

Plain English Guide

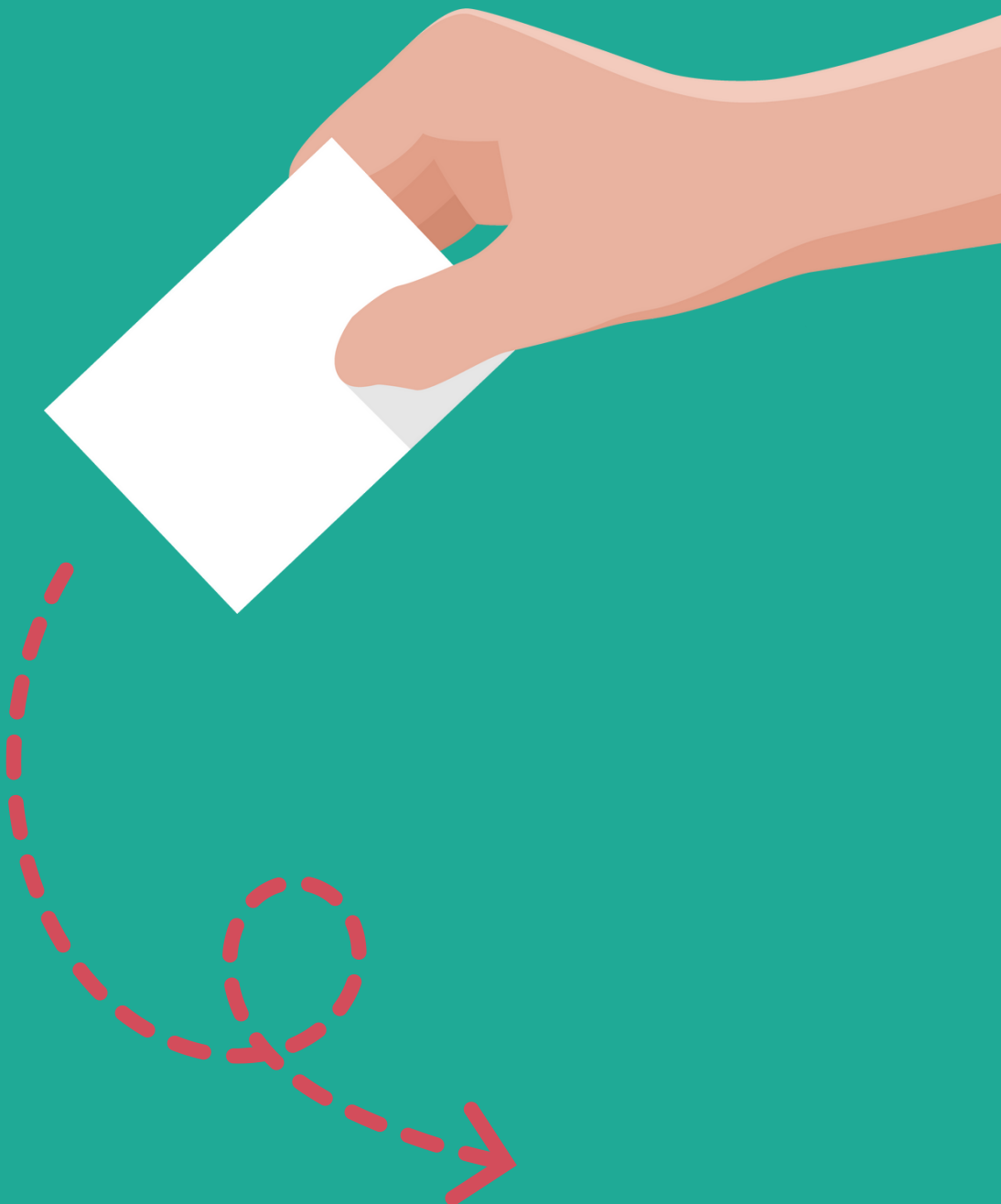
FORSA



**2024-2026 Public Sector Pay
Agreement Explained Easily**

What is plain English?

