



# General Election Opinion Poll

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2015



# Methodology and Weighting

- RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,007 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> November 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.



# Longer Term Trends Positive for Fine Gael - I

At face value this poll shows a relatively stable political landscape, with no significant movement for any party, and all the month on month moves within the margin of error. Fine Gael remain the largest party gaining 1% more votes and securing 31% of the first preference vote in total, with Labour still struggling to regain lost ground static at 7%. Fianna Fail continue to secure support in the high teens, with 19% in this poll. Sinn Fein are in and around the same territory securing 18% in this poll.

Beyond this the large disparate grouping of Independent Candidates and Other Parties remains, but can be sub divided into about 14% who claim to still want to vote for Independent candidates themselves, and the rest spread across smaller parties that have been formed by groups of Independents in the more recent past. Anti-Austerity Alliance-People Before Profit Party is the largest of these securing 4% of the first preference vote, with the Social Democrats not far behind on 3%. The Green Party continues to secure 2% support, while Renua secures just 1%.

This relatively stable picture however when compared month on month, somewhat hides more interesting long term trends. As such once again the advice when interpreting polls is to look beyond the short terms + or – figures vs last month, and instead focus on the far richer trends that can be identified in the tracking data.

When we look at trends over even just the past half year the data shows a far more interesting picture of shifting voter loyalties. For some time RED C has championed the theory that a significant proportion of those currently claiming they will vote for Independent candidates, may simply be using this option to hold fire on where their final loyalties might lie. Torn between anger at the austerity and broken promises they believe this government has made, and the reality that the parties they voted for at the last election are still probably the safest bet for not rocking the boat over the next five years.

Our prediction was that as voters moved closer to the realities of an actual General Election they may well start to shift back to the government parties and away from their claimed support for Independent candidates.

That shift certainly appears to be materialising to some extent for Fine Gael. The downward trend in support for Independent candidates and other parties seen over the past 4 months, is very closely matched by the upward trend in support for Fine Gael.

## Longer Term Trends Positive for Fine Gael - II

Month on month Fine Gael has been gaining increased support by just +1 or +2% of the electorate, which could be seen as within “margin of error” change. However, when you add this all up over the past four months, a consistent upward movement has delivered overall gains in support of +6%. During the same time period Independent candidate and Other Party support has also fallen by 6%.

The key for the government parties is persuading those who voted for them in 2011 to do so again on 2015. This appears to be precisely what Fine Gael is managing to do better over the recent past, while Labour is still struggling to woo back lost voters.

We have looked closely at those voters that supported Fine Gael and Labour at the last election and have since moved away to neutral Independent candidate ground. The main issues they claim will impact on their vote behaviour are Water Charges and the Health Service, although looking beyond this their own personal economic situation is also vital. There is also evidence that for some ex Fine Gael voters, water charges, is lessening as an issue as the payments themselves are relatively low and maybe it is these voters who are shifting back to the party they voted for in 2011.

The largest gains for Fine Gael over the longer past four months are seen among older voters aged 55, where the party is now securing 2 in 5 voters. Voters in Munster also appear to be more convinced by the largest government party in recent months, with gains of over 10% since July. It's also interesting that gains have been made in less well-off households.

Winning back lost voters then is key to the success of the current coalition being re-elected. The past four months has seen Fine Gael improve its voter loyalty by 10%. In July the party was only retaining 60% of those who voted for them in 2011, but by November this had improved to 70% retention of past voters.

Labour on the other hand are only managing to secure 30% of those that voted for the party in 2011, with a mass exodus of past voters to other parties. While Fine Gael will be happy to see support rise, the stagnation of Labour support at this stage may present new challenges in forming a government in 3-4 months time.

