



General Election Opinion Poll

28th June 2015



Methodology and Weighting

- RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,007 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 22nd – 24th June 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.



Labour suffer post referendum hangover

It's just over a month since the marriage referendum, and already the landscape of political support is changing. Government parties had noticed significant gains in support in the run up to the Referendum with Fine Gael growing share to 28%, and Labour returning to double digits with support at 10%. However, some of this resurgence in support may be more to do with the extent of the media coverage they reviewed during the referendum as opposed to real change in voter behaviour.

A month further down the line and certainly support has not been maintained for Labour, who now see their share of the vote fall to 7% (-3%), a real disappointment for the party after some small gains. At the same time Fine Gael have held steady at 28%, bringing them ever closer to that 30% which would bring them in sight of their original 2011 general election support. So why has Labour, in a relatively quiet month politically speaking, not managed to maintain their levels of support, while Fine Gael hold steady?

There appears to be a correlation between Labour support and any media coverage they receive, with its impact being more keenly felt by them rather than other larger parties. When surrounded by positive news stories, such as the recent marriage referendum, Labour, to a degree, see the benefits, noting a positive uplift. However when a negative story breaks, either directly related to either Labour or Fine Gael, it is most likely Labour that incurs the impact. In a quiet period when media attention is less focused on the two main parties, Fine Gael have the strength of loyal support to maintain first preference, Labour have not the same sticking power or loyalty built up among voters, which sees them lose out particularly to Independents.

What is clear is that Labour is guilty by association for many and the reverse is not always evident. The poor performance of Labour in the local and European elections in June last year saw the party at 7%, the same low support level as this poll, leading to the resignation of Gilmore and Burton subsequently taking his place. In the polls however, while very poor for Labour and a notable decline, Fine Gael remained unscathed. During the 'Garda Gate' controversy in spring of last year involving the Garda Commissioner and Alan Shatter it was evident that Fine Gael had been impacted, but Labour by association had also been damaged. When the first Irish Water Bills arrived at people's doors in April this year there was again a decline for both parties.

Labour suffer post referendum hangover

Coinciding with Labour's decline, is the gain for Independents moving from 22% first preference support to 27%. In fact, when you look at those having voted for Labour in the last general election, only a third remain loyal, with another third claiming they will vote for an independent candidate, and the final third scattered across remaining parties. While not the highest level of support recorded for Independents, it certainly brings them back in the race after a period of decline when they have been out of the media spotlight.

As Labour's attention declines; the voter's lacking loyalty to the party see a natural progression to Independents, suggesting again the need for Labour to maintain a positive focus. Secondly, more recently there have been rumours of an impending new party, consisting of independent TDs Róisín Shortall, Catherine Murphy, and Stephen Donnelly. Shortall of course being well regarded among the Labour voters may be taking some of her old party support towards Independents, but to a potentially greater degree the idea of a new party with her at the helm may be affecting Labour. It will be interesting to see the impact if a new party is to emerge, given that Renua has to date had little impact, with 1% support in this most recent poll. It begs the question if support for Independents really is simply that and faith in the so called 'alliance', rather than a demand for a new party as had been so widely suggested.

Labour are not the only party to record declines this period. It seems that, similar to Labour, the high received during the referendum for Sinn Féin has been somewhat short lived, as they return to 18% first preference (-3%). Sinn Féin had been noting positive support, closing the gap with Independents but has seen a significant gap emerge this poll, now slightly lower than Fianna Fail for first preference. Some of these declines may be somewhat impacted by the recent controversy surrounding Sinn Féin's expulsion and suspension of certain councillors in Cork East, with waters somewhat muddied as to the reasons behind their decisions it leaves some voters uncertain and they seem more comfortable supporting the Independent candidate.

With the 2016 general election beginning to loom, buoyed by some suggestions of it taking place early; it is likely that we will see many changes in support between now and then. Many agendas remain on the table for discussion and debate, including the rejection to pay water charges, although it is unclear as to how long this will retain traction, the promise from Burton to repeal the 8th Amendment if elected again and more recently the commitment to cut USC alongside proposed tax cuts in Budget 2016, suggesting the election has in form already begun.