A communication is in plain English 'if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended readers can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information.' Source: [The International Plain Language Federation](#). For more info: www.nala.ie



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Ask Fórsa



Introduction

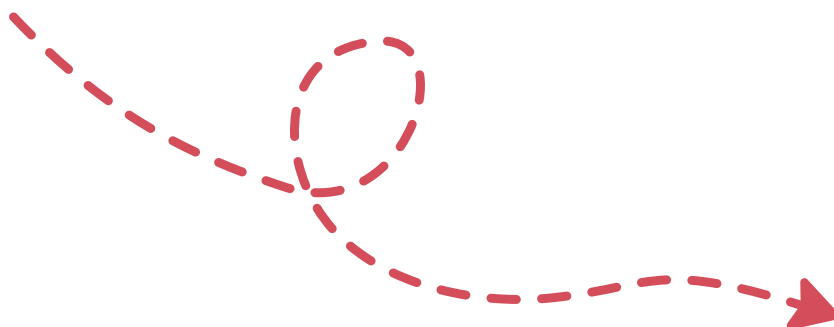
The government and union negotiators have reached an agreement on a new public sector pay deal. If union members vote “yes” to the agreement, it will run from 1st January 2024 to 30th June 2026. The new agreement was published on Friday 26th January 2024, after two months of talks.

On 27th September 2023, the Public Services Committee of ICTU met to agree on what was most important to ask for in talks with the Government. The unions present agreed on four main points:

- The new agreement would need to cover the rising cost of living. Especially for low- and middle-income earners.
- The new agreement would need industrial relations to return to pre-recession norms.
- The new agreement would need to allow for “local bargaining”.
- The agreement would need to make sure that recommendations for future proofing public services would be considered by Government.

On 10th January, the Government’s offer was 7.5%. Union negotiators turned down this offer because it was not enough. On Friday 26th January, union negotiators agreed to the new offer of 9.25% over two and a half years, with additional increases available through a local bargaining clause, because they think it is the best offer available at this time.

Public service workers will see a noticeable increase in pay this year. The increase in the first year will be 4.25% overall. This increase is more than the Government’s original pay offer because workers need more after three years of back-to-back inflation.



Fórsa's position

It's up to members. We will listen to what you have to say. We will hold a ballot for members to decide if we will support the agreement.

The union's elected National Executive Committee (NEC) is recommending members vote "yes". The NEC met on Tuesday 30th January and voted unanimously to recommend the pay deal.



The pay deal

Pay increases will not be all at once. They will happen in increases two to three times a year from the start of 2024 to the middle of 2026.

2024

- The first increase will happen on 1st January 2024. An extra 2.25% will be added to your annual salary, or €1,125, whichever works out as more.
- On 1st June 2024, an extra 1% will be added to your annual salary.
- On 1st October 2024, an extra 1% will be added to your annual salary, or €500, whichever works out as more.

2025

- On 1st March 2025, an extra 2% will be added to your annual salary, or €1,000, whichever works out as more.
- On 1st August 2025, an extra 1% will be added to your annual salary.
- On 1st September 2025, the first phase of local bargaining will be put in place.

2026

- On 1st February 2026, an extra 1% will be added to your annual salary, or €500 whichever works out as more.
- On 1st June 2026, an extra 1% will be added to your annual salary.

These pay proposals can be mean up to 17.3% extra for lower paid workers. The flat-rate increases make this deal worth more for workers on less than €50k per year.

Part-time workers and other workers who don't work full-time hours will be paid the same percentage increases. Flat-rate increases will be worked out relative to their hours.

If members vote to accept the agreement, unions will not be able to start any new pay negotiations while the agreement lasts. But local bargaining will give unions the chance to negotiate up to 3% extra on a group-by-group basis.

The pay increases will also apply to pensionable allowances.



Working hours

The extra working hours known as the 'Haddington Road' hours were ended in the last pay deal, *Building Momentum*. There is still the issue of how overtime in the civil service is worked out. This agreement means unions and the public service will keep working towards fixing overtime for these workers.

Pensions

This agreement won't affect all public service pensioners. Anyone who entered the public service before 1st January 2013 will be given pension increases in-line with the pay increases.

Anyone who entered the public service after 1st January 2013 is on a different scheme, the single public service pension scheme. This scheme is tied to the Consumer Price Index and increases in-line with inflation.



