

Influencer agencies were fined by the GVH due to a premium-rate text message targeting at children

17 May 2022, Budapest – The Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) has imposed a fine on three influencer agencies for failing to comply with obligations imposed on them in relation to the 'Ask Bongo' SMS game, which was advertised in an unlawful way.

Last May, the national competition authority has imposed [a fined of HUF 350 million](#) on a foreign undertaking for a mobile game called 'Ask Bongo'. The Australian operator of the game tried to encourage children to send premium-rate text messages via concealed advertisements while failing to disclose the costs involved. In addition, the GVH has also found three Hungarian influencer agencies and one web content producer to be liable for certain infringements. Taking the nature of their cooperation into account, the GVH obliged the domestic undertakings to develop internal rules of procedures (a so-called compliance programme) to prevent any similar infringements in the future instead of imposing fines on them.

The GVH investigated the fulfilment of the obligations imposed during the procedure after the deadline in the framework of a follow-up investigation. The procedure found that three of the four undertakings had implemented the programme required by the authority late or with incomplete documentation. As all elements of the obligations - such as respect of deadlines and proper justification - are equally relevant to the appropriate pursuit of the public interest, the GVH will in all cases strictly monitor the correct and full implementation of the obligations imposed in its decisions. Accordingly, the authority imposed a total fine of HUF 900 thousand on the three undertakings Bona Extra Kft. and P4R Digital Agency Kft. and Social Guru Hungary Ltd.

„The development and implementation of internal policies and compliance programmes to prevent future infringements must not only be undertaken but must be rigorously enforced. The national competition authority has made it clear on several occasions that it prioritises the protection of tens of thousands of children, families, elderly or sick people.” – reminded Csaba Balázs RIGÓ, President of the GVH.

The GVH does not only support legitimate influencer marketing in its procedures: it has recently closed its public consultation on the revision of the [Authority's Guidance for influencers \(opinion leaders\)](#). The renewed guideline, which is also updated to take account of new expectations arising from technological developments, will be presented by the competition authority at a public workshop.

The official registration number of the case is: **VJ/40/2021.**

Press Office of the GVH