

The GVH recommends that consumers pay increased attention when purchasing tickets online

On the basis of received market indications, the Hungarian Competition Authority (Gazdasági Versenyhivatal, hereinafter GVH) recommends that consumers pay greater attention when purchasing tickets online.

During the festive period there is a significant increase in the number of people who visit online ticket seller websites. It is a legal requirement for ticket seller websites to inform their visitors fully, and in a transparent manner, about the prices of the offered events and all of the additional costs that need to be paid besides the advertised price of each ticket.

According to the market indications received by the GVH, it is a very common occurrence that consumers ultimately end up paying a final price that is higher than the original advertised price. Consequently, in order to enable consumers to make informed decisions when purchasing tickets online, the GVH recommends that consumers pay enough time and attention during the purchasing process, in particular by fully and carefully reading the conditions of purchase related to possible additional charges and costs determining the final price.

At the same time, the GVH encourages undertakings engaged in online ticket selling activity to take advantage of the possibilities provided by technology and to strive to provide understandable, transparent and accurate information to consumers regarding the prices and contents of products and services offered by them.

The GVH noticed that the following circumstances may hinder the informed decision-making process of consumers:

- The additional charges (administration fee, booking fee and value added tax) which have to be paid besides the published price are not indicated properly in advertisements and they can be barely noticed even during the ordering process (e.g. small print).
- The websites display their terms only in English and do not provide the possibility of administration in Hungarian, despite the fact that Hungarian is among the languages that can be selected on the websites before the initiation of a purchase.
- The existence and extent of additional expenses (e.g. transaction fee, comfort fee, ticketing fee, administrative costs) that may be charged for the same services under different names during the ticket purchasing process are not clear to consumers. Consumers sometimes only become aware of these expenses during the very last stage of the purchasing process.
- On occasions certain important information can only be obtained by reading the General Contractual Conditions. However, the structure and wording of this

document make it difficult for consumers to quickly and easily understand this information.

- Certain websites require registration before the booking process can be initiated (e.g. name, e-mail address, phone number, billing data) even though such information is only necessary when an actual purchase is being made.
- During the final stage of the booking process, before payment is made, consumers must accept the terms and conditions of purchase (e.g. general contractual terms, rules for data processing, information for consumers), by ticking a box. Consumers are presented with this information for the first time at this very final stage of the booking process and the available (20-25 minutes) timeframe for completing payment is not necessarily enough to enable consumers to review and understand the text, which also contains a lot of legal expressions.

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