

Representatives of the Agency for the Protection of Personal Data, at the Vrije University in Brussels, on Wednesday, August 24, held a final meeting with project partners as part of the ARC (Awareness Raising Campaign for SMEs) project - Data protection awareness raising campaign for small and medium-sized enterprises . With the aim of providing support to small and medium-sized enterprises in harmonizing business processes with GDPR, the Agency has been implementing a project for the last 30 months, co-financed by the EU program "Rights, Equality and Citizenship", with the Irish Data Protection Commission and Vrije Brussel University.

The meeting was also attended by representatives of the European Commission, the European Data Protection Board, the European Data Protection Supervisor, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, and representatives of the Croatian Chamber of Commerce and the Croatian Association of Employers.

The participants were greeted by Zdravko Vukić, director of the Personal Data Protection Agency, Igor Vulje, member of the supervisory board of the ARC project and deputy director, Prof. Dr.Sc. Paul de Hert from the University of Vrije Brussel, member of the supervisory board of the ARC project, Bruno Gencarelli on behalf of the European Commission, and the project results were presented by project manager Anamarija Mladinić on behalf of the Personal Data Protection Agency, MB Donnelly on behalf of the Commission for Data Protection and Ashwinee Kumar on behalf of the University of Vrije Brussel .

Namely, the GDPR has been in full application for more than 4 years, and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises in Croatia, as well as throughout the EU, still have ambiguities regarding compliance with the GDPR. Unlike large companies, small and medium-sized enterprises do not have the financial and human resources to coordinate their operations properly. Precisely for this reason, the European Commission finances projects aimed at raising the level of awareness of personal data protection among small and medium-sized enterprises and providing concrete assistance when complying with the GDPR, which was used by the Agency for the implementation of the ARC project.

All participants agreed that the ARC project improved the knowledge and level of personal data protection of small and medium-sized entrepreneurs in Croatia, but that further and continuous educational activities and activities to raise the level of awareness of the importance of personal data protection are needed. In order to achieve the project goal, i.e. to facilitate the implementation of the GDPR for entrepreneurs and to raise the level of awareness of personal data protection among the general public, the Agency carried out numerous activities within the project.

Thus, 31 workshops were held for a total of 2,000 micro, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs throughout the Republic of

Croatia, cooperation was established with the Croatian Chamber of Commerce, which provided full support during the workshops. In addition, thanks to the HGK platform, recordings of the held workshops are available free of charge for all entrepreneurs at <https://digitalnakomora.hr/e-ucenje/baza-znanja>. For the needs of the target group, the mobile application GDPR Croatia was created, as well as the website of the project in Croatian and English <https://arc-rec-project.eu/naslovna>, where numerous, easy-to-understand educational materials adapted specifically for small children are available. and medium-sized entrepreneurs. Likewise, in order for as many entrepreneurs as possible to learn about the benefits of the ARC project, the Agency created a promotional video and implemented a digital campaign on social networks Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Thanks to the activities carried out, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, in addition to useful information and a better level of business compliance, were also able to save a significant amount of money for training.

The Agency will continue to provide support to entrepreneurs in harmonization through the EU project ARC II, co-financed from the "Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values" program, the implementation of which will begin in September this year. The project will be implemented in partnership with the Italian supervisory authority for data protection, the Faculty of Organization and Informatics from Varaždin, the University of Vrije Brussel and the University of Florence. The main project result will be an IT solution that will make it easier for entrepreneurs to fulfill their obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation.