

GVH President: “We are building a bridge between the Western Balkans and the Turkic states”

Connectivity represented by the Hungarian Competition Authority at the Balkan Competition Platform in Istanbul

Budapest, 30 September 2024 – “Hungary and the Hungarian Competition Authority are committed to connectivity and mutual knowledge sharing.” said Csaba Balázs Rigó, President of the GVH, at the first Balkan Competition Platform conference in Istanbul. The main objective of the cross-border initiative is to strengthen cooperation on competition policy between the participating countries. The GVH has been a leading contributor to the exchange of knowledge on competition law in the region for almost two decades.

The first ever Balkan Competition Platform was held in Istanbul on the 30th of September 2024. Organised by the Turkish Competition Authority, the international event aims to promote the development of competition enforcement in the participating countries by enhancing mutual knowledge sharing and professional cooperation. In addition to the Presidents of the Turkish Competition Authority and the GVH, the meeting was attended by the Presidents and Heads of the Competition Authorities of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Romania.

Csaba Balázs Rigó, President of the Hungarian Competition Authority, stressed at the conference that *“Hungary and the Hungarian Competition Authority are committed to connectivity. We consider it a priority to build bridges between regions and countries, in the face of fragmentation. Our aim is to promote professional cooperation and mutual knowledge sharing based on partnership.”* - said the President of the GVH.

The GVH maintains a strong partnership with competition authorities in the Balkans and the Turkic states. In January of 2024, the [Hungarian Competition Authority joined the Competition Council of the Turkic States as an observer](#) (in line with Hungary's status in the Organization of Turkic States) and in April of this year it signed a [bilateral cooperation agreement with the Turkish Competition Authority](#).

The GVH has been a catalyst for international competition policy cooperation in the Balkan region for almost two decades. The Authority and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have jointly run the [Regional Centre for Competition \(RCC\)](#) in Budapest since 2005. Building on the expertise of the OECD and the GVH, the Training Centre provides support through the organisation of educational and professional programmes, mainly to countries in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The aim of the RCC is to improve competition policy, competition law and competition culture and to assist competition authorities in their work, thus contributing to the improvement of competition and thereby economic development in the beneficiary countries. Through the RCC, Hungary and the GVH

play a leading role in the development of transitional economies and technical assistance in the region.

The Budapest Training Centre has several beneficiaries, both among the Turkic states (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) and in the Balkan region (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania).

Csaba Balázs Rigó underlined at the Istanbul event that: *"The GVH has been a close professional partner of the competition authorities of the Western Balkans for around two decades and is therefore committed to using its own means to advance the accession of the countries concerned to the European Union as soon as possible."*

As an official programme of the Hungarian EU Presidency, the Hungarian Competition Authority is [organising the 50th European Competition Day in Budapest on the 22nd of October](#). The [international conference will bring together leading European experts](#) in competition law to discuss the relationship between competitiveness, sustainability and competition policy, the experience to date in the implementation of the Digital Markets Act, and the potential and risks of using artificial intelligence. In addition to the 27 EU Member States, the GVH has invited the competition authorities of eight candidate countries, five of which (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia) will represent the Western Balkans region.

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