



**The Sunday  
Business Post**

# General Election Opinion Poll

January 2017



# Methodology and Weighting

- ✓ RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,004 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 23<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> January 2016.
- ✓ 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 recall for how people voted at the last election and weights this to the exact result at the last election.
- ✓ 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 8 to 10 are included as being those who will definitely go and vote.
- ✓ In all respects the poll was completed to the opinion polling guidelines set out by both ESOMAR and AIMRO.



# Government Under Pressure as Fianna Fail Make Gains

The winter break hasn't been a particularly good one for Fine Gael and their government partners, and this first RED C Sunday Business Post poll of the New Year reflects the lack of voter loyalty among the Irish electorate.

Having seen support trend downward during 2016, Fianna Fail are the big winners, bouncing back in this poll to secure 27% of the first preference vote. A strong increase of 3% at the extremes of margin of error is positive growth for the party and more importantly brings a halt to declines seen throughout 2016. That it comes at a time when the Dail has not been sitting, suggests the party does well when the focus is the problems for the Government, such as the hospital trolley and housing issues. The main losses in support that lead to Fianna Fail gains come from a combination of small drops for the government partners, but also a slightly heavier fall in support for Sinn Fein.

Both Fine Gael and the Independent Alliance see small drops of 1% each in first preference support. Not a disaster for either party by any means, and support for both has remained relatively steady since the last election. However it does reflect a very gradual downward trend for Fine Gael – perhaps not enough to put any significant pressure on Enda Kenny's leadership directly, but enough to start making some TD's a little more nervous that things are moving in the wrong direction

The government parties have spent quite a lot of time since November dealing with the recurrent hospital trolley and capacity crisis, and as the Dail was not sitting have been unable to offset that with any good news. It is clear that voters are also somewhat concerned about Ireland's position and negotiations on Brexit. There certainly appears to be a view among voters that more needs to be done in these negotiations, and this is where pressure does come to bear on Enda Kenny. Many voters are concerned that Enda Kenny has chosen to lead negotiations, as well as acting as Taoiseach. Almost two thirds of voters (74%) say they would prefer someone given sole responsibility for negotiating an Ireland Brexit deal, rather than the Taoiseach take on this role on top of his other duties. This sentiment is not just held by opposition supporters, but is also evident among over two thirds (69%) of Fine Gael voters. It suggests voters are concerned by what they currently see of the government negotiations, on an issue they know will impact both the country and themselves personally.

The Independent Alliance drop of 1% in support is also relevant, as this is the lowest level of support the party has recorded in a RED C poll since the last election. It will most certainly set Independent Alliance ministers nerves on edge. At the same time it is worth noting that this is within any sample error, and at the same time support for Other Independents has risen by 2% to the highest level seen since the last election. There clearly may still be confusion among voters between the two.

Sine Fein support declines by 2% to leave them securing 14% of the first preference vote. It should be noted however that the 16% secured in the last poll was a high for party during 2016. In reality support has fluctuated for the party between 13% and 16% since the last election, so today's poll results for the party are actually relatively steady. The reason for the drop since November can perhaps be placed on issues in Northern Ireland, with the party collapsing the Stormont parliament at a time when voters are very concerned about the relationship between Northern Ireland and the Republic in any Brexit deal. There was also relatively heavy coverage of Gerry Adams claimed knowledge with regard to the murder of Brian Stack.

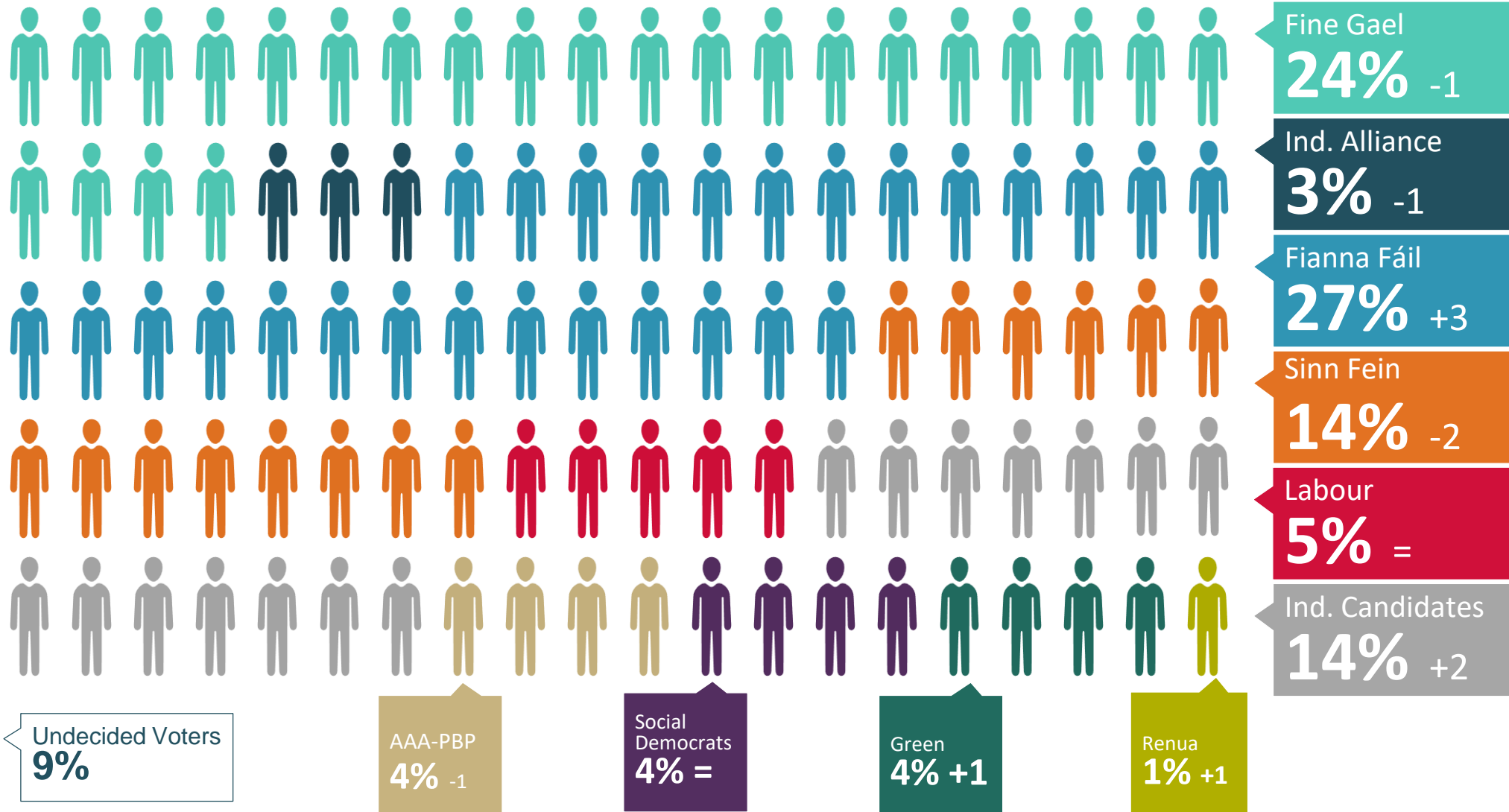
The other smaller parties all retain similar levels of support seen at the end of 2016, with the Social Democrats, AAA-PBP and the Green Party all securing 4% share of the vote, while Renua remains on 1%.

