



General Election Opinion Poll

28th Apr 2013

Prepared for:

THE SUNDAY BUSINESS POST
IRELAND'S FINANCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC NEWSPAPER

Methodology and Weighting



- RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,003 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 22nd and 24th April 2013.
- A random digit dial (RDD) method is used to ensure a random selection process of households to be included – this also ensures that ex-directory households are covered.
- Half of the sample are interviewed using an RDD landline sample, with the other half conducted using an RDD mobile phone sample, this ensures 98% coverage of the population reaching landline only households, mobile only households and those with both a landline and a mobile.
- Interviews were conducted across the country and the results weighted to the profile of all adults. A further past vote weighting is included that takes the current recall for how people voted at the last election, compares this to the actual results, and weights the data to halfway between the two.
- Vote intention results are based on those who will actually go and vote, using a 10 point scale, where 1 is not at all likely and 10 is very likely, those rating 4 to 10 are included as being those who will actually go and vote.
- Finally, some people tell RED C that they intend to vote, and have a good past voting record, but say they don't know who they would vote for or refuse to answer the question. Whenever such people say which party they voted for in the last election, RED C ascribe 50% to the party they voted for previously. We have seen from analysis of past elections that this is the most likely outcome and this reallocation tries to overcome the effect of the “spiral of silence” where voters are do not want to admit who they will vote for.
- In all respects the poll was completed to the opinion polling guidelines set out by both ESOMAR and AIMRO.

Where do the opposition go from here? - I

- Fine Gael retain 28% of the first preference vote in this poll, 8% below the level the party achieved at the last election. In itself the figure is not that remarkable, given the tough decisions that have had to be made along the way, and the fact that we currently lie midway between elections. What is far more interesting, is that this is exactly the same first preference share the party secured for the past five polls running back to November last year.
- This means support for the party has remained stable at this level despite....the controversy over Health Minister James Reilly and the location of care centres, a tough budget, the initially poor response to the Magdalene Laundries and subsequent apology, the introduction of the property tax, negative press over water rates, the difficult negotiations over Croke Park and its eventual refusal by the Unions, not to mention clear divisions across the party in relation to the abortion debate.
- There may well be more problems for the party that I haven't recalled, but you get the general idea. Despite all these problems, the fall in support witnessed during the past year has hit an invisible floor. This suggests that for current Fine Gael voters, something pretty dramatic will have to happen, before they will consider moving their support elsewhere.
- Labour has seen support fall back again this month. This fall leaves them securing 11% of the first preference vote; which is pretty much within margin of error where they have been also for the past five or six months despite some small shifts either way in the meantime. The fact that the Labour party's support fluctuates a little more than Fine Gaels, is evidence that they are certainly the party more under pressure within the coalition, and perhaps more open to further losses. However the recent trends for party over the longer term suggests they too have shored up support somewhat from the declines seen last year, at least to stop them going below the 10% mark.
- The fact that Fine Gael and Labour appear to have arrested declines, and in Fine Gaels case hit something of a floor in support levels, has interesting implications for those in opposition. The reality is that despite positive gains for both parties over the last year, Fianna Fail and Sinn Fein are not making the consistent gains they were.
- This month Sinn Fein has made some small gains in share, securing at extra 2% of the first preference vote, to leave the party taking 16% overall. These gains are of course positive for the party. However, these gains are quite likely due to the coverage that the party received at their Ard Fheis last week; and in itself represent a regain of lost ground, rather than a further advance for the party.

