Third-level funding a 'whole-of-society issue', says IFUT

Wed. Oct 4th, 2017

Third-level funding and planning are issues that affect every part of our economy and society. The crisis in the sector can no longer be ignored and must be addressed in the forthcoming Budget, Frank Jones, Deputy General Secretary of the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), said today.

Addressing a national demonstration organised by the Union of Students in Ireland in Dublin, (Wed Oct 4th), Frank Jones said that "This is is a vital matter not just for those students who are in third-level at the moment. It directly affects the thousands of people that work in the sector, the parents of those in the sector, the parents of those doing the Leaving Cert this year and in future years and the tens of thousands of young people currently in second-level education."

"More generally the overall health of our third-level education impacts on virtually every section of our economy and society and on the economic and social well being of our entire population.

"While the government continues to delay and obfuscate on the recommendations contained in the report of its higher education funding working group, published last year, our students and universities continue to suffer. This budget is an opportunity for the government to begin to address this crisis in higher education.

"In addition, class sizes are increasing and teacher : pupil ratios have declined to a totally unacceptable level. The ever-increasing administrative burden on lecturers and researchers is squeezing the time available for lecturing and teaching.

"This is not simply a student issue, it is a whole-of-society issue and crisis. The government must understand this and respond immediately with necessary funding, staffing and other necessary supports," Frank Jones said.

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