

It is worth cooperating when the GVH is knocking on your door

2 June 2021, Budapest – The Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) has conducted on-site inspections at 26 undertakings in the past twelve months. Even during the dawn raids of the GVH, undertakings have a lot of options to reduce the fines imposed on them; in spite of this, the GVH has encountered fleeing suspects and panicky destruction of data before.

The purpose of the unannounced inspections (dawn raids) of the GVH, which it is authorised to perform in possession of a judicial warrant, is to collect evidence concerning an alleged infringement or a merger under investigation. For example, as part of a large-scale two-day cartel detection action organised a few years ago, 38 employees of the GVH conducted inspections at a total of 14 involved undertakings.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, last year the GVH performed dawn raids at 26 sites. Taking the pandemic into account, strict health protection measures were implemented during these recent on-site inspections in order to protect the employees of both parties. In 2020, the GVH copied and processed approximately 7 TB of data as part of these inspections: this amount of data is equivalent to about 700 movies, 490 thousand photographs or 7 million plain text files.

By publishing [an easy-to-understand guidance document](#), the GVH aims to help undertakings learn about their rights, obligations, and last but not least, their options for cooperation during dawn raids since it is not too late to voluntarily admit to participating in a cartel even at this point, which could result in a significant reduction or even waiving of the competition supervision fine.

However, not all undertakings fulfil their statutory obligation to fully cooperate with the case handlers of the GVH performing on-site investigations; from time to time, the Authority encounters cases where the undertakings in question try to hide any possible evidence. The GVH has seen a managing director trying to smuggle their laptop out of the site in a backpack and even an employee simply tearing pages out of a planner and attempting to destroy them. In another case, a director suddenly decided to urgently begin scrapping their desktop computer. Neither of these attempts was successful and even resulted in [severe procedural fines](#) being imposed. Therefore, we can say that cooperation is more beneficial in all cases and results in a more favourable situation for the undertakings during the competition authority proceedings.

GVH Press Office