



The Data Protection Officer is a burden for SMEs and therefore should not be made compulsory!

Brussels, 8 October 2014 – HOTREC, the umbrella Association of Hotels, Restaurants and Cafes in Europe, and UEAPME, the employers' organisation representing the interests of European crafts, trades and SMEs, call the Justice and Home Affairs Council not to make the Data Protection Officer compulsory, at least not for SMEs, whose core business is not data processing.

Ahead of the Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting taking place on 9 and 10 October 2014, HOTREC and UEAPME call on the Council not to make it compulsory for companies to have a Data Protection Officer, especially not for SMEs, if the company's core business is not data processing.

"The economic and administrative burden that the Data Protection Officer would imply would be simply unbearable for SMEs to handle in the current times of crisis. The fee of hiring an external DPO can easily amount up to €12.000€ per year. And even if the company attributes the task to an internal employee, this person will be spending a substantial amount of time in order to be specialised on a topic that is redundant to the company, as a small hotel or restaurant core business is not data processing", stressed Christian de Barrin, CEO of HOTREC.

"New legislation should avoid any additional burdens to SMEs, as they are the backbone of European economy. Let's not forget the "Think Small First principle" and the proportionality principle. The only decisive facts to take into account should relate to the categories of data being processed and the type of processing activities" – highlighted UEAPME Secretary General, Peter Faross.

Therefore, HOTREC and UEAPME call on the Council to:

- Keep the designation of the DPO optional;
- Ensure that SMEs employing less than 250 employees and whose core activity is not data processing are not obliged to designate a DPO.

What is HOTREC?

HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. This industry includes around 1,8 million businesses, of which 99% are small and medium sized enterprises (91% of them micro enterprises, i.e. employing fewer than 10 people). These businesses make up some 59% of industry value added. The hospitality industry provides some 10.2 million jobs in the EU alone. Together with the other tourism industries, the sector is one of the largest industries in Europe. HOTREC brings together 42 national associations representing the sector in 27 different European countries. For further information please visit www.hotrec.eu or follow our Twitter account: https://twitter.com/HOTREC_EUROPE.

What is UEAPME?

UEAPME is the employers' organisation representing exclusively crafts, trades and SMEs from the EU and accession countries at European level. UEAPME has 80 member organisations covering over 12 million enterprises with 55 million employees. UEAPME is a European Social Partner. For further information please visit <http://www.ueapme.com/> or follow @UEAPME on Twitter.

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