**Pay increase on way for over 700 Lidl employees**

**Lidl extends commitment to pay the latest ‘Living Wage’**

**First supermarket in Ireland to announce €11.90 minimum hourly rate**

**Dublin,** Monday, 5th November, 2018: Lidl, the first major nationwide employer to commit to paying the Living Wage in 2015, has made a further commitment to match the latest revised rate recommended by the Living Wage Technical Group effective from 1st March 2019. The change will benefit 16% of employees, while all other employees working in Lidl already earn in excess of the Living Wage.

This proactive step continues Lidl’s exemplary track record as a pioneering, best-practice employer and is just one of many benefits Lidl has introduced in recent years to create a better workplace for all 4,300 employees. Current benefits enjoyed include: Employee Assistance Programme; paid maternity and paternity leave; subsidised Sports and Social; paid sick leave; paid volunteering; pension contributions after one year with the company; and paid health insurance for salaried employees. In addition to this employees benefit from extensive training and development opportunities which have enabled 43% of our current store management to progress through the company having initially started as Customer Assistants.

A similar commitment is being announced today to employees in Lidl Northern Ireland using the UK Living Wage Foundation’s recommended rate of £9.00 per hour.

**Announcing Lidl’s commitment to pay the latest Living Wage, John Paul Scally, Managing Director, Lidl Ireland said:** *“Lidl is proud to champion the Living Wage in Ireland. Our people are central to our success. They look after our customers, drive our operations and support our communities across Ireland. It is important for us to reward them - not just with market-leading rates but also by creating an environment where our colleagues’ holistic needs are prioritised including their overall sense of wellbeing. As part of our Work Safe-Live Well programme we’ve invested in many health and wellbeing initiatives over the past number of years, including the Step Challenge, life-saving Heart and Diabetes screening, Mental Health Awareness campaigns and our confidential Employee Assistance Programme. By continually investing in our team, we continue to retain and attract the best employees and, in turn, continue to serve our 1.5 million plus weekly customers the highest quality products cheaper than any of our competitors.”*

Lidl Ireland employs over 4,300 employees in its 158 stores, head office in Tallaght and three distribution centres and regional offices based in Charleville, Mullingar and Newbridge. According to figures released by Kantar Worldpanel, Lidl currently holds 11.7% of the Irish grocery market.

**Ends**

**For reference:**

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**Note for editors:**

**Living Wage**

The Living Wage is a wage which makes possible a minimum acceptable standard of living. In principle, a living wage is intended to establish an hourly wage rate that should provide employees with sufficient income to achieve an agreed socially acceptable standard of living. The calculation takes clothing, food, housing, health, education, transportation, and social/ recreational costs into consideration.

The new 2018 figure of €11.90 represents an increase of 20c per hour over the 2017 rate of €11.70. The increase has been driven by changes in the cost of living and changes in the taxation system. The current housing crisis, and associated increases in rent levels, continues to be the main driver of the wage rate increasing for 2018.

Source: The Living Wage Technical Group <https://www.livingwage.ie/>

**About Lidl Ireland**

Lidl Ireland employs over 4,300 staff in its 158 stores, head office in Tallaght and three distribution centres and regional offices based in Charleville, Mullingar and Newbridge. Lidl is committed to working with its growing number of over 200 Irish suppliers, investing €700 million per annum in sourcing Irish goods and services.

In 2018, Lidl was awarded the coveted ‘Outstanding Achievement in Corporate Social Responsibility’ at the Chambers Ireland CSR Awards, a key pillar of Lidl’s CSR strategy is its employee wellbeing programme called Work Safe-Live Well.