



## General Election Poll



4<sup>th</sup> Dec 2011

Prepared for:

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

Job No: 41110

## Methodology and Weighting

- 1005 interviews were conducted between the 28<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011 among all adults aged 18+, providing a sample error of + or – 3%.
- 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 general election, compares this to the actual results, and weights the data to halfway between the two.
- In all aspects the poll was conducted to the standards set out by AIMRO (the Association of Irish Market Research Organisations) and ESOMAR (the European Society of Marketing and Research)
- Throughout the report we have used the following notations:  
Higher than average  Lower than average 

## Government Party support under pressure



- In the first Sunday Business Post / RED C poll since the Presidential Election, there is evidence that the government parties are coming under pressure. Fine Gael remain the largest supported party in the state securing 32% of the first preference vote, but this is down 4% when compared to last election, and a long way behind the honeymoon highs of 40% recorded in the middle of the year.
- Labour are also under pressure, losing 2% share in just over a month since the election of Michael D. Higgins. This leaves the party securing 15% share of the first preference vote, and means they are also 4% down on the vote share they secured at the last election. For Labour this is a significant concern, as the parties share of the vote has not been this low for over three years. In fact it was January 2009 when they last saw support at just 15%, and certainly the belief within the party would have been that they had moved well beyond this level of support.
- Of all the non-government parties, Fianna Fail makes the biggest gains in today's poll, taking 18% of the first preference vote, an increase of 4% in the past month since the Presidential Election. This is 1% higher than they achieved at the general election, and is the highest share the party has seen since about this time last year. It is still some way behind where the party once was, but does suggest, as the Presidential Election also flagged, that there is an opportunity for the party to recover some of its lost voters.
- Sinn Fein also does well by retaining support levels they enjoyed during the Presidential Election. They secure 15% of the first preference vote, which is down 1% in the past month, but still significantly higher than the party achieved at the last election.
- Finally, Independent candidates and other parties support is down slightly at 20%. This is a fall of 2% since last month. The support is made up of 17% support for Independent candidates, just 1% for the Green Party, 1% for the Socialist Party and 1% others.
- The backdrop to this mini-backlash against the government parties is of course the Budget, much of which has been leaked or floated before the day itself. Confidence in the Fine Gael and Labour coalition to manage the economy stands at 37% in today's poll, a little behind the support for the parties generally, but significantly ahead of this time last year before they were elected and the previous government was producing the Budget. This is positive news for the government parties as it does suggest they have done much to convince voters of their credentials on economic issues, so why the mini-backlash?

- Firstly this figure needs to be analysed by party support for a more interesting take on the results. Fine Gael supporters are quite clearly backing the coalition in terms of its economic ability, with 72% of current voters supporting the government's economic credentials. But the same cannot be said about Labour supporters, with just only just under half 49% suggesting they believe the coalition can manage the economy.
- Secondly, the majority (66%) of the electorate believe that Fine Gael and Labour have gone back on promises they made with regard to taxation at the time of the election. Once again, those who voted Labour into power at the last election, are particularly likely to feel that this is the case, with a staggering 74% of Labour supporters agreeing that the party had gone back on election policies with regard to taxation.
- There are also problems within the analysis of the Budget for Fine Gael, when we analyse voters attitudes towards the Croke Park agreement. Overall, 65% of voters feel that the Croke Park agreement should be re-negotiated, suggesting this remains a thorny issue in general. However it is also more of an issue for Fine Gael supporters, with 70% of their supporters stating that the Croke Park agreement should be revisited to further reduce public sector pay costs. If nothing is done in this regard, and other measures on tax are put in place, this could turn supporters against the party.
- The Budget is very important then for both parties, in that it needs to address both spending cuts and taxation to meet the needs of supporters at either end of the political spectrum. The split Budget over two days next week may be the governments means of meeting these demands, we will see next year how successful they have been.

