



General Election Opinion Poll

22nd February 2015



Methodology and Weighting

- RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,004 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 16th – 18th February 2015.
- 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.
- In all respects the poll was completed to the opinion polling guidelines set out by both ESOMAR and AIMRO.



The New Irish Electoral Landscape - I

The overall first preference share figures in today's poll suggest a relatively stable electorate over the past few months. However, the electorate now is very different than seen even two years ago. Despite recent talk of their demise, those supporting Independent candidates (27%), are now the largest grouping of voters in the Irish population; while Sinn Féin garner the third largest grouping, with support from among 22% of the electorate. A position that is perhaps unthinkable just two years ago.

Overall, Independent candidates/others secure 27% of the vote, when including some of the smaller parties or collaborations. In more detail the poll suggests that 25% would vote directly for Independent candidates, 1% for other parties and 1% for Lucinda Creighton's new party (as yet without a name). Support for Independents has been relatively steady at this level since October last year, but before that it had been on a relatively consistent upward trend.

The longer term rise of support for Independents is driven by people from very different backgrounds, which is perhaps unsurprising given that the candidates themselves represent a very wide ranging set of beliefs and doctrines. If we look at those voters who now claim support for Independent candidates, they have switched from all parties, but almost half supported the current government at the last election. Over a quarter (26%) voted for Fine Gael at the last election, while 18% voted for Labour.

This would appear to suggest that these voters could be persuaded to switch back. However, it may not be as simple as that. A large chunk of these voters (29%) also voted for Fianna Fáil in 2007, so they don't necessarily have any loyalty to the current government. They are in some ways lost sheep without a home, and this possibly makes a vote for Independent candidates more likely. It is also clear that an "anti-party" rhetoric is gaining traction. To counter this, the idea of voting for highly vocal and high profile independent candidates may be somewhat different, when they go to the polling booth and they potentially don't even know who their Independent candidate is.

So what about Sinn Féin? They also now appear to be one of the largest parties in the state according to support in the polls. But we seen this before haven't we? Quite regularly in recent elections Sinn Féin support has done well in between elections, but fallen away as the election approached, and not been matched by real votes cast in polling booths on election day.

The New Irish Electoral Landscape - II

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First Preference Vote Intention – February 2015

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)

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



Fine Gael

24% =

Labour

7% -2

Fianna Fail

18% -1

Sinn Fein

21% +1

Independent/
Other

30% +2

Undecided Voters

13% +1

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First Preference Vote Intention – February 2015

If the general election was tomorrow which party or independent candidate do you think you would give your first preference vote to? (showing impact of past vote weighting, and likely voter filters)

(Base: All adults 18+)

CURRENT FIRST PREFERENCE SUPPORT					
	Core figures	Impact of Past vote weighting	Likely Voters	Excluding Undecided	2011 Election Results
	%	%	%	%	%
Fine Gael	21	21	22	24	36
Labour	5	6	6	7	19
Fianna Fáil	15	14	15	18	17
Sinn Féin	19	18	18	21	10
Independent candidates	21	21	22	25	13
Green Party	2	2	2	3	2
Lucinda Creightons New Party	1	1	1	1	n/a
Socialist Party	*	*	*	*	1
Other Party	2	2	1	1	1
Undecided	14	15	13		

