

Government Haddington Road legislation is a ‘rushed job’ and appears to exclude non-union staff, says IFUT

Sunday, May 26th, 2013

The Irish Federation of University teachers (IFUT) has said that the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Bill 2013, published by the government last week, would appear to automatically freeze increments of staff who are not a member of a trade union for three years, regardless of their willingness to sign up to the productivity proposals of the Haddington Road agreement.

“This is the inevitable, if perhaps unintended, consequence of Section 7 of the Bill,” according to IFUT General Secretary, Mike Jennings.

Section 7 defines a collective agreement as ‘an agreement by or on behalf of a public service body on the one hand, and by or on behalf of a body or bodies representative of the public servants to whom the agreement relates on the other hand.’

“It would seem that for members not associated with a representative body, the Minister will be required either to make a special exception in each case, otherwise they will be treated the same as if they had rejected the Agreement.

“The text of the legislation overall shows the hallmarks of having been a rushed job and underlines that it may not stand up to constitutional scrutiny. That is why IFUT’s Executive decided at its meeting last week to commission a top level Senior Counsel to examine the Bill from the perspective of its constitutionality and whether there are grounds for IFUT to challenge it in the courts.

“Following receipt of legal advice and the holding of the special conference, IFUT’s Executive will decide on whether to recommend acceptance or rejection of the new offer,” Mike Jennings said.

ENDS

For further information on this press release please contact:

John Gallagher, John Gallagher Consulting Tel. 087 9369888

Mike Jennings, General Secretary, IFUT Tel. 087 6776747