Local bargaining

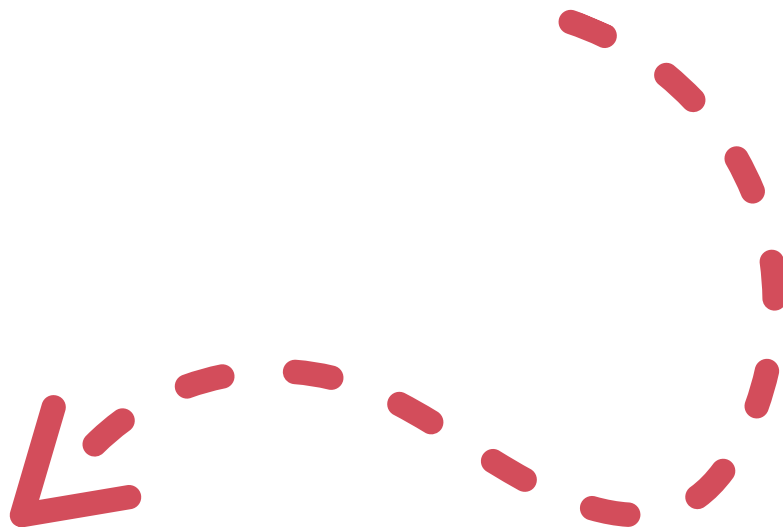
Local bargaining is a system that will be used by unions to deal with issues that affect grades, groups, or categories of employee. HSE Admin grades, or Revenue employees, or SNAs in schools will all have different problems. Local bargaining means it will be easier for unions to raise these unique issues with employers.

Local bargaining can also win for grades, groups, and categories by using 3% of payroll cost to deal with these issues. 1% during this agreement, and the other 2% in the next agreement.

The list of local bargaining categories will be agreed by the 30th June this year. This means local negotiations can start in July 2024. They can run until June 2025.

Review clause

If there are changes in the economy the unions will be able to ask for a review of the agreement. This happened with the last agreement, *Building Momentum*. In 2020, when *Building Momentum* was agreed, no one knew the cost-of-living crisis would happen. In 2022 the unions were able to get a review of the agreement because of rising prices. The results of the review were: another year was added to the *Building Momentum* agreement and an extra 6.5% pay increase for public servants over those two years.



"No strike" clause

This agreement does have a clause that limits industrial action. This is not uncommon, and every public service agreement has had a clause that limits industrial action. The agreement does also have a 'simplified dispute resolution process' which will make settling disputes more straightforward.

Additional Issues

Reform/transformation

- Approach largely based on Department of Public Expenditure's 'Better Public Services' strategy.
- Provision for consultation and engagement.
- Co-operation with normal, ongoing change required.

Apprenticeships

- Promise to put in place the Public Service Apprenticeship Plan (2023).
- Target of at least 750 yearly apprenticeship registrations across the public service by 2025.
- Specific targets for craft apprenticeships.

CORU Fees for health and social care professional

- Registration fee will stay at €100.

Outsourcing

- Strong protections against outsourcing in this agreement.



What happens next?

A ballot of Fórsa members will begin on Monday 19th of February and finish on Friday 15th March at 12 in the afternoon. Fórsa members will be sent online ballots, and a unique voter code (UVC). Details on how to vote are on www.forsa.ie.

On 25th March, representatives of the 19 unions will gather and put together the results of their ballots. The strength of each union's vote will be relative to the number of civil and public service members it has.

Do I have a vote?

To vote you must be a Fórsa member and work in:

- civil service
- public service
- non-commercial state agency

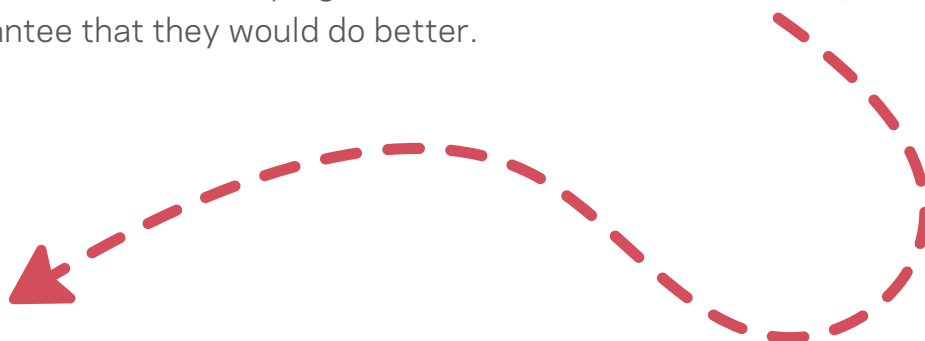
Anyone who can vote will be sent an email with a unique voter code and a link to our secure voting website. To vote you will need your unique voter code which can only be used once.

Make sure Fórsa has your up-to-date details. If you have had a change of job or email address, you might not get your unique voter code. You can make sure your details are up-to-date by filling out this [form](#).

What happens if members reject this agreement?

The last agreement ended on 31st December 2023. While there is no new agreement management will be able to make changes in the workplace without talking to staff.

Union negotiators think that this is the best agreement we can get. If the agreement is rejected, negotiators will go back to talks. The negotiators think workers will need a sustained campaign of industrial action to do better, but there is no guarantee that they would do better.