First Preference Vote Intention – June 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

28% =

Labour

7% -3

Fianna Fail

20% +1

Sinn Fein

18% -3

Independent/
Other

27% +5

Undecided Voters

13% +1

REDC

First Preference Vote Intention – June 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)

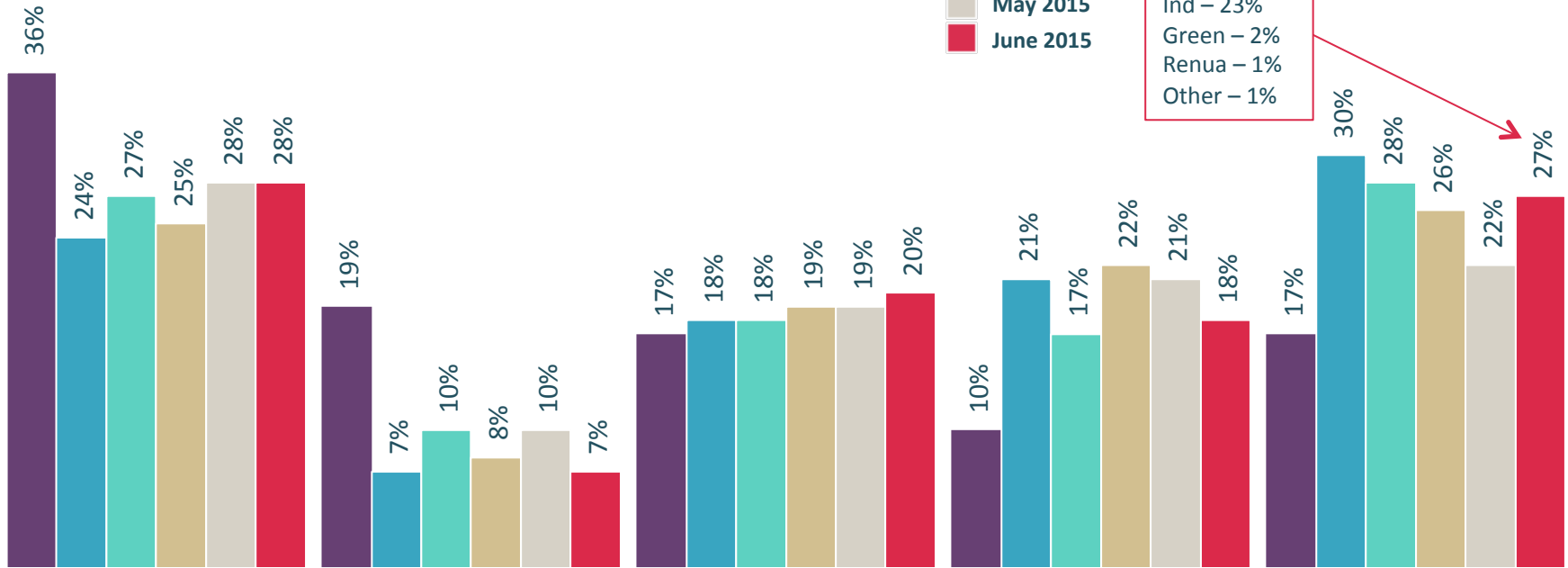
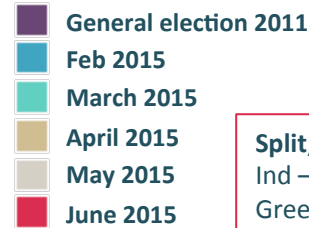
(Base: All adults 18+)

CURRENT FIRST PREFERENCE SUPPORT					
	Core figures	Impact of Past vote weighting	Likely Voters	Excluding Undecided	2011 Election Results
	%	%	%	%	%
Fine Gael	24	23	24	28	36
Labour	5	6	6	7	19
Fianna Fáil	17	17	17	20	17
Sinn Féin	17	16	16	18	10
Independent candidates	19	19	20	23	13
Green Party	2	2	2	2	2
Renua	1	1	1	1	n/a
Socialist Party	*	*	*	*	1
Other Party	*	1	1	1	1
Undecided	15	15	13		

