

# Press release: UK encouraged to 'shop small' this Small Business Saturday

- government ministers out in force to support their local independent businesses this Small Business Saturday (2 December)
- the UK is home to a record 5.7 million small businesses

Government ministers are visiting independent businesses across the UK today in celebration of Small Business Saturday.

The annual campaign, now in its fifth year, champions and supports the UK's small businesses. Last Small Business Saturday, £717 million was spent in small businesses on the day.

Small Business Minister, Margot James said:

This government is completely behind the UK's 5.7 million small businesses – they are there, day in and day out, at the heart of our local communities.

They are the backbone of our economy, so I encourage everyone to think big by shopping small this Small Business Saturday.

At the start of 2017 there were a record 5.7 million small businesses in the UK – an increase of more than 1.2 million since the start of 2010. The [latest business population estimates](#) show that these businesses are responsible for 48% of private sector employment and contribute £1.4 trillion in turnover.

Since 2010, government support for smaller businesses includes:

- British Business Bank programmes supporting £3.4 billion of finance to over 59,000 smaller businesses
- over 50,000 Start-Up Loans worth more than £348 million
- increasing the amount central government spends with small business – central government contracts above £10,000 are openly advertised on the government's procurement website, [Contracts Finder](#)
- a network of 38 local growth hubs which make it easier for start-ups and existing businesses to access the support they need
- appointing a Small Business Commissioner to champion the interests of small business and help drive a culture change in payment practises

Additional support in the Budget included a 10-year action plan to unlock £20 billion of investment in innovative firms, a £2.3 billion package to reduce business rates bills and further freezes to fuel duty worth £850 million a year.

For more information about government support available to small businesses, please [contact the business helplines](#).