

One of the best-known ticketing sites may use hidden costs to influence consumers

18 May 2023, Budapest - The Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) has launched an investigation into the Hungarian operator of Eventim, one of the most popular ticketing portals, for allegedly failing to inform users about certain costs in a timely manner.

The Hungarian Competition Authority has launched proceedings against CTS Eventim Hungary Kft, a Hungarian member of the German Eventim group, for allegedly misleading consumers when selling tickets online. This is because the site presumably only informs users about certain costs (such as handling and delivery costs) after they have added tickets to their shopping cart or have registered. Thus, during the purchase process, the operator is potentially withholding certain information from consumers about the price of the tickets, which is substantial for their decision.

Hidden costs (usually taxes or shipping and handling fees) that appear dripped during the purchase process or only at the end of the payment process on online commercial platforms can be classified as dark patterns. Dark patterns are digital commerce's interface design methods that distort consumers' decisions without being perceived. In the case of hidden costs, for example, the consumer has already invested valuable time and energy in the purchase process when the unexpected additional charge(s) arise and is therefore more likely to buy the product despite the higher total amount. Similar objectionable practices are becoming more and more common: at the beginning of the year, the European Commission [published](#) the results of a coordinated fast-track investigation involving 25 countries, which measured the presence of so-called 'dark patterns' in online commerce. The results suggest [that a significant number of undertakings are using unfair practices to bias consumers' choices](#) towards options that are in their own interests, through the design or language of their internet interfaces.

The opening of competition supervision proceedings does not mean that the undertaking committed the infringement. The proceedings aim to clarify the facts and thereby prove the alleged infringement. The time limit for the proceedings is three months, which may be extended on two occasions, each time for a maximum of two months, where justified.

Official registration number of the case: **VJ/11/2023**

GVH Public Service Communications and International Section

Further information:

Bálint Horváth, Head of Communication +36 20 238 6939

Katalin Gondolovics, Spokesperson +36 30 603 1170