# First Preference Vote Intention – November 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  
**31%** +1

Labour  
**7%** =

Fianna Fail  
**19%** -1

Sinn Fein  
**18%** +2

Independent/  
Other Party  
**25%** -2

Undecided Voters  
**10%** -2



# First Preference Vote Intention – November 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	Prompting on Other Parties	2011 Election Results
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Fine Gael	28	27	28	31	31	36
Labour	5	5	6	7	7	19
Fianna Fáil	15	16	17	19	19	17
Sinn Féin	16	16	16	18	18	10
Independent candidates	14	14	16	17	14	13
Green Party	2	2	2	2	2	2
Renua	1	1	1	*	1	-
AAA-PBP	2	2	2	2	4	1*
Social Democrats	1	1	1	2	3	-
Other Party	1	1	1	2	1	1
Undecided	15	15	10	n/a	n/a	n/a

\*Socialist Party

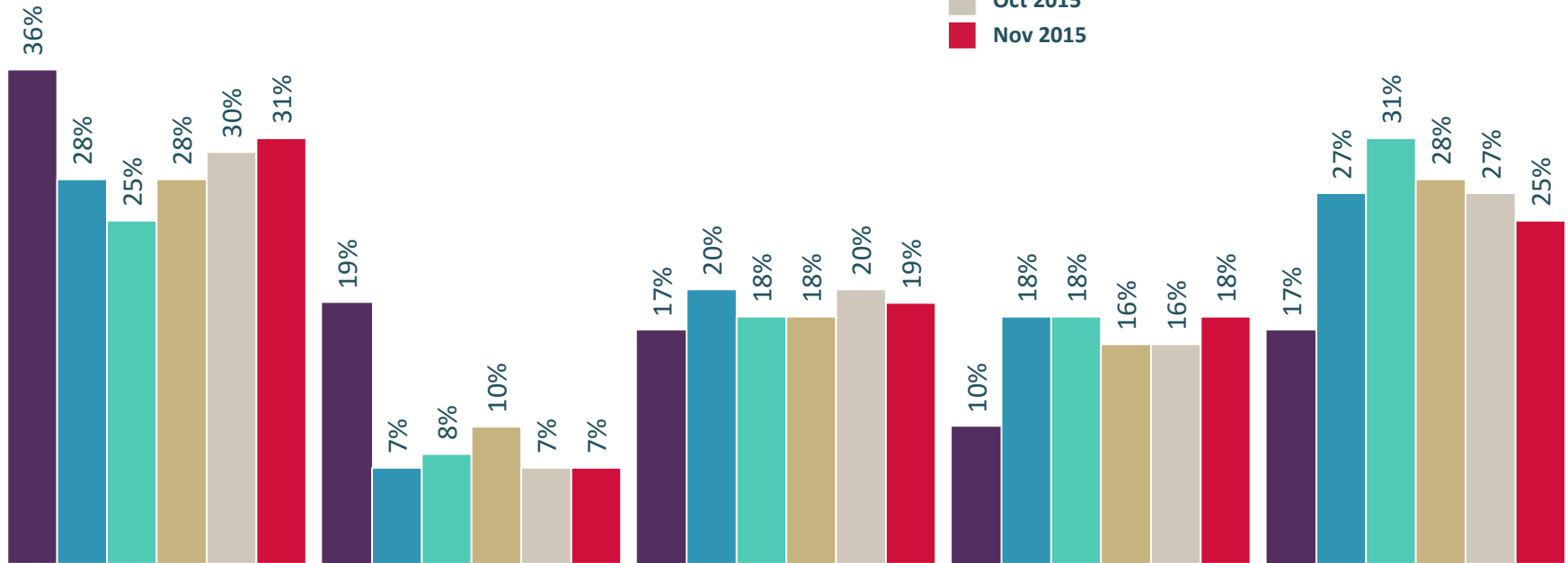


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# First Preference Vote Intention – June-Nov 2015