Ask Fórsa

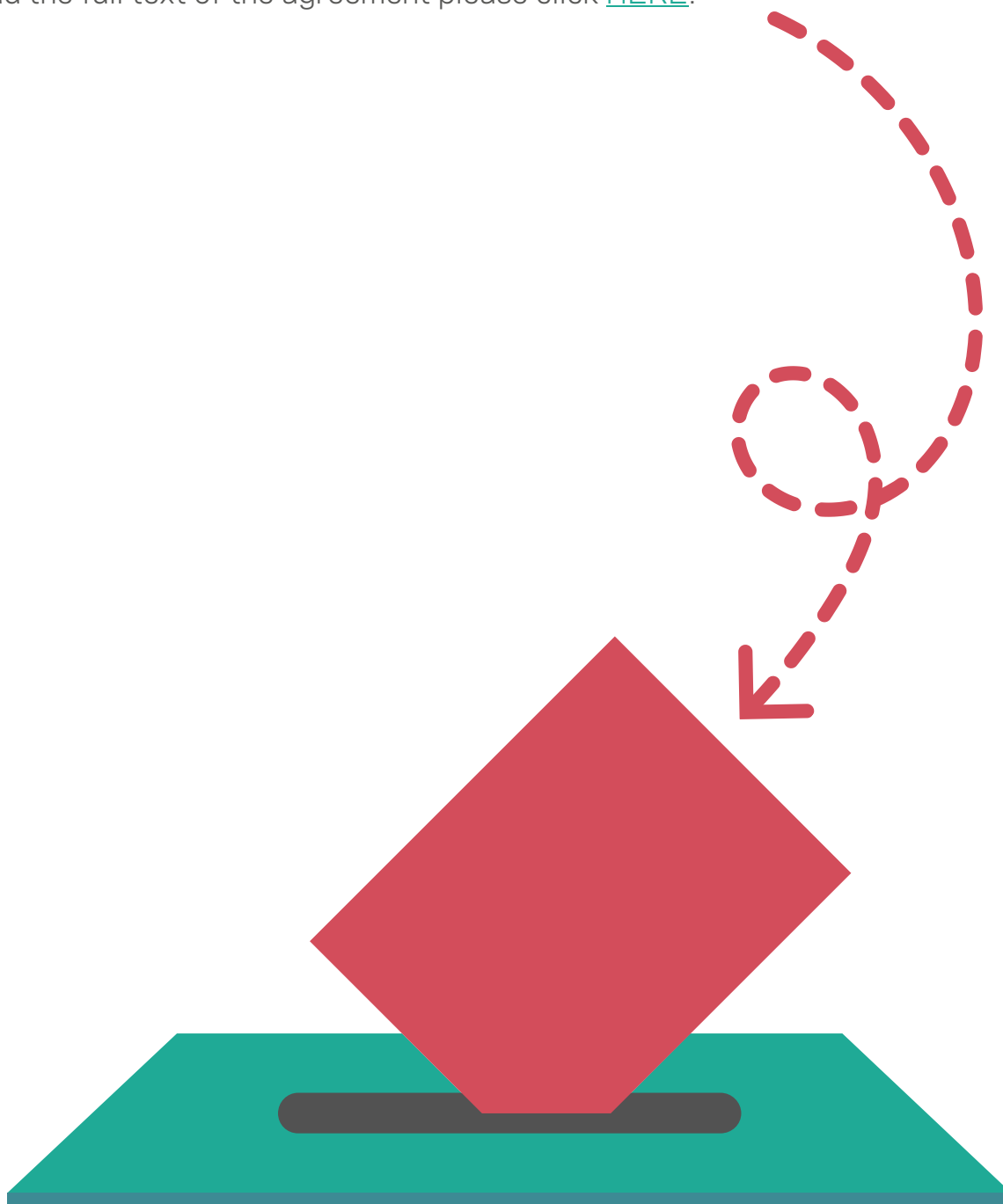
There will be information meetings online and in workplaces from Tuesday 6th February.

If you have a question about the agreement, please [contact us by email here](#).

Email Fórsa @

- Civil Service Helpdesk - cshelp@forsa.ie
- Education Helpdesk - edhelp@forsa.ie
- Service and Enterprises Helpdesk - sehelp@forsa.ie
- Health and Welfare Helpdesk - hwhelp@forsa.ie
- Local Government Helpdesk - lghelp@forsa.ie

Read the full text of the agreement please click [HERE](#).



Don't leave others to
speak for you.

Join Fórsa so you can
vote on your job, your
career, your rights!



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www.forsa.ie