

CEC urges NO vote in October ballot

The ballot on the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 (PSSA) will be conducted in October.

The PSSA is an extension of the Lansdowne Road Agreement 2013-2018. ASTI members voted to reject the Lansdowne Road Agreement in October 2015.

ASTI Central Executive Council (CEC) is urging members to vote NO to the PSSA.

School stewards are being asked to distribute and collect ballot papers between Monday, October 9th and Monday, October 16th. The closing date for receipt of ballot papers on the PSSA is Wednesday October, 18th (5.30p.m.).

Summary of key points of Agreement:

Pay restoration:

- 1st January 2018: current salaries to increase by 1%.
- 1st October 2018: salaries to increase by 1%.
- 1st January 2019: salaries which are less than €30,000 to increase by 1%*.
- 1st September 2019: salaries to increase by 1.75%
- 1st January 2020: salaries less than €32,000 to increase by 0.5%*.
- 1st October 2020: salaries to increase by 2%.

This represents a 5.75% increase over three years for teachers.

**Teachers are not eligible for these measures/ increases.*

Pensions:

- The agreement provides for a reduction in the pension levy as follows:
 - 1st January 2019: increase in pension levy threshold from €28,000-€32,000 (€325 per annum) and reduced levy for post 1 January 2013 pension scheme members (€500 combined).
 - 1st January 2020: increase in pension levy threshold to €34,500 (€250 per annum) and reduced rate of levy for post 1 January 2013 pension scheme members (varies, e.g. €350 combined at €40,000 salary).
- The conversion of the remaining levy into a permanent Additional Superannuation Contribution (ASC). The ASC will reflect the different pension benefits accruing to pre and post 1 January 2013 scheme members.

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Inside this Nuacht

- What a NO vote means?
- What a YES vote means?
- Key documents for further information

Warning

The closing date for receipt of returned ballot papers on the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 is **Wednesday, October 18th at 5.30p.m.**

To ensure that your vote counts, please post it early.

Vote NO to the Public Service Stability Agreement

- The remaining permanent ASC for pre 2013 pension scheme members will range between 0.8% for a teacher earning €37,500 and 5.95% for a teacher earning €82,500. For post 1 January 2013 pension scheme members the permanent ASC will range between 0.27% for teachers earning €37,500, and 1.65% for a teacher earning €67,500.

Sample pension levy reductions for pre 1 January 2013 teachers

Salary	Current Pension levy	Retained as ASC	Restoration
€38,166	€941	€366	€575
€48,581	€1,983	€1,408	€575
€58,019	€2,926	€2,351	€575
€67,442	€3,906	€3,331	€575
€73,729	€4,566	€3,991	€575

Sample pension levy reductions for post 1 January 2013 teachers

Salary	Current Pension levy	Retained as ASC	Restoration
€38,166	€941	€122	€819
€48,581	€1,983	€468	€1,515
€58,019	€2,926	€783	€2,143
€67,442	€3,906	€1,109	€2,797
€73,729	€4,566	€1,329	€3,237

PSSA = Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020

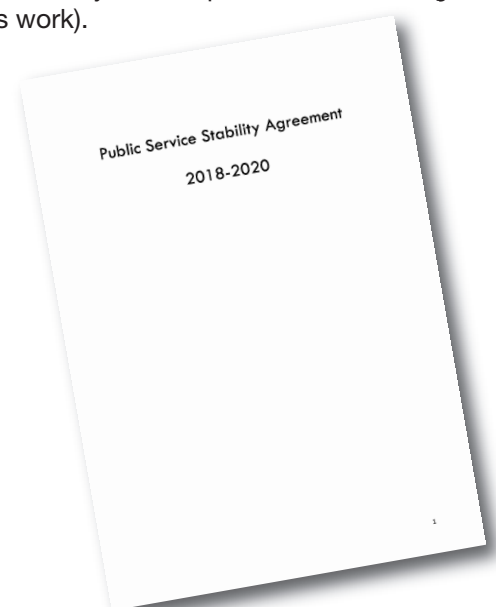
LRA = Lansdowne Road Agreement 2013-2018

HRA = Haddington Road Agreement 2013-2016

Other provisions

- Pension benefits will be preserved for the duration of the agreement. Pension parity will remain. No consumer price index calculation for future pensions will be implemented for the duration of the Agreement.
- Teachers are **not** eligible for the working hours concession in the Agreement (PSSA: Section 2.12.2). This is because the Government side is of the view that the supervision and substitution opt-out offer provided an opportunity for teachers to reduce their working time.
- No change in working hours for teachers. Continuation of Croke Park hours.
- From January 2019, an end to the pension levy on non-pensionable earnings (e.g. earnings from State Examinations work).
- Commitments to industrial peace.

