



## General Election Opinion Poll

4<sup>th</sup> March 2012

Prepared for:

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

Job No: 48911

## Methodology and Weighting



- RED C interviewed a random sample of 1007 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 27<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> February 2012.
- 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.

## Yes vote appears more likely now EU Treaty referendum is called.



Confirmation that the imminent EU treaty referendum will take place in Ireland appears in itself to have helped convince more voters that the Treaty should be passed. In today's Sunday Business Post/ RED C poll 60% of the electorate, who express an opinion, suggest they will vote in favour of the Treaty.

This is a considerable increase on the last poll taken at the end of January, when just 52% of those who expressed an opinion said they would vote Yes. This does not appear to be as a result of undecided voters making their minds up, as we actually have more undecided voters in today's poll. Instead, it is the No vote which is under pressure, with some previous No voters moving to the Yes camp and still more now undecided.

The mid aged 35-54 year old age groups and those in more downmarket social class groups, whom we have seen in RED C's economic tracking feel most impacted by the recession, appear to be least in favour of the Treaty. But even among these groups, today's poll suggests the treaty would be carried, with 57% of 35-54 year olds voting in favour and 53% of those in less well off social groups.

When we look at Treaty support by party allegiance, all of the main party supporters, with the exception of Sinn Fein and Independent candidate voters, support the treaty to varying degrees. Fine Gael voters are most in favour of the treaty with 78% support. Fianna Fail supporters are not far behind with 70% suggesting they would vote yes – suggesting Eamon O'Cuiv may have been a bit hasty in resigning over the issue. Labour supporters are less sure, but 56% still support the treaty.

In contrast only 42% of Sinn Fein supporters suggest they vote in favour of the Treaty. Sinn Fein's decision to campaign against the treaty appears to be relatively well founded based on this support, and given they will be the only major party campaigning for a No vote. This could work in their favour to recruit more voters generally to the party.

## Yes vote appears more likely now EU Treaty referendum is called.



Today's poll sees Sinn Fein secure 18% of the first preference vote, up 1% since last month and 3% since November last year, suggesting that their support is on something of an upward trend, if perhaps not to the levels that have been suggested elsewhere.

Being the only significant party campaigning for the No side in the EU treaty referendum, will give the Sinn Fein plenty of exposure in the coming months, as both sides of the campaign have to be given equal media space and airtime. This in itself could potentially allow them to encourage some more support among No voters who currently support other parties or Independent candidates, as well as the likely bounce they will receive simply through increased media exposure.

Sinn Fein's gains this month appear to be mainly from Independent candidates, support for whom falls back to 19%, down 2% month on month; rather than from government parties who support appears relatively secure. The fact that Independent candidate supporters are also more likely to vote No, suggests that this trend could continue, unless some of these Independent candidates also come forward strongly to fight against the Treaty.

Across the government parties, Fine Gael retain 30% of the first preference vote for the second month in a row, thus slowing the downward trend they had seen in recent months. Likewise Labour actually see an improved first preference share of 16%, up 2% since last month, and again reversing some of the losses seen during the winter.

Fianna Fail TD's will also be pleased to see at their Ard Fheis this weekend, that support is relatively steady in this poll. The party secures 17% of the first preference vote, pretty much in line with the past two polls.

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It will be interesting to see the impact that campaigning for the Treaty will have on party support over the next few months. It appears that Sinn Fein have the best opportunity to make gains, but they also need to be careful not to overplay this, with over 40% of their supporters suggesting they will vote in favour of the Treaty.

