



BUDAPEST - HUNGARY

Heads of Agency Meeting

25-26 MARCH 2024

Index

Table of Contents

Table of contents	02
The responsibilities of the Authority	03
Presidential greeting	04
General information about Hungary	05
Agenda of the Meeting	06
Castle Quarter – Buda Castle	07
Chain Bridge – Budapest’s Oldest Bridge	08
Heroes’ Square	09
Gellért Hill and the Citadella	10
House of Parliament	11
The House of Music Hungary	12
Thermal baths	13
Practical informations	14
Contacts information	15



Intro

The responsibilities of the Authority



The Hungarian Competition Authority (Gazdasági Versenyhivatal - GVH; its English name used in the early years of operation was Office of Economic Competition) was established by Act LXXXVI of 1990 on the prohibition of unfair market practices and started its operation on 1 January 1991. The enactment of the prohibition of anticompetitive behaviour and the setting up of the authority was motivated by the will of protecting the freedom and fairness of competition.

The Competition Act, which is currently in force, is Act LVII of 1996 on the prohibition of unfair and restrictive market practices. The Act entered into force on 1 January 1997. Besides the provisions on competition, the Act determines the legal status of the Authority and regulates its basic structure and operation, further, the procedures, which it conducts. By Hungary's accession to the European Union, the GVH became a member of the European Competition Network that consists of the national competition authorities of the EU Member States and the DG Competition of the European Commission. As from the same time, the GVH is required to apply EC competition law under certain conditions.

The task of the GVH in relation to the fairness and freedom of competition is to enforce the competition rules for the benefit of the public in a way, which increases long-term consumer welfare and competitiveness at the same time. Furthermore, it promotes competition in general and, where no competition exists on the market, the GVH endeavours to create competition and promotes appropriate state regulation to be put in place.

The activities of the GVH in connection with the safeguarding of competition rest on the following three pillars.

- 1) competition supervision proceedings - the enforcement of the national and the EU competition law;
- 2) competition advocacy - the GVH tries to influence state decisions;
- 3) competition culture - the objective of the GVH is to contribute to the development of competition culture by the dissemination of knowledge about competition policy, in order to raise public awareness of competition issues, and by the promotion of the development of competition-related legal and economic activities of public interest.

Beyond the safeguarding of competition, the GVH fulfils other law enforcement tasks provided by other legal acts such as the Trade Act.

More info



Greeting

Presidential greeting

Dear Colleague, dear Guest!

As President of the Hungarian Competition Authority (GVH), it is an honour for me to welcome you all to Hungary on the occasion of the Heads of Agency Meeting organised in the framework of the OECD-GVH Regional Centre for Competition in Budapest (RCC). Thank you very much for accepting our invitation: your participation reminds us of how important our initiative is and motivates us to further strengthen our cooperation.

We hope that this meeting will be a worthy experience for you, both professionally and socially. This guide aims to provide you with some practical tips about the upcoming event and an insight into the most famous sights and attractions of the city. As the hosts of this special event, we are at your disposal to meet all your needs and answer all your questions.

I wish you a productive and fruitful conference and a pleasant stay.

Sincerely,

Rigó Csaba

Csaba Balázs Rigó
President of the Hungarian
Competition Authority



General information about Hungary

Languages

Hungarian is the official language of Hungary, whereas English is widely spoken.

Currency

The currency of Hungary is the Forint (Ft).

Local time

Hungary Time is GMT +1.

ATMs and Credit Cards

All major banks in Budapest have automatic teller machines (ATMs) and all major credit cards are accepted almost everywhere.

Electricity supply

The electricity supply in Hungary is 230 V and the frequency is 50 Hz. You can use your electric appliances in Hungary, if the standard voltage in your country is in between 220 - 240 V.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in all indoor public locations.

Emergency Number

Call 112, the EU-wide emergency number for police, fire department and ambulance.



Heads of Agency Meeting Guide

Agenda of the Meeting

Monday 25 March 2024

19.00–22.30	WELCOME DINNER
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Tuesday 26 March 2024

