

The Hungarian Competition Authority celebrates its 30th anniversary

20 November 2020, Budapest – It was 30 years ago that the first Parliament responsible for the regime change adopted the first Competition Act, establishing the Hungarian Competition Authority.

It was on 20 November 2020 that the first Parliament responsible for the regime change adopted act LXXXVI of 1990 on the Prohibition of Unfair Market Practices, i.e. the first competition act. It was this piece of legislation that established the Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH), which commenced its operation as of January the following year.

“I was there in the Parliament 30 years ago when our legislative body voted to adopt the first modern competition act. It was modern in the sense that it laid down the framework for the norms required in developed market economies. The most modern, however, it was in the way the procedural and operational rules of the Authority guaranteed the institution’s independence. The act has changed many times since, following the developing international trends. It is an uplifting feeling to have made it to the 30th anniversary of its adoption and that I have been pursuing this profession and teaching the science of it ever since. Thus, I could become a part of developing and cultivating a true professional culture” - said Ferenc Vissi, the first president of the GVH, holding this position from its establishment until 1998.

The competition authority has come a long way since its establishment 30 years ago. Since it was founded, it has initiated 5054 proceedings to ensure fair economic competition and it has imposed a competition supervision fine in 1298 cases, the cumulative amount of these fines being HUF 100,848,726,900. The smallest fine ever, HUF 5,000 was imposed in 1993 on an individual entrepreneur who did not inform manufacturers of the conditions for the purchase of their products. The highest fine was almost one and a half million times that much, HUF 7,178,000,000, imposed by the competition authority two decades later on seven large construction companies who participated in the so-called railway construction cartel.

Social expenditure dedicated to the GVH have been recouped multifold: solely in the 2010s, consumers could save over HUF 150 billion thanks to the intervention of the GVH, eliminating cartels causing price increases or stepping in to stop such mergers.

“It was an honour and at the same time a serious responsibility to join the 30 year history and work of the GVH. The professional experience and international network of connections accumulated during the past three decades are values that command respect, but the time has come for renewing. As the fourth president of the GVH, I strive to achieve with my service that, based on the knowledge it has gained, the competition authority, as a cooperating and characteristic national authority, shall safeguard fair competition for the benefit of Hungarian people” – said Csaba Balázs Rigó, the president of the GVH appointed as of 15 April 2020.

A good indication of the international professional recognition achieved by the Hungarian Competition Authority during the past three decades is the fact that in 2021 Hungary will host the annual conference of the International Competition Network (ICN), which brings together competition authorities from around the world. The GVH expects that 500 authority leaders and competition law experts will arrive to Budapest from 139 countries for the 3 day world congress. According to plans, a further 2000 participants will follow the event live on the internet from all over the world. The video showcasing the event can be viewed on the [Authority’s website](#).