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## Cartel Chat and leniency campaign

The Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH) attaches great importance to the fight against cartels. In order to help the detection of cartels, the GVH set up a newly developed online anonymous contact system, the “Cartel Chat” and launched a new leniency campaign.

What is deemed to be successful action as regards to the detection of cartels is “breaking the silence”, and detecting and obtaining decisive evidence. One of the most effective tools which enables competition authorities to obtain information from stakeholders themselves is the leniency policy. As the GVH knows from research, SMEs are unaware of the very notion of a cartel and its consequences, and of their ability to step away from a cartel and benefit from significantly less severe sanctions. To remedy this situation the GVH decided to develop the “Cartel Chat” system in order to improve undertakings’ knowledge of cartels and foster competition law abiding business behaviour.

“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 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. They can do so even if the so called compliance programme in operation at the undertaking does not work or does not work properly. They can also ask questions about cartels, the leniency policy and the procedure of the policy and about the informant reward. 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 GVH pays attention to the importance of a constant further development of the competition culture. As a continuation of the general competition law compliance campaign from last year, on 1 December 2015 the GVH initiated a communication campaign to popularise the leniency policy with the slogan “It cannot be kept secret”. The campaign is countrywide and integrated. As a part of it, the GVH has created a microsite (<http://www.kartell.gvh.hu/>), which aims to clearly explain – to SMEs in particular – what cartels are, why they are harmful and what action can be taken against them. The main purposes of the campaign are raising awareness, education and incentive.

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