Where do the opposition go from here? - II



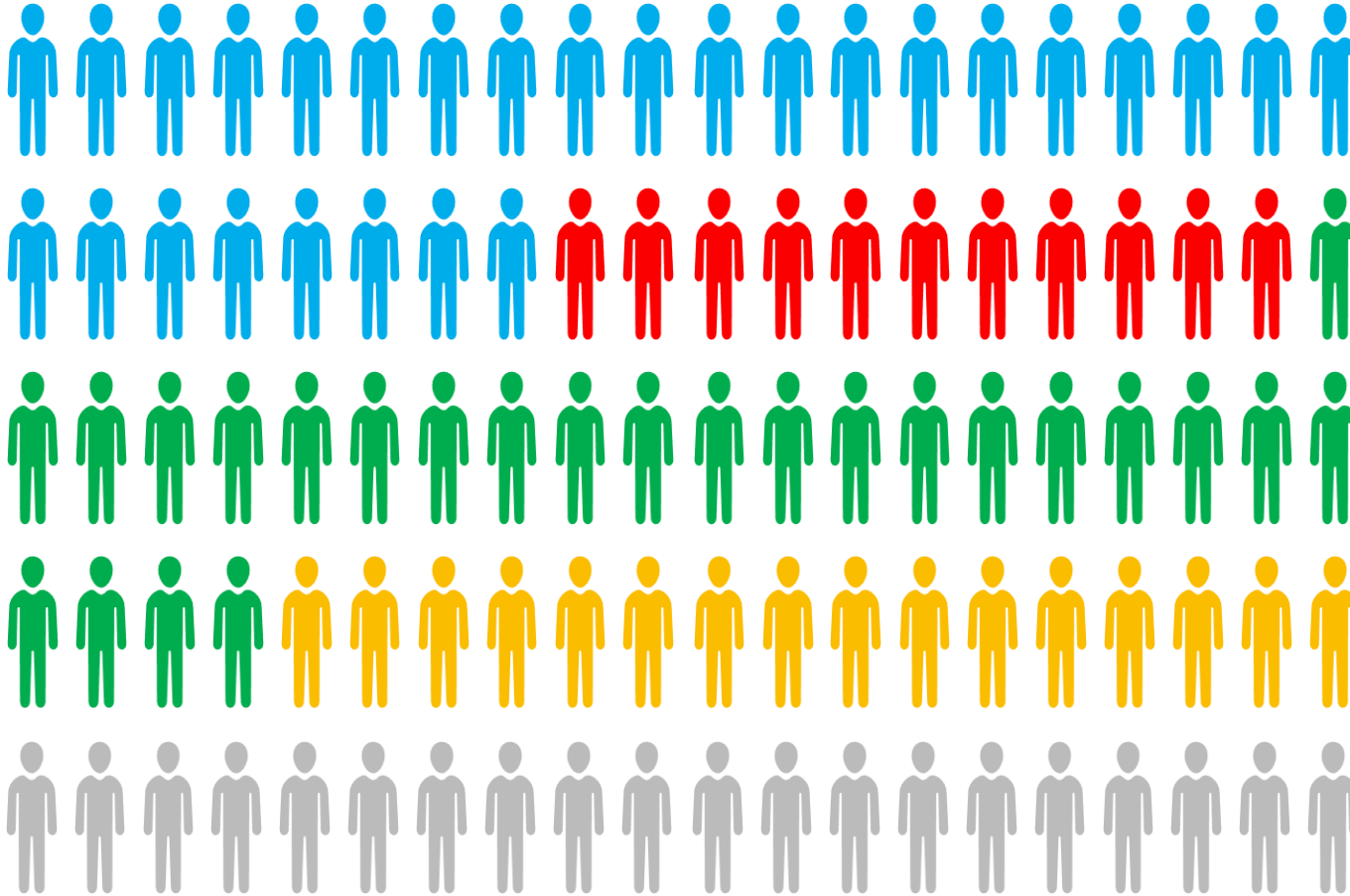
- Likewise Fianna Fail share rises by 1%, to leave the party securing 25%. To have got to this level of support is of course an extremely good result, following the beating that the electorate gave them at the last election. But the question does have to be asked, how much of this has been down to the work being done by the party, and how much is due to the lack of a credible alternative to the government parties? This particular month on month rise is not that significant, given they has secured 26% two months ago. The real challenge lies ahead, in either persuading more hardened government party supporters to jump ship, or persuading those who still see the party as toxic that they have really moved on.
- Recent poll results therefore suggest, that the opposition parties are going to have to do far more in the future to persuade further voters to switch to them. Up till now they have benefited from largely from a leakage of support, based on voters feeling that the government parties are breaking their promises. But let's face it, at this stage any gains that the opposition have made from the government not keeping their pre-election promises, appears to be pretty much built in to where the parties stand now. Instead, the opposition are going to have to find ways to make more noise and perhaps stick their heads further above the parapet in order to take share, and that is of course far more difficult and dangerous game than the one both parties appear to have been playing.
- Some have muted that the start of Fianna Fail's improved fortunes and rise in the polls began around this time last year, which coincided with Micheal Martin's personally apology for the parties actions at the Ard Fheis, making the party less toxic for past voters. The question is what realistically what can the they do this year if anything, that is a strong enough trigger to persuade more voters to switch to them?