Overall then a good start to 2017 for Fianna Fail, with a corresponding poor one for the Government Parties. At this stage probably not enough to threaten the current coalition or confidence and supply arrangements, but a marker for the future should these trends continue.

# First Preference Vote Intention – 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017

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)

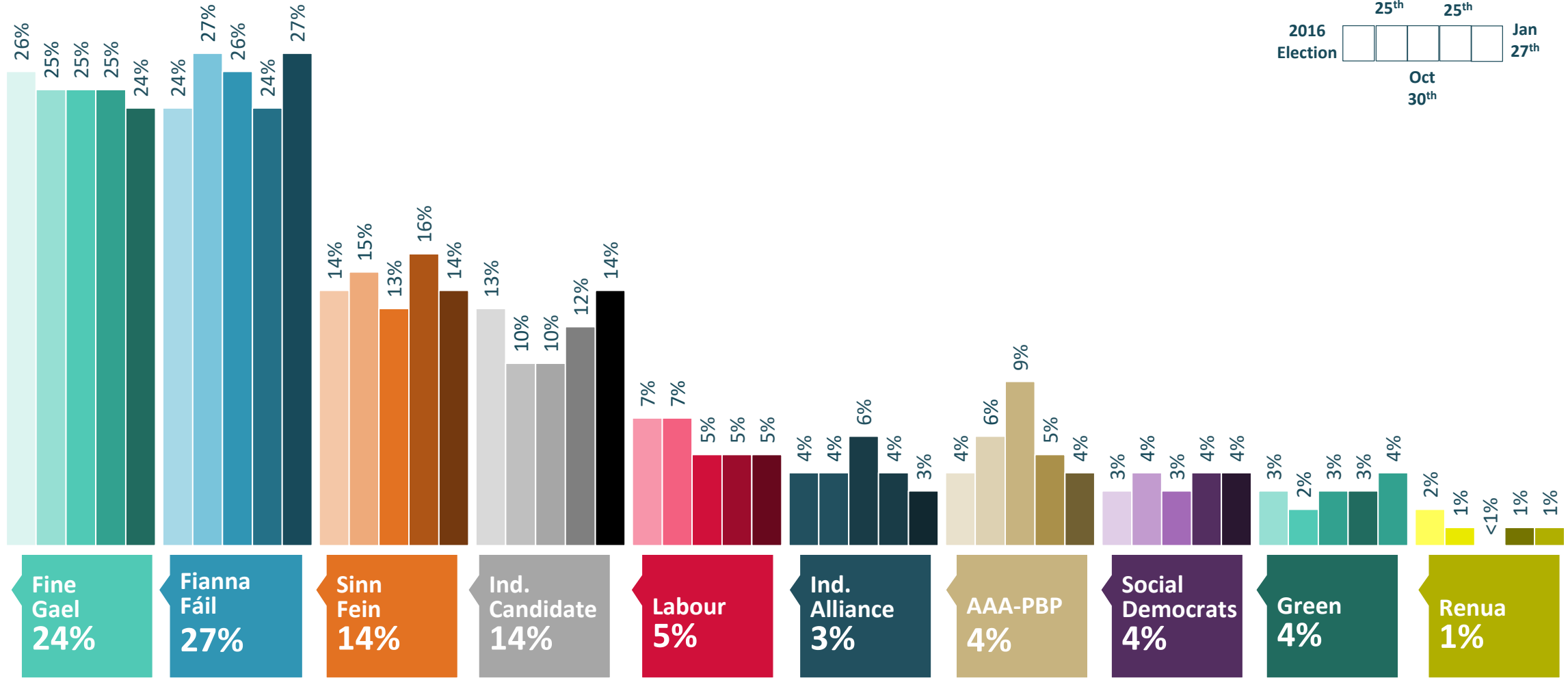
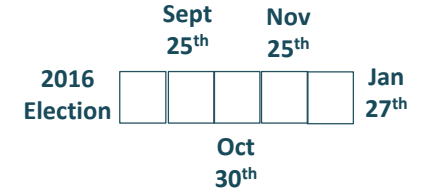
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



# First Preference Vote Intention – January '17

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)