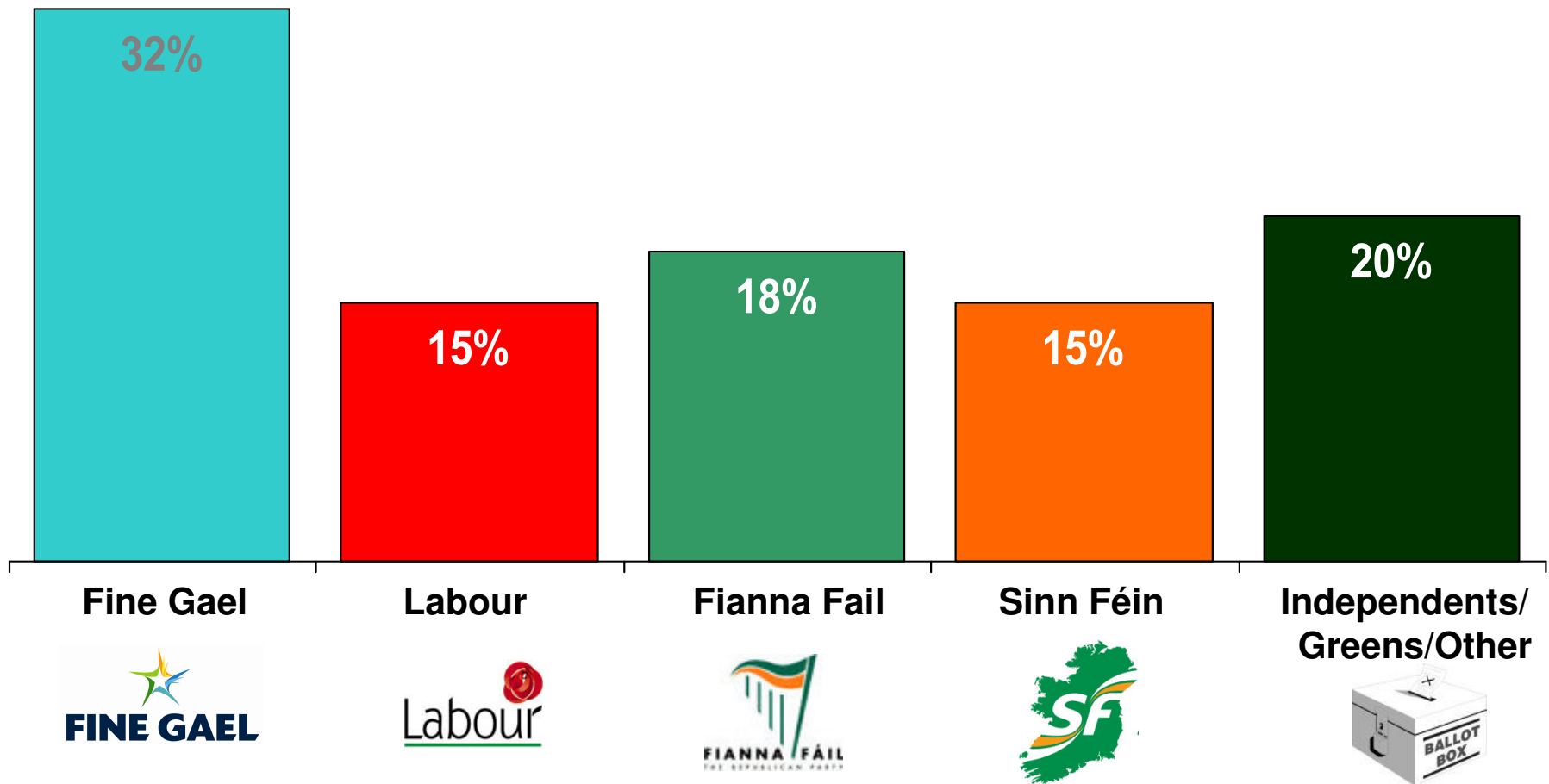
# General Election

# If there were a *general election* tomorrow, to which party or independent candidate would you give your first preference vote?

(Base: All adults WHO WILL VOTE 18+)



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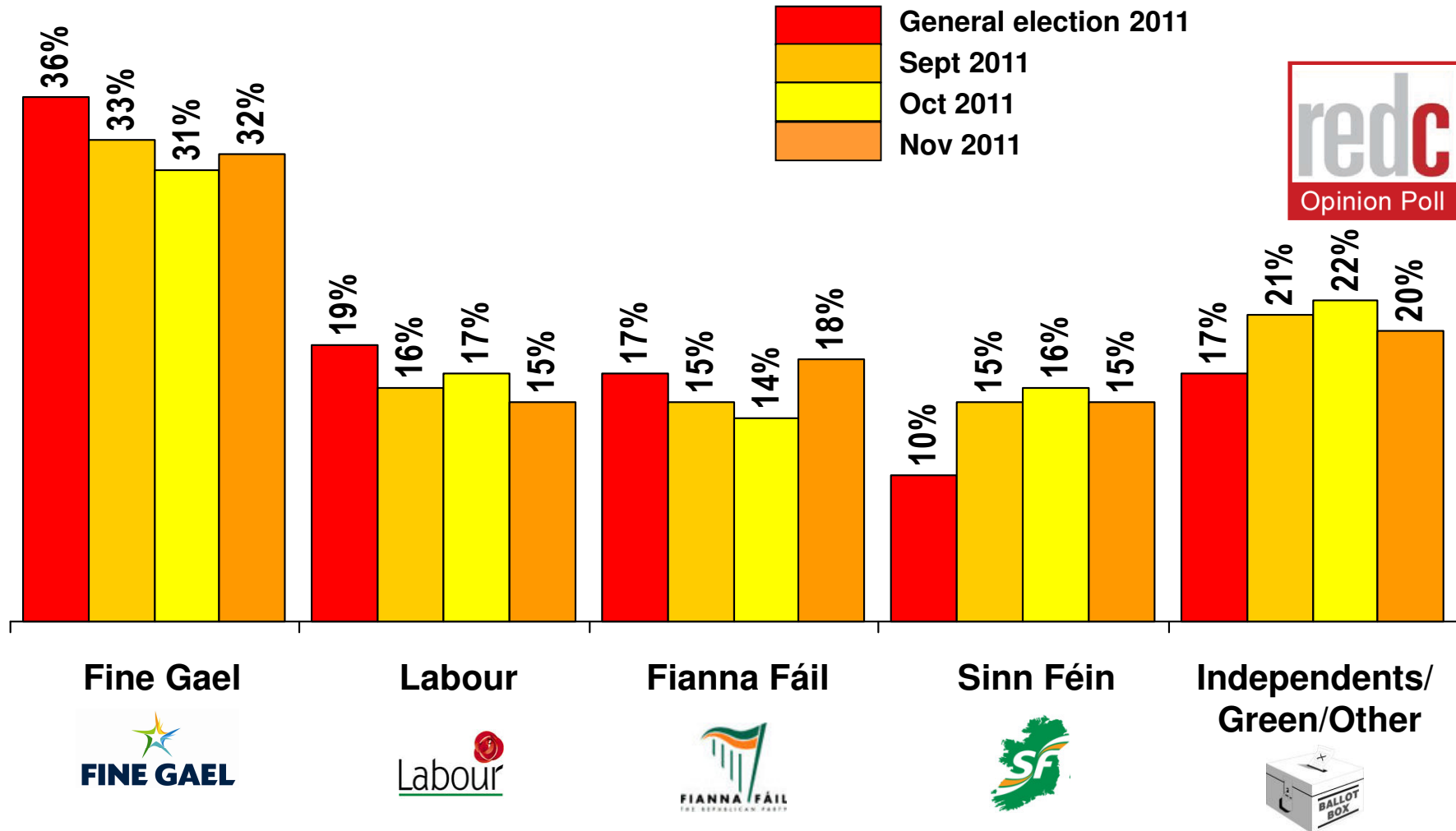


