



NEW MEMBER WELCOME PACK



iSME

Irish **SME** Association

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Established in 1993, ISME provides Lobbying, HR Advice, Training & Events for members.

ISME is the only independent representative association for Small and Medium Enterprises and currently has in excess of 10,500 members nationwide.

Advice & Support

- Dedicated HR Advisory Service
- General Business Advice & Support including HR, Finance and more
- Resources including guides, FAQs, templates

Promote your Business

Providing opportunities to promote SMEs through the website –Member News, Shop Local, our publications The bISME & the ISME Wall Planner, events and networking

Representation & Lobbying

The only independent voice for the SME sector, lobbying on key issues facing businesses

Learning & Development

Offering short & long courses designed for, and delivered to SMEs, with up to 40% discount for ISME Members



NEW AMAZON IRISH SITE A BLOW FOR SMALL SHOPS FACE PRICES AND PUNISHMENT

Blow for bricks & mortar stores

EXCLUSIVE by GARY MENEELY

AMAZON'S new Irish website will be a killer blow to some bricks and mortar shops, it is claimed.

One small business group has described the launch – coming next year – as a mixed bag for Irish firms.

Amazon hailed the new website as “great news for Irish customers” and a new shop window for the country's enterprises.

Some small businesses welcomed the development, saying Amazon has provided them with a valuable outlet for goods. But

other local firms face a struggle to compete with the huge multinational company's website.

Critics warned the Amazon announcement presents another blow to the traditional bricks and mortar high street store.

Books and clothes shops are expected to be hardest hit.

Speaking to the Irish Sun last night, Neil McDonnell, chief executive of the small business lobby group ISME, said Amazon presents “pros and cons”.

He said: “It does depend on the business sector. Amazon is extremely powerful. Businesses in

direct competition with them are going to experience very significant price pressure.

“On the upside, they do provide a channel for those businesses and manufacturers that are capable of working with them. They can give a scale that would not be otherwise available to those businesses.

“Books remain really active on Amazon. Book prices there are

often below the rates elsewhere. So small bookstores and a lot of bricks and mortar clothing stores will be pressured.”

But Mr McDonnell said local clothes shops can still compete if they have a “unique offering”.

gary.meneely@the-sun.ie



Amazon ... and McDonnell, right

SME group to grill candidates

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Each candidate will be asked to respond with their views by the

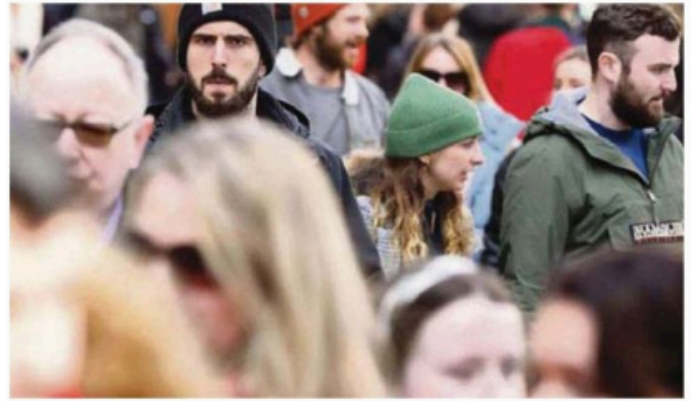
Reduce Vat to 21% and hospitality rate to 9% in budget, says Isme

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Publishing its pre-budget submission, the group accused the Government of being “dismissive” of the “strategic importance of the SME sector”, and called for more influence in bodies responsible for setting labour policies.

Isme said there should be a change to how the minimum

cent and said the standard rate should be cut to 21 per cent, it said. PRSI should be charged at 2 per cent on all income up to €424 per week, rising to 6 per cent on everything above that level, its said.

Alongside proposed change to the capital gains tax regime, this would help to add €1.4 billion to the State's coffers, it said. Workers currently pay no PRSI if their weekly income is below €352 a week. If it is higher, they pay 4 per cent on the full amount.

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CSNA and ISME call for €75,000 damages cap

As the Department of Justice prepares to publish the legislation amending the Defamation Act 2009, ISME and the CSNA met with the Minister of State at the Department of Justice, James Browne, last month to call for the introduction of an immediate cap of €75,000 for serious defamation.

damages in personal injuries cases. Awards of up to twice the vouched loss should be awardable by the Courts. This is consistent with legislative provisions under the Unfair Dismissals Act 1977.

