

Higher Education needs Rainy Day Fund now not in future, says IFUT

It is incredible that this year's Budget set aside €1.5 billion for a future rainy day fund while higher education is drowning in an existential funding crisis that is being ignored, the Irish Federation University Teachers (IFUT) has stated.

Joan Donegan, General Secretary of IFUT, said that the specific amount for universities within the broad allocation of €150m for 'higher education, further education, training and research' needs to be clarified. It would appear to fall far short, yet again, of the resources highlighted as necessary in the specially commissioned 2016 Cassells Report.

"In addition, the 0.1% increase in the National Training Fund Levy, first announced last year, will further undermine academic freedom and flexibility at university level, particularly in the context of severely restricted State Funding. This risks further impacting on academic standards and ratings," she said.

IFUT has long proposed that a portion of Corporation Tax be set aside as State Funding to help maintain top-class education for the tens of thousands of young people who enter third-level each year.

"It is quite staggering that the Government has opted to prioritise setting aside such a large portion of 'historically high-levels of Corporation Tax' for a potential future 'rainy day' while higher education is drowning in underfunding right now," Joan Donegan said.

ENDS

For further information on this media release please contact:

John Gallagher - John Gallagher Consulting. Tel. 087 9369888

Joan Donegan - General Secretary, IFUT - 087 1315960