RESEARCH EVALUATION DIRECTION CLARITY

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Fine Gael



Labour



Fianna Fáil



Sinn Féin



Independents/  
Green/Other



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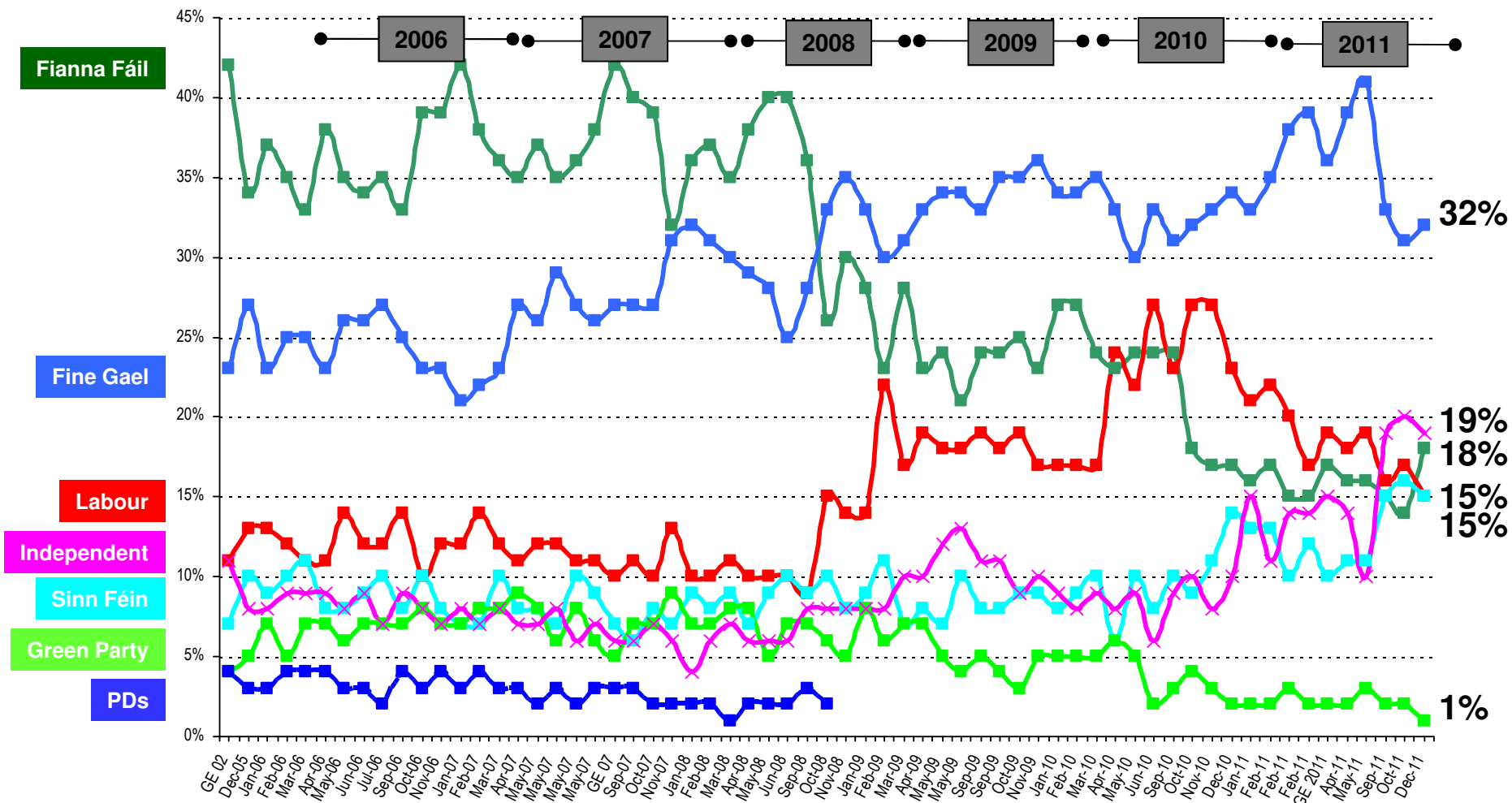
<b>CURRENT FIRST PREFERENCE SUPPORT</b>			
	<b>Core figures 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 2011</b>	<b>Excluding undecided</b>	<b>2011 Election Results</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Fine Gael</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Labour</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Fianna Fáil</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Sinn Féin</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Independents/ Green / Others</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Undecided</b>	<b>16</b>		