All members are advised to read the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020 available at www.asti.ie



The Public Service Stability Agreement is sometimes called LRA2. This is because the Agreement is an extension of the Lansdowne Road Agreement.

CEC urges NO vote

Key reasons for CEC recommendation

ASTI Central Executive Council is recommending that members vote NO in the ballot on the PSSA.

CEC is recommending members vote NO because of:

- No commitment to equal pay for post 2010 entrants.
- Pay increases still leave many teachers below their 2008 earnings.
- Unacceptably high pension contribution.
- Continuation of Croke Park Hours.
- Continuation of imposed “reform”.
- Industrial action in respect of any matters covered by the agreement is precluded.
- Disputes which are unresolved following conciliation must go to arbitration. Arbitration outcome is binding.
- The Agreement endorses the continuation of FEMPI, including its punitive elements.

A CEC subcommittee has set out the implications of a NO vote and a YES vote. See pages 4-7.

In addition, the ASTI Safety, Health and Welfare committee has examined the PSSA from the point of view of teacher welfare.

What does the PSSA 2018-20 do to promote teacher welfare?

- The document’s lack of emphasis on the needs of teachers does little to enhance worker welfare.
- While it is good that the PSSA acknowledges work-life balance (Section 2.12.2), it offers no tangibles or structures to enhance work-life balance for teachers.
- The PSSA makes no acknowledgement of the impact of the Croke Park hours on teachers who sometimes have to pay extra costs to cover family demands at these times. In order to work these unpaid hours, some LPTs have also reported having to cancel supplementary work, a necessary source of income.
- The concept of worker wellbeing is strongly linked to professional autonomy, where a worker’s abilities and rights to make decisions relevant to their working life are recognised. PSSA focuses on managerialism – control taken from workers over their working lives. PSSA seeks to standardise terms and conditions of employment (Section 2.8.3). This approach is demotivating and disempowers teachers.
- The pace of change can be a stressor in the work environment. Initiative overload is a recognised cause of stress for teachers. The PSSA is underpinned by the *Action Plan for Education 2016-2018*, *Curricular Reform within Schools*, *National Skills Strategy 2016*, and *National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy 2011-2020*. The PSSA cites these strategies (Section 2.3.1.), indicating that the Government’s reform agenda includes but is not limited to them.
- It is clear that the working conditions imposed during the financial emergency are set to continue for the duration of this Agreement and will continue to be a stressor in schools.
- The lack of a common pay scale is divisive and demoralising in schools.

Who gets to vote?

All ASTI members, including Emeritus members, are entitled to vote in the ASTI ballot on the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020

What does a NO vote mean?

The ASTI is affiliated to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). ICTU's policy on public sector pay is decided by an aggregate vote of all affiliated unions representing public sector workers. On September 18, ICTU accepted the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020.

The INTO and TUI have rejected the PSSA in separate ballots of their members.

Unions can choose whether or not to be bound by a public sector agreement. Rejection of a public sector agreement does not necessarily mean repudiation. Repudiation may be interpreted as industrial action which is deemed to breach the Agreement.

In the event of a NO vote, the ASTI will have a number of options available which may include:

- Maintaining/ lifting the current suspension of industrial action.
- The ASTI could decide to be bound by the terms of the LRA and the PSSA.
- The ASTI could conduct a ballot of members on the terms of the LRA and the Junior Cycle reform proposals (with a view to putting the ASTI on the same footing as the INTO and the TUI).

REJECTION WITHOUT REPUDIATION

- If the ASTI rejects the PSSA, but does not repudiate the PSSA or the LRA, then ASTI members will continue to receive the LRA measures which were implemented with effect from June 10th 2017. (See Nuacht 4, August 2017).
- Measures due under the remainder of the LRA (which expires at the end of 2018) will also apply. These are:
 - 1st January 2018: Full restoration of the pay cuts applied under the Haddington Road Agreement (HRA) for those earning between €65,000 and €100,000 (the first half of this restoration was applied to ASTI members with effect from June 10th, 2017).
 - 1st January 2018: Post 2012 entrants will receive the second phase of an increase equal to an honours primary degree allowance (the first half of this restoration was applied to ASTI members with effect from June 10th, 2017).
- Measures due under the PSSA may also apply (see pages 1 and 2 of this Nuacht).
- If the ASTI rejects the Agreement, it can join with the INTO and TUI in campaigning for Equal Pay for Equal Work.

