

Budget highlights 'policy paralysis' on higher education, says IFUT

Corporation tax allocation would revive universities who supply huge graduate numbers to multinational sector

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The failure again in today's Budget to address the funding crisis in higher education highlights a continued policy paralysis in government on the sector, that threatens to undermine our universities and the education of tens of thousands of students countrywide, the Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) states.

Frank Jones, Deputy General Secretary of IFUT, said that the continued shift in funding to private sector sources, including a further 0.1% increase in the employers' levy, is both totally inadequate and masks the failure to restore state investment.

"It again blatantly ignores the recommendations of the 2016 Cassells Report and emphasises paralysis on decision making.

"IFUT has consistently proposed using a portion of the continued massive Corporation tax revenues to support universities, who provide the graduates required to staff many multinational corporations here. This Budget is another missed opportunity in that regard.

"The new overemphasis on universities serving immediate business needs is also evident in concessions to private business investing in R&D as well as funding concentrating on 'priority skills' training.

"It bodes ill for the intention of government in the current discussion on establishing a Higher Education Commission, and poses very real threats to university autonomy and academic freedom," Frank Jones said.

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