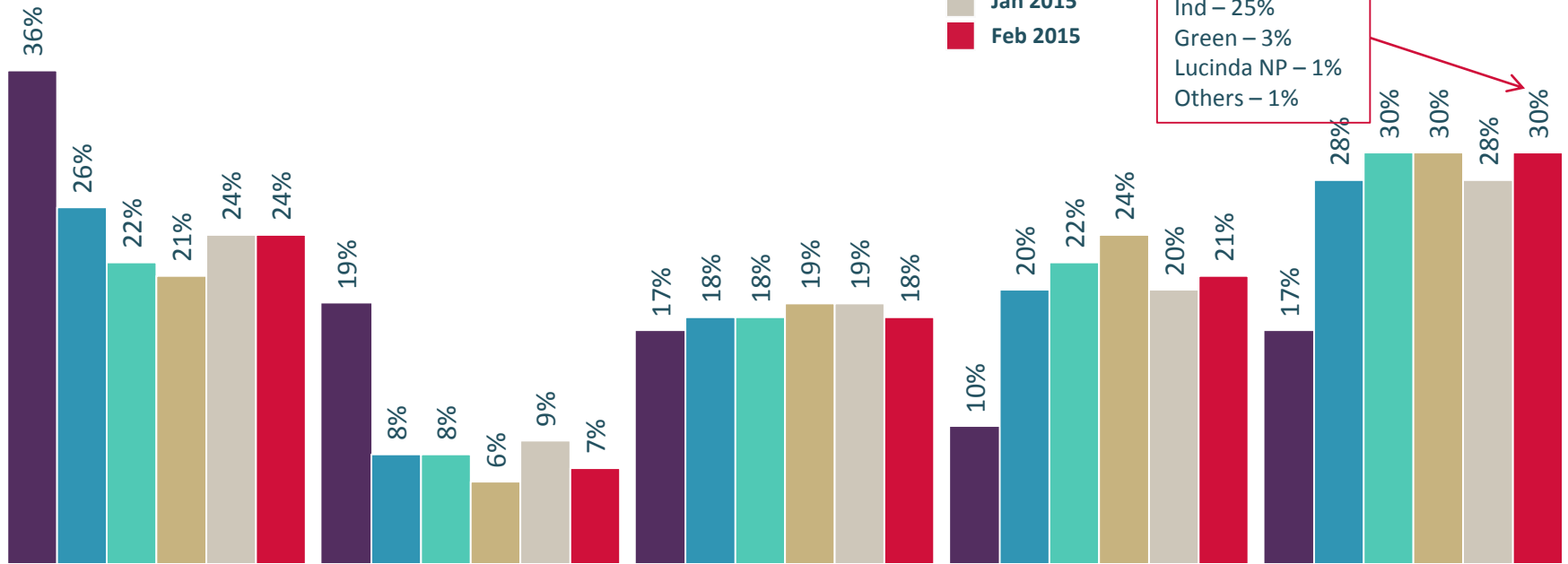
First Preference Vote Intention – Oct 2014 – Feb 2015

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)

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



Split;
 Ind – 25%
 Green – 3%
 Lucinda NP – 1%
 Others – 1%



Fine Gael
24%

Labour
7%

Fianna Fail
18%

Sinn Fein
21%

Independent/
 Other
30%

Undecided Voters
13% +1



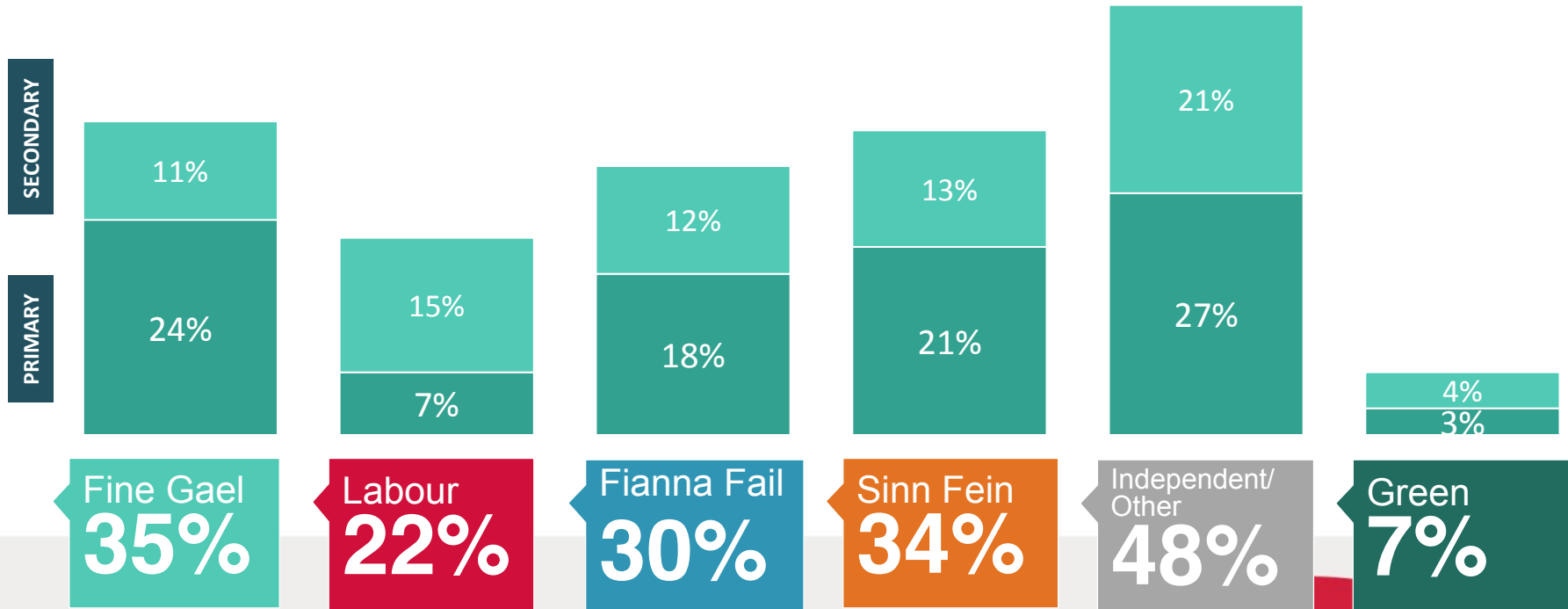
Primary and Secondary Levels of Party Support