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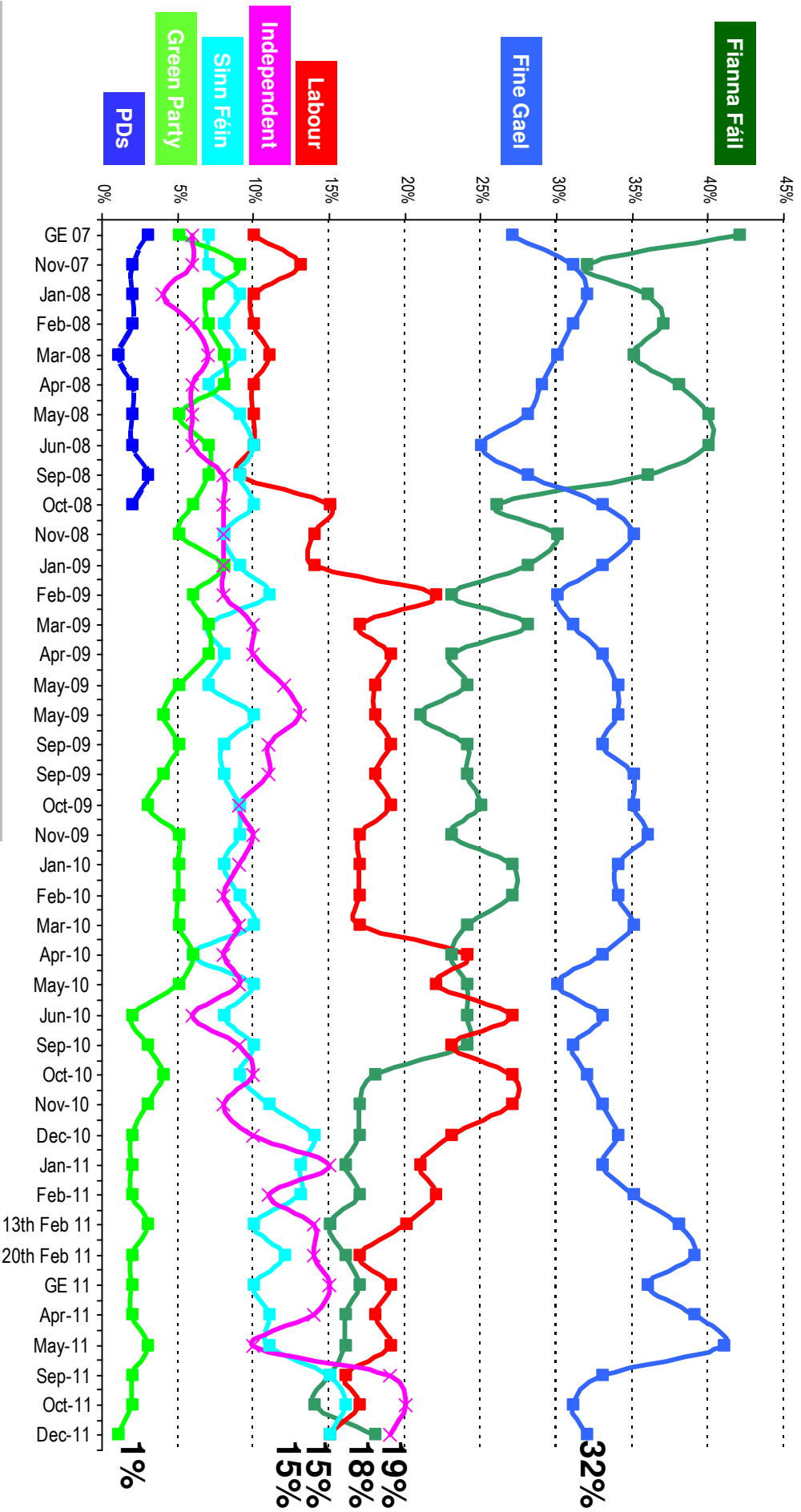