General Election

First Preference Vote Intention – April 2013

If the general election was tomorrow which party or independent candidate do you think you would give your first preference vote to? (Past vote weighted and adjusted for Spiral of Silence)

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



Fine Gael
28% =

Labour
11% -2

Fianna Fail
25% +1

Sinn Fein
16% +2

Independent/
Other
20% -1

Undecided Voters
22%

First Preference Vote Intention – April 2013

If the general election was tomorrow which party or independent candidate do you think you would give your first preference vote to? (Past vote weighted and adjusted for Spiral of Silence)

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote (including undecided))



CURRENT FIRST PREFERENCE SUPPORT AMONG THOSE LIKELY TO VOTE

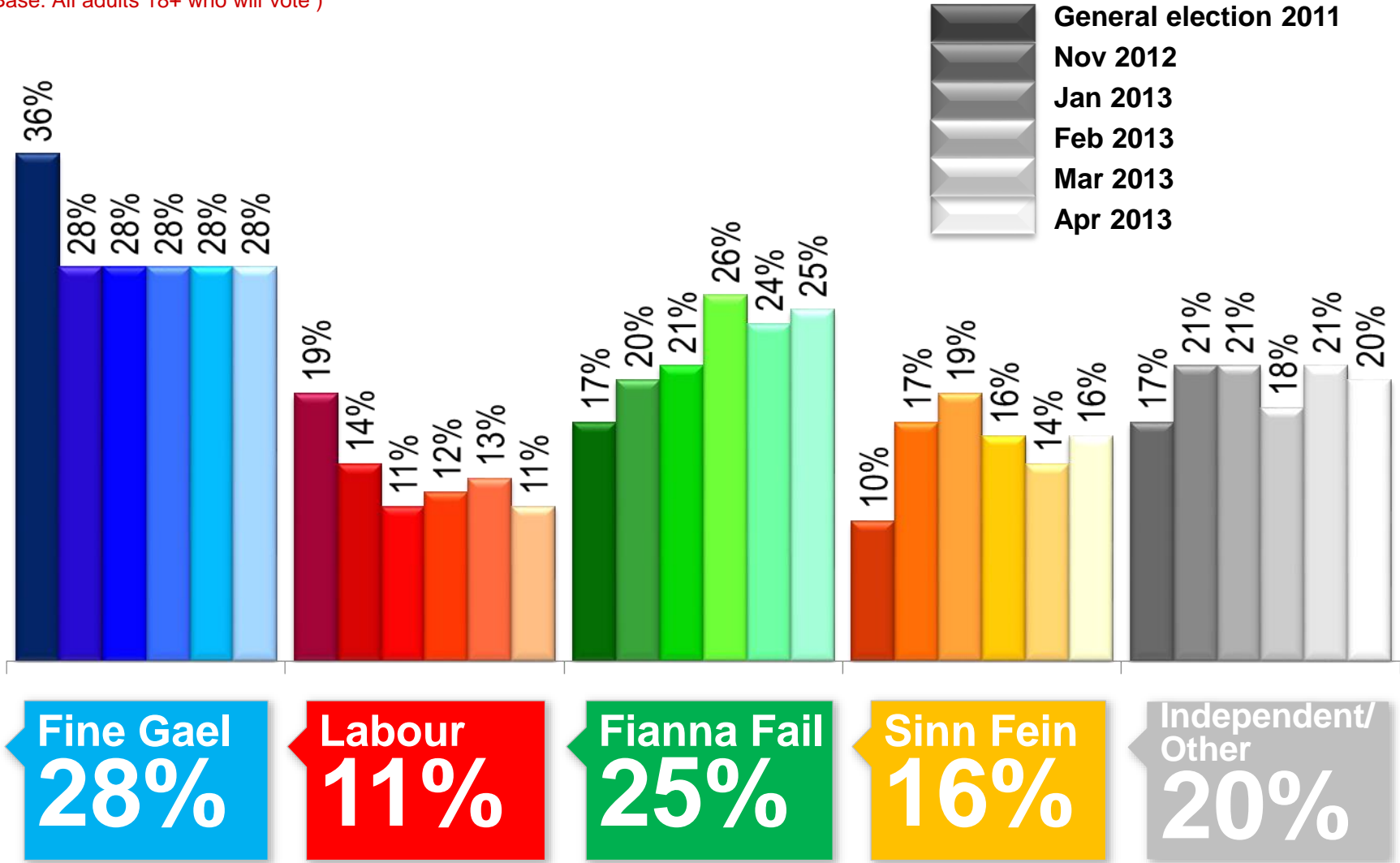
	Core figures 26 th April 2013	Excluding 50% undecided, and weighting back 50% undecided to how they voted in past elections	2011 Election Results
	%	%	%
Fine Gael	21	28	36
Labour	8	11	19
Fianna Fáil	20	25	17
Sinn Féin	13	16	10
Independent candidates	13	16	13
Green Party	1	2	2
Socialist Party	1	1	1
Other Party	1	1	1
Undecided	22		