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

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



■ 1st Preference
 ■ 2nd Pref & NOT 1st Pref

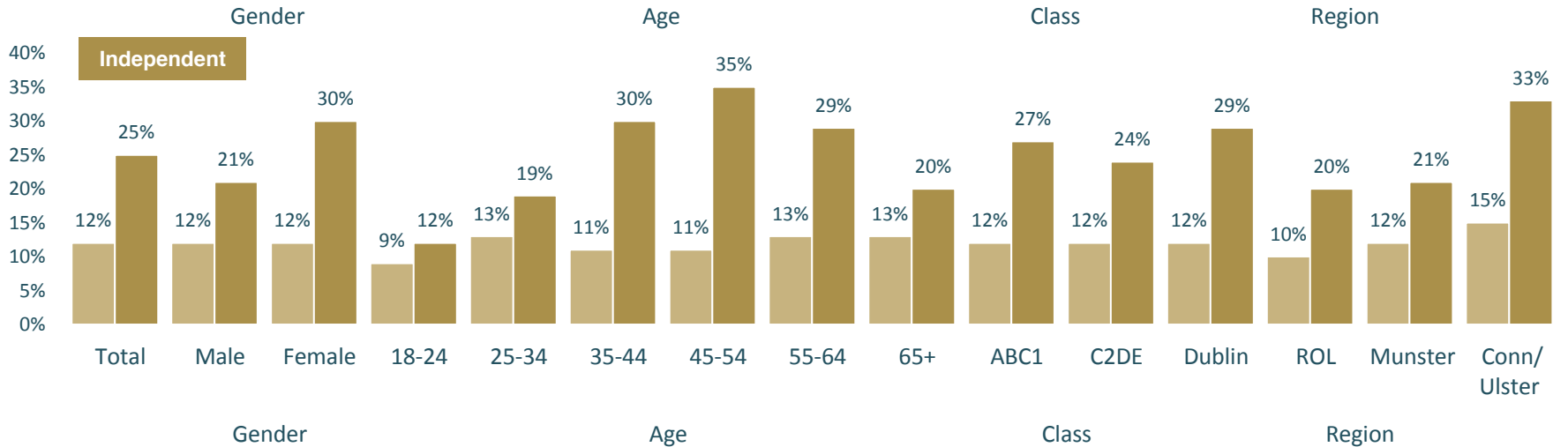
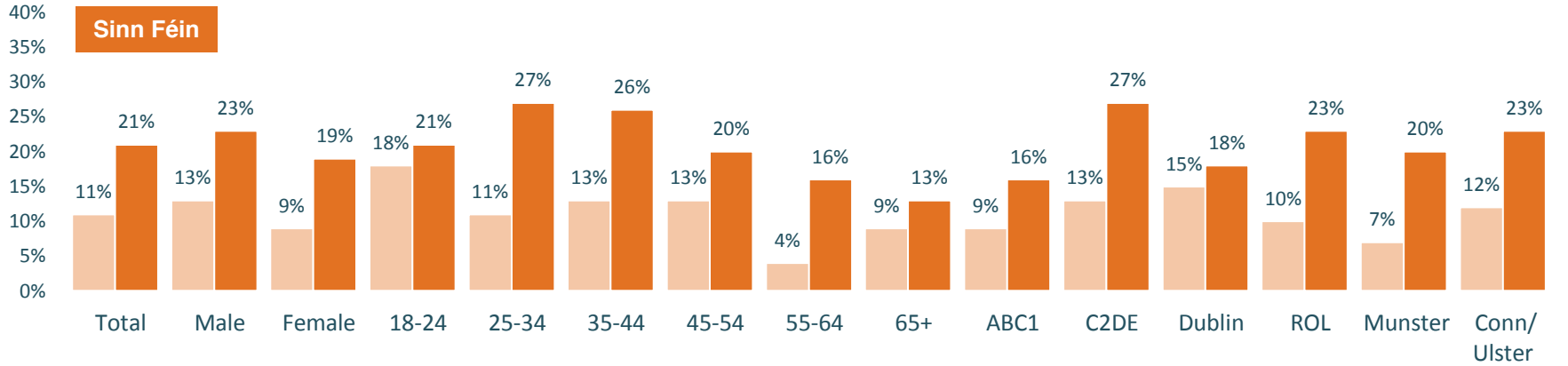


