

There are Problems with Consumer Ratings all Across the EU

8 February 2022, Budapest - According to a joint inquiry by the European Competition Network, in which the Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) was also involved, many of the evaluation systems used by dealers do not accurately reflect consumer opinions in the online space.

At the beginning of January, the national competition authority published the [domestic experiences of a rapid European inquiry](#) into the display of consumer opinions in online commerce. The European Commission, which coordinated a joint inquiry by 26 Member States plus Iceland and Norway, recently published [the results of the joint action](#).

In total, the inquiry verified 223 major websites for their consumer evaluation system. In 144 cases, the authorities were unable to verify that the published consumer reviews were authentic - that is, that they were published by consumers who had actually used the product or service.

104 websites fail to provide information on how consumer opinions are collected and processed. Only 84 websites made this information available on the evaluation page itself, while the other dealers only included it in "small print", for example in their contractual terms.

118 sites did not provide information on how they prevent false reviews from being posted on their site. 176 websites failed to disclose whether their internal policies prohibit consumer reviews being written for an incentive (e.g. financial rewards) and, if these are authorized, how they ensure that these are kept separate from reviews written in exchange for no incentive.

The authorities that participated in the investigation concluded that at least 55% of the websites checked could be involved in unfair commercial practices and had reservations about a further 18%.

Last year the GVH made [recommendations to market players](#) after having reviewed the consumer evaluation system of domestic food delivery platforms and published [further proposals](#) following the conclusion of the European Fast Track Review, to ensure that Hungarian consumers face transparent, clear and traceable evaluation systems in the online space.

Thanks to the fact that the experiences and achievements of the GVH are also recognised at an international level, the GVH is a regular participant in consumer protection actions coordinated by the European Commission. The GVH gives priority to the investigation of [informal complaints of consumers](#) and contributes significantly to the predictability of the Hungarian consumer protection system that is based on four pillars (GVH, Hungarian National Bank, Ministry of Innovation and Technology, government offices).

[The GVH represented the European Coronavirus Task Force](#) at the World Conference of the largest international umbrella organisation of consumer authorities, but also has extensive links with national consumer protection and advertising organisations. GVH experts are also regular speakers at consumer protection conferences on the most up to date issues, for example the [greenwashing phenomenon](#).

Press Office of the GVH