First Preference Vote Intention – Nov 2012 – April 2013



If the general election was tomorrow which party or independent candidate do you think you would give your first preference vote to? (Past vote weighted and adjusted for Spiral of Silence)

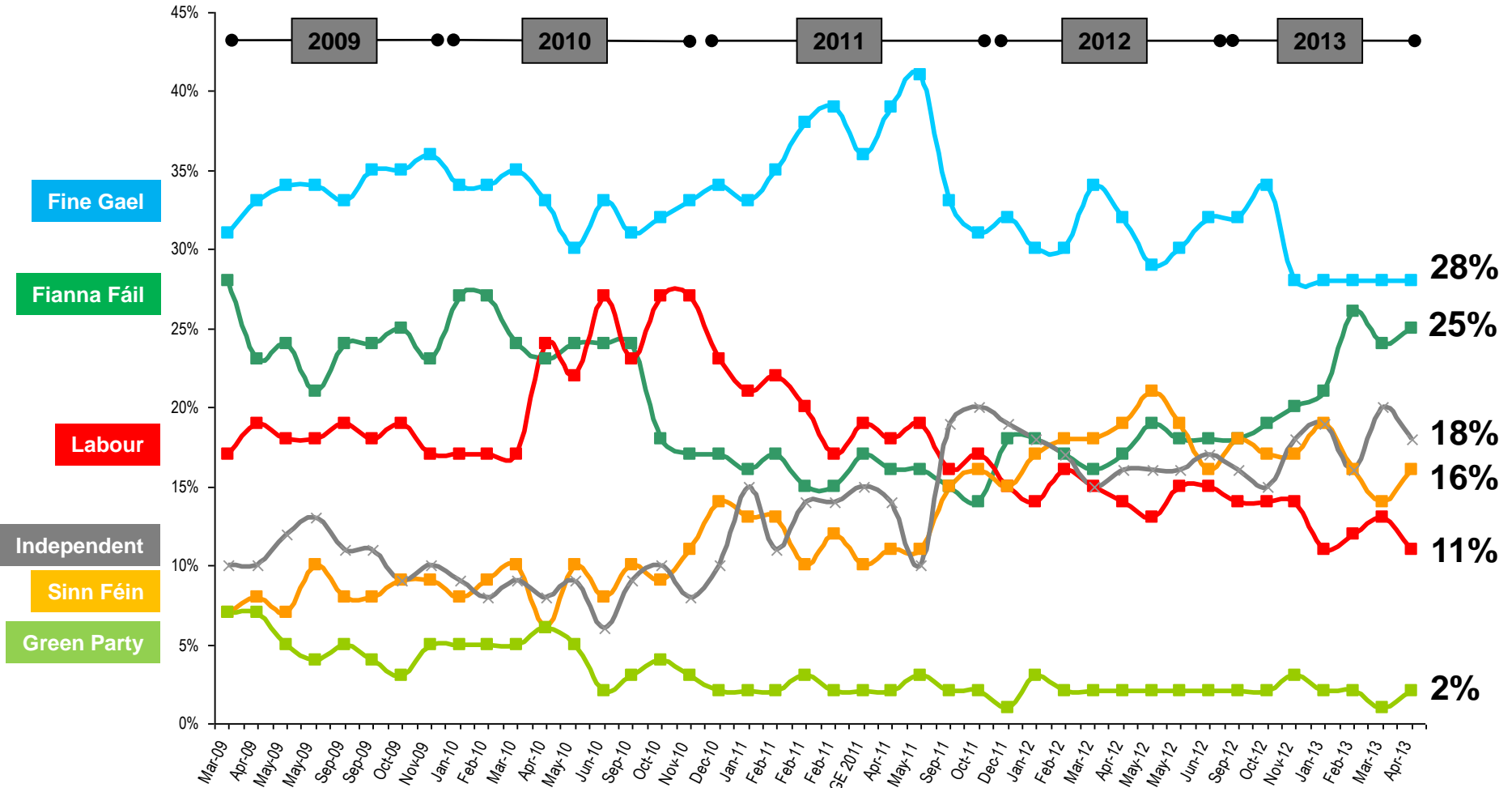
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