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  
**31%**

Labour  
**7%**

Fianna Fail  
**19%**

Sinn Fein  
**18%**

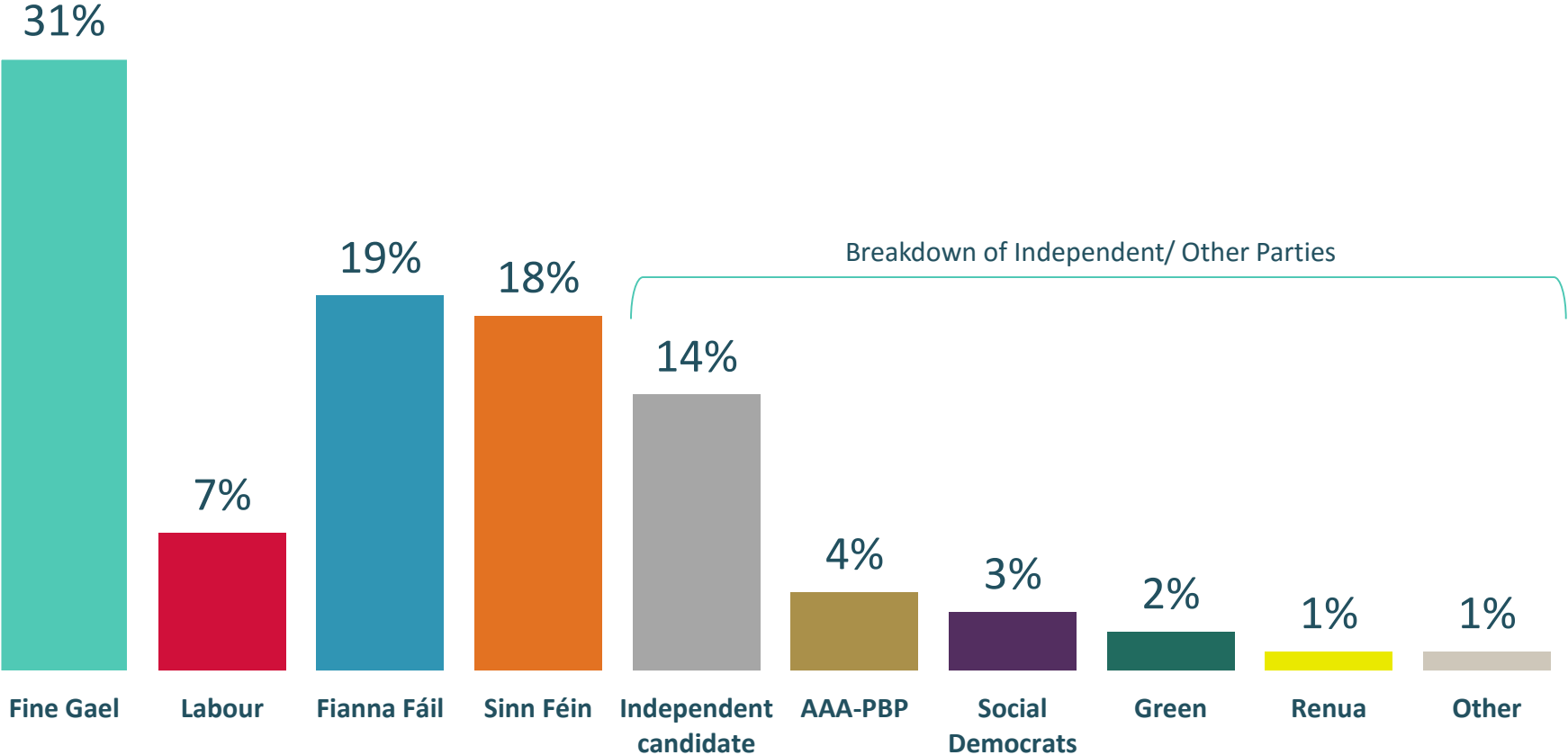
Independent/  
Other Party  
**25%**



# First Preference Vote Intention – Nov 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) + PROMPT If Independent Candidate for party.

