

Scandalous neglect of third-level education in party manifestos must be corrected, say IFUT

Party leaders should correct the ignoring of third-level

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Mike Jennings, General Secretary of the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT), has called on the leaders of the four main political parties to immediately explain and correct the neglect of third-level education following an independent assessment of their Manifestos on national radio today (*Breakfast Show - Newstalk Radio*).

Senior economist, John Fitzgerald, classified the manifestos of Fine Gael, Fianna Fáil and Labour as offering ‘very limited resources’ for third-level, while he said that Sinn Féin have made ‘no obvious provision.’

John Fitzgerald further stated that the ‘really big cutback has been at third-level’, where ‘staff : student ratios have deteriorated dramatically’ and that ‘if you want to maintain or build quality you have to put in resources.’

Mike Jennings said “the fact that perhaps Ireland’s most senior independent economist can issue such a highly critical analysis is a damning indictment of the main political parties’ refusal to listen to the wide range of voices, from IFUT to HEA and IBEC, all of which point out that third-level education is being systematically strangled of funding, resources and staff.

“The continued ignoring of third-level education and the needs of hundreds of thousands of our young people flies in the face of the slogans of the parties in their manifestos.

“No educationalist or young person will be encouraged to vote in Friday’s election if the needs of education are so flagrantly ignored. The leaders of the main parties should correct the situation before polling day and any incoming government must effectively address resources allocation for the sector,” Mike Jennings said.

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For further information on this media release, please contact:

John Gallagher, John Gallagher Consulting. Tel. 087 9369888

Mike Jennings, General Secretary, IFUT. Tel. 087 6776747.