

Hungarian success in the ICN-WBG Competition Advocacy contest

On 9 March 2016, the International Competition Network and the World Bank Group announced the winners and honorable mentions of their 2015-2016 Competition Advocacy Contest. The Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) was awarded an ‘Honorable Mention’ for its anonymous contact system, the Cartel Chat, which it introduced last year.

The contest, which aims to increase the role of competition authorities in the development of competition culture, was also organized last year by the World Bank Group and ICN. There were 43 entries in the contest spread over four themes.

The GVH won the honorable award in the category of *“Catalyzing competition reforms through citizen and civil society engagement”*.

The GVH attaches great importance to the fight against cartels as cartels have an extremely harmful impact on the development of the whole economy. What is deemed to be successful action as regards to the detection of cartels is “breaking the silence”, and detecting and obtaining decisive evidence. Competition authorities can obtain information on the most effective way of achieving the above from stakeholders themselves – one of the potential tools employed by the GVH for this goal is the leniency policy.

At the end of last year, the GVH launched a communication campaign to popularise the **leniency policy** with the following slogan **“It cannot be kept secret”**. As part of this campaign, the GVH introduced the **new contact system** for replying to questions about cartels.

Cartel Chat is a closed and protected system that assures persons (individuals and undertakings) who have information about secret cartels by a **simple, anonymous registration** that

1. they can share their special knowledge with the employees of the Cartel Detection Section of the GVH, in full anonymity and without fear of negative consequences or retaliation;
2. they can share information they have become aware of with the GVH even if the so called compliance programme in operation at the undertaking does not work or does not work properly;

3. they can ask any **questions** they want about **cartels, the leniency policy and the procedure of the policy and about the informant reward**;
4. in every case, they will receive answers from the **same employee of the GVH** who they have previously dealt with in the event that they have further questions.

More information about the contact system is available [here](#) (only in Hungarian).

The aims of the integrated communication campaign were to raise awareness, to incite activity and to forward basic information. In order to achieve the latter, the GVH has created its own microsite on <http://kartell.gvh.hu/> (only in Hungarian).

Besides the activities of competition supervision and competition advocacy, the GVH is also responsible for the development of competition culture, in the framework of which it is responsible for disseminating general information on competition policy and promoting undertakings' compliance with competition law. To fulfil this role, the GVH initiates communication campaigns aimed at inciting compliance with competition law and increasing the awareness of consumers.

Further information regarding the Advocacy Contest of the World Bank Group and ICN and its winners is available [here](#).

Budapest, 10 March 2016

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