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)

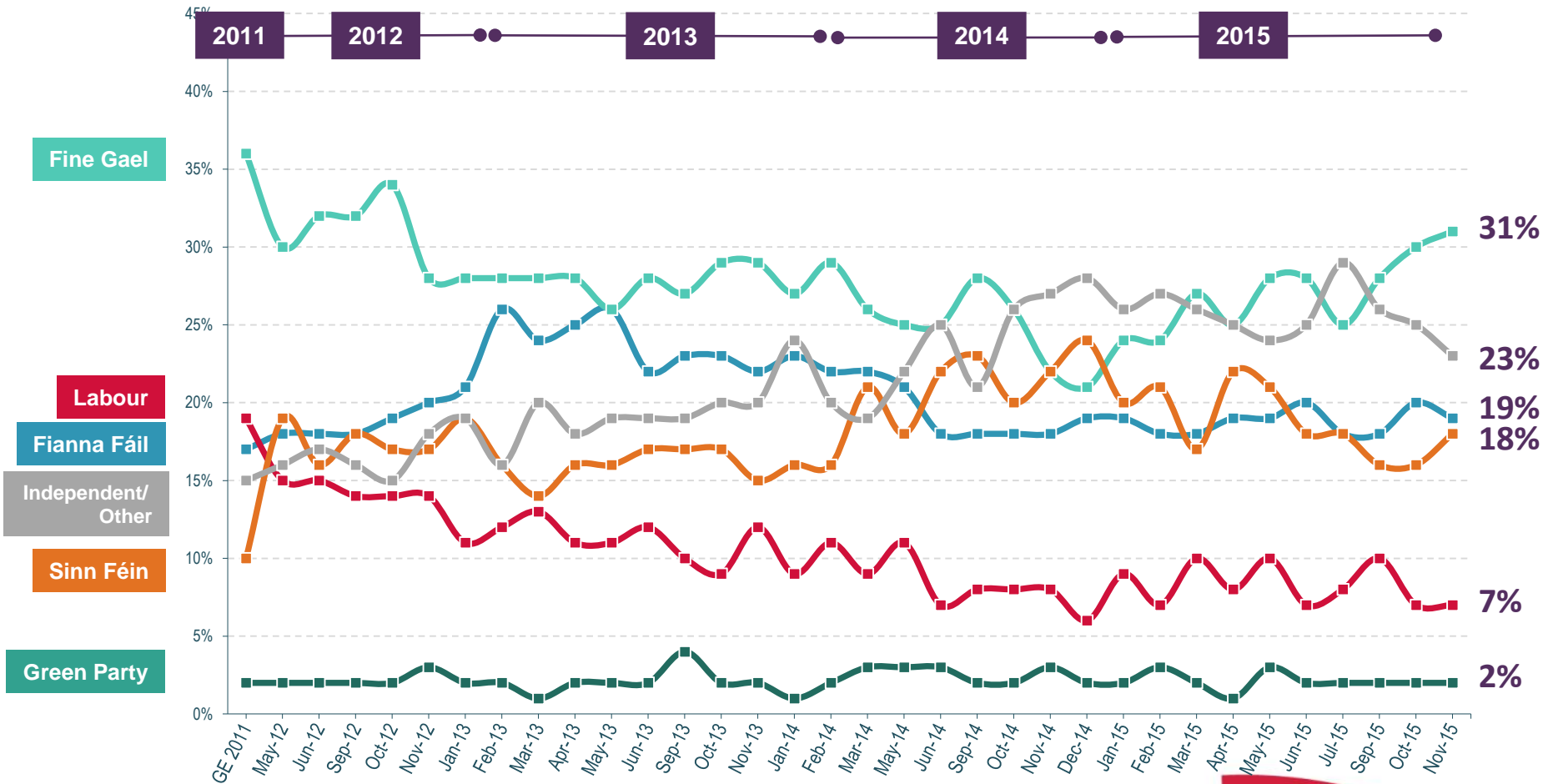




# First Preference Vote Intention – 2011-2015

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)

