

IFUT criticises ignoring of education in government formation talks as new Euro report highlights education cuts in Ireland

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The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has strongly criticised the almost total ignoring of education in the various discussions on forming a government since the general election, saying a new European report suggests education funding cuts here are a local rather than European phenomenon.

IFUT General Secretary, Mike Jennings, said that findings in The state of funding in education, teachers' working conditions, social dialogue and trade union rights in Western European countries (2016) points to "*a persistent negative investment trend since 2010*"

"Alarmingly it warns that this is not due to '*cuts spread across Europe*' but is '*mainly found in the same group of countries*,' including Ireland. Of even more concern, while the report refers to '*slightly increased*' education funding in a number of European countries as we come out of recession,' Ireland is not listed among them," he said.

Published by the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE), the report also warns of '*Global corporation/consultancies that are influencing education policy and the delivery of education products and/or schooling.*'

It warns of 'neo-liberal, market and business driven ideology and approaches in education and warns that commercialisation and privatisation undermine public education and are detrimental to society'.

Mike Jennings said that, in the case of Irish higher education, numerous reports from the HEA, third-level colleges themselves as well as IFUT all warn that current funding models are effectively destroying the fabric of third-level and threaten to undermine the very future of the next generation of college graduates.

"This Report should serve as a major wake-up call to the political system and department of education, that education funding can no longer be ignored. It is clear from the report that countries like France, Austria and Sweden and already reversing education cuts introduced during the recession. Any incoming government here should do the same," he said.

Read the [Survey Report on Western European Countries](#)

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