

## **ASTI reaffirms rejection of LRC proposals**

### **– Haddington Road Agreement does not represent sufficient change**

Due to the fact that the Public Services Stability Agreement 2013 – 2016 (Haddington Road Agreement) does not represent sufficient change from the original LRC proposals, ASTI Standing Committee has reaffirmed ASTI members' rejection of the LRC proposals.

ASTI members rejected the Croke Park II Proposals by 84% to 16% in April.

ASTI General Secretary, Pat King said the measures that were central to the emphatic rejection of Croke Park II by teachers remain part of the the Haddington Road Agreement. These include compulsory supervision and substitution, the abolition of payment for supervision and substitution, and cuts to pay. "In addition, teachers are aggrieved that after pay cuts averaging 14% and significant additional work and flexibility given under the Croke Park Agreement, the Government is again targeting teachers and other public sector workers," he said.

ASTI Standing Committee also felt that the proposals did not go far enough in addressing the inequalities suffered by recent entrants to the teaching profession.

#### **ASTI members vote for industrial action**

Earlier this month, ASTI members voted by 87% to 13% to engage in industrial action if the Government acted unilaterally to impose pay cuts or to worsen working conditions.

This mandate for industrial action stands in the event that the Government imposes cuts by legislation - as it has indicated it intends to do in cases where agreement is not reached.

#### **Information on the revised proposals is included inside.**

The main differences in the new proposals relate to supervision and substitution, pay cuts and job security measures for new and part-time/ temporary teachers.

**Information on Government legislation is also included inside.**

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The full text of the  
Haddington Road Agreement  
is available at [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie)

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## Background

In February 2013, following talks between the public sector unions and the Government side, facilitated by the Labour Relations Commission, the LRC put forward proposals setting out a range of measures to bring about savings of €1 billion from the public pay and pensions bill over the years 2013, 2014 and 2015.

These proposals were put to a ballot of ASTI members, and were rejected by 84%. The proposals were also rejected by the majority of public sector unions and by the public services committee of ICTU. Subsequent to the rejection of the proposals, the LRC invited trade unions to further talks with a view to negotiating revised proposals.

The Central Executive Committee of the ASTI agreed to enter talks and ASTI negotiators entered talks on May 20th.

Revised proposals emerged in the form of the Haddington Road Agreement and at a meeting of ASTI Standing Committee on May 23, it was decided to reaffirm ASTI members' rejection of the LRC proposals, as the revised proposals did not represent sufficient change.

## Differences do not represent sufficient change

The Haddington Road Agreement includes most of the same measures as were included in the previous LRC proposals, including:

- pay cuts for those earning above €65,000;
- increment freezes for those earning below €65,000;
- compulsory unpaid supervision and substitution;
- increase in supervision and substitution commitment.

**Differences in detail and the inclusion of some additional provisions, as outlined below, did not constitute sufficient change, ASTI Standing Committee stated.**

### Higher pay

#### Under the original proposals:

Those on salaries above €65,000 would be subject to pay cuts and a freeze on incremental salary increases for 3 years.

#### Under the revised proposals:

Those on salaries above €65,000 would be subject to the same pay cuts. However, those earning between €65,000 and €100,000 would have their pay restored in two equal phases, on 1st April 2017 and on 1st January 2018.

Those earning between €65,000 and €100,000 would be subject to two six-month increment freezes. Their next due increment would be paid as normal, but the following increments would be delayed by 6 months each.

Those earning above €100,000 would be subject to a 3-year incremental freeze, as originally proposed.

### CID eligibility

The qualification period for the granting of CIDs in schools would be reduced from 4 years in a school to 3 years. The 3 year requirement would be the standard requirement in future and would apply to those completing 3 years in a school in August 2013 and who are re-employed in that school in September 2013.

### Job security for new, part-time, and temporary teachers

Under the new proposals, an Expert Group would be established to consider and report on the level of non-permanent employment and casualisation in teaching and the importance of employment security for fixed-term and part-time teachers.

### Supervision and Substitution

#### Under the original proposals:

All teachers would have to engage in S&S of up to 49 hours per year. They would have to be available for substitution for 5 class periods per week and would be required to deliver a maximum of two periods. The maximum requirement per week would be two and a half hours.

S&S payments would be discontinued with effect from the 2013/2014 school year.

S&S cover would be used to cover all uncertified leave and the first day of certified sick leave, bereavement leave, and force majeure leave.

#### Under the revised proposals:

All teachers would have to engage in S&S up to a maximum of 43 hours per year. They would have to be available for substitution for 5 timetabled class periods per week, and to engage in S&S for a maximum of 3 hours per week.

S&S payments would be discontinued with effect from the 2013/2014 school year. However, to compensate, a gross additional payment of €796 would be included in the incremental scale for teachers in 2016/2017 and a further €796 would be included in the incremental scale in the school year 2017/2018, i.e. a total salary increase of €1,592 for each teacher.

Cover would not be required for bereavement leave or the first day of certified sick leave. Cover for the first day of force majeure leave under S&S would be deferred to 2014/2015 school year.

**Full details of the Haddington Road Agreement  
are available at [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie)**

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## Government legislation

In an unprecedented step, the Government has published legislation which will give the Government powers to reduce public servants' pay and to adjust their terms and conditions, regardless of any existing legislation, contracts or agreements.

As well as giving the Government these powers, The Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Bill, 2013 will:

- cut public servants' salaries over €65,000, by the terms contained in the Haddington Road Agreement, with no promise of restoration for those not covered by the Haddington Road Agreement. This cut to take effect from July 1, 2013;
- suspend incremental progression for three years for all public servants not covered by the Haddington Road Agreement commencing from July 1, 2013; and,
- reduce public service pensions.

The ASTI is seeking legal advice on the legislation as a matter of priority.

### Grace period for retirement

The legislation also provides that "those retiring before 31 August 2014, or a later date that may be ordered by the Minister, will be entitled to have their pensions calculated as if the pay reduction and any increment pause or freeze had not applied to them."

The ASTI understands this to apply to all public servants, whether covered by the Haddington Road Agreement or not, and is seeking legal clarification on this matter.

## What next?

Should the Government use this legislation against teachers, the ASTI will react in line with the recent ballot on industrial action in which ASTI members voted by 87% to 13% to engage in industrial action if the Government acted unilaterally to impose pay cuts or to worsen working conditions.

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