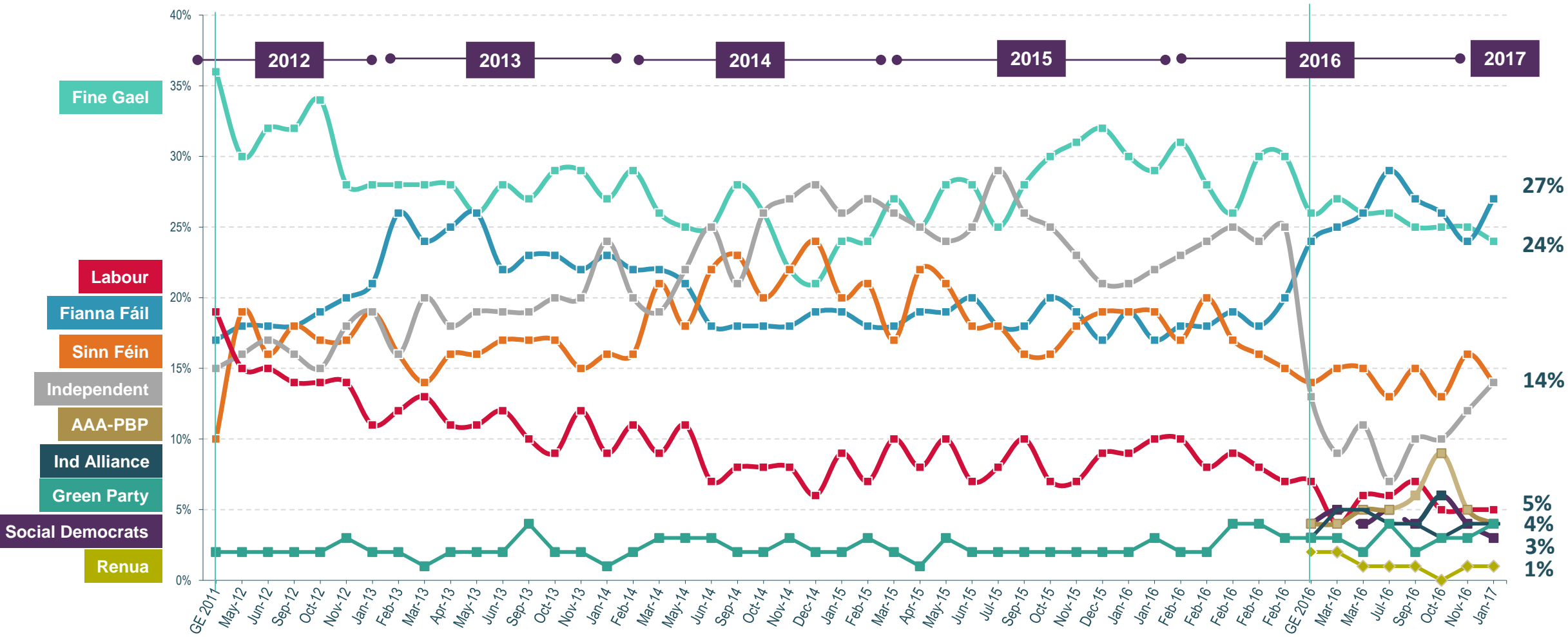
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



# First Preference Vote Intention – 2012-2016

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)

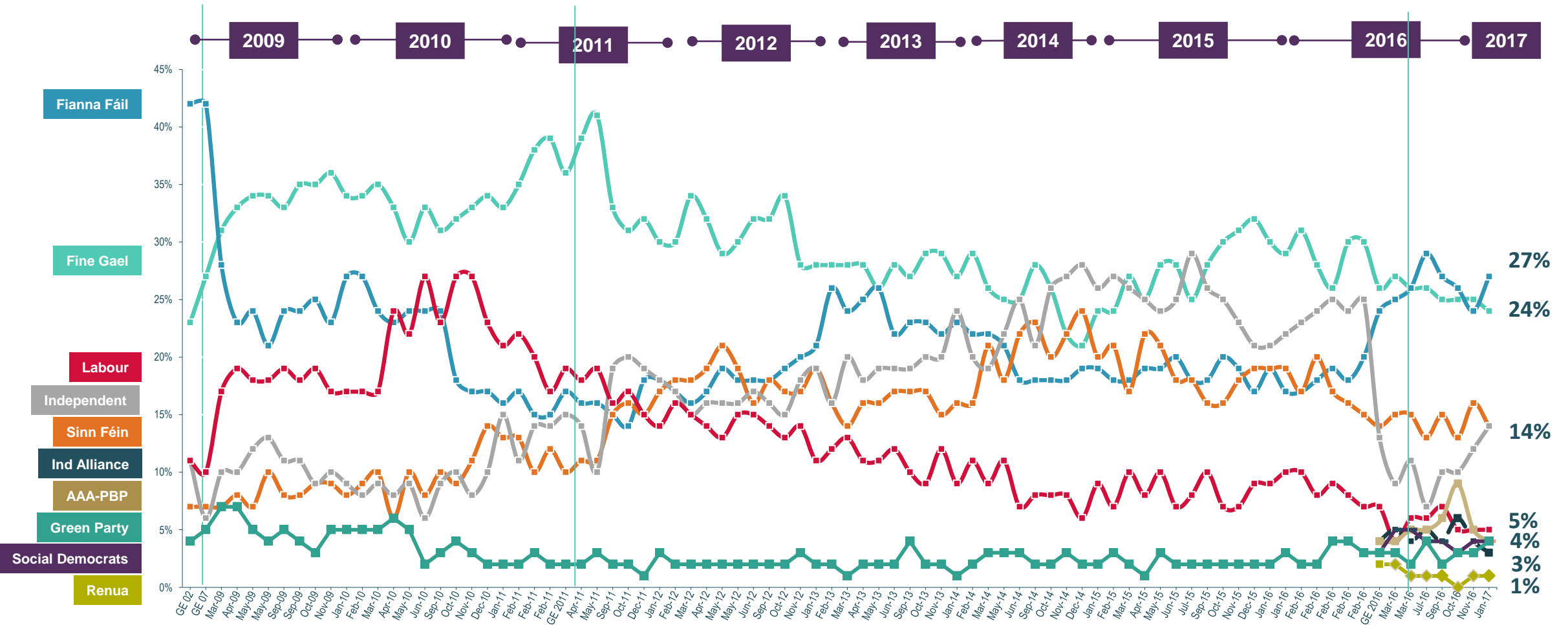


Note; From GE 2016 Onwards, 'Independents/Others' split out to show AAA-PBP, Social Democrats & Renua separately

# First Preference Vote Intention – 2009 to 2016

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 )

