Building Momentum: A new public service agreement

Dear member

As you are aware, Fórsa’s elected National Executive has given detailed consideration to the proposed new public service agreement, called Building Momentum, and it has overwhelmingly decided to recommend ACCEPTANCE of the agreement in this ballot.

I share the National Executive’s view that Building Momentum represents the best possible outcome at this time. I am particularly pleased that we have achieved a package that’s substantially weighted towards lower-income civil and public servants.

Because of Fórsa’s determination, the proposed agreement also includes a mechanism to address the additional hours introduced for many under the Haddington Road agreement. If accepted, this would be the first agreement to address this injustice. And the initial funding allocated means that, for those affected, working time will start being reduced from next year.

There is also a separate mechanism (and initial funding) to address sectoral issues.

The provisions of the proposed two-year agreement include:

* A general round increase worth 1% of gross pay or €500 a year, whichever is the greater, on 1st October 2021
* A second general round increase worth 1% of gross pay or €500 a year, whichever is the greater on 1st October 2022
* Provision for the equivalent of an additional 1% increase through a ‘sectoral bargaining fund’ on 1st February 2022.
* A process of returning to pre-Haddington Road working hours, with €150 million available to commence implementation during 2022, and provision for a successor agreement to engage on additional measures
* Restoration of overtime and premium payments to pre-2013 levels
* The establishment of a ‘sectoral bargaining fund,’ initially worth 1% of basic pensionable pay, to deal with outstanding adjudications, recommendations, awards and claims, with the option for groups to use all or part of the available allocation as a sectoral pay round
* The retention of strong safeguards against outsourcing
* A commitment not to increase CORU, or other professional registration fees, during the lifetime of the agreement
* A requirement for the education department to consult with Fórsa about the updating of the SNA contract, including the appropriate use of the contracted 72 hours.

This is a relatively short agreement which means that, if it’s accepted, I expect to be back in negotiations to further improve pay, working conditions and protections in 18 months or so.

I urge you to read the proposed agreement in the context of the challenging times we are experiencing as an economy and society, and cast your vote before 5.00pm on Thursday 11th February to ensure that your voice is heard.

With best wishes,

Kevin Callinan

General Secretary