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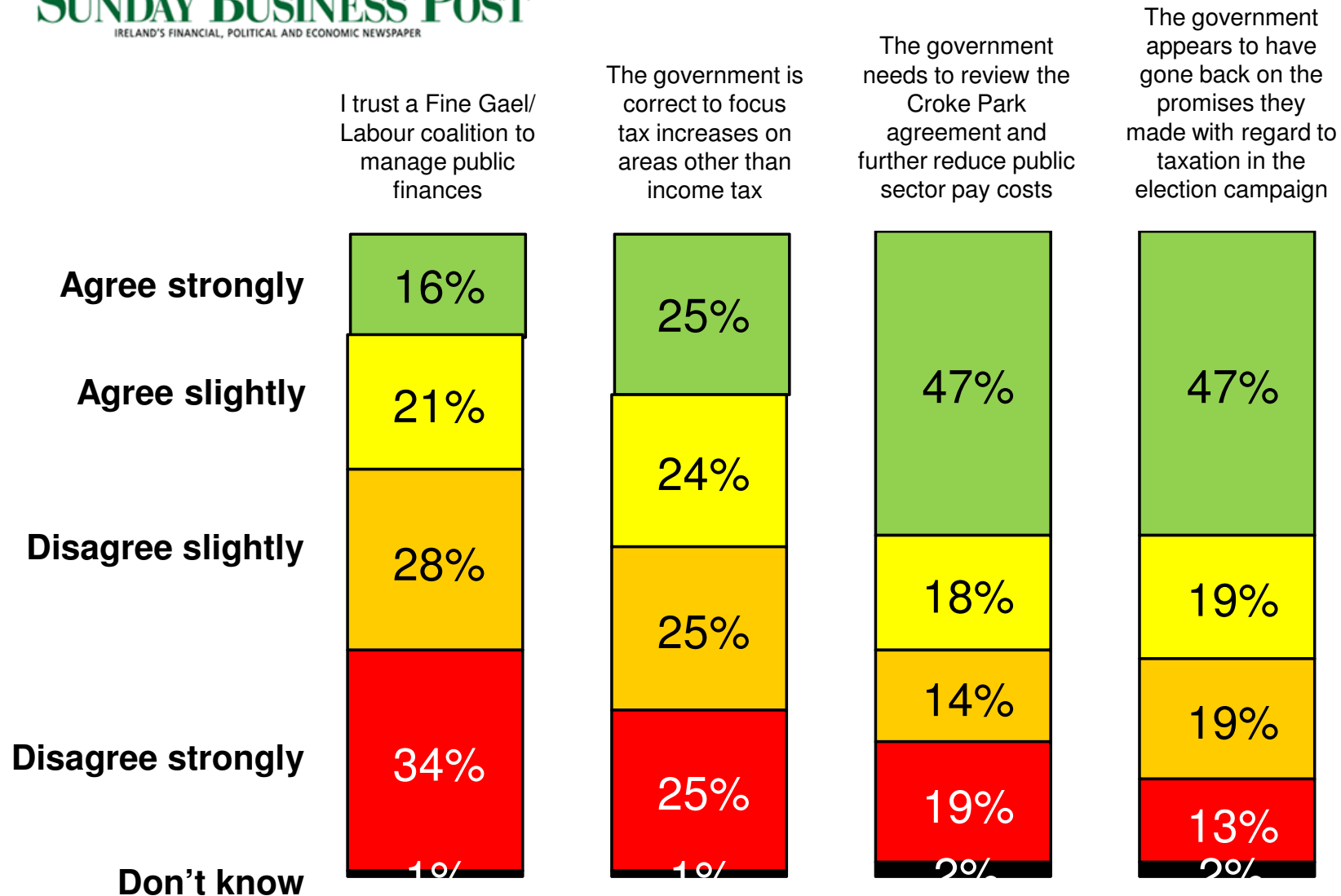
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# 2012 Budget