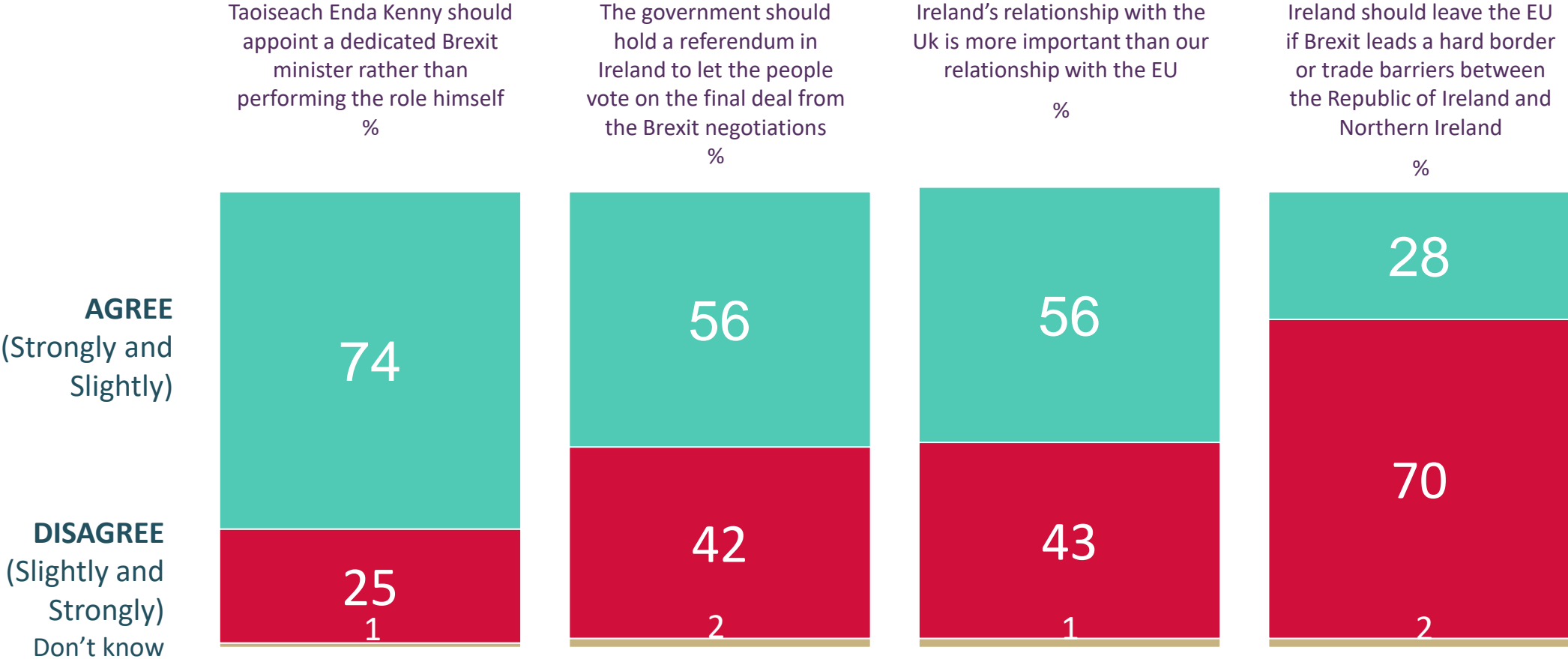


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# Attitudes towards Brexit

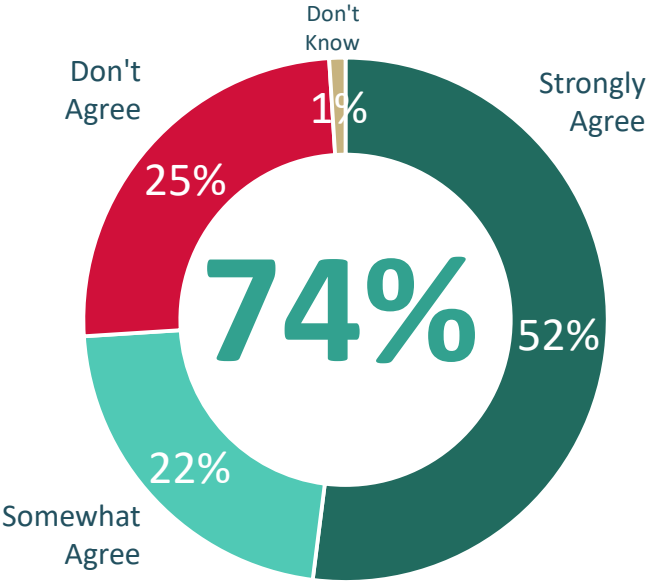
(Base: All adults 18+)

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements that other people have made about Ireland and the Irish government's reaction to Brexit...

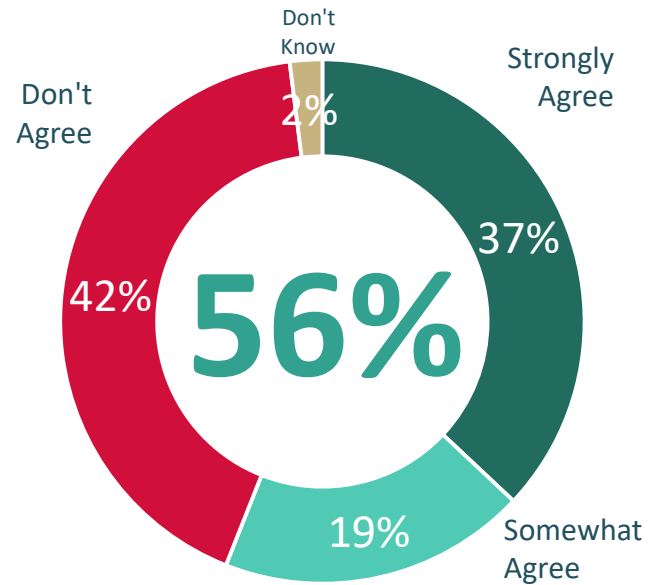
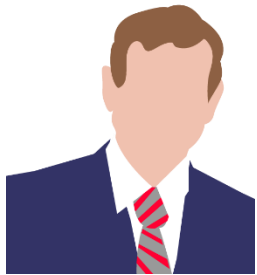