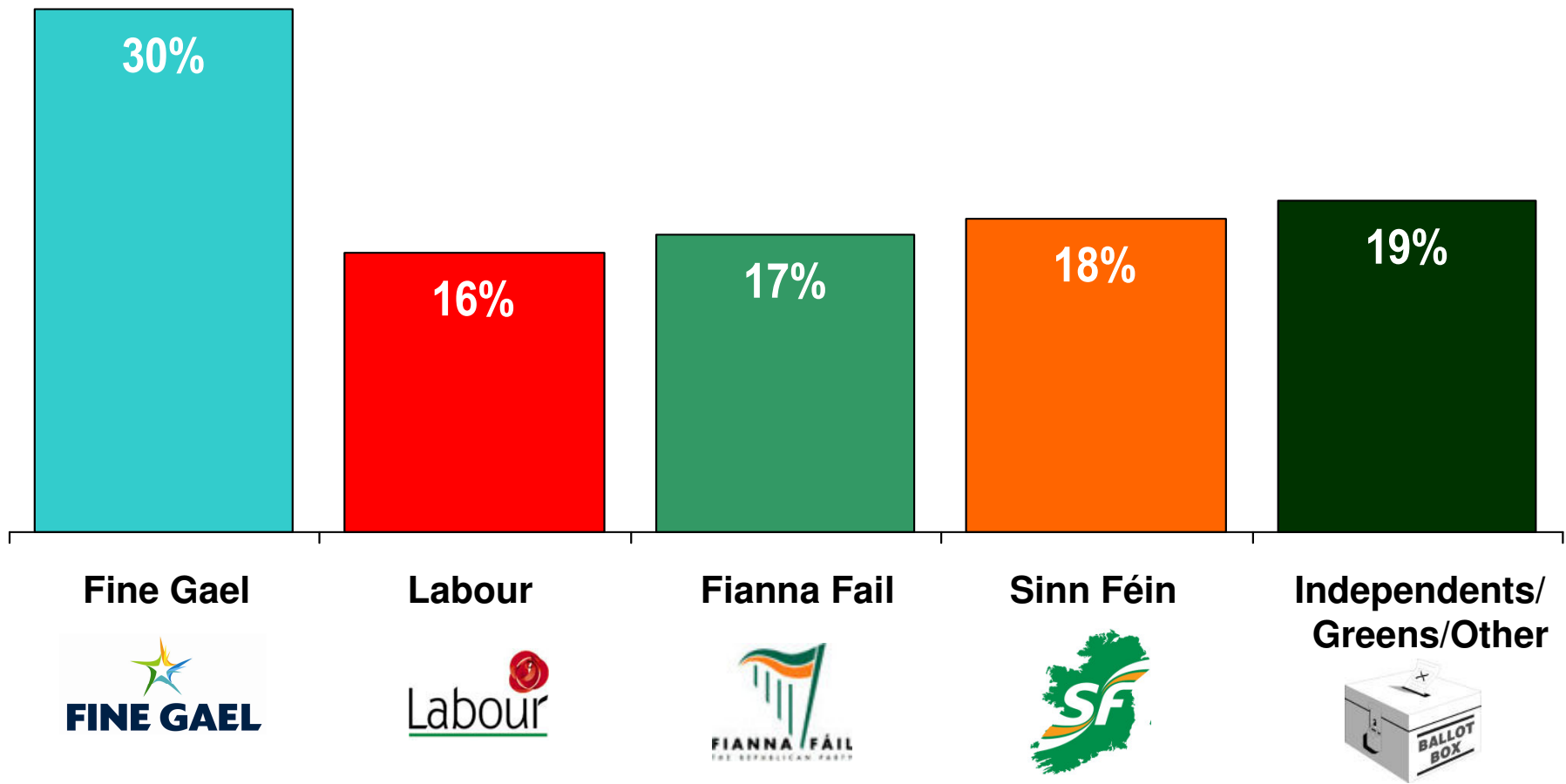
# General Election

# 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