09.30–09.45	OPENING REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Csaba Balázs Rigó, President of the Hungarian Competition Authority • Ori Schwartz, Head of the OECD Competition Division 								
9.45–10.30	KEYNOTE SPEECH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frédéric Jenny, Chairman of the OECD Competition Committee 								
10.30–10.45	COFFEE BREAK								
10.45–11.30	JUDICIAL CONTROL OF COMPETITION AGENCIES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderated by Ori Schwartz, OECD JUDICIAL CONTROL OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS: A VIEW FROM A NATIONAL AGENCY AND THE EU COURT OF JUSTICE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marianna Rantou, European Court of Justice HOW JUDGES DEAL WITH COMPETITION CASES. SOME RESEARCH ALL OVER EUROPE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Francisco Marcos, IE School Madrid 								
11.30– 12.30	SOME EXPERIENCES FROM THE REGION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderated by María Pilar Canedo, OECD <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Gegham Gevorgyan, Chairman, Armenia</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Alexei Ghertescu, President, Moldova</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Adisa Begić, Chairperson, Bosnia and Herzegovina</td> <td>Bogdan Marius Chirițoiu, President, Romania</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mirta Kapural, President, Croatia</td> <td>Pavlo Kyrylenko, President, Ukraine</td> </tr> </table>	Gegham Gevorgyan , Chairman, Armenia	Alexei Ghertescu , President, Moldova	Adisa Begić , Chairperson, Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bogdan Marius Chirițoiu , President, Romania	Mirta Kapural , President, Croatia	Pavlo Kyrylenko , President, Ukraine		
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Mirta Kapural , President, Croatia	Pavlo Kyrylenko , President, Ukraine								
12.30–13.30	LUNCH BREAK								
13.30–14.30	MERGER CONTROL – A COMPARATIVE EU/US PERSPECTIVE <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderated by María Pilar Canedo, OECD <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Patty Brink, US DOJ</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Paul Csiszár, DG COMP</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Patty Brink , US DOJ		Paul Csiszár , DG COMP					
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14.30–14.45	COFFEE BREAK								
14.45–16.00	SOME EXPERIENCES FROM THE REGION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderated by María Pilar Canedo, OECD <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Denar Biba, Chairman, Albania</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Alexei Ghertescu, President, Moldova</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mammad Abbasbeyli, Head, Azerbaijan</td> <td>Bogdan Marius Chirițoiu, President, Romania</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mirta Kapural, President, Croatia</td> <td>Asadulla Kayumov, Deputy Chairman, Uzbekistan</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Irakli Lekvinadze, Chairman, Georgia</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Denar Biba , Chairman, Albania	Alexei Ghertescu , President, Moldova	Mammad Abbasbeyli , Head, Azerbaijan	Bogdan Marius Chirițoiu , President, Romania	Mirta Kapural , President, Croatia	Asadulla Kayumov , Deputy Chairman, Uzbekistan	Irakli Lekvinadze , Chairman, Georgia	
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16.00–16.20	THE RCC IN THE FACE OF THE CURRENT CHALLENGES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderated by María Pilar Canedo, OECD 								
16.20–16.30	FINAL REMARKS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Csaba Balázs Rigó, President of the Hungarian Competition Authority • Ori Schwartz, Head of the OECD Competition Division 								
16.30–20.00	SOCIAL EVENT								

Castle Quarter – Buda Castle

The Castle Quarter (Várnegyed) refers to the oldest part of Budapest, located within the defensive walls of the Buda Castle (Budai Vár) complex. Located on the Castle Mount (Várhegy), it corresponds with the medieval royal city of Buda.

The Castle Quarter offers a place for the heart and soul of Hungary's cultural and historical heritage. Walking among the historical streets of the city of Buda one can come across landmarks such as the Vienna Gate (Bécsi Kapu), the **Matthias Church** (Mátyás Templom) or the Fisherman's Bastion (Halászbástya). Also located here, is the **Sándor Palace** (Sándor-Palota), official residence and workspace of the president of Hungary.

The Castle Quarter is located within the walls of the Buda Castle complex. The Buda Castle itself is one of the most iconic landmarks of Budapest. The building also hosts within itself numerous cultural institutions such as the **Hungarian National Gallery** (Magyar Nemzeti Galéria), or the **National Széchényi Library** (Országos Széchényi Könyvtár) our first national public institution founded in 1802.

The Castle Quarter in itself, can offer cultural and entertainment programmes for several days, and is among the most prominent tourist destinations in Budapest, and in Hungary.



Chain Bridge – Budapest’s Oldest Bridge

In 2023, we celebrated the 150th birthday of Budapest. However, since the city’s historical past dates back almost two thousand years, the 150th anniversary is not about the foundation, but the unification of the three historical parts, namely Buda, Pest and Óbuda. Cities used to surround themselves with walls in order to protect their values. Today, we stand up for our principles and values by breaking these walls down and building bridges instead. A symbol of this is the Chain Bridge over the river Danube – being renovated for the 150th anniversary. We also build bridges in a figurative sense: out of acceptance and openness between people.