First Preference Vote Intention – Feb – June 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
28%

Labour
7%

Fianna Fail
20%

Sinn Fein
18%

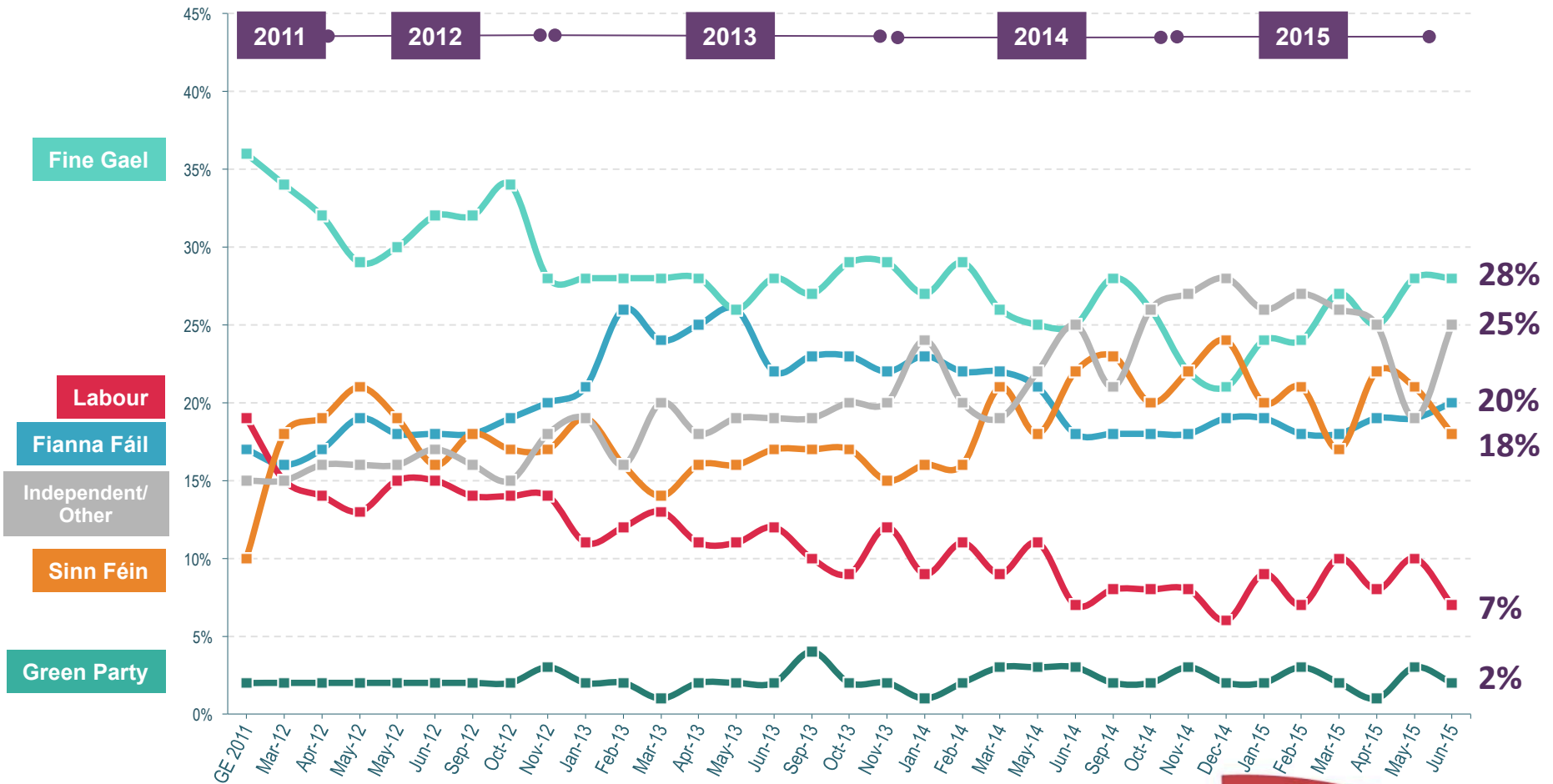
Independent/
Other
27%



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)

