

POLICING, SECURITY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY BILL ALL DIVISIONS, YOU HAVE EXERCISED YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO BE HEARD



Welcome to the latest national edition of the Garda Civilian Bulletin. In this edition, we focus exclusively on the national outcomes of the engagement process where Clerical and Executive Officers* had their opportunity to express their opinions on the proposed Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill, which has a direct impact on all Clerical and Executive Officer Grades across the Fórsa membership network.

In addition, an update on the outcome of the recently

concluded NEW national wage agreement ballot, is featured.

For any queries related to this bulletin please do not hesitate to contact gardacivilianinfo@forsa.ie.

Civil Servants have spoken

A series of engagement meetings were held during the months of August and September, across the Garda Network, that resulted in significant numbers of Clerical and Executive Officer Grade Civil Servants assigned to An Garda Síochána participating in online

Clerical and Executive Officer representatives.

and in person meetings to discuss the proposed Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill, and the potential implications of said instrument, should it be implemented in its current format.

You may recall, that previously your union Fórsa conducted a poll which among other matters identified that 94% of respondents wished to remain a direct employee of the Civil Service and of that 94%, 99% identified that they had grave concerns related to the impact that any change might have on their existing terms and conditions.

*In some locations, other grades from within the ranks of the Civil Servants throughout this sector, who were members of Fórsa, attended the meetings also, and this was facilitated upon request. It should be noted, that the level of attendance by colleagues classed as Technical Grades, did not exceed 0.005% of the overall numbers of meeting participants. Therefore, the data reflected in this bulletin is overwhelmingly representative of the opinions of Clerical and Executive Grades.



Clerical and Executive Officers meeting in Tipperary.



Chris Crowley,
Chair of the
Dublin Garda
Civilian Branch.

During the meeting, attendees endorsed that the following were of concern should their status of Civil Servant be altered.

Loss of mobility	80%
Loss of protections for Civil Servants	85%
Subject to GSOC governance	70%
Inability to access interdepartmental competitions/promotions	79%
Concerns related to the organisational culture of An Garda Síochána	71%

In addition, serious other issues related to the potential negative impact of a change of employment on general terms and conditions, were cited inclusive of flexi-leave, annual leave, changes to roles and responsibilities, lack of training and support, shift patterns and reporting structures etc.

This broad engagement project was at the behest of your union representatives nationally, who proposed and actively participated in that series of meetings.

Whether the meetings took place in person or online, the format was exactly the same... civil servants were actively encouraged to air their views and participate in a

series of live polls on matters that were of concern to them, and detailed here is the culminative results of that national process.

In response to 'Do you have concerns related to the potential change to your employment status from civil servant to public servant?', 98% indicated that they had.

In the interests of balance, participants were asked if a potential change to employment status could, in fact, afford Civil Servants an opportunity and, nationally 18% of all attendees indicated that they saw this proposed change to their employment status as an opportunity.



Clerical and Executive Officers meeting in Mayo.

So where to now?

Having concluded this extensive engagement project, what is clear is that the proposed legislation, and its potential implication for Civil Servants, is definitively a concern for the Fórsa membership, and we as an organisation of workers, who, through our chosen union Fórsa, are not only committed to supporting each other to win fairness and justice in the workplace, but are equally committed to seeking an acceptable outcome for our members.

As this bulletin is published, Fórsa's negotiation team led, by Assistant General Secretary Jim Mitchell, have sought to meet with the employer representatives to discuss the proposed changes, and

indeed to communicate your position in relation to same, and a series of updates with regard to any developments will be communicated in the coming weeks. Moreover, we collectively reserve the right to pursue this matter accordingly, until an acceptable and meaningful resolution is agreed.

We will continue to communicate with you all, but it is imperative that the ranks of Civil Servants, that are represented by Fórsa, continue to participate and actively support each other in this current challenge, and indeed in any challenge that may lie ahead. Your union representatives nationally, who are proactively engaging on this matter are there to provide guidance and

support, whilst ably representing you, but they cannot do it alone. So please continue to seek updates, participate in any further union initiatives at local level and potentially national level, and encourage others to do the same.

If you are not a member of this union or have colleagues who may not currently be members, please join and encourage others to join also. Have a voice and participate, as this is about the future of work, or to be more precise, your future working life and career.

Sincerest thanks to all whom have participated in online initiatives or indeed attended in person meetings.

**Not a member?
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Clerical and Executive Officers meeting in Dublin.

NEW PUBLIC SERVICE PAY PROPOSALS - WHAT HAPPENS NOW

The revised public service pay package for 2022-2023 followed negotiations between public service unions and the Government at the Workplace Relations Commission (WRC) and was published at the end of August.

Fórsa conducted an electronic ballot of eligible members on the revised public service pay package which resulted in 91.3% voting in favour of the proposals. The pay deal will now see the implementation of pay increases of 3% with effect from 2nd February 2022, 2% from 1st March 2023 and 1.5% or €750 (whichever is the greater) from 1st October

2023. This is in addition to 1% or €500, whichever is greater, due at the beginning of October 2022.

The minimum payment of €750 a year from next October means the package would be worth 8% to a worker earning €25,000 a year and 7% to a person on €37,500 a year.

Fórsa General Secretary Kevin Callinan stated that this result was a strong statement of support for the pay deal, worth 6.5% in addition to existing Building Momentum pay adjustments, with better increases for lower paid workers.

"Throughout the ballot process Fórsa members engaged with the union very actively, and the strong endorsement by our members reflects a recognition that these pay measures will be a helpful support to people at a critical time," he said.

However, it is worth noting that the short lifespan of the pay terms would mean that negotiations on a successor agreement would need to take place in 2023 and with that in mind your union Fórsa will proactively engage with you on this and all related matters in the coming year.

We are organising to win, are you?

As we continue to face and address the challenges that Civil Servants are experiencing, it is important that we continue to organise ourselves to win, and seek resolution to all matters that affect us currently and into the future.

As workers, we can only effectively seek and make change through active union membership and participation in our union Fórsa and therefore if you are not a member please join by clicking the link below or by contacting your local Fórsa representative.

If you are already a member and wish to become more active in your union, please contact Lead Organiser, Bernie Aston baston@forsa.ie.

Together, change is possible and outcomes are realised, but only through one effective organised and powerful voice and that is through your union. Become organised, participate and have your say.

If you require any further detail related to the proposed Policing, Security and Community Safety Bill and the status, or indeed potential impact of same, on you as a Civil Servant, or have any queries related to any matter contained in this bulletin, please email gardacivilaninfo@forsa.ie.

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