

The GVH terminated its cartel proceeding on the market of household paper products

The Gazdasági Versenyhivatal (GVH – the Hungarian Competition Authority) terminated its proceeding initiated against AUCHAN Magyarország Kereskedelmi és Szolgáltató Kft., DM-Drogerie Markt Kereskedelmi és Szolgáltató Kft., METRO Kereskedelmi Kft., ROSSMANN Magyarország Kereskedelmi Kft., ESSITY HUNGARY Kereskedelmi Kft., SPAR Magyarország Kereskedelmi Kft., TESCO-GLOBAL Áruházak Zrt. and VAJDA-PAPÍR Gyártó Kereskedelmi és Szolgáltató Kft.

The GVH investigated whether the manufacturers which were parties to the proceeding, namely ESSITY HUNGARY Kereskedelmi Kft. and VAJDA-PAPÍR Gyártó Kereskedelmi és Szolgáltató Kft., had engaged in a concerted practice to raise prices, agreeing on the extent and timing of these increases, in relation to a number of their paper products (e.g. paper tissues, toilet papers); furthermore, it investigated whether they had also shared with each other any other kind of sensitive business information. The evidence uncovered in the course of the proceeding did not support the presumption that the manufacturers had been engaged in unlawful discussions – which went beyond the scope of their existing legitimate business relations – during their meetings.

The investigation of the GVH also sought to ascertain whether the manufacturers mentioned above had been engaged in co-ordinations aimed at concerting their pricing or other activities resulting in concerted prices with their trading partners.

Based on the evidence uncovered during the proceeding, however, it could not be proven that the investigated retailers had concerted their behaviour by using the manufacturers as communication channels or mediators.

The facts supporting the suspected infringement could not be ascertained in a way that was substantive enough to result in a resolution; consequently, given that the continuation of the investigation was unlikely to bring further results, the Competition Council terminated the proceeding in respect of all parties.

Case number: **Vj/22/2015.**

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Gazdasági Versenyhivatal

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