

News about Google data protection, visas and banking in the UK and more

Maddyness provides you with a quick digest of three news items to keep you up to date with the startup scene, emerging trends and other noteworthy stories. Here's what's been happening in the news this week.

British Google users to lose EU data protection

Google is planning to migrate British users' accounts from the control of EU privacy regulators and to place them under U.S. jurisdiction instead. Following Brexit, this change will leave the private information of tens of millions with less protection and within easier reach of British law enforcement. Google will require its British users to acknowledge new terms of service including the new jurisdiction.

Google and other US tech companies are headquartered in Ireland, which is staying in the EU and is under the General Data Protection Regulation. As a result, Google wants to move its British users out of Irish jurisdiction because it is confusing whether Britain will follow GDPR or adopt other rules that could affect the management of user data.

Startups can still recruit talent but using a point-based immigration system

On the UK Government's website it's very clear: "Our message to the world: Britain is open for business".

Three weeks after Brexit, the UK is implementing the "biggest shake-up of the UK's immigration system for a generation". Businesses will still be able to recruit talented people from around the world using a single streamlined points-based immigration system.

What's the points-based immigration system? The new system, effective from 1 January 2021, will assign points for specific skills, qualifications, salaries or professions. As a result, visas will only be awarded to those who gain enough points.

Not only is this system expected to "help restore public trust in the immigration system", but also to boost innovation and accessibility to the best and most talented workers from around the world. Additionally, it aims to prioritise the skills people have and gauge their contribution to the UK's economy, not their origins.

"Today is a historic moment for the whole country. We're ending free movement, taking back control of our borders and delivering on the people's priorities by introducing a new UK points-based immigration system, which will bring overall migration numbers down. We will attract the brightest and the best from around the globe, boosting the economy and our communities, and unleash this country's full potential." – Home Secretary, Priti Patel

41% of small UK companies risk failure

Recent research from Think Business Loans found that “41% of SME’s are unsure of their ability to invest in their business over the next 12 months”. Furthermore, the value of business loans to SME’s has fallen by 56%, meaning small companies are being left behind by banks.

Despite contributing £1.9T to the UK’s economy, only 2% of SME’s receive bank loans. As a consequence, 4 out of 10 businesses are unsure of their ability to invest in their businesses, with many others searching for innovative funding alternatives to help boost their growth, such as crowdfunding or private lenders.

The lack of funding from major banks is causing SME’s to experience issues like never before. Data from the report revealed that small businesses can’t afford growth-hacking technology, with 22% unable to afford card readers. This lack of support from banks is considered a major obstacle for SME’s. Over a third (36%) of SME’s based in the UK find it difficult to plan a budget for the year ahead, while they’re feeling the pressure of challenging market conditions.

Samsung accidentally sent ‘Find My Mobile’ push notification to Galaxy phones worldwide

Samsung Galaxy smartphone owners worldwide have received a weird “Find My Mobile” push notification, with the letter “1” that disappears when tapping on it. The latest Samsung devices were affected, as well as Galaxy Z Flip, Galaxy Note 10 series, Galaxy S, Galaxy A, and Galaxy J series phones. Curiously, users who don’t have Samsung’s “Find My Mobile” app on their phone also received the same push notification. Samsung is yet to make an official statement.