

Key public service unions advise members to back deal

BRIAN SHEEHAN

The executive councils of the four largest public service unions, whose general secretaries recently negotiated the proposed new public service agreement, have each recommended that their members back the deal.

Leaders from SIPTU, Fórsa, INTO and INMO are the four officers of the ICTU Public Services Committee, who negotiate on behalf of ICTU public service trade unions.

Between them these four unions represent a clear majority of the 385,000 public servants across the 19 affiliates, who will be covered by the proposed Public Service Agreement, 2024-2026.

Given the strong likelihood that members of these four large unions will back the agreement, it now looks certain to pass. These national level deals are decided on an aggregate ballot basis.

Whether it will be as well received as the extension to the previous agreement, Building Momentum, remains to be seen. That agreement was backed by all affiliated unions who conducted ballots ahead of the PSC of ICTU announcing formal acceptance in October, 2022.

The margins of acceptance for the Building Momentum extension among SIPTU, Fórsa, INTO and INMO, were exceptionally large, such as the huge 97% vote in favour by nurses and midwives, members of the INMO. SIPTU and Fórsa recorded margins in favour of 90% and 91% respectively for that deal.

The executives of the two main second level teacher unions, ASTI and TUI, have yet to decide on their positions on the proposed new agreement. It would be a surprise, however, were they to recommend rejection.

Last time out, in 2022, the margin of acceptance was well over 80% in both TUI and the ASTI. The members of both of these unions had rejected several previous public service agreements.

Meanwhile, the Unite union has deferred a decision on whether to recommend acceptance of the deal due to its "concerns that the deferred 2% [local bargaining fund] will be viewed by Government as a down-payment on a successor agreement, rather than its stated purpose of addressing local bargaining issues."

PAY TERMS

The pay terms of the Public Service Agreement, 2024-2026 are repeated hereunder:

2024

- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 2.25% or €1,125, whichever is greater, on 1 January 2024.
- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% on 1 June 2024.
- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% or €500, whichever is greater, on 1 October 2024.

2025

- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 2% or €1,000, whichever is greater, on 1 March 2025.
- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% on 1 August 2025.

2026

- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% or €500, whichever is greater, on 1 February 2026.
- A general round increase in annualised basic salary for all public servants of 1% on 1 June 2026.

Local Bargaining

- A local bargaining instalment, equivalent to 1% of the basic pay cost, on 1 September 2025. (Detailed arrangements for local bargaining units will be agreed by the parties by 30 June 2024.)
- The remaining 2% of a local bargaining fund “will fall to be addressed in any successor pay agreement”. The basic pay cost is inclusive of allowances in the nature of pay, of the particular grade, group or category of employee or bargaining unit. This may include proposals involving changes in structures, work practices or other conditions of service.

(See [IRN 05/2024](#) for IRN's extensive coverage of the proposed pay agreement)