First Preference Vote Intention – 2009-2013

If the general election was tomorrow which party or independent candidate do you think you would give your first preference vote to? (Past vote weighted and adjusted for Spiral of Silence)

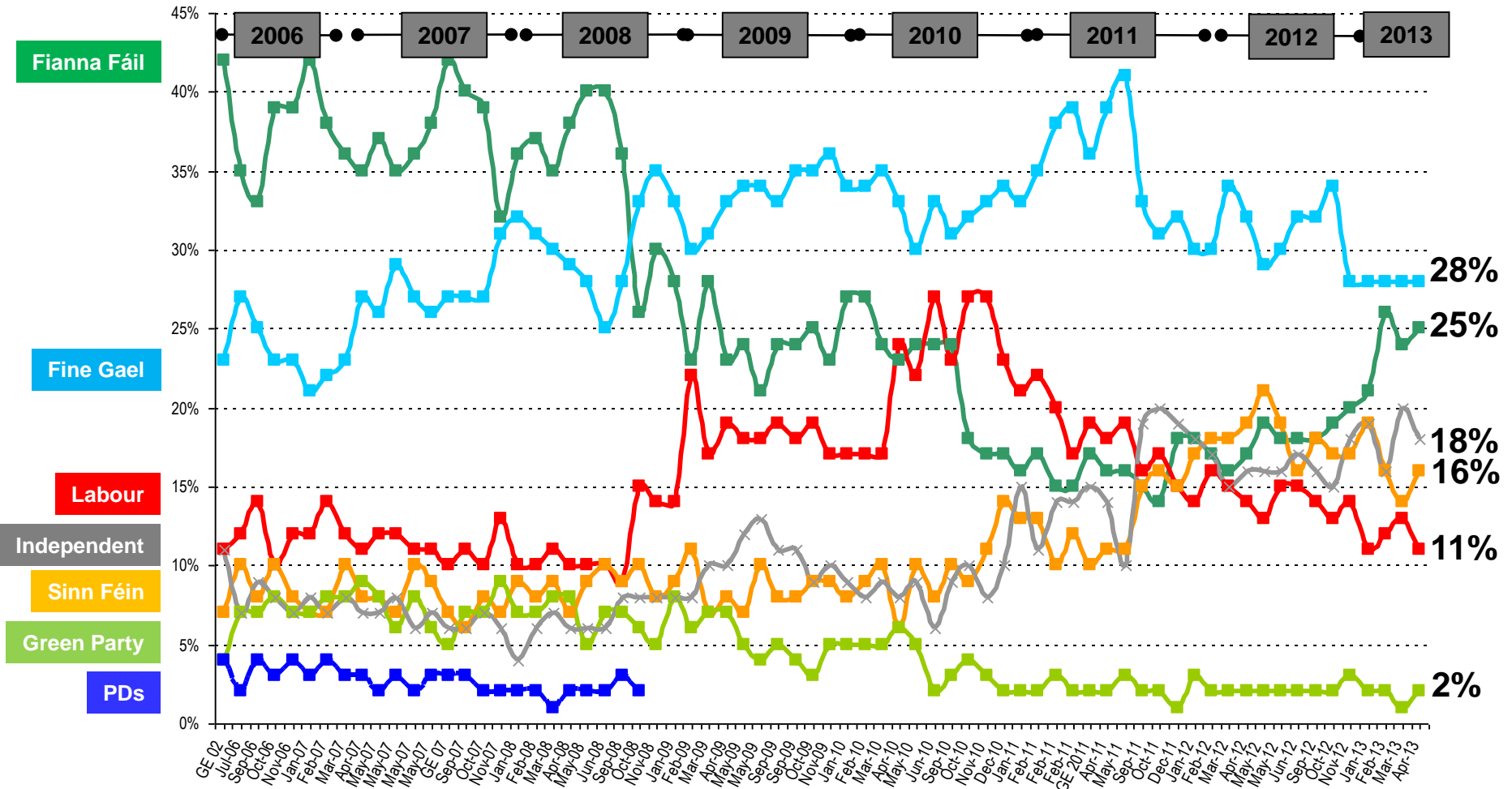
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



First Preference Vote Intention – 2006 to 2013

If the general election was tomorrow which party or independent candidate do you think you would give your first preference vote to? (Past vote weighted and adjusted for Spiral of Silence)

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



Attitudes towards Croke Park II



With regards to the recent Croke Park II vote, can you tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following?

