



Věra Jourová
Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality
European Commission
Rue de la Loi – Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels

Prot. No. 120/LH
Brussels, 14th May 2018

Dear Commissioner,

Re: Application of the GDPR

UEAPME, the European Association of Crafts and SMEs, EUROCHAMBRES, the European association of Chambers of Commerce & Industry and HOTREC, the European Hospitality Industry, have repeatedly stressed that they fully support the fundamental rights of European citizens for the protection of personal data. Indeed, entrepreneurs care about their privacy and the privacy of the others.

The General Data Protection Regulation will apply as from 25th of May this year. The implementation of these requirements and their high complexity constitute a major challenge, especially for small and medium sized enterprises. That is why our organisations have provided a variety of advice and extensive information to assist SMEs all over Europe during this intense period of preparation and transposition.

Despite these efforts and the two year transition period, a lot still needs to be done and a lot of questions remain unanswered. In many member states, the relevant national legislation has not yet been adopted and guiding material has only recently become available. In addition, as we can read on the website of one national DPA, *“the interpretation and the implementation of the GDPR is a “work in progress”, concertation is still going on at European level and the application of the legislation in practice is still unknown.”* In such circumstances, proper compliance at the moment of the regulation coming into force will hardly be possible.

Therefore we urge you to recommend to member states and the National Data Protection Authorities to invest in support of and advice to SMEs and to commit, during the first year, to not immediately imposing fines in case of infringements.

Yours sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Ulrike Rabmer-Koller in black ink.

Ulrike Rabmer-Koller
UEAPME President

Handwritten signature of Christoph Leitz in black ink.

Christoph Leitz
Eurochambres President

Handwritten signature of Susanne Kraus-Winkler in black ink.

Susanne Kraus-Winkler
HOTREC President