



**The Sunday
Business Post**

General Election Opinion Poll

October 2017



Methodology and Weighting

- ✓ RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,004 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 16th – 20th October 2017.
- ✓ 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.



As You Were, As Budget Has Little Impact on Vote Intention

The fanfare of the budget is over, and the impact of how people perceive both government and opposition parties is in. No real change.

I suppose really it is what we should have expected. Firstly, the budget was not a giveaway and made small adjustments for most. Also none of it has as yet to really impact on any of those that may gain somewhat from what was provided. Secondly, it was very clear that all of Fine Gael, the Independent Alliance, and Fianna Fail had a strong influence over its content. So no real surprise that there are no obvious winners.

The impact is that most parties remain at the same level of support seen last month, with small changes all within the margin of error. Both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail actually drop support by 1% point, which means that the gap between them remains the same. Fine Gael secure 29% of the first preference vote, while Fianna Fail secure 25%, leaving a 4% gap not much larger than that seen at the last election.

For Fine Gael this is of course more positive than their supply and confidence partners. Given that until the change in leadership Fianna Fail had driven support above the Government leaders. However it also shows just how difficult it is possibly going to be to move any further, with an apparent ceiling of support for Fine Gael currently sitting at around 30% of the electorate. It's also clear that Fianna Fail are not going away any time soon, and a 4% gap is certainly possible to overturn within an election campaign.

The Independent Alliance coverage during the budget sees the party regain lost ground, rising 2% since last month. While this is also within the margin of error for the party it represents a 50% increase in support and returns them to the levels they secured at the last election, so will no doubt be a very welcome shift. The coverage for this group may also explain the rise in support for Independent candidates generally, with those outside the Alliance also gaining support by 2%.

Sinn Fein doesn't do so well out of the poll. While the drop in support for the party is just 2%, which is within the margin of error, it should be noted that the trend in support over two polls cannot be ignored. A drop of 4% support since July will be of concern, particularly as the 14% support this leaves them at is the same as the party achieved at the last General Election, and the lowest level we have recorded since January.

Sinn Fein were a clear target for both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail before and during the budget, and it appears to be having some effect. Whether Gerry Adams taste for €30 bottles of wine however, has anything to do the parties performance in this poll can only be speculation, but this did of course get heavily covered in the media during the days that the poll was taken.