(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1,003)

Disagree

DK

Agree

The government should now go ahead and **cut** public service pay

50%



30%

The government should **accept** the union's decision and try to **renegotiate** the Croke Park agreement

23%



56%

The government should **ease off on austerity** by reducing public spending cuts

25%



54%

If the government has any spare cash, it should **reduce taxes** for working people

18%

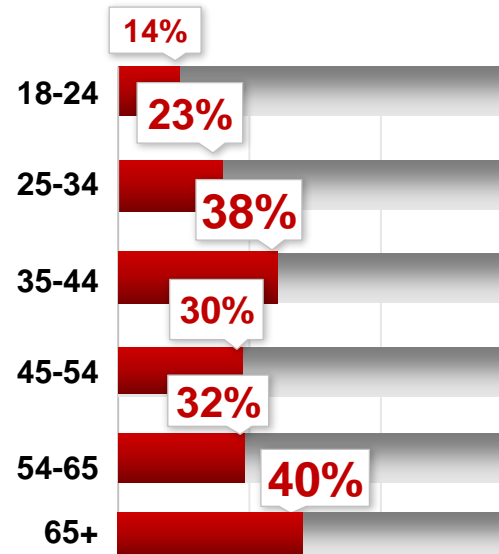
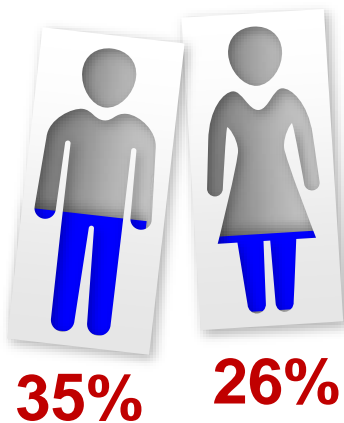


68%

The government should now go ahead and **Cut** public service pay



(Base: All Adults 18+)