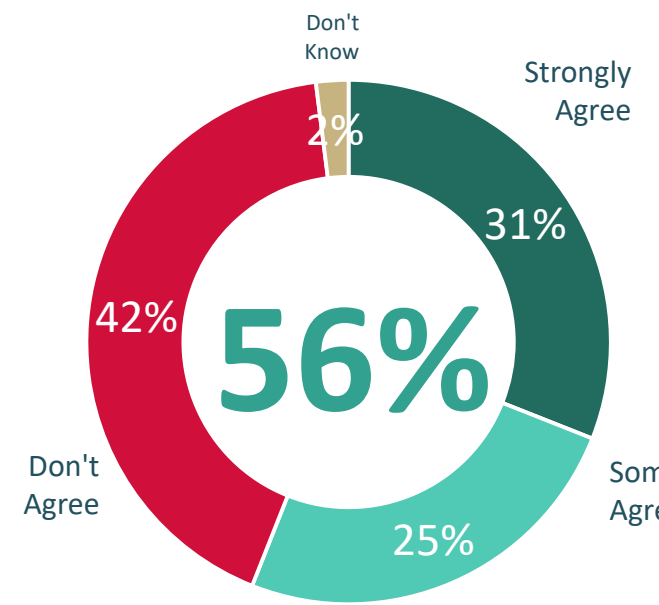
# Attitudes towards Brexit



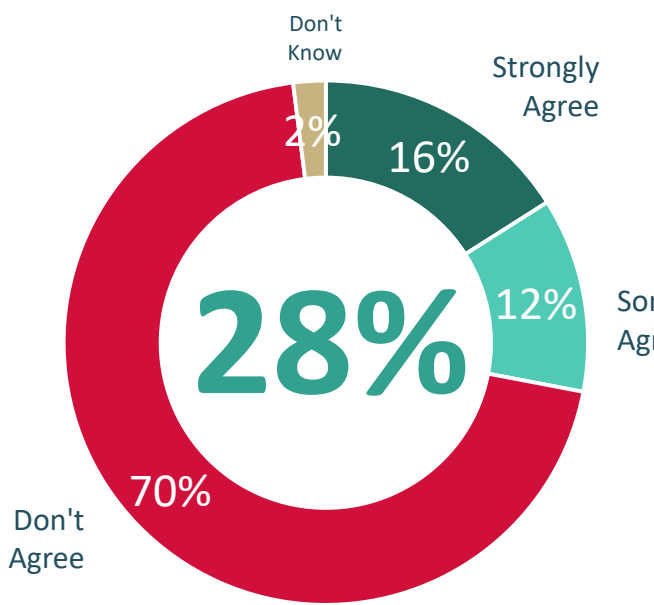
Taoiseach Enda Kenny should appoint a dedicated Brexit minister rather than performing the role himself



The government should hold a referendum in Ireland to let the people vote on the final deal from the Brexit negotiations



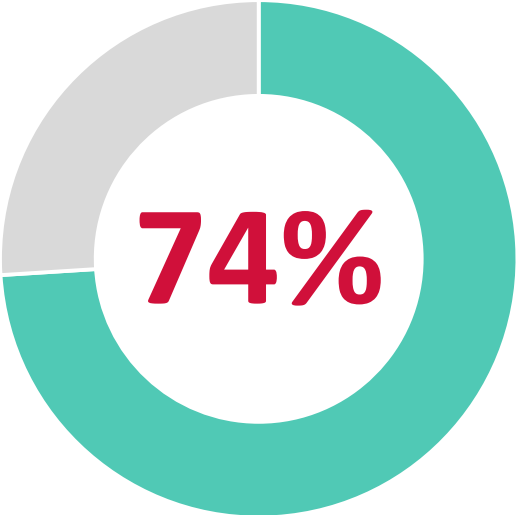
Ireland's relationship with the UK is more important than our relationship with the EU



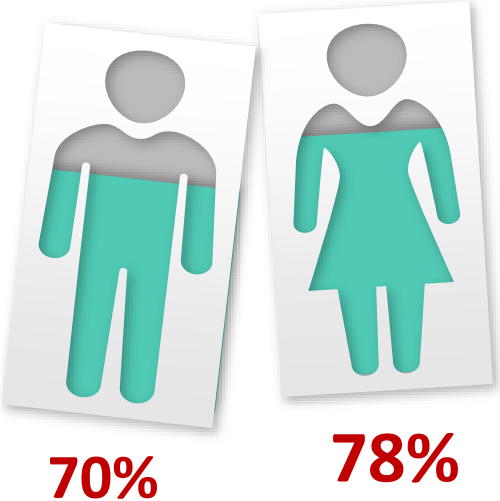
Ireland should leave the EU if Brexit leads a hard border or trade barriers between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland



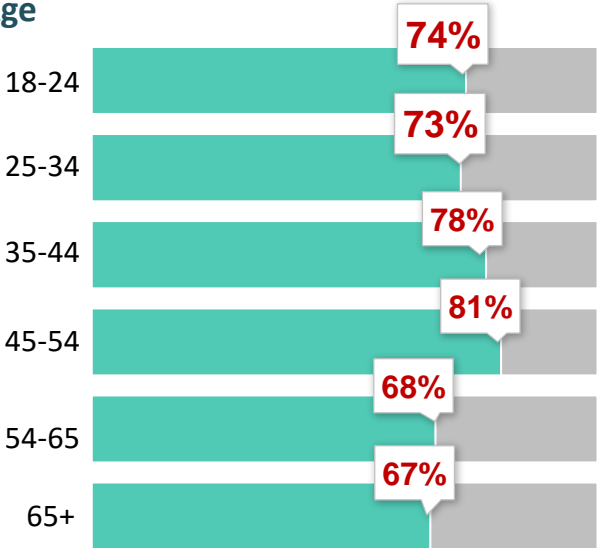
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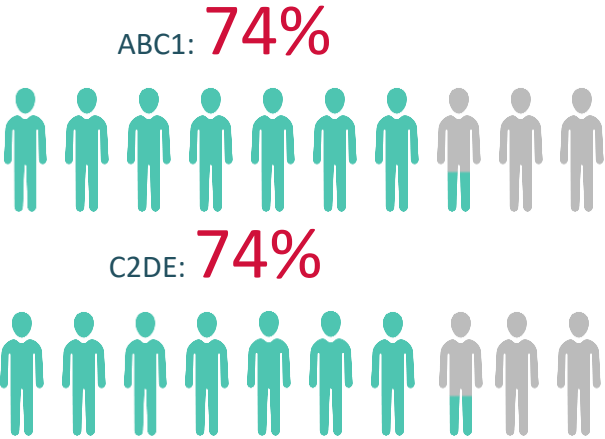
Gender