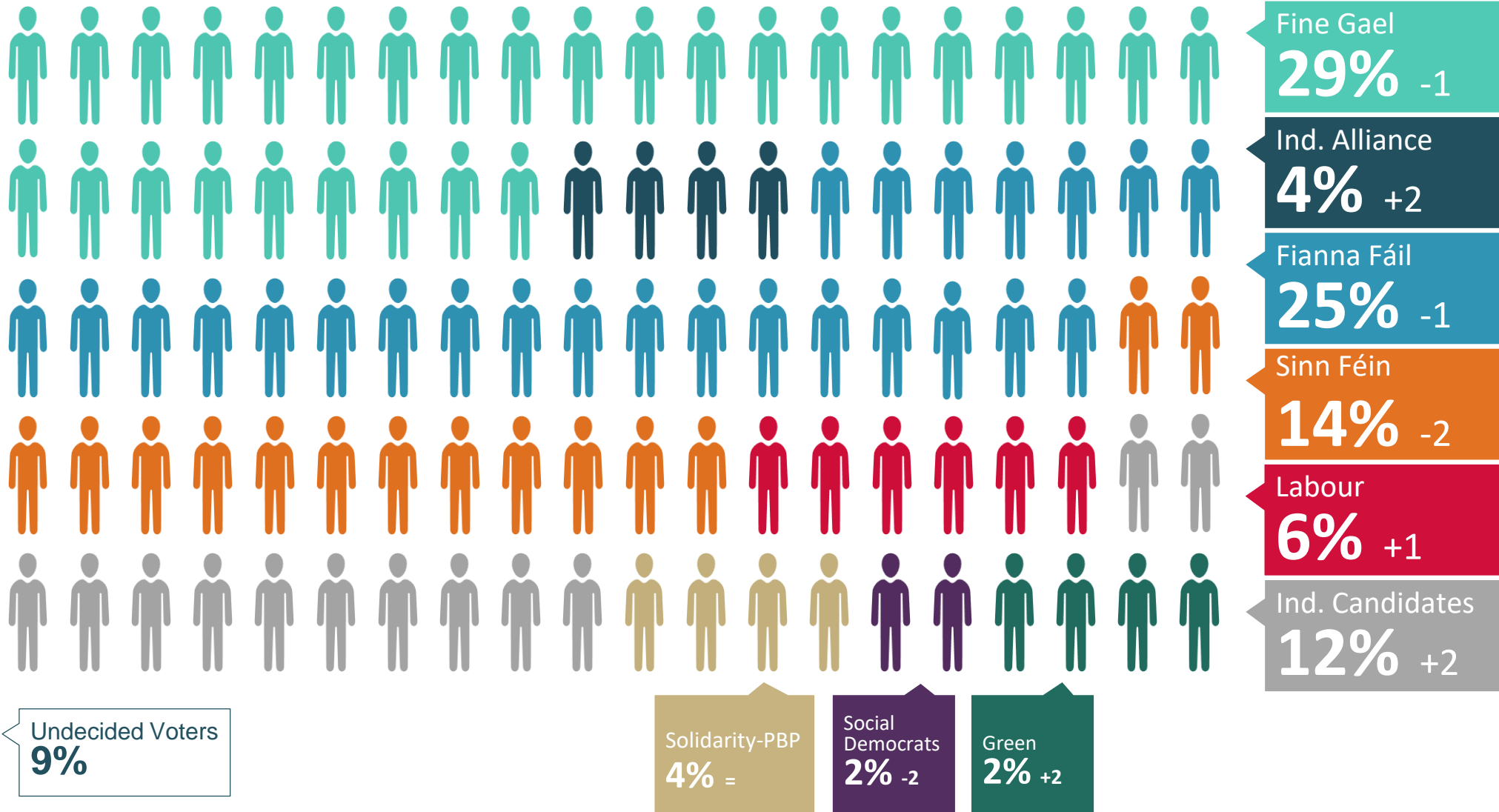
Of the other parties the Green Party gains 2% support and much like the Independent Alliance this is important for them, as it brings them back up to the highs they have been achieving for much of the year. Labour are up 1%, Solidarity PBP retain a stable 4% support, and the Social Democrats drop 2%.

All in all the results of the poll don't provide a significant change in narrative on how the electorate feels about the parties, except perhaps the consistent downward trend for Sinn Fein. The question must be what will it take to see a more lasting change and trend in support for one of the main parties? As without such an event, do any of the parties really want another election any time soon?

First Preference Vote Intention – 22nd October 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)