We owe the construction of the beautiful **Chain Bridge** to Count István Széchenyi – referred to as the greatest Hungarian thanks to his key political, cultural, and economic role. Although it is clear that connecting Buda and Pest became increasingly urgent in the 19th century for numerous reasons, the construction of the first bridge also owes much to Széchenyi’s personal experience: on hearing news of his father’s death, he travelled from Debrecen to Vienna, but he had to delay his crossing over the Danube by several days on account of the bad weather, i.e., the bridge also meant to serve uninterrupted traffic between the eastern and northern parts of the country. Count Széchenyi never actually got to cross the bridge as by the time of its inauguration he was already being treated in a mental institution, where he later took his own life.



Heroes' Square

Andrássy avenue is recognised as a World Heritage site with its magnificent buildings, such as the **Opera House** designed by renowned Hungarian architect Miklós Ybl, the Neo-Renaissance Academy of Music or the Fashion Hall, but it also includes the Heroes' Square at the end of the Andrásy avenue flanked by the Museum of Fine Arts and the Kunsthalle.

It is the largest and most symbolic square in Budapest. Originally, in the second half of the 19th century, an ornamental fountain designed by Hungarian architect Miklós Ybl, stood in Heroes' Square at the end of Andrásy avenue. The Gloriette Well was ultimately relocated to Széchenyi Hill (it has since been functioning as a lookout point), and an imposing monument was designed to take its place to commemorate the 1000th anniversary of the Hungarian Conquest of 896: the Millennium Monument. In the centre stands the statue of Archangel Gabriel on a 36 m column: in his left hand he holds a double cross and in his right hand the Holy Crown, because, according to the legend, King Stephen of Hungary was prompted by the Archangel in a dream to convert to Christianity and crown himself. The base of Gabriel's column is surrounded by the equestrian statues of the chieftains of the 7 Hungarian tribes, led by Grand Prince Árpád. The colonnades feature statues of historical figures that played an active role in creating modern Hungary.

Along with many other landmarks, the **Vajdahunyad Castle** was also constructed for the Jubilee celebration of the thousand years of the Hungarian State. The building complex is considered a particularly interesting tourist attraction as it combines elements from the Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque styles at the same time. City Park is a spectacular location for boating and pedal boating, while in winter the artificial lake becomes a skating ring.



Gellért Hill and the Citadella

Originally built as a fortress by the Austrian army under Haynau, the Citadel sits atop the Gellért Hill offering a view of Hungary's capital as none other. Whilst the inner chambers of the fortress are currently closed to visitors due to renovation, the monument is among the most recognisable landmarks of Budapest and Hungary, symbolising the freedom of the Hungarian people. Indeed, the Liberty Statue or Freedom Statute commemorates those who sacrificed their lives for the independence, freedom and prosperity of Hungary (transition from communism to democracy). Gellert Hill bolsters many other iconic landmarks: such is the **Cave Church** (Saint Ivan's Cave) which has a temperature of around twenty Celsius degrees all year around due to the hot springs. Hidden in the green area in Gellert hill is the Philosophers' Garden featuring a group of statues depicting famous thinkers and religious figures.



House of Parliament

Building this beautiful monument took seventeen years, from 1885 to 1902, based on the design of architect Imre Steindl. Unfortunately, the designer himself did not live to see the inauguration since he died five weeks before. An essential stipulation for the project was that only Hungarian raw materials could be used for the construction of the Parliament and that Hungarian craftsmen and manufacturers had to be involved in the process – these conditions were fulfilled, with only the gigantic granite columns imported from abroad. Some of the figures are impressive: roughly 40 million bricks were used for the construction, while around 40 kilograms of 22-23 carat gold embellish the Parliament. It can be entered through a total of 27 gates, and 365 towers of varying sizes, one for each day of the year, rise from the Hungarian Parliament.

The neo-Gothic building is undoubtedly the most iconic symbol of Hungary – it symbolises the sovereignty of Hungary and the continuity of Hungarian statehood despite many tribulations. It is worth mentioning that the building is not only the seat of the [Hungarian National Assembly](#), but is also home to the [Library of the Hungarian Parliament](#) with a collection of some of the rarest and oldest manuscripts and books relating to the evolution of Hungarian constitutionalism and law. The Parliament building also provides guided tours in [numerous languages](#).