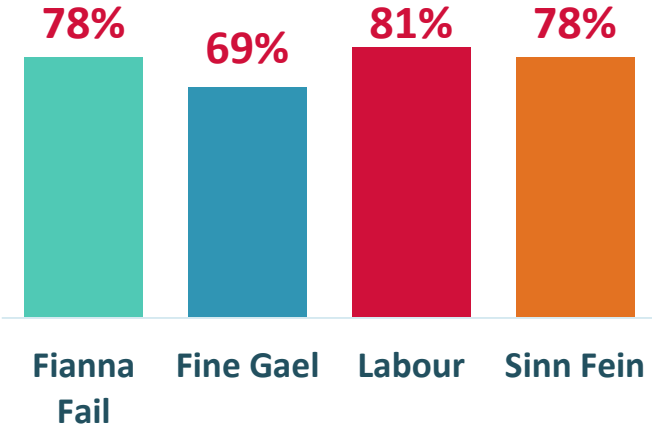
Age



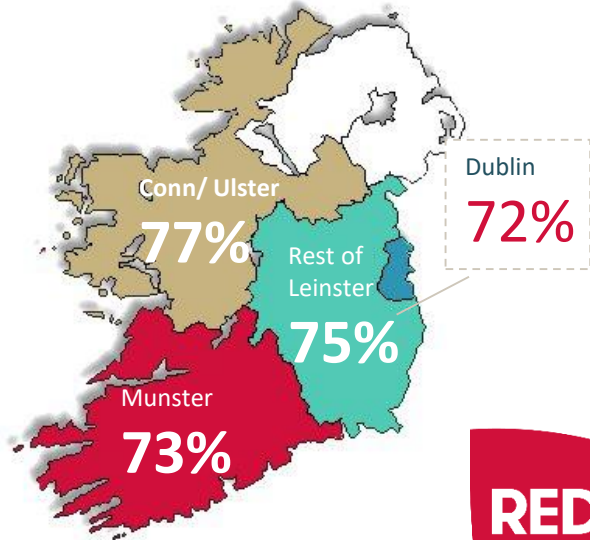
Social Class



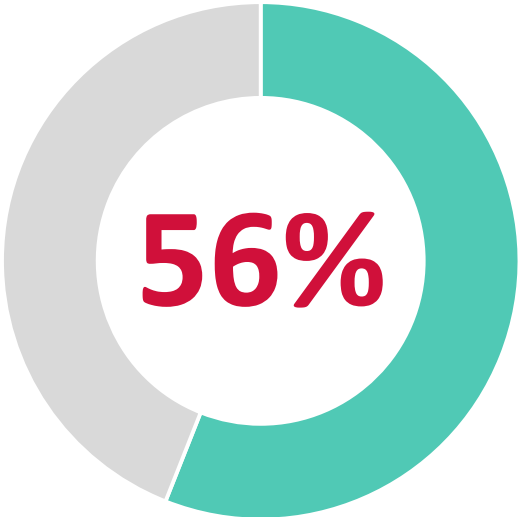
Party Agree



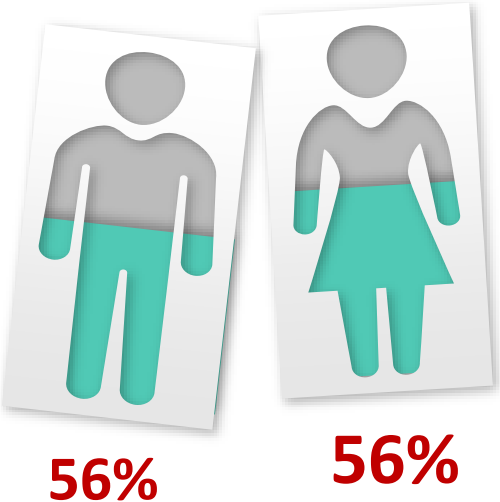
Region



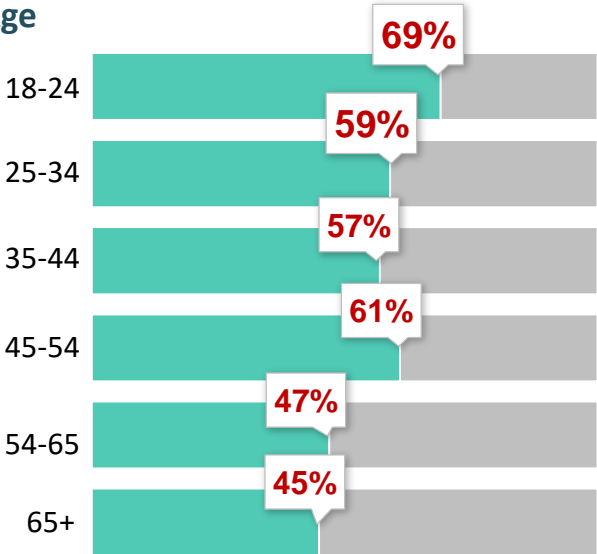
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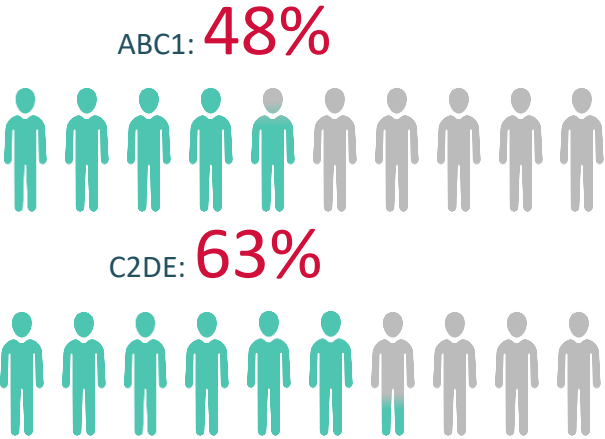
Gender