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Change in Support for Sinn Féin and Independents

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)

Apr 11  Feb 15

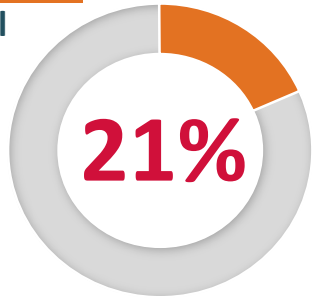


Who Supports Sinn Féin and Independents?

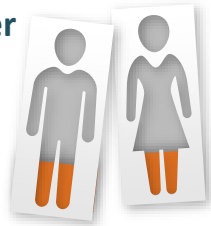
If the general election was tomorrow which party or independent candidate do you think you would give your first preference vote to?
(Past vote weighted)

Sinn Féin

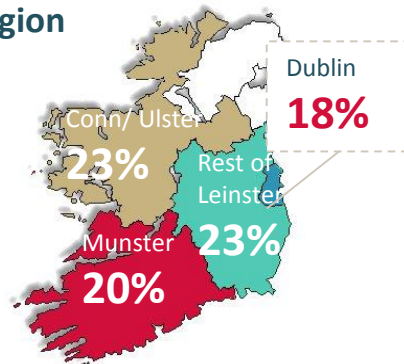
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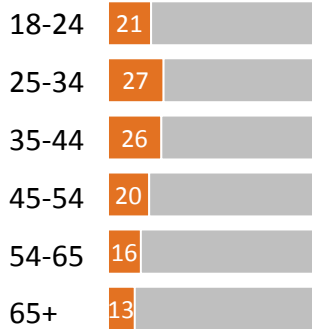
Gender



