

Non-union firms largely remain opposed to bargaining

ANDY PRENDERGAST

Over 70% of non-union firms maintain they will not consider bargaining with trade unions, but interest in non-union collective bargaining has dropped, according to the new IRN-CIPD pay and employment practices survey.

Amidst planned reforms of Ireland's industrial relations framework, including a measure that might compel non-union employers to have 'good faith' engagement with trade unions, some 73% of non-union companies still say they will not consider collective bargaining with a trade union.

This is consistent with last year's IRN-CIPD survey which returned a 75% 'No' response.

However, the number of companies saying they would consider non-union collective bargaining (such as an 'excepted body' under the 2015 IR Amendment Act) has dropped from 16% last year, back to 9% this year (in line with what was indicated in 2022's IRN-CIPD survey).

Employers who rule out non-union collective bargaining have increased from 45% to 55% since last year. The drop in interest in non-union bargaining appears to be explained by a reduction in firms already unionised saying they would consider non-union bargaining.