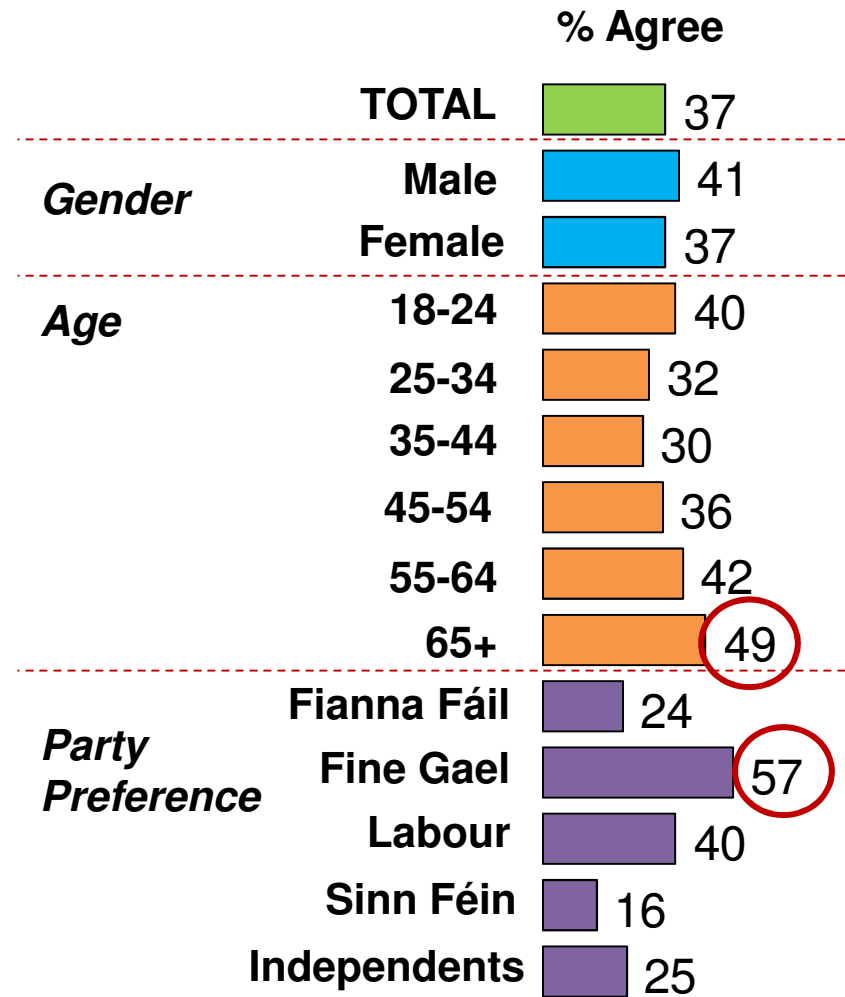
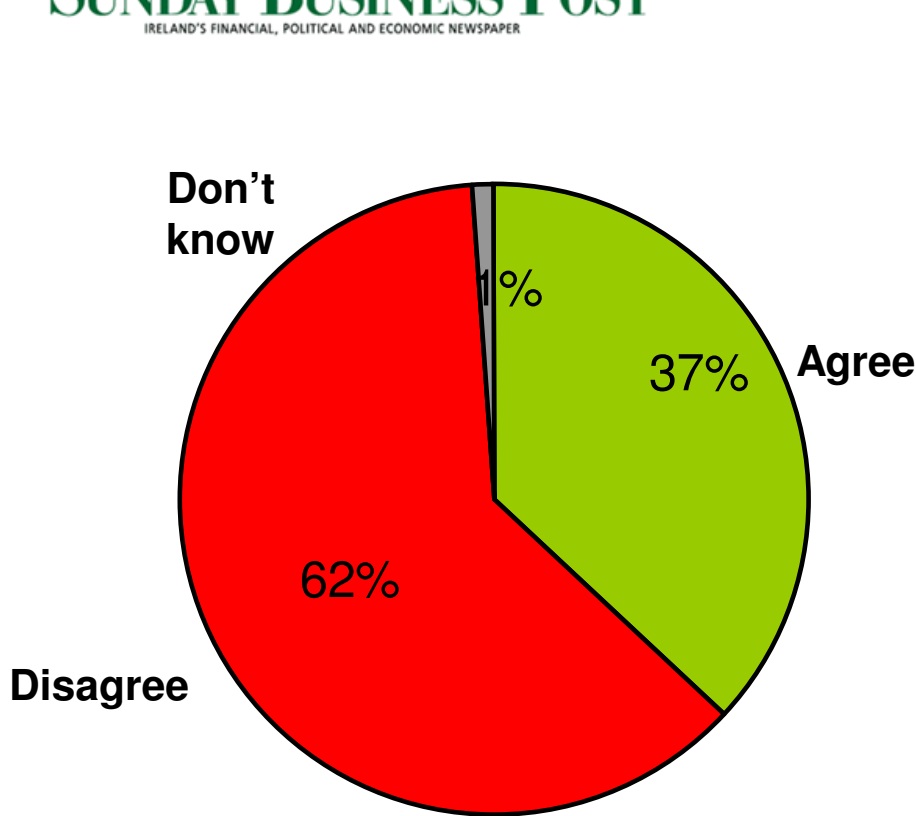
# Attitudes towards 2012 Budget

(Base: All adults 18+)