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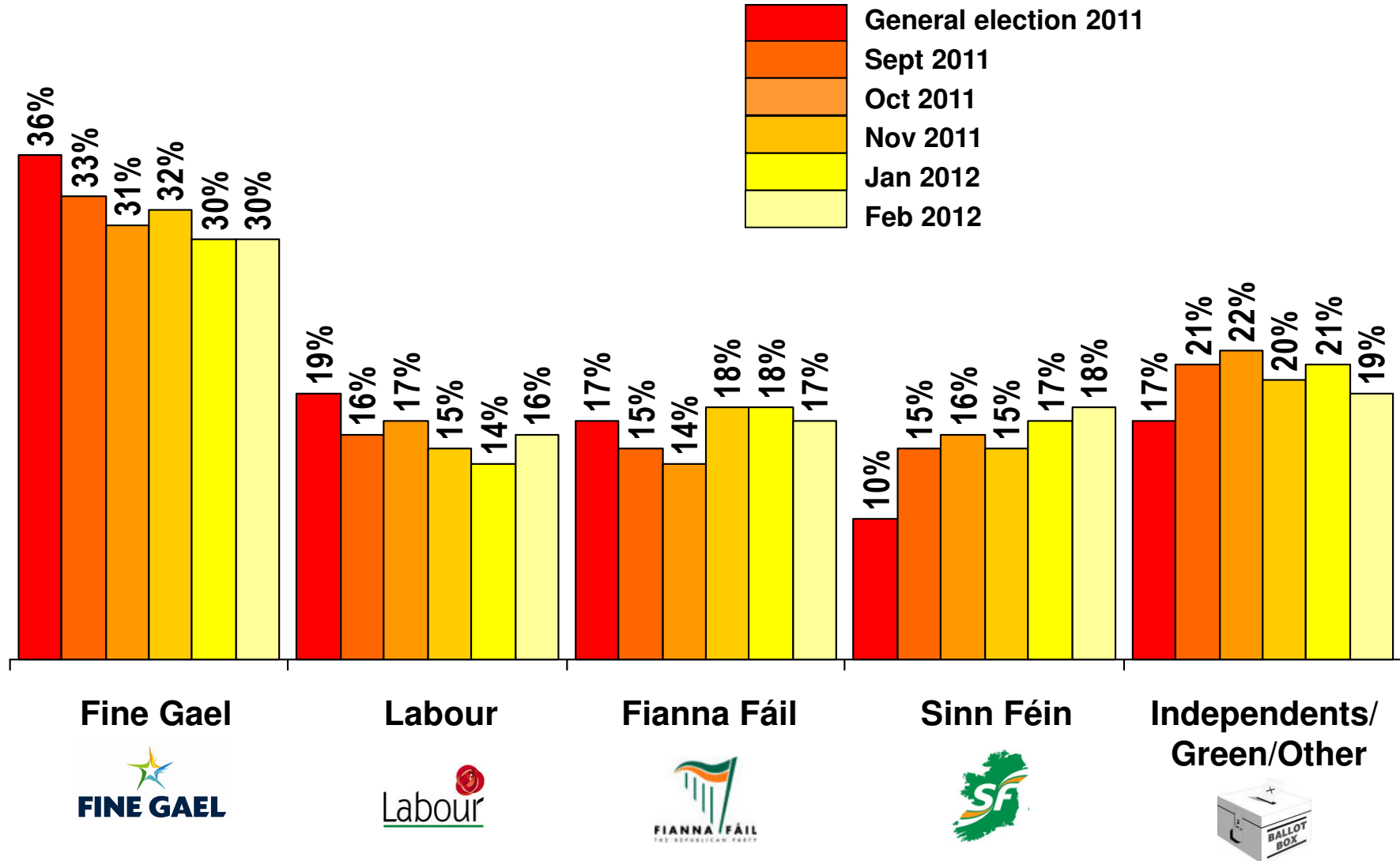