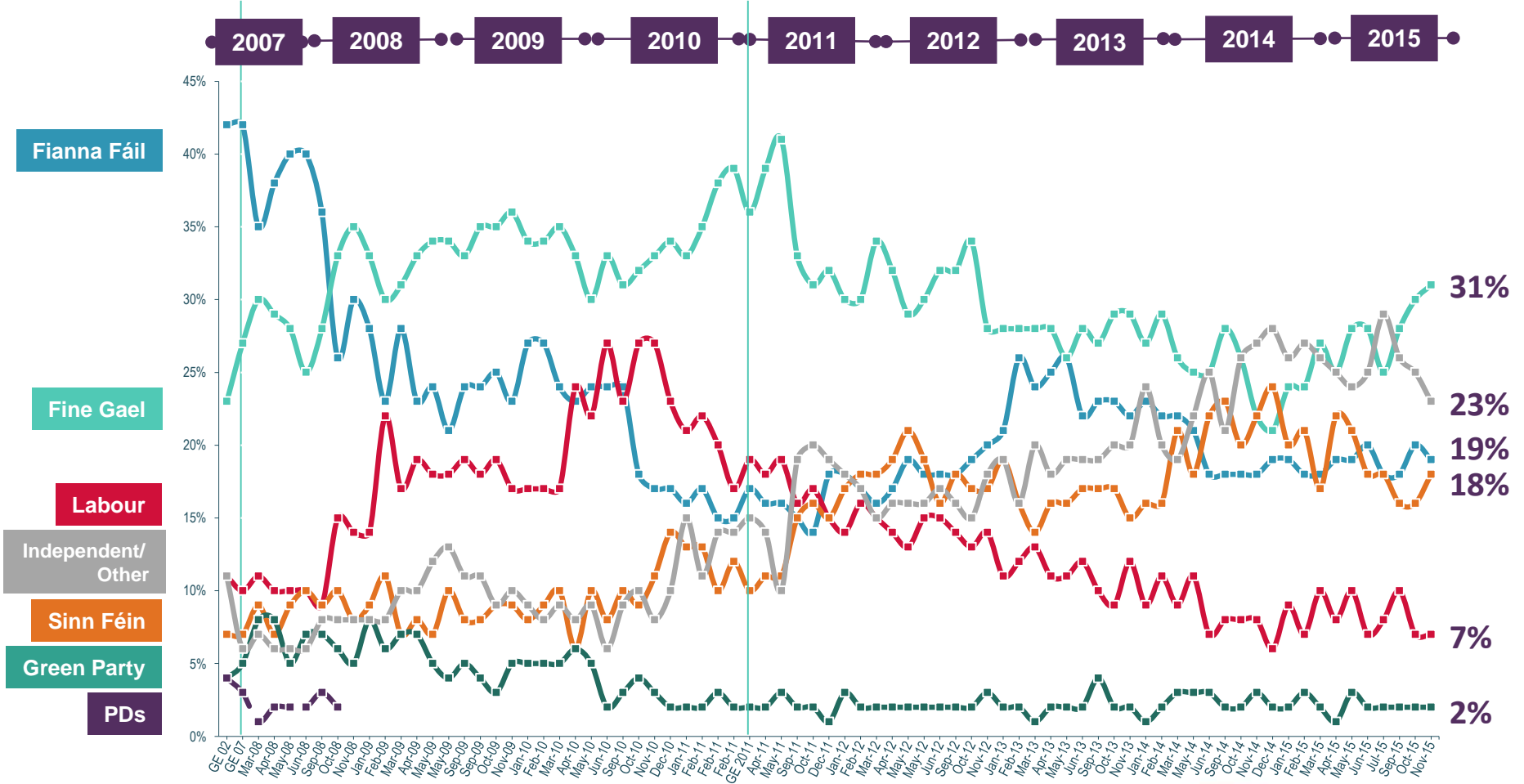
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote )