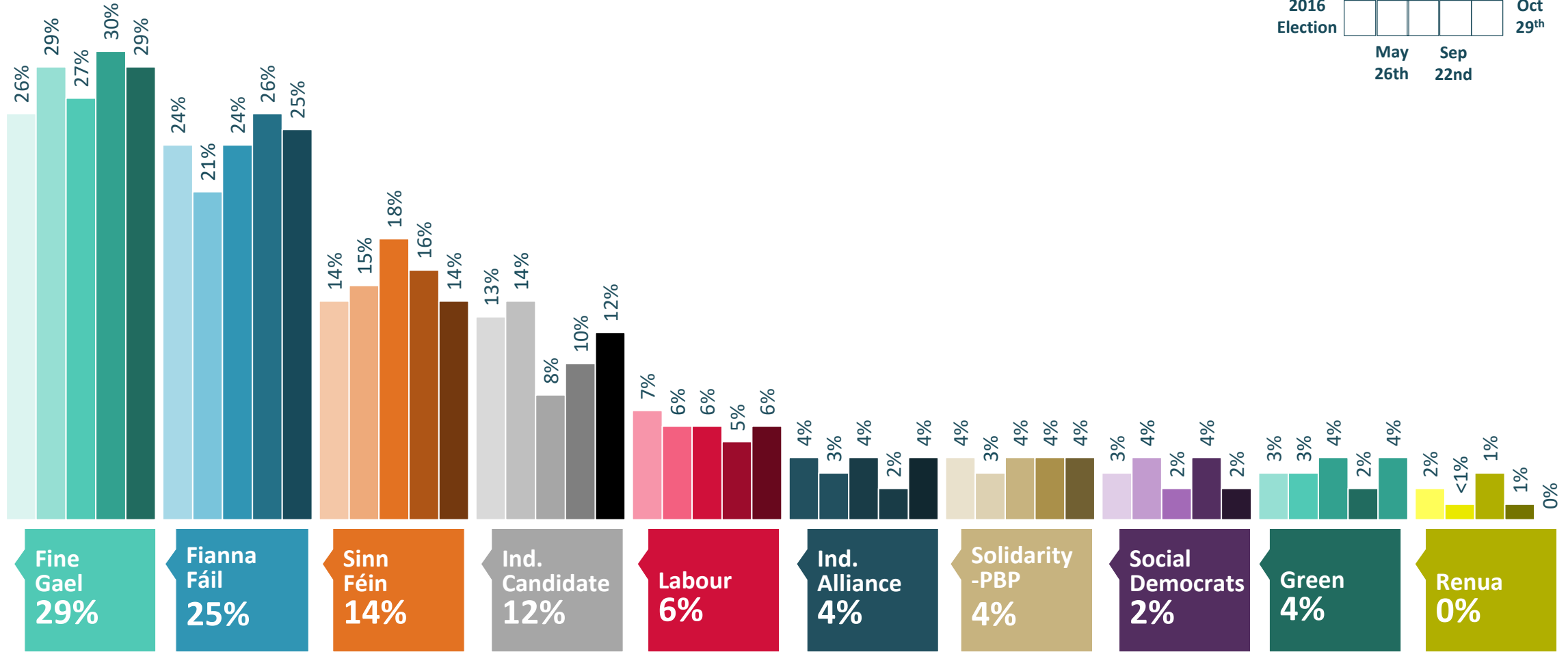
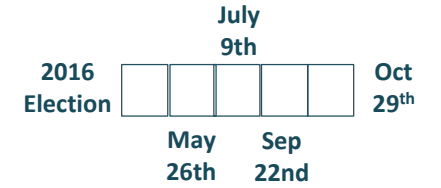
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



First Preference Vote Intention – October '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)

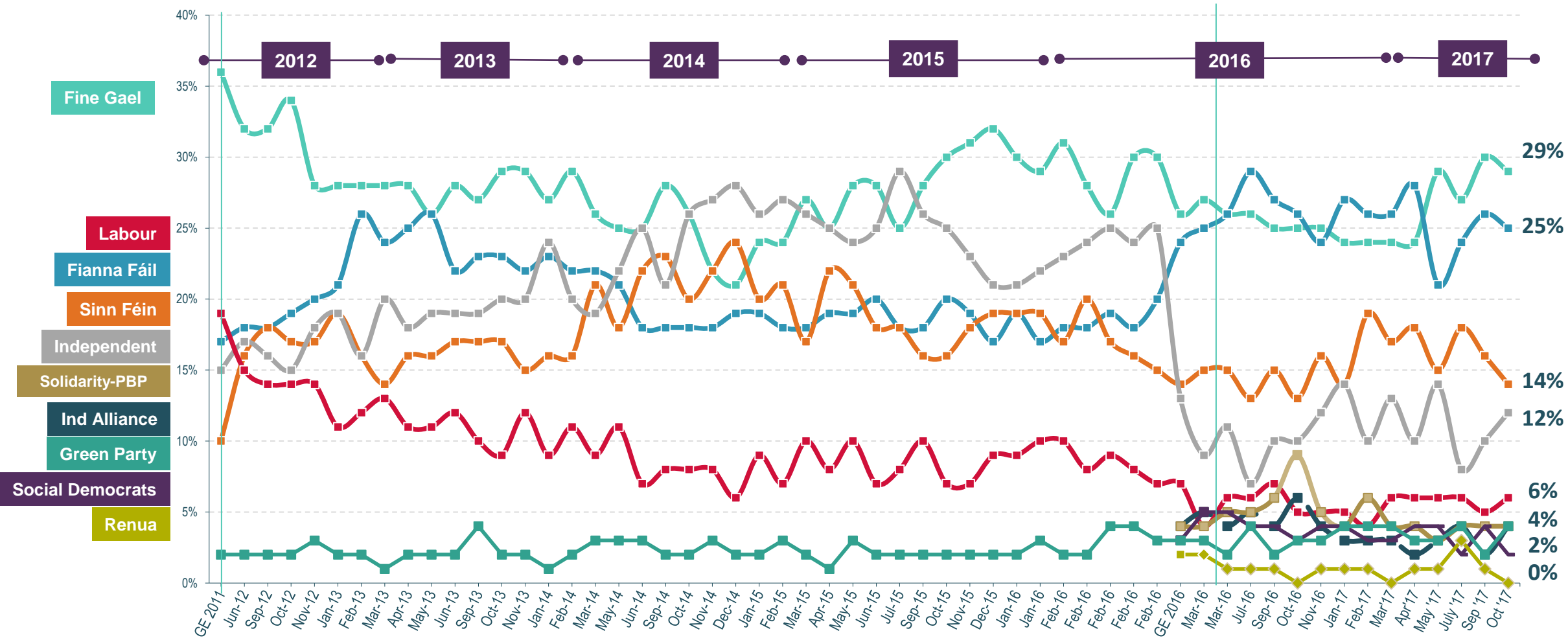
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