RESEARCH EVALUATION DIRECTION CLARITY

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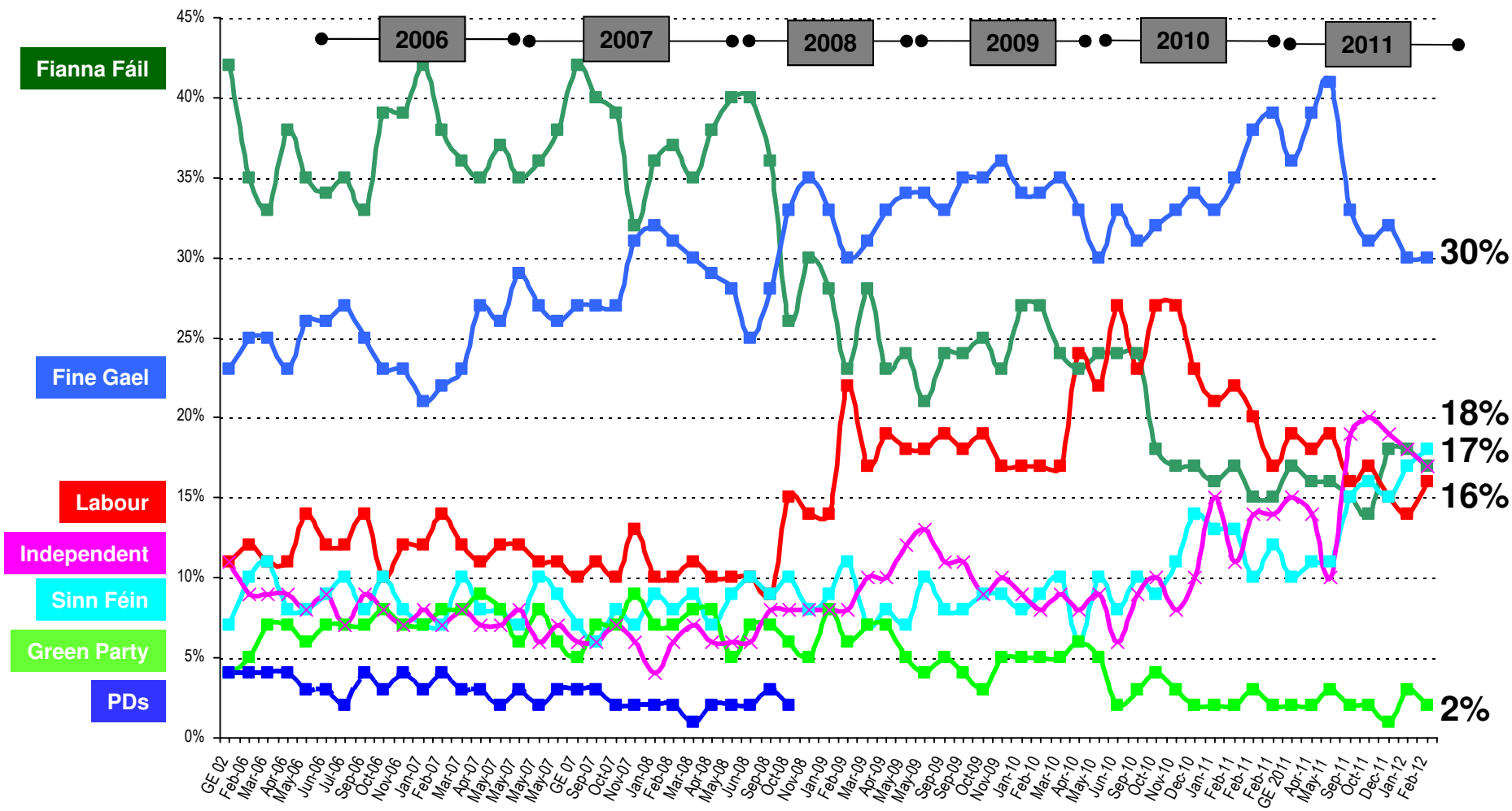


<b>CURRENT FIRST PREFERENCE SUPPORT</b>			
	<b>Core figures 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 2012</b>	<b>Excluding undecided</b>	<b>2011 Election Results</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Fine Gael</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Labour</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Fianna Fáil</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Sinn Féin</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Independents/ Green / Others</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Undecided</b>	<b>16</b>		

