or involuntary liquidation, change of name, change of a member, etc.), in an attempt to avoid being held accountable.

The GVH has recently been receiving more and more informal complaints, based on which it appears that misleading and exploiting those who wish to dispose of their timeshare have acquired a new impetus.

- Affected consumers are once again being contacted primarily via telephone with a promising offer, which involves a private individual purchasing their timeshare and paying for it in cash.
- The caller usually introduces themselves as acting on behalf of a civil advocacy organisation that assists those who have suffered damages related to timeshares, thus gaining the misplaced trust of the consumers.
- At the time of the personal meeting, the scammers await their customers with an already prepared contract, in which the buyer is no longer a private individual but an undertaking and payment is to be made not in cash but in credit that can be used within the commerce system operated by the company.
- Consumers are generally not given enough time to review the contract but are encouraged to make a decision immediately, emphasising that the undertaking is only able to purchase a limited number of timeshares.
- Consumers are made to pay several thousands of Hungarian forints as fees for being registered in the system and the goods offered there tend to be overpriced and poor-quality products, which buyers only find out after the fact.
- Furthermore, in spite of all this, the timeshare is not transferred to the buyer company since timeshare providers typically only permit them to be sold to private individuals. Therefore, the maintenance costs associated with the timeshare continue to be borne by the scammed consumers.

To those who wish to sell their timeshare, the GVH recommends reviewing the offered terms and conditions thoroughly and obtaining detailed information about the reliability and consumer reviews of the undertakings in question before they sign the contract. It is important that consumers should not give in to any pressure put on them during personal meetings and that they make deliberate and informed decisions in all cases.

GVH Press Office