First Preference Vote Intention – 2012-2017

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)

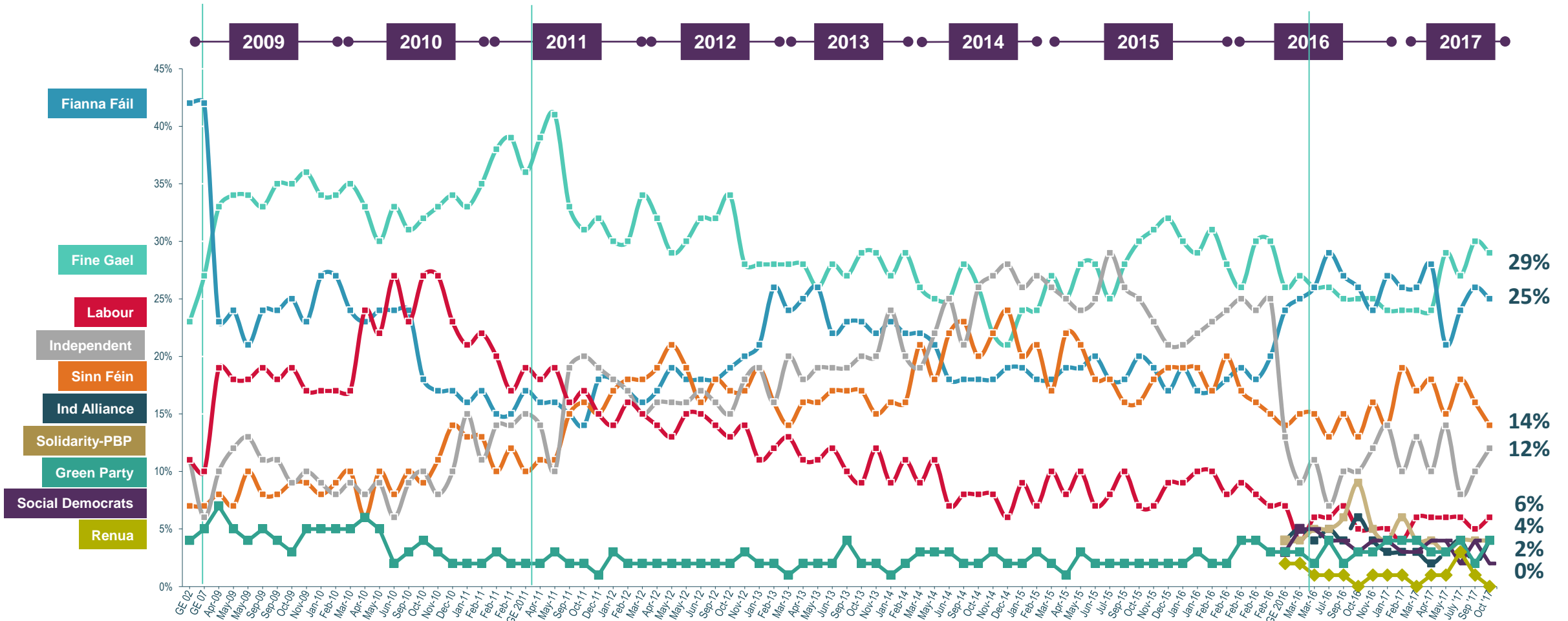


Note; From GE 2016 Onwards, 'Independents/Others' split out to show Solidarity-PBP, Social Democrats & Renua separately

First Preference Vote Intention – 2009 to 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)



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

**THANK
YOU**

REDC