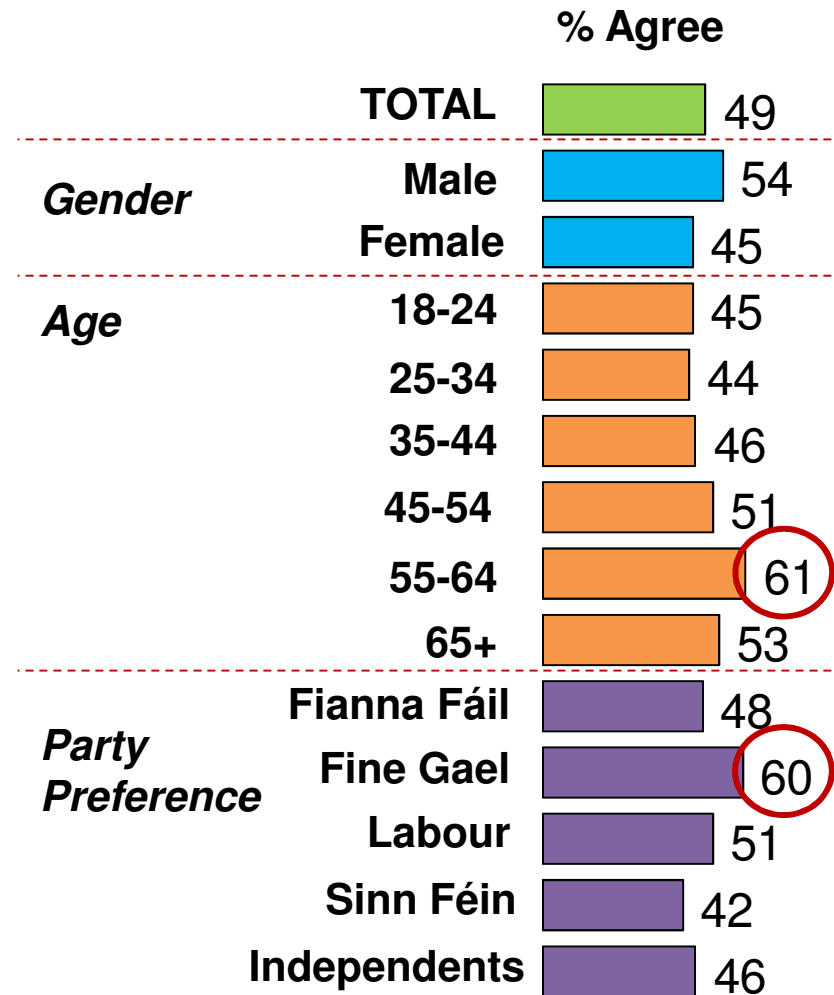
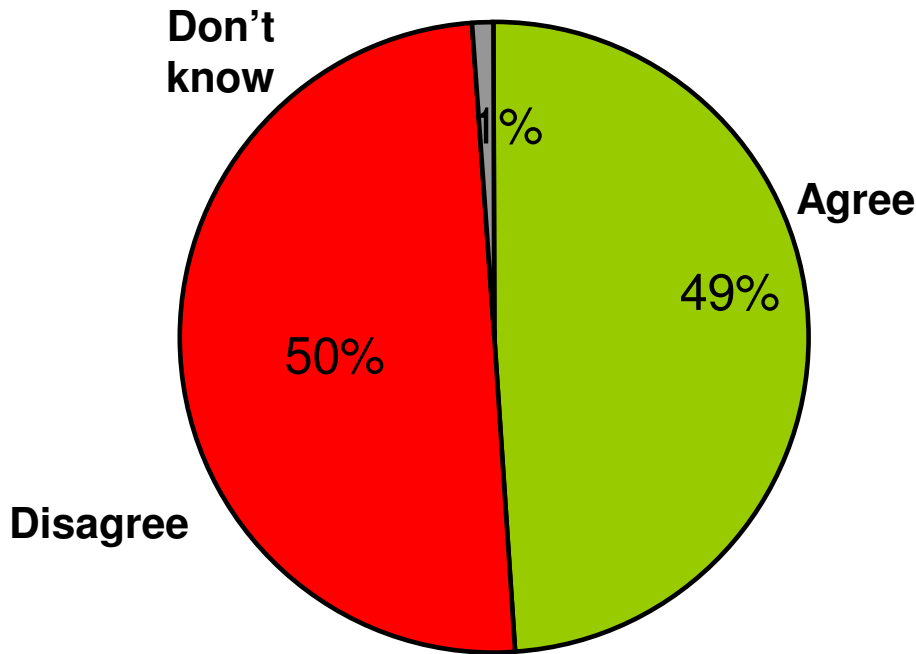
# I trust a Fine Gael/ Labour coalition to manage public finances

(Base: All adults 18+)