# 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)

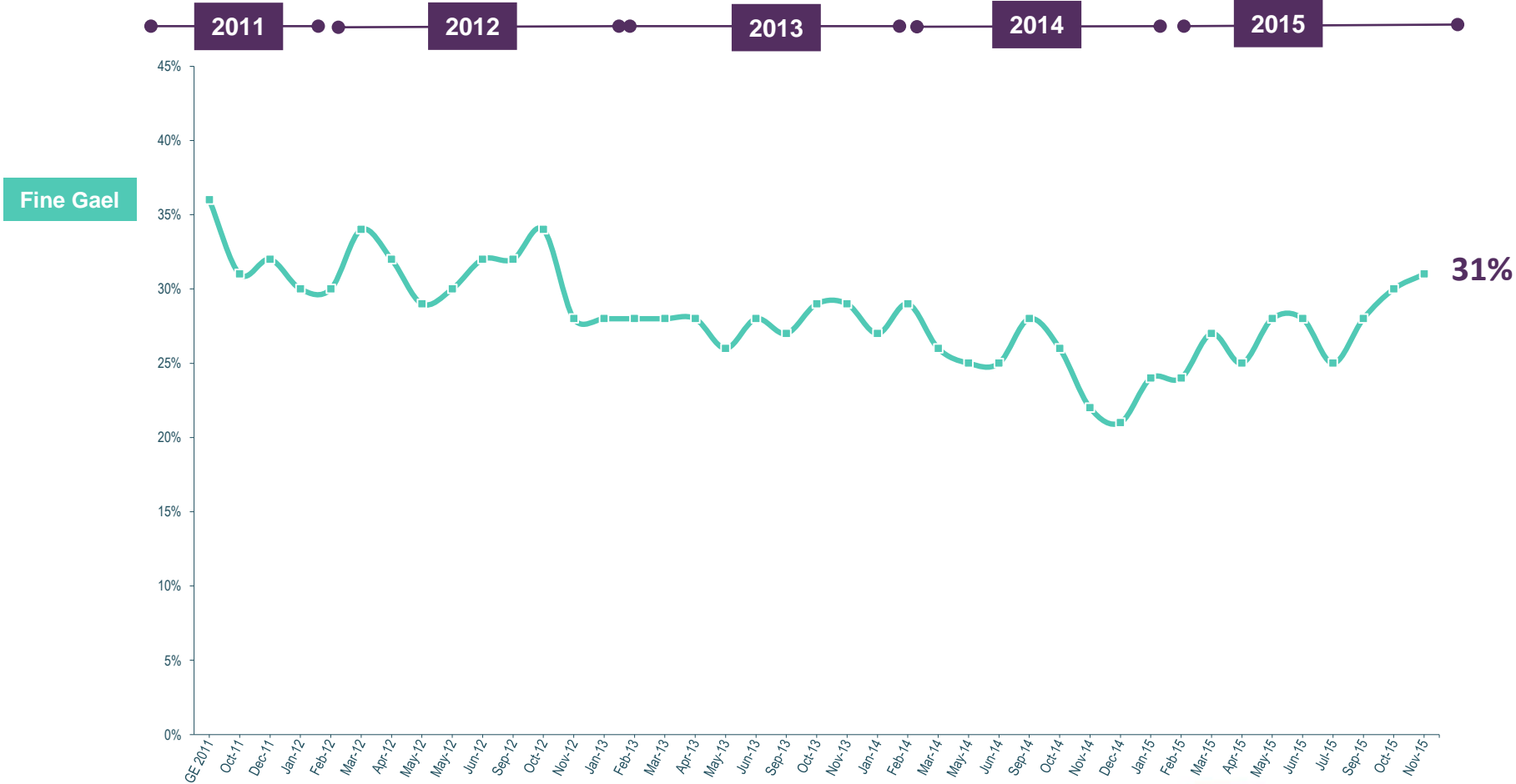
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote )



# First Preference Vote Intention – 2011 to 2015 – Fine Gael

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)