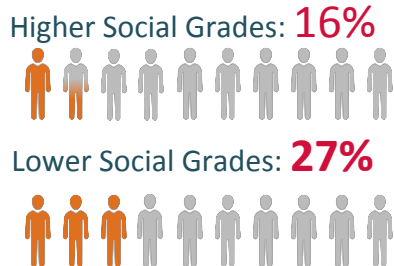
Region



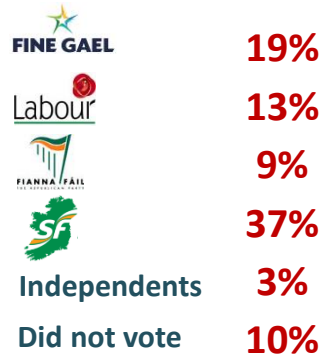
Age



Social Class

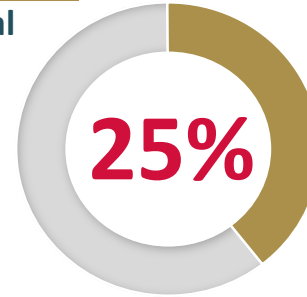


Party Vote at Last Election

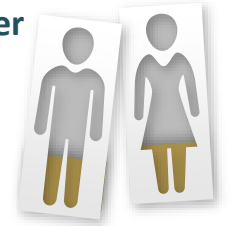


Independent

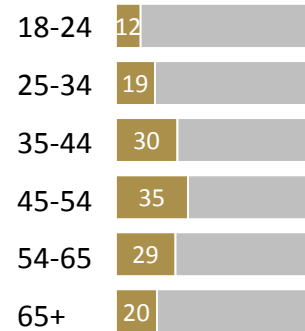
Total



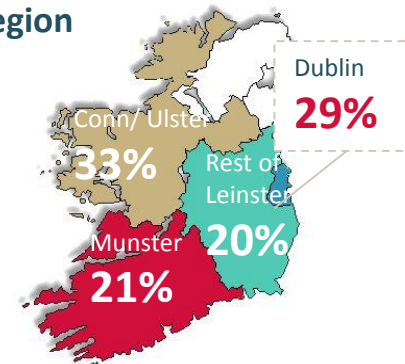
Gender



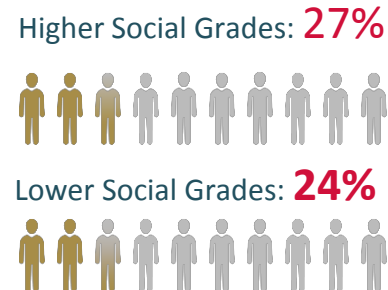
Age



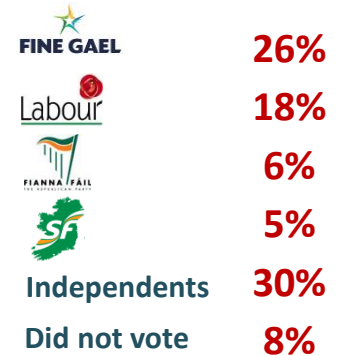
Region



Social Class



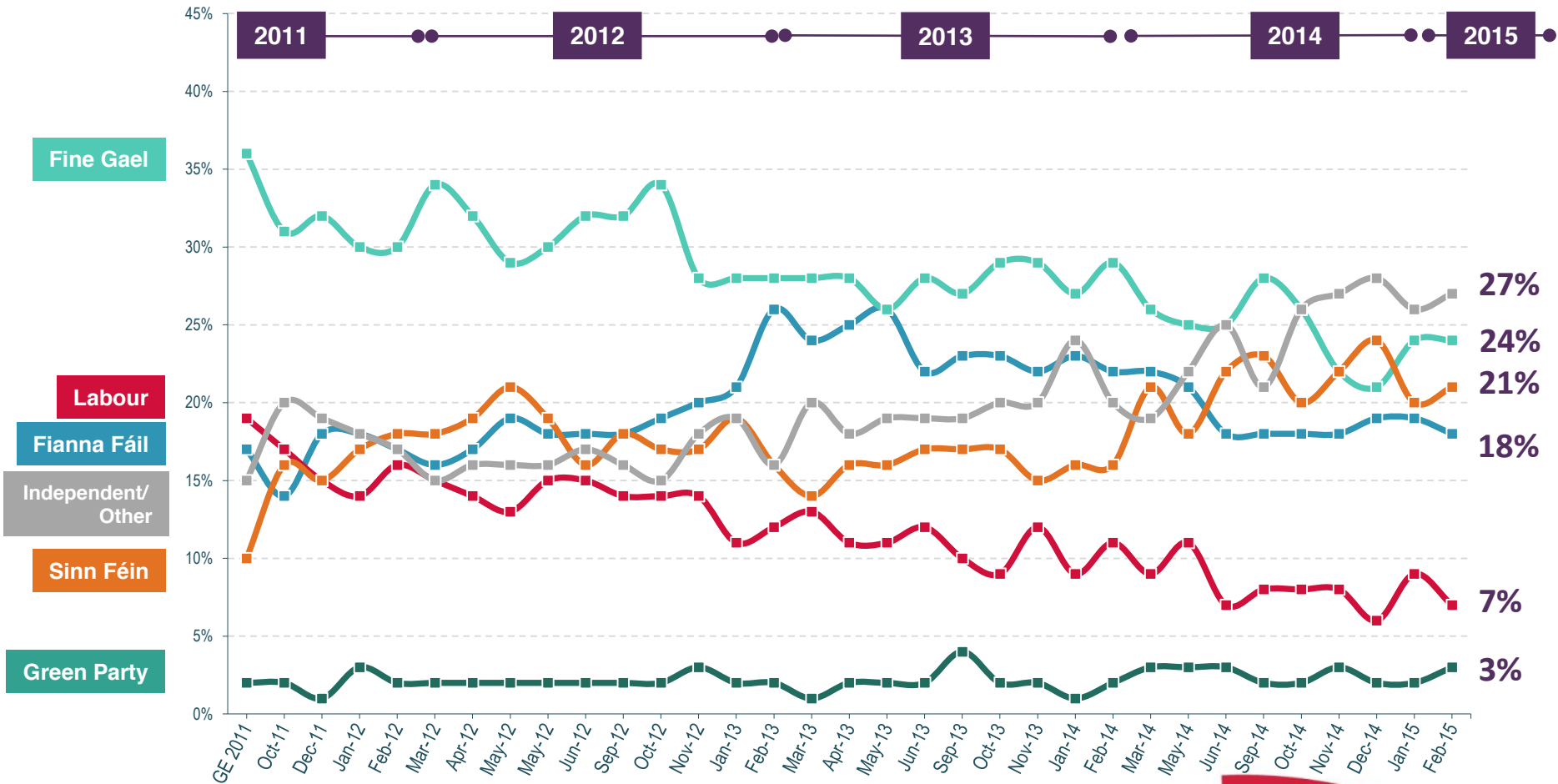
Party Vote at Last Election



First Preference Vote Intention – 2011-2015

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)

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



First Preference Vote Intention – 2007 to 2015

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)

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)