A New Wonder in Hungary: The House of Music Hungary

Music holds a special place in Hungary and the hearts and minds of Hungarians. A great number of Hungarian composers have created excellent music – among them Béla Bartók, Ferenc Liszt, Zoltán Kodály and György Ligeti have made their mark on the universal language of music. As a unique and complex institution of musical initiation as well as the venue for the country's first comprehensive exhibition presenting the history of music, the House of Music Hungary opened in the City Park in January 2022. The building was designed by Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto and has evolved into a true contemporary architectural masterpiece. It is nestled among the trees of the City Park, honours its natural environment to a great extent, and provides a one-of-a-kind artistic experience that incorporates natural landscape, architecture and exhibition design, all of which serve the creation of music and sound.

There are several **guided tours** at the House of Hungarian Music, which will be one of the social events of the first day of the Meeting.



Thermal baths

Budapest is unique as a world capital in boasting medicinal springs under its territory, supplying 70 million litres of hot therapeutic water, rich in minerals and other elements. The water is used primarily in health spas and thermal baths or as mineral drinking water sold in bottles. It can be stated that one of the most outstanding points of Budapest's vibrant spa life is the **Art Nouveau-style Gellert Bath**, which was opened to the general public after the WW1, but a bath has stood here as far back as the Middle Ages. Furthermore, a series of baths can be found in a row, some of which were established during the Turkish occupation, whilst others during the Middle Ages: the Rudas, the Rác, the Király and the Lukács baths.

Széchenyi Thermal Bath is the largest spa complex in Budapest and in Europe. It is located in the heart of City Park and is surrounded by several wonderful sights. The water is recommended for the treatment of degenerative joint and spine diseases, calcium deficiency in the bone system and post-traumatic rehabilitation. The spa is named after Count István Széchenyi – referred to as the greatest Hungarian – who played a key role in the development of the country. He started effective development work in the 19th century, revitalising Hungary through the modernisation of industry, agriculture, transport and trade. We owe him the construction of the beautiful Chain Bridge and he also had the Danube, the Tisza River and Lake Balaton regulated.

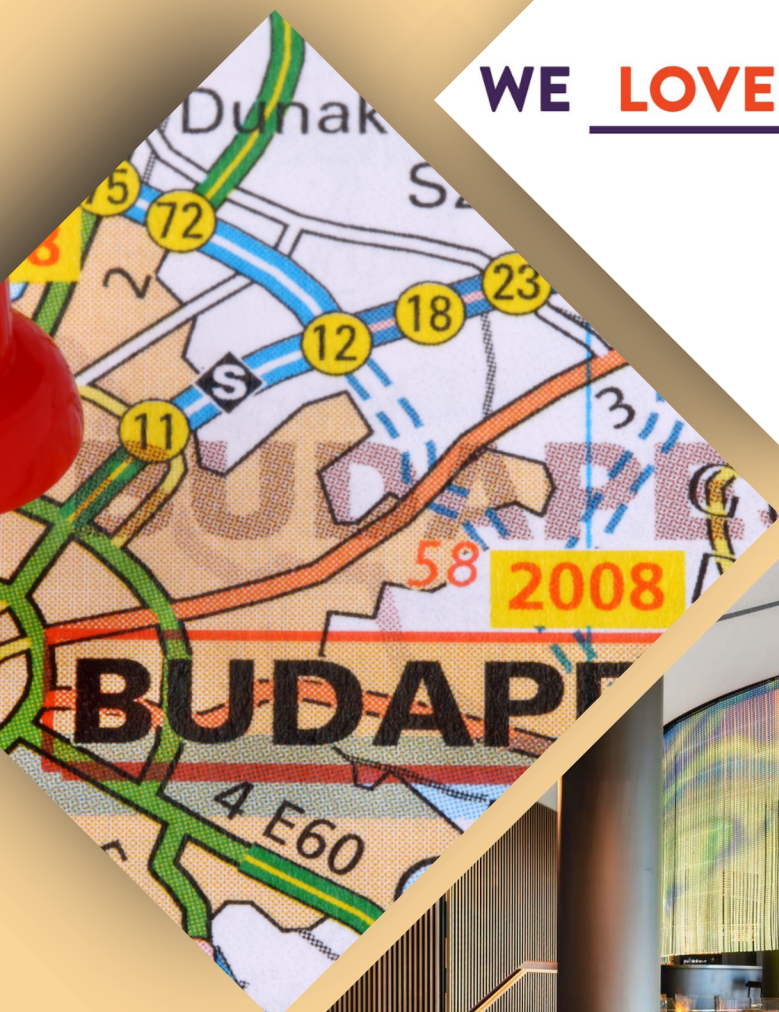


Practical information and contact information

Tap on the picture!



WE LOVE BUDAPEST



Practical information and contact information

If you have any questions concerning the event, please do not hesitate to contact our colleagues:



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**We are looking forward to welcoming you
in Hungary!**

2024
Hungary
Budapest