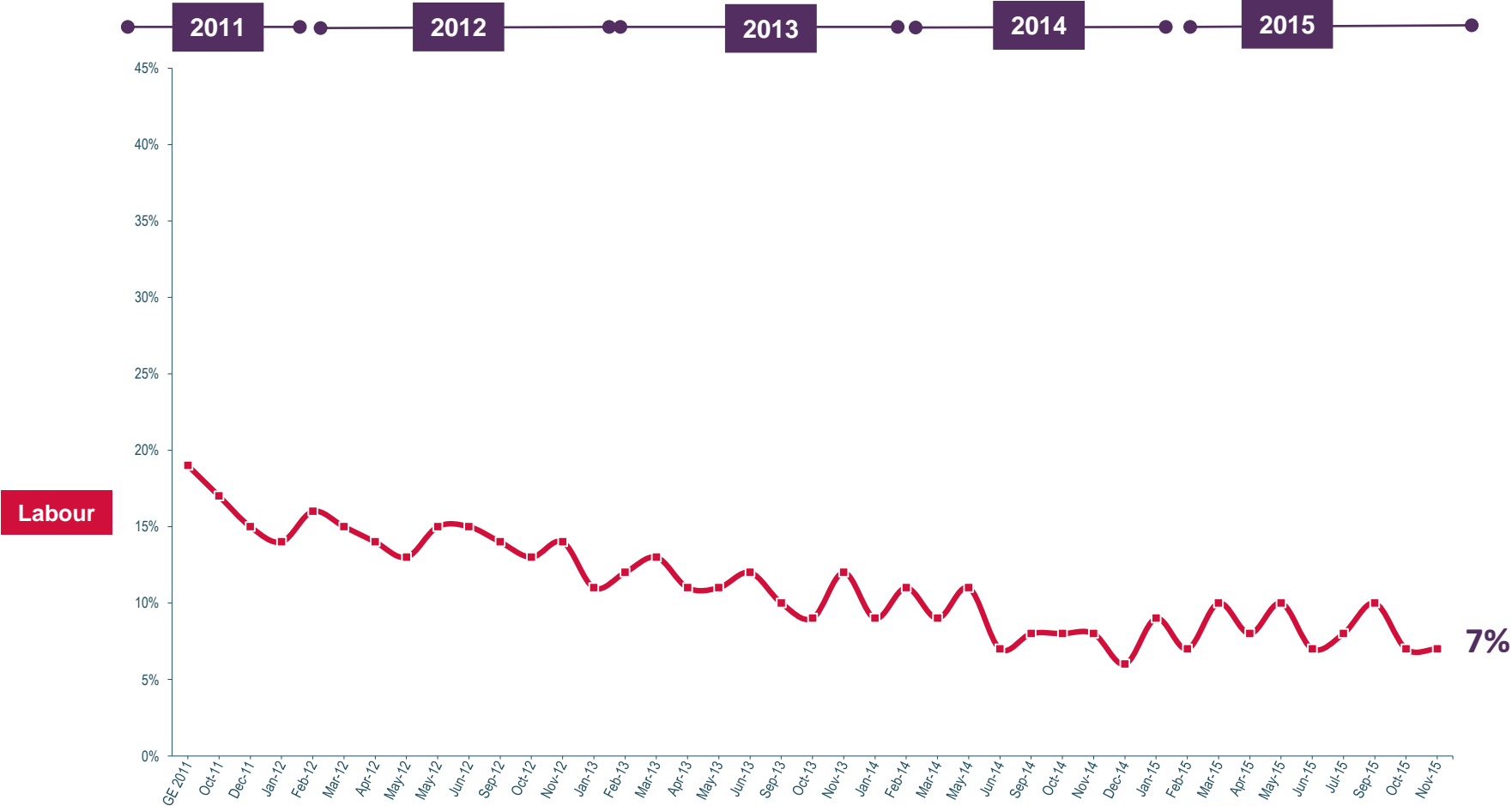
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote )



# First Preference Vote Intention – 2011 to 2015 – Labour

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)

