

## Viber is making several changes thanks to the GVH proceedings

**Budapest, 17 May 2024 - The Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) has corrected the behaviour of yet another global technology company with a complex package of measures that is in line with the latest data protection requirements. Under the obligations imposed by the GVH, Viber Media, the operator of the Viber app, has been forced to implement a series of measures to help consumers better understand the features of the platform and make more informed choices about the service.**

Viber is an internet-based messaging service with a significant number of users in Hungary. The [GVH's proceedings](#) were launched because information on the free and secure nature of the Viber service was not available in Hungarian, and consumers were not fully informed about the data management. The proceedings were brought against Viber Media S.á.r.l., a company registered in Luxembourg and part of a group of undertakings controlled by the Japanese-based Rakuten Inc.

The GVH's investigation concluded with a commitment to protect the interests of Hungarian consumers, which can be given based on voluntary commitments by the company involved in the domestic service, without the national competition authority finding an infringement or lack of infringement. Some of the compliance requirements were already introduced by the company operating Viber during the proceedings. These include, for example, the preparation and continuous updating of privacy notices and in-app information in Hungarian.

Viber Media has also agreed to provide additional information on data management before registration begins and to make a new feature, Viber Plus subscription, available to existing and new users in Hungary, which, among many other features, will enable an ad-free Viber experience. Users who opt into the monthly Viber Plus service will not have their personal data used for advertising and will not receive any more ads as long as their Viber Plus subscription is active, the company's commitment states. The commitment will also bring positive changes to the non-paid basic Viber service, increasing the role of consumer consent to reduce the amount of personal data that can be used by the company by default and improving consumer information on privacy and security issues.

The company has also undertaken to develop a chat-bot (Privacy Bot) in Hungarian to inform users about online privacy and security. The Privacy Bot helps consumers to be aware of their data through concise, understandable visual messages and links to relevant decision points. The company has committed to operate the Privacy Bot for at least two years.

The GVH has developed the agreed package of measures in cooperation with the Hungarian National Authority for Data Protection and Freedom of Information (NAIH), correcting Viber's behaviour in a way that is in line with [the latest European data protection standards](#).

For years now, the Hungarian Competition Authority has paid particular attention to investigating the market conduct of large technology companies and online platforms that affect the interests and market position of a significant number of consumers and businesses. In recent years, the GVH has imposed competition remedies on [Google](#) and [PayPal](#), among others, and has imposed significant competition fines on [Apple](#) and [Booking.com](#) in Hungary. The GVH concluded its investigation into [Wish](#), one of the world's largest e-commerce marketplaces, in February 2023 and closed its investigation into [TikTok](#) at the end of November last year, where the Hungarian competition authority achieved results with global impact.

**The case's reference number is VJ/6/2020.**

### **GVH Public Service Communications Section**

Further information:

Bálint Horváth, Head of Communication +36 20 238 6939

Katalin Gondolovics, Spokesperson +36 30 603 1170