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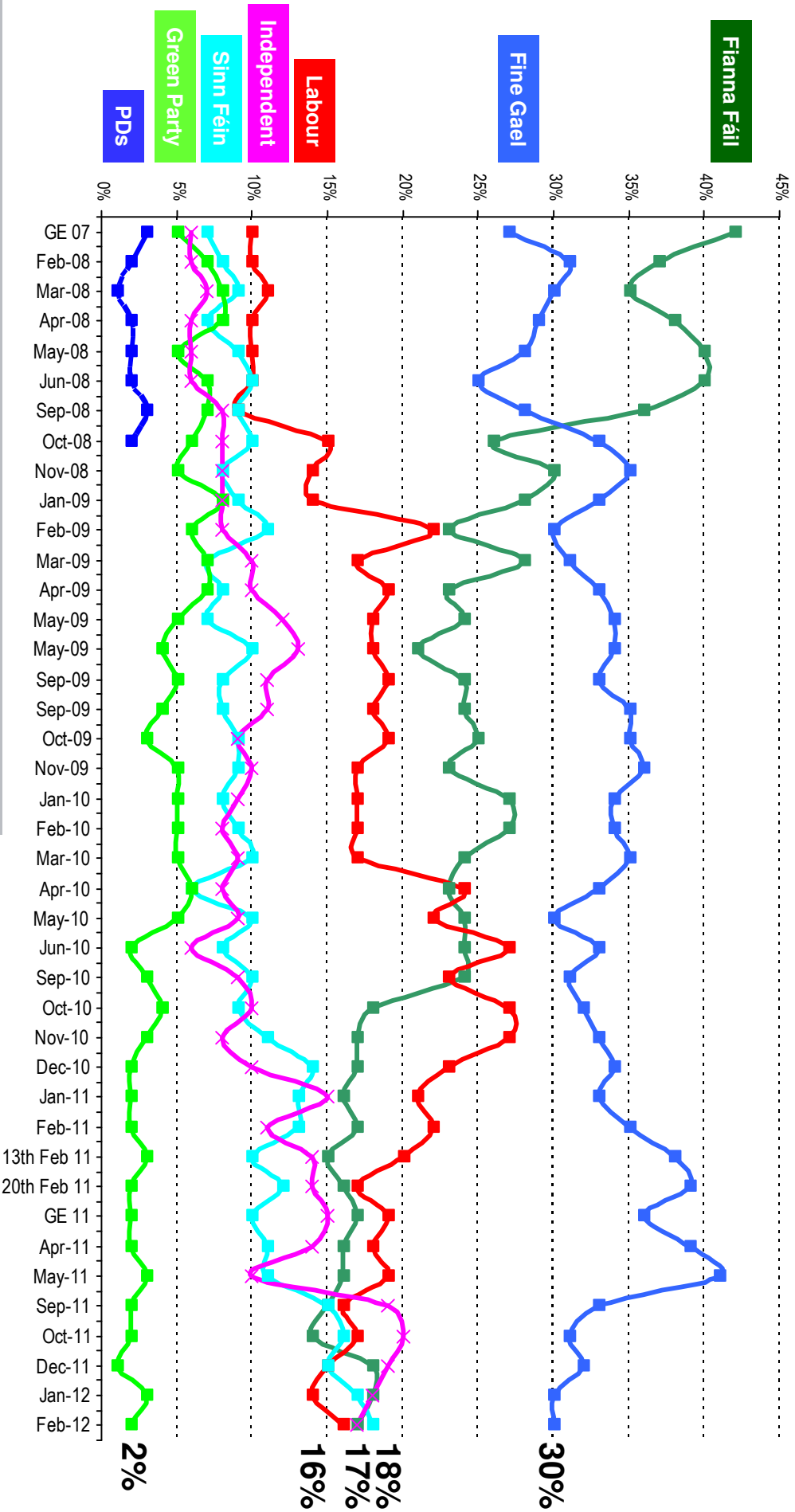
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# European Treaty