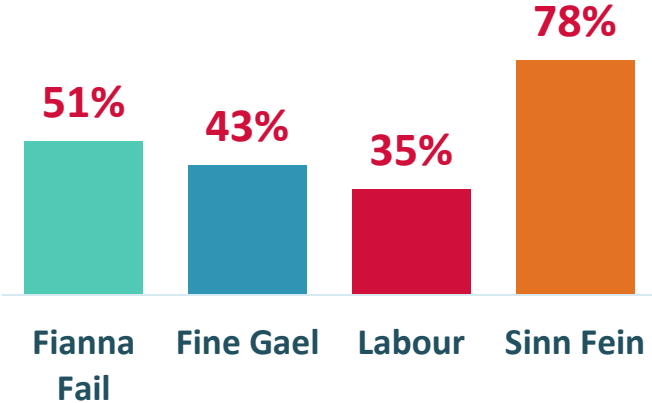
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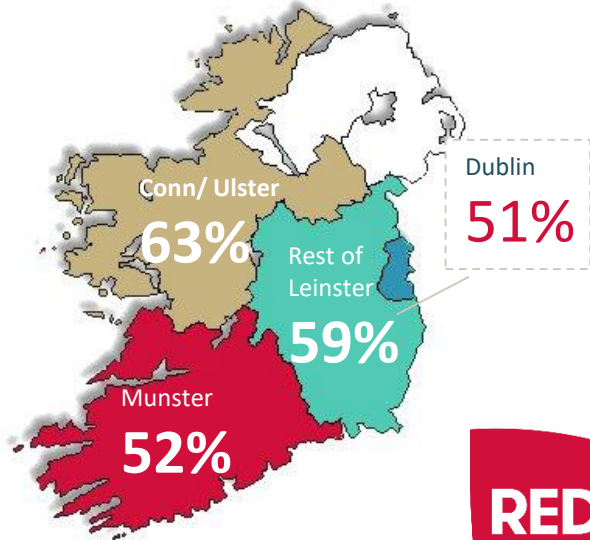
Social Class



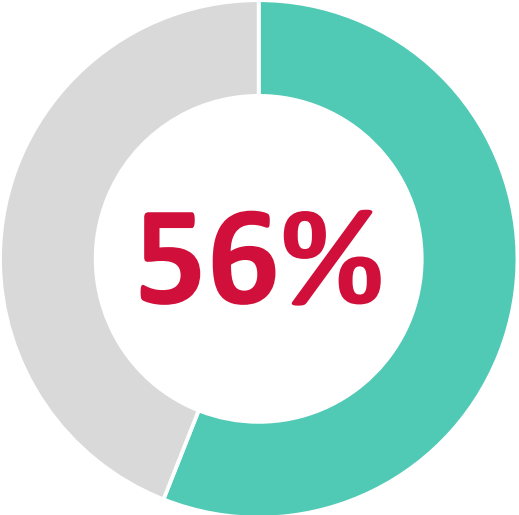
Party Agree



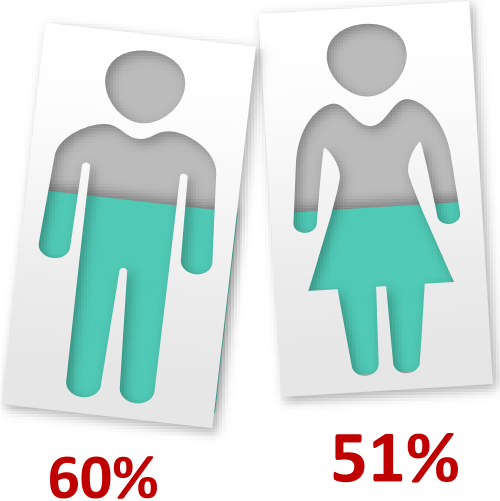
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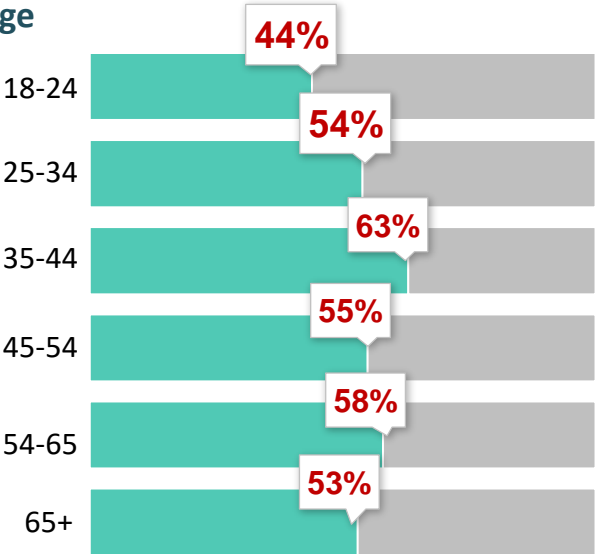
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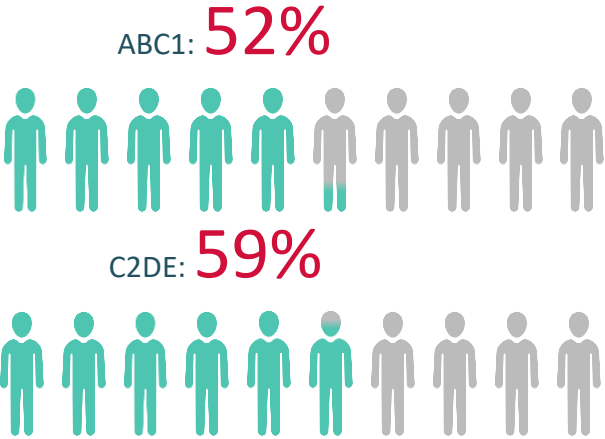
### Gender



