

Executive Committee Newsletter

July 2017



President Michael D Higgins speaks at ICTU BDC 2017

Pay

Ballot papers are currently being distributed to members nationwide. The balloting process will close at 2pm on Thursday, 14 September. Ballots must reach the PSEU offices at 30 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, by this time. Envelopes should be marked 'Union Pay Ballot'.

The proposed pay agreement – the Public Services Stability Agreement 2018-2020 – contains a number of key features, including the following schedule of pay restorations:

2018

- 1% Pay Restoration on 1st January 2018
- 1% Pay Restoration on 1st October 2018

2019

- Increase in the entry threshold for the 'pension levy' from €28,750 to €32,000 (the levy is deducted at 10% so this is, in effect, a flat rate increase of €325) on 1 January 2019.

- 1% pay restoration on 1 January 2019 for annualised salaries up to €30,000
- 1.75% pay restoration on 1 September 2019.

2020

- Increase in entry threshold for 'pension levy' to €34,500 (Equates to flat rate increase of €250 for all those earning more than the threshold)
- 0.5% pay restoration on 1 January 2020 for annualised salaries up to €32,000
- 2% pay restoration on 1 October 2020.

The Union has prepared a list of FAQs to assist in answering the queries of members. This will be updated continually during the balloting period and can be accessed [here](#).

The Union has also made Branch Officers aware that, where there is demand, we will facilitate meetings with members to discuss the provisions of the Agreement.

We have also prepared an audio presentation to explain the provisions of the Agreement to members. It will shortly be available on the website.

In addition to the financial elements of the Agreement, it provides for additional annual leave for members of the EO grade. Their annual leave allowance will increase by 1 day following 12 years of service and by an additional day after 14 years of service.

The Agreement also contains a provision to examine the issue of pay for new entrants. This examination will take place by the end of 2018.

As with all Agreements, there are positive and not so positive aspects. A not so positive aspect is the fact that it was not possible at this time to resolve the additional working time issue that was introduced in the Haddington Road Agreement – although some additional flexibilities were introduced to assist those for whom the additional working time has the most impact.

Taking all of this into consideration, the Executive Committee has deliberated the merits of the Agreement at length

and has decided to recommend to members that, on balance, taking both positive and not-so-positive factors into account, it is in members' best interests to vote in favour of the agreement. Full details of the Agreement are available at www.pseu.ie.

Those who have recently been upgraded from SO to EO have the right to a ballot once they complete and send in their application form. For more information about applications, please visit www.pseu.ie.

And now it's over to you. Members are asked to examine the proposed Pay Agreement and to return their ballots before the deadline.

New Union Project

At the 2016 PSEU Conference, a motion was adopted to hold a ballot during 2017 on a proposal to found a new Union that would be comprised of the membership of the PSEU, CPSU and IMPACT.

Negotiations between the three unions are continuing and, as things currently stand, the ballot will most likely take place towards the end of the year.

A Financial Due Diligence study of the three organisations was conducted by Mazars and found that all three unions are financially sound and that a new union would have a substantial strike fund. A financial report will be prepared for circulation to members.

Discussions have concluded regarding the structure of the proposed new Union. It has been decided that a number of seats on its National Executive would be reserved for the current 'constituencies' and likewise for the Civil Service Divisional Executive, which would have full autonomy in respect of matters exclusive to the Civil Service, (a new union, as proposed, would be, overwhelmingly, the largest Civil Service union).

The project to find a name for the new Union is underway with a proposal expected in the autumn. As members will be voting on a legal instrument of amalgamation, a name will be required prior to the ballot.

A survey to identify members' priorities for a benefits package is on the website, visit www.pseu.ie. There is a prize draw for those who participate.

The new Union, if created, would be the second largest on the island with a membership of 80,000+.

Executive Committee Workshop

Over the summer, the Executive Committee held a workshop on the issue of membership recruitment.

Currently, our level of membership stands at around 80%, meaning that, although the vast majority is in membership, there some 20% of potential members in the Civil Service who have not yet joined.

The Executive Committee has agreed to ask the Recruitment sub-committee to consider the following action points:

1. Analyse who is successfully recruiting and 'tap in' to their knowledge
2. Design campaign guidance for Branches.
3. Design a 'Recruitment Officer' role for Branches and then ask Branches to appoint
4. Consider how other similar organisations identify and approach non-members.

Given that our bargaining power is only as strong as our numbers, the Executive Committee recognized the importance of focusing on recruitment.

ICTU Women's Committee

The PSEU has nominated Executive Committee members Melissa Brennan and Rhona McEleney to be

representatives on the ICTU Women's Committee. The Women's Committee is responsible for considering a number of areas of policy including the preparation of reports on aspects of women's employment conditions of work, remuneration, etc. Melissa Brennan is the current Secretary to the Women's Committee.

Solidarity Fund

The Executive Committee has agreed to the Union's Solidarity Fund giving a donation to assist a children's football team from Gaza. The initiative is being organized by Gaza Action Ireland and will see the children visit with other children's football teams in Dublin, Limerick, Kinvara and Manorhamilton.

ICTU Biennial Conference

A delegation of Executive Committee Members attended the ICTU Biennial Conference in Belfast on July 4-6. The Conference brings together almost 1,000 Union activists from across the island to set priorities and policy directions for the Trade Union movement on the island.

Over the course of the Conference, delegates adopted motions seeking to end precarious work contracts, closing the Gender Pay Gap, organizing youth workers and promoting worker welfare. A PSEU motion on the selection of ICTU's nominees for Seanad seats, was ruled out of order.



Photo of freed Colombian trade unionist Huber Ballesteros with Justice for Colombia campaigners, including union General Secretary Tom Geraghty.