



**Press Statement – For Immediate Release  
Monday November 26th 2018**

**An Taoiseach and Retail Excellence get vocal about supporting local**

***Small Business Saturday Awareness Campaign launched to encourage consumers to shop local and support small retailers this Christmas***

Retail Excellence and An Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar TD have launched an awareness campaign to support local retailers this Christmas and year-round. The campaign, which was launched at Government buildings, centres around Small Business Saturday which will take place on Saturday December 1st this year.

Originally an American concept, Small Business Saturday is an initiative that is supported and promoted by Retail Excellence, the largest retail representative body in Ireland. This is the fifth year of the Irish campaign which profiles small businesses and encourages consumers to shop locally and support jobs and enterprises in their respective communities.

Group Chief Executive of Retail Excellence David Fitzsimons said "It is important to recognise the massive impact small businesses have on our economy, both nationally and locally. With 37,400 businesses and 282,000 Irish jobs dependent on the industry initiatives like Small Business Saturday are crucial to encourage consumers to shop local and support retailers in Ireland".

"This initiative is critically important at a time when two-thirds of consumer spend online is fulfilled by businesses operating outside Ireland and in the face of falling excise figures recorded by the Department of Finance which is largely indicative of an increase in cross border shopping".

Commenting on the launch, Taoiseach Leo Vardakar said "I am pleased to endorse Small Business Saturday, now in its fifth year. The idea is simple; if you want to back your local businesses, and in turn your local community, then shop local this Christmas. Your local shop or retailer has a unique appeal; they can offer you tailored local advice, as well as the best local goods and produce. By shopping local this Christmas, you can give your local businesses a year round boost".

"Retail Excellence would like consumers to understand that their small change can make a big difference on Small Business Saturday in their local economy. Every €10 spent locally is worth €40 in terms of supported employment, supported communities and helping the business to continue to operate year-round."

On December 1st remember to shop local and support Small Business Saturday!

Ends

**Caption**

Becci Harrison of Fishers of Newtownmountkennedy, Co. Wicklow and Jean McCabe of Willow, Ennis, Co. Clare pictured with An Taoiseach Leo Varadkar for the launch of Small Business Saturday 2018.

**For comment**

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**About Small Business Saturday in Ireland**

Small Business Saturday started as a grassroots, non-political, non-commercial campaign, which highlights small business success and encourages consumers to shop local and support small businesses in their communities. The day itself takes place on the first shopping Saturday in December - Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup> this year.

**Editors notes**

Excise take was down €300 million in Q3 2017 which indicates consumers are buying cigarette and alcohol products outside the jurisdiction

**About Retail Excellence**

Established in 1995, Retail Excellence is owned by the members, for the members. We are an organisation which invests in innovative and exciting learning, market intelligence, human resources services, Government representation and member networking initiatives. Retail Excellence has over 1,850 leading retail companies in Ireland. Our members are the most progressive and innovative retailers. Retail Excellence is by far the largest retail industry body in Ireland.