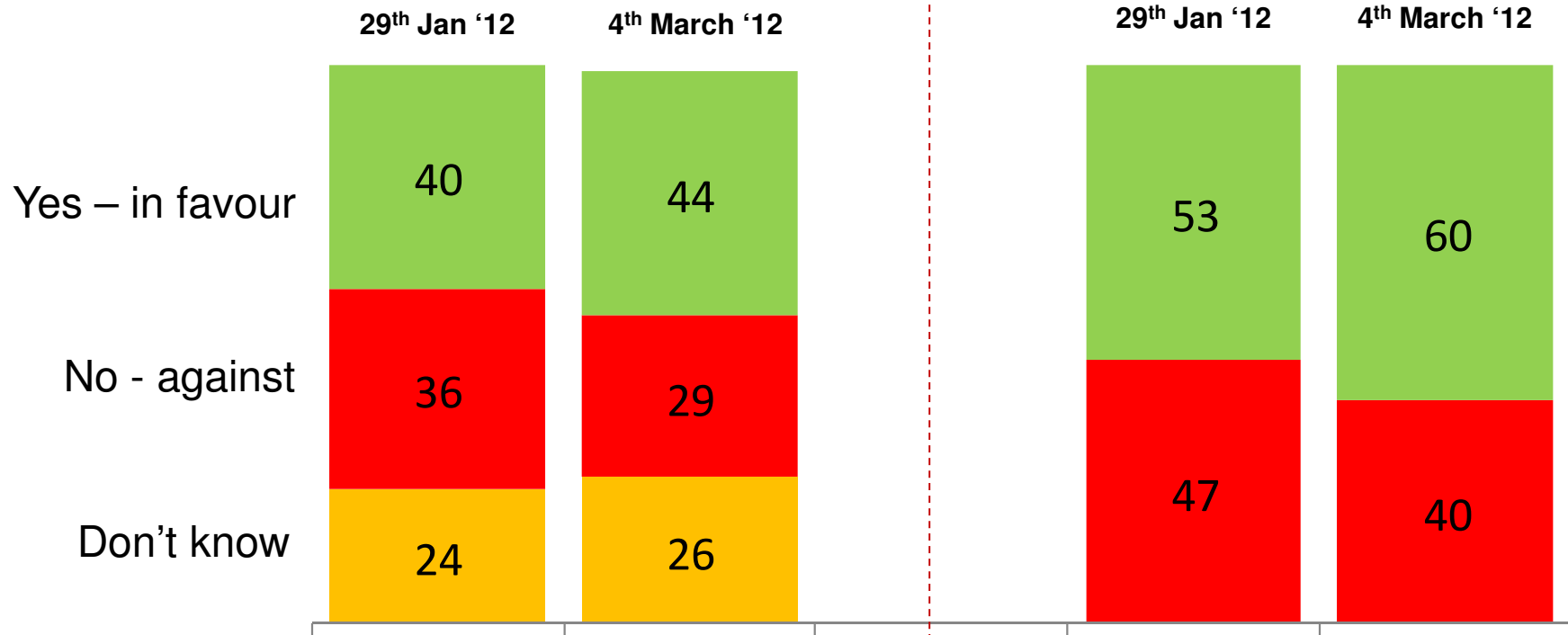
# Likely vote behaviour towards the European Treaty

(Base: All adults 18+)



How do you think you would currently vote in such a referendum?  
%

Treaty Vote Intention  
(excl Don't Knows)  
%



# How do you think you would currently vote in the EU Treaty referendum?

(Base: All adults 18+)