Extracts from Department of Education and Skills letter to ASTI, May 2017:

“The continuing restoration of financial and other benefits would be contingent on the continuing application of a suspension of all action. Any restoration measures would stand to be reversed in the event that a suspension is not sustained.

“A specific question was raised in relation to increment payment dates in future years and specifically whether these would revert to a teacher's original increment dates. The Department notes the position set out by ASTI representatives in our recent discussion. While the question does not fall to be considered at this point, it would fall to be considered in the context of the ASTI's formal entry to the applicable collective agreement.”

The Department of Education and Skills has stated that the continuation of LRA measures for ASTI members is contingent on continuing the suspension of industrial action.

- For unions which reject the PSSA, Section 4.1.3. states: *“It is agreed that an examination of the remaining salary scales in respect of post January 2011 recruits at entry grades covered by **parties to this Agreement** will be undertaken within 12 months of the commencement of this Agreement.”*

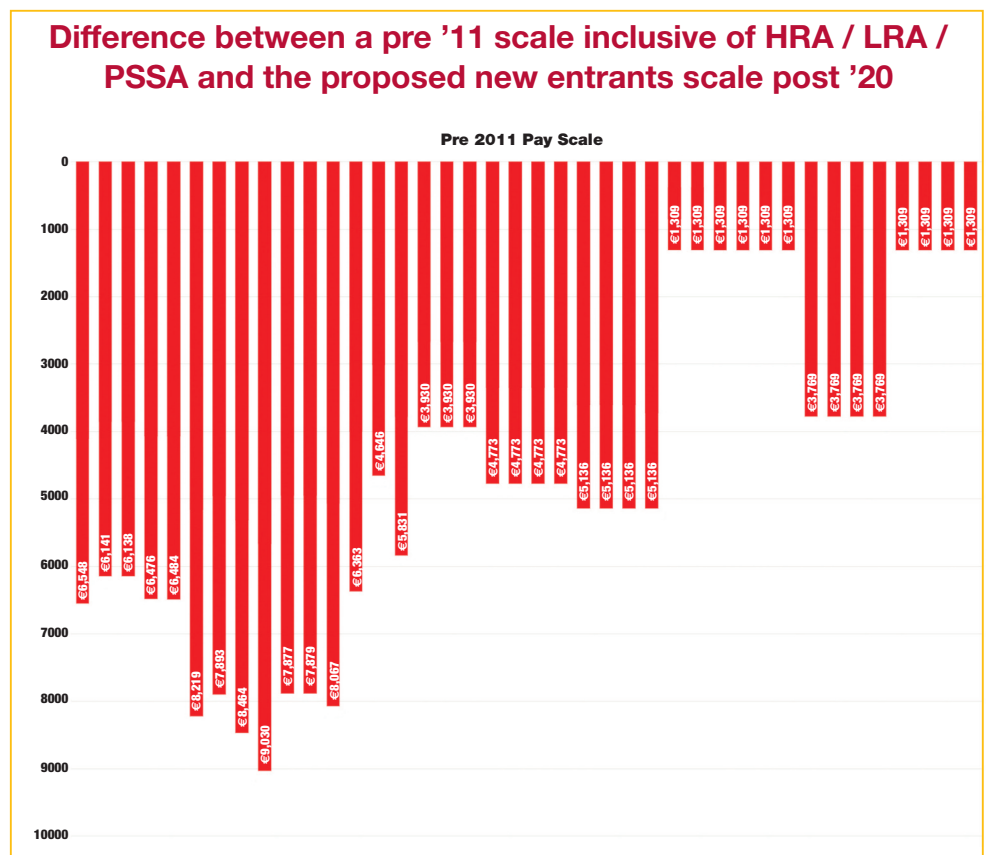
REJECTION AND REPUDIATION

- If the ASTI rejects the PSSA and engages in industrial action which is interpreted as repudiation of the PSSA or LRA then ASTI members face penalisation in the form of the withdrawal of measures under the PSSA and/or LRA. These measures could include:
 - The removal of LRA pay measures (this could mean ASTI members’ pay reverting to pre-June 10th 2017 levels).
 - Removal of protection against compulsory redundancy.
 - Non-implementation of the PSSA pay/ pension measures.
- The ASTI can continue its industrial relations campaigns against the Lansdowne Road Agreement, the discriminatory pay of post 2010 entrants and the Junior Cycle reform implementation proposals.
- The ASTI can seek to continue its campaign for equal pay for post 2010 entrants in conjunction with the INTO and TUI. However, in the event of industrial action, the consequences for ASTI members could be more severe, unless the ASTI agrees a position on LRA/ Junior Cycle reform implementation proposals which places us on an equal footing with the INTO and TUI (i.e. the ASTI becomes party to the LRA/ Junior Cycle reform implementation proposals).
- For unions which reject the PSSA, Section 4.1.3. states: *“It is agreed that an examination of the remaining salary scales in respect of post January 2011 recruits at entry grades covered by **parties to this Agreement** will be undertaken within 12 months of the commencement of this Agreement.”*

What does a YES vote mean?