The adoption of the anti-SLAPP Directive (which protects journalists and media outlets from aggressive litigation)

should never be considered ‘actionable.’

Stuart Lodge, CEO of retail security company Lodge Service International, said that the situation in regard to litigation in Ireland had become progressively worse over the past 15 years and “has now deteriorated to an extent that we are seriously questioning whether it is still viable to conduct business here. We also believe that we are not alone; and this claims culture is deterring other suppliers and investors from doing business in Ireland. We also propose that retailers and their representatives should be able to question customers in relation to purchases or activities in their without fear of actionable cases taken against them.” Due to a increase in the use and abuse of “analogous proceedings” such as complaints under the Equal St 2000 – 2015, ISME and the CS seeking the extension of anti-protections to proceedings by Workplace Relations Commission. Furthermore, both bodies believe plaintiffs under the Equal Stat 2000 – 2015 should be required a deposit of €500 with the W hears a complaint under this A

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The business representative bodies highlighted the fact that the Supreme Court has now confirmed that capping of damages is constitutional and that this is exclusively a matter for the Oireachtas. As the level of damages recommended by the Supreme Court in Higgins -V- DAA is excessive, inconsistent with the Judicial Guidelines on serious injuries, and is almost certainly repugnant to Article 10 rights under the European Convention on

by the EU Parliament means that Ireland must introduce robust and meaningful protections for defendants, as well as significant penalties for offending plaintiffs. Compensation for defendants must be equivalent to three times the damages sought by the plaintiff, or the maximum jurisdiction of the Court in which the claim is brought, whichever is the greater. This level of consistency with

Strength in numbers: retailers join forces to make themselves heard

GOVERNMENT policy measures are to blame for rising costs of business and it's up to politicians to fix it. That's the message from retail representatives who have teamed up in a coalition of small businesses to lobby the government for change. A Department of Enterprise study, published in March, revealed in a case study of an unnamed grocery firm which found that “more than half of the increase in the cost base” of the firm from 2019 to 2026 “will be a result of changes in government policy”.

Recent analysis from Ibec suggests new labour market policies, including the commitment to a Living Wage by 2026, the introduction of pension auto-enrolment, statutory sick pay, and increases to employers' PRSI, will add over €4 billion to annual employer wage bills.

Furthermore, Tara Buckley, Director General of RGDATA, told Rina Ní Riada, grocery is directly in the firing line. “The Government's own report found that

strength in numbers: “If we're not aligned with the broad spectrum of our wish-list, [policy makers] can divide and conquer. So it makes sense for us to come together on areas we agree upon and compel the Government to take action, because labour costs impact every small and medium-sized business in the country.”

A common area of concern between retailers and other industries, such as hospitality, is the desire to see a 9% VAT rate for foodservice. Save Jobs is calling for a permanent 9% rate, a reduction from the current 13.5%. “Typically margins on the grocery side are low and are high on the deli side,” said McDonnell. “So businesses have to decide: do I swallow this VAT increase or pass it on? Now we're the second most expensive consumer



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Furthermore, Tara Buckley, Director General of RIGDATA, told RTE News, "grocery is directly in the firing line. The Government's own report found that convenience food retail is significantly impacted by employment changes. They put a figure of around 36% increase in the wage bill."

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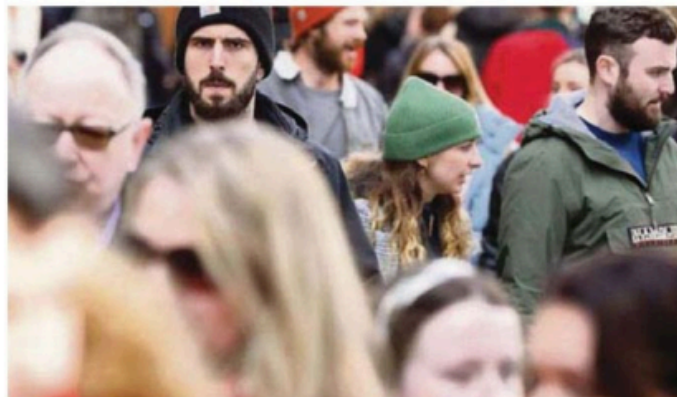
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Under the new rules, businesses are now obliged to report in much more detail the level of expenses they pay their employees.

Another source described it as a 'little hand grenade' in the 2022





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