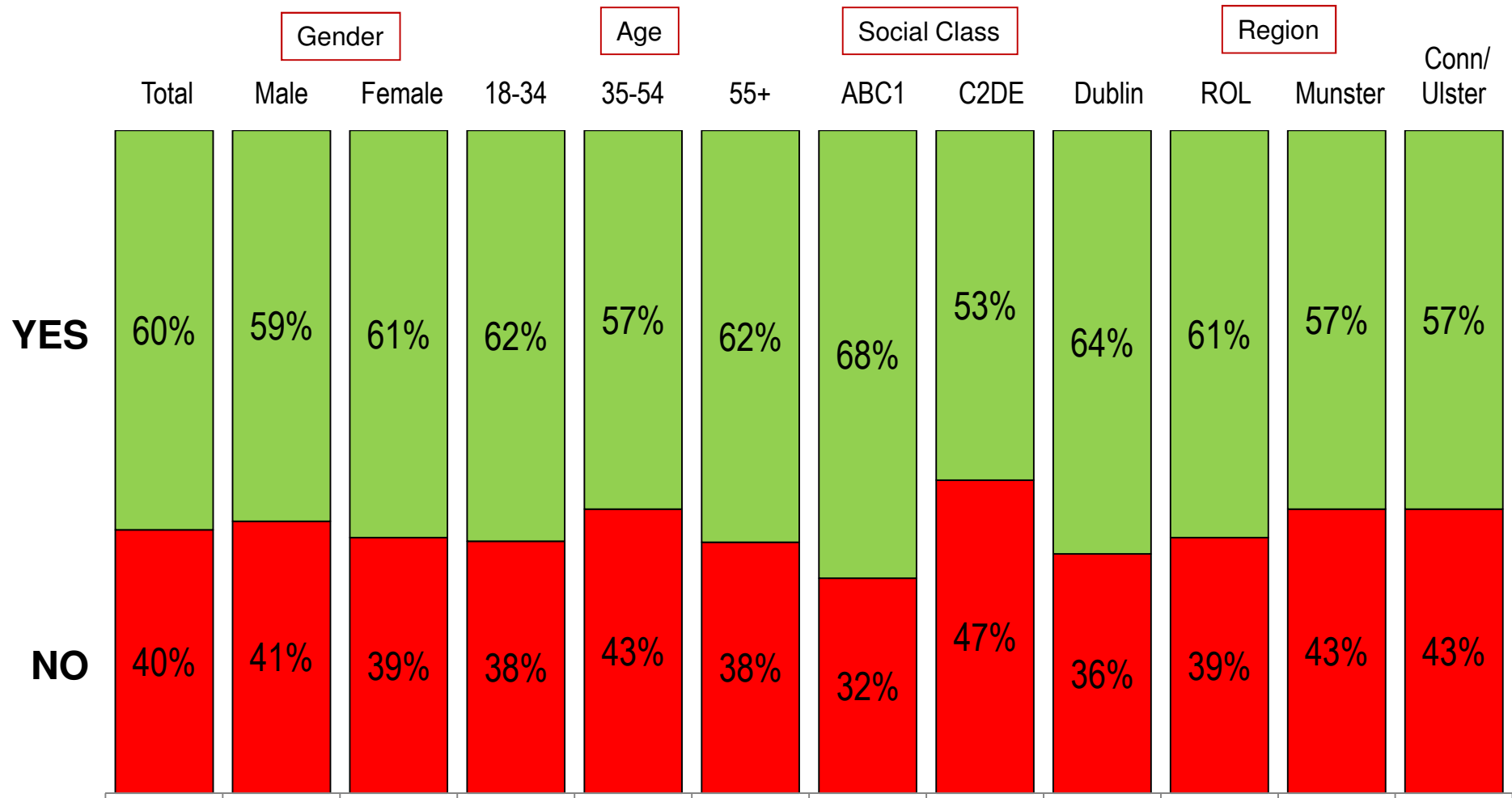


How do you think you would currently vote in such a referendum?	Total %	Gender		Age			Class		Region			
		Male %	Female %	18-34 %	35-54 %	55+ %	ABC1 %	C2DE %	Dublin %	ROL %	Munster %	Conn/ Ulster %
Yes	44	46	43	44	44	46	50	38	46	43	44	44
No	29	32	27	27	33	28	24	34	26	27	33	33
Don't Know	26	22	30	29	24	26	26	29	28	31	22	23

How do you think you would currently vote in such a referendum?	Total %	PARTY SUPPORT					
		Fianna Fail	Fine Gael	Labour	Sinn Fein	Ind.	Undecided
BASE SIZE:		(132)	(222)	(115)	(155)	(125)	(144)
Yes	44	54	62	44	33	37	37
No	29	23	17	35	46	42	19
Don't Know	26	23	20	21	21	21	44

# How do you think you would currently vote in the EU Treaty referendum – excluding Don't Knows?

(Base: All adults 18+)



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Current Party Support