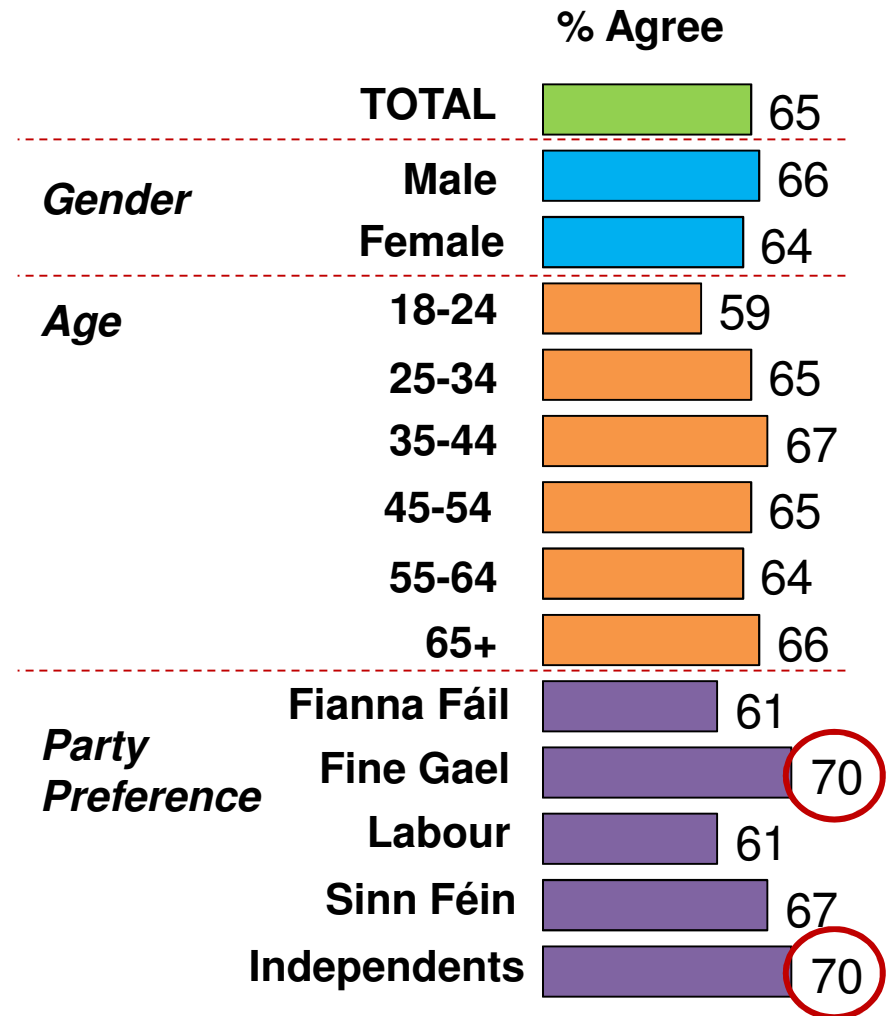
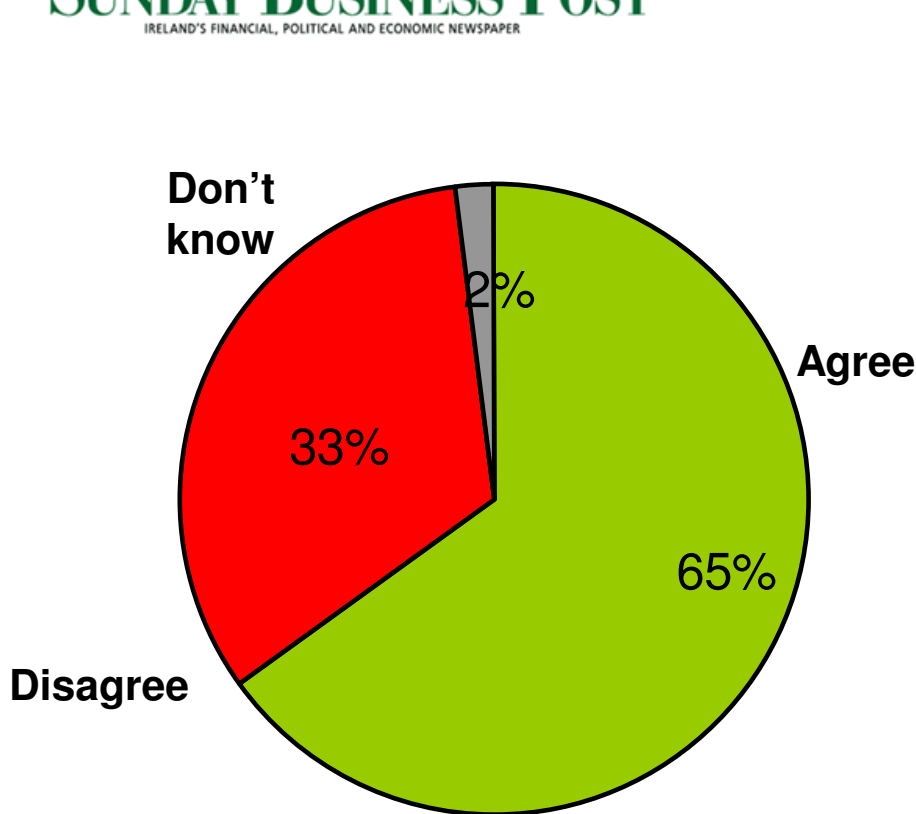
# The government is correct to focus tax increases on areas other than income tax

(Base: All adults 18+)



# The government needs to review the Croke Park agreement and further reduce public sector pay costs

(Base: All adults 18+)



# The government appears to have gone back on the promises they made with regard to taxation in the election campaign.



(Base: All adults 18+)