- ASTI members will be signed up to the Lansdowne Road Agreement (LRA) in its entirety.
- ASTI members will be signed up to the Public Service Stability Agreement (PSSA) 2018-2020 (which is an extension of the LRA) in its entirety.
- The measures implemented for ASTI members following the suspension of industrial action in June 2017 will continue to apply. (See Nuacht 4, August 2017).
- Measures due under the remainder of the LRA (which expires at the end of 2018) will apply. These are:
 - 1st January 2018: Full restoration of the pay cuts applied under the Haddington Road Agreement (HRA) for those earning between €65,000 and €100,000 (the first half of this restoration was applied to ASTI members with effect from June 10th, 2017).
 - 1st January 2018: Post 2012 entrants will receive the second phase of an increase equal to an honours primary degree allowance (the first half of this restoration was applied to ASTI members with effect from June 10th, 2017).
- The Public Service Stability Agreement does not deliver equal pay for recently qualified teachers during its lifetime. The following pay gap remains. (See graph).

Salary gap for recently qualified teachers under the PSSA



At the end of the Public Service Stability Agreement, a significant gap will remain between the pre-2011 salaries and the new entrant salaries. This graph illustrates this differential as it occurs throughout a teacher's career. The graph includes all measures under the Lansdowne Road Agreement 2013-2018 and the Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020.

- A proportion of the Pension Related Deduction (PRD) will become an Additional Superannuation Contribution meaning teachers will pay a higher pension contribution permanently.
- ASTI members will be signed up to deliver the Croke Park 33 hours.
- ASTI members will be signed up to deliver the Framework for Junior Cycle as outlined in *Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation and Appendix 22 May 2015* and in *Statement of Assurances 29 November 2016*.
- There will be some unwinding of the FEMPI legislation under the terms of the PSSA. However, the punitive elements of FEMPI remain (e.g. the provision to freeze increments). In addition, FEMPI will continue to affect the pay of a minority of ASTI members at the end of the Agreement.
- The ASTI can continue to pursue equal pay for recently qualified teachers through a review mechanism under the PSSA.

PSSA Section 4.1.3: “It is agreed that an examination of the remaining salary scales in respect of post January 2011 recruits at entry grades covered by parties to this Agreement will be undertaken within 12 months of the commencement of this Agreement. On conclusion of this work, the parties will discuss and agree how the matter can be addressed and implemented in a manner that does not give rise to implications for the fiscal envelope of this Agreement and that has regard for the medium term fiscal framework. Any outcome will be restricted to parties adhering to this Agreement.”

This is **not** a commitment to the achievement of equal pay for post 2010 teachers. There is no provision for any improvement in the pay differential between pre and post 2010/ 2011 entrants in the life time of the PSSA. There is no timeline for improvement in the pay differential.

- ASTI members will be signed up to a new distributive leadership model for Posts of Responsibility as set out in *Looking at our Schools 2016 – A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools*.
- Grace period: Teachers who retired or will retire post February 2012, to the extent that they retired on reduced salaries, will receive pension increases in line with pay increases received by their peers currently in employment in accordance with the terms of the agreement.
- ASTI members will be signed up to imposed “reform” including *Action Plan for Education 2016-2019*, *Curricular Reform within Schools*, and *National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy (2011-2020)*.

For further information visit
www.asti.ie

The following important documentation is available on the ASTI website:

- Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020
- The Lansdowne Road Agreement (Public Service Stability Agreement 2013-2018)
- Nuacht 4, August 2017 – Suspension of industrial action
- Junior Cycle Reform - Joint Statement on Principles and Implementation and Appendix to the Joint Statement 22 May 2015
- [Junior Cycle Reform] Statement of Assurances 29 November 2016 [available in Outcome of DES and ASTI Discussions - 29 November 2016]
- Action Plan for Education 2016-2019
- Literacy and Numeracy for Learning and Life - The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children 2011-2020.
- Looking at Our School 2016 : A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools.

**ASTI Ballot October 2017
CEC urges all members to vote NO**



**Please ensure your vote is returned early.
Closing date for receipt of ballot papers is
Wednesday, October 18th at 5.30p.m.**