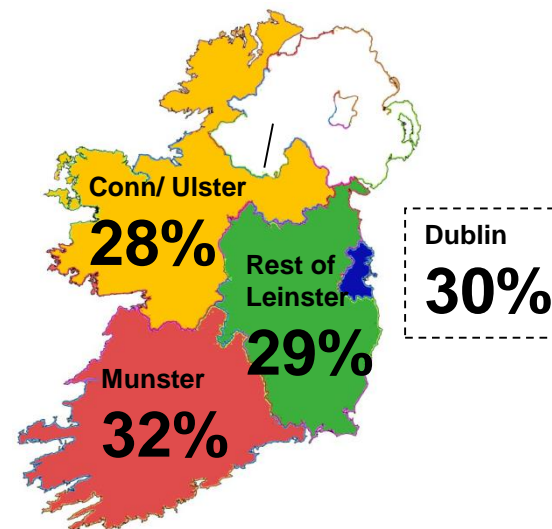
Higher Social Grades: **29%**



Lower Social Grades: **28%**



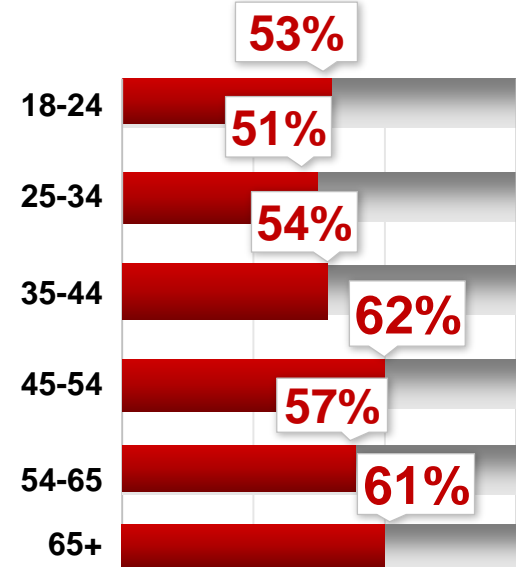
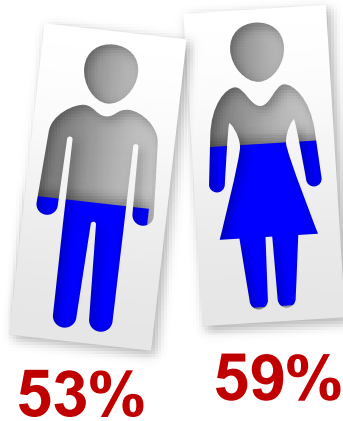
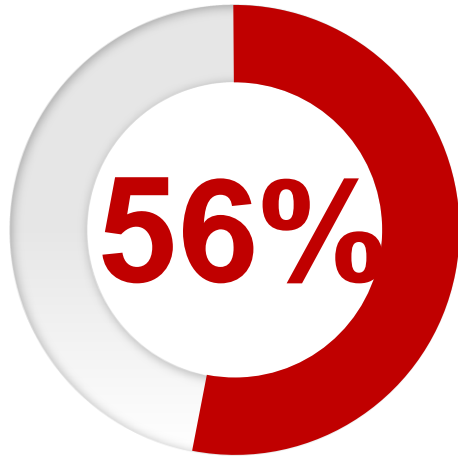
Party Support 2011



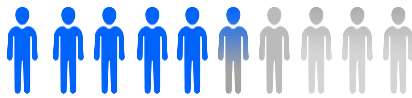
The government should **accept** the union's decision and try to **renegotiate** the Croke Park agreement.

(Base: All Adults 18+)

C



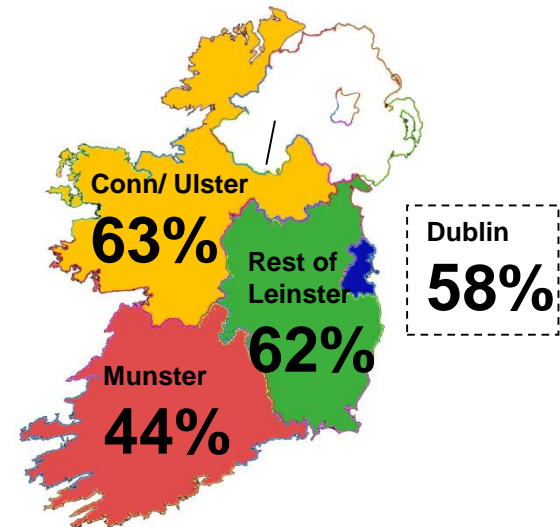
Higher Social Grades: **55%**



Lower Social Grades: **58%**



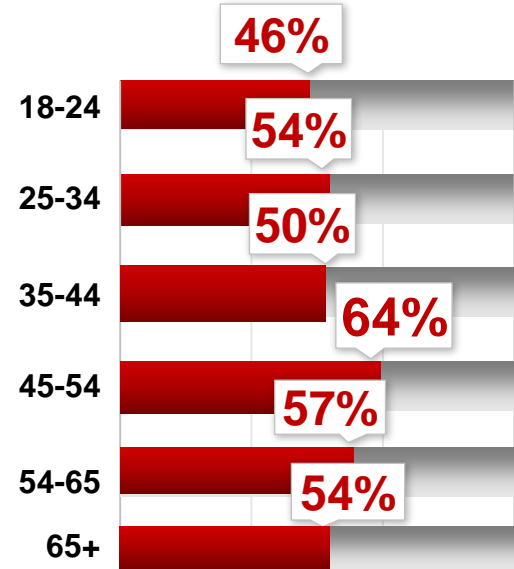
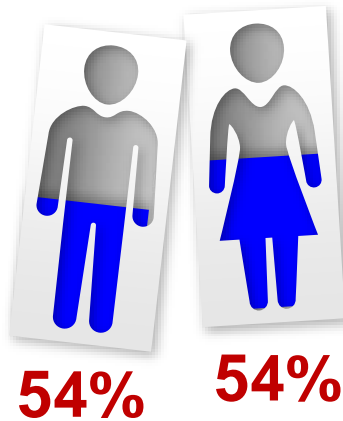
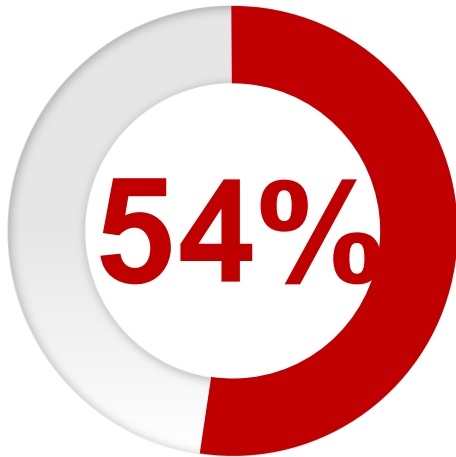
Party Support 2011