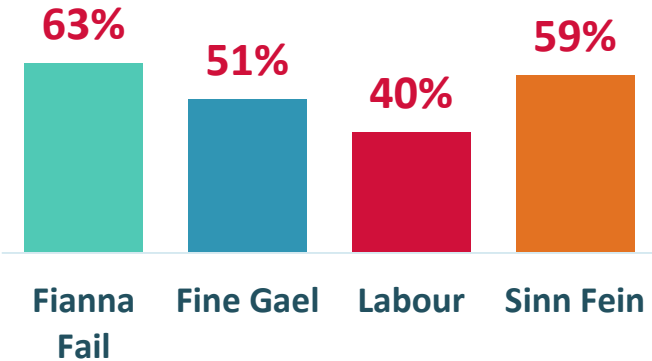
### Age



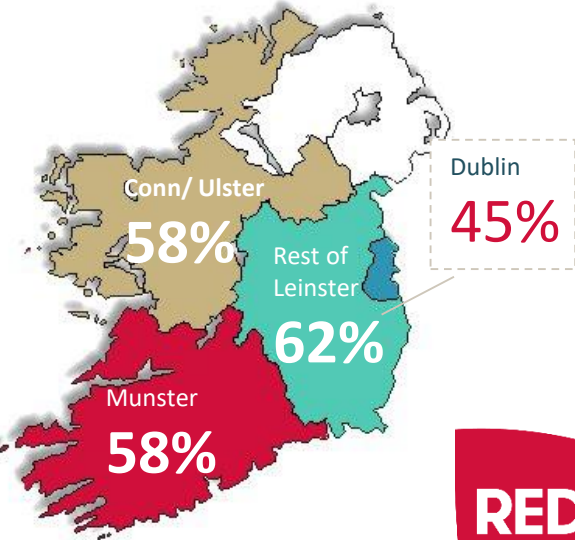
### Social Class



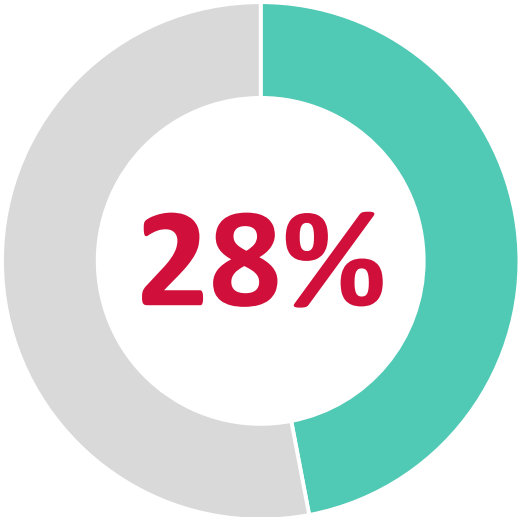
### Party Agree



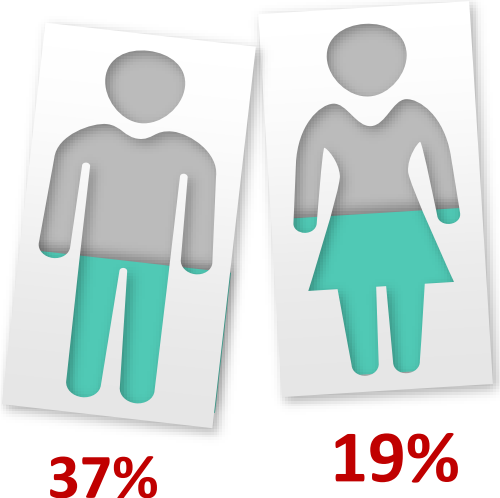
### Region



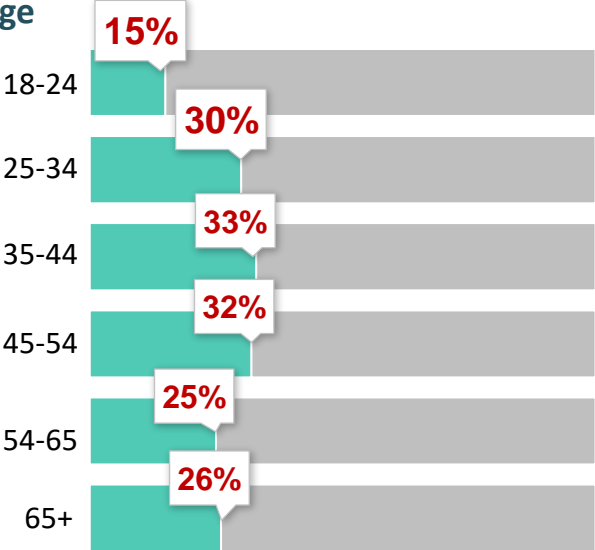
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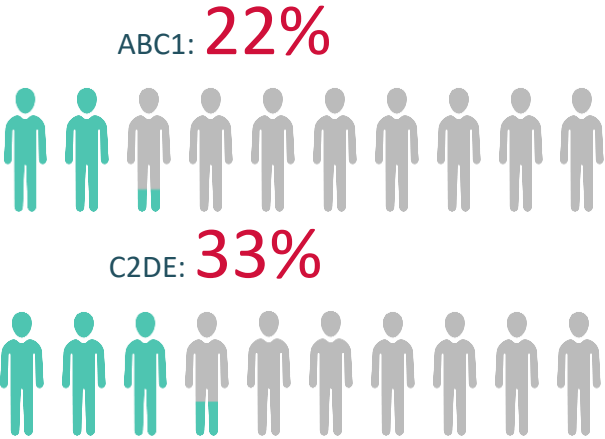
## Gender



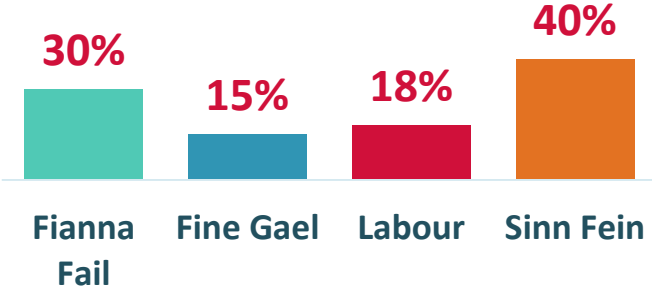
## Age



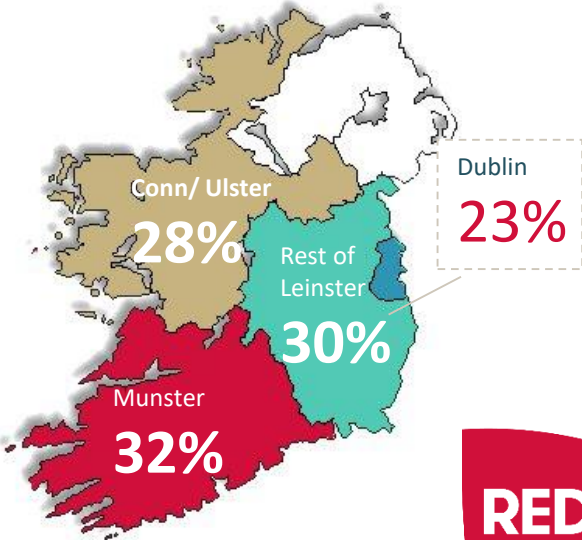
## Social Class



## Party Agree



## Region



**THANK  
YOU**

**REDC**