The government should **ease off on austerity** by reducing public spending cuts.

C

(Base: All Adults 18+)



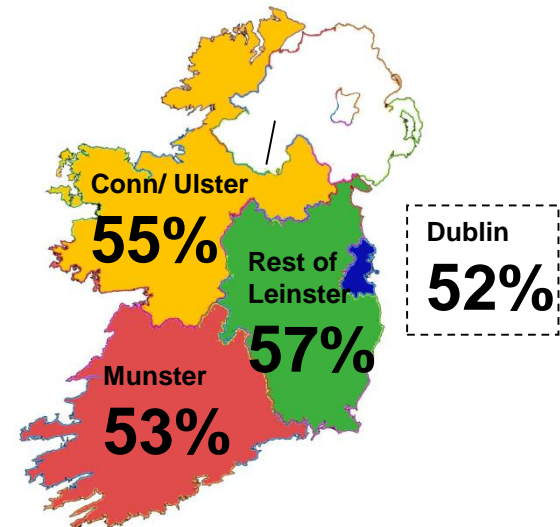
Higher Social Grades: **54%**



Lower Social Grades: **54%**



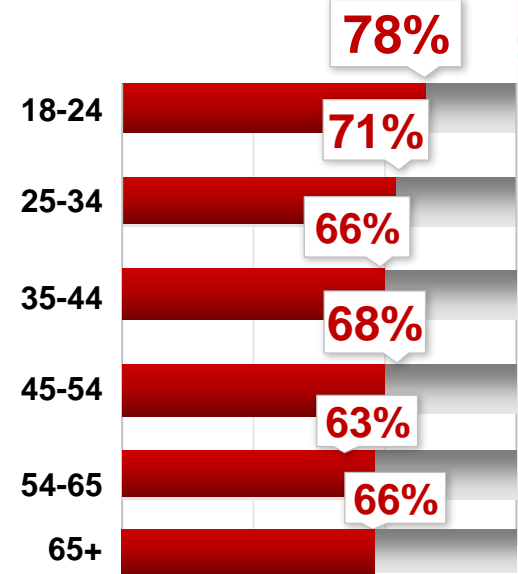
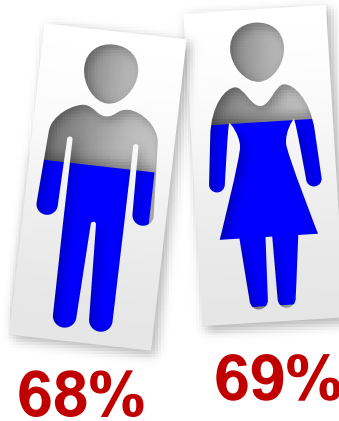
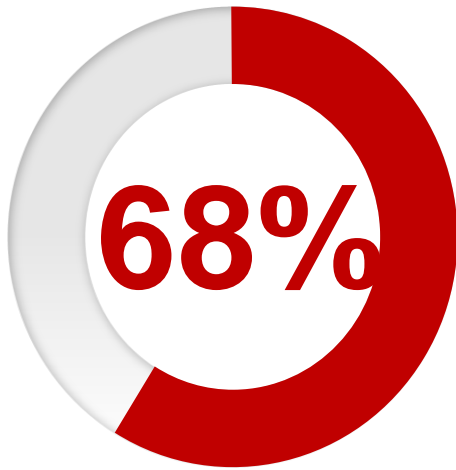
Party Support 2011



If the government has any spare cash, it should **reduce taxes** for working people

(Base: All Adults 18+)

C



Higher Social Grades: **62%**



Lower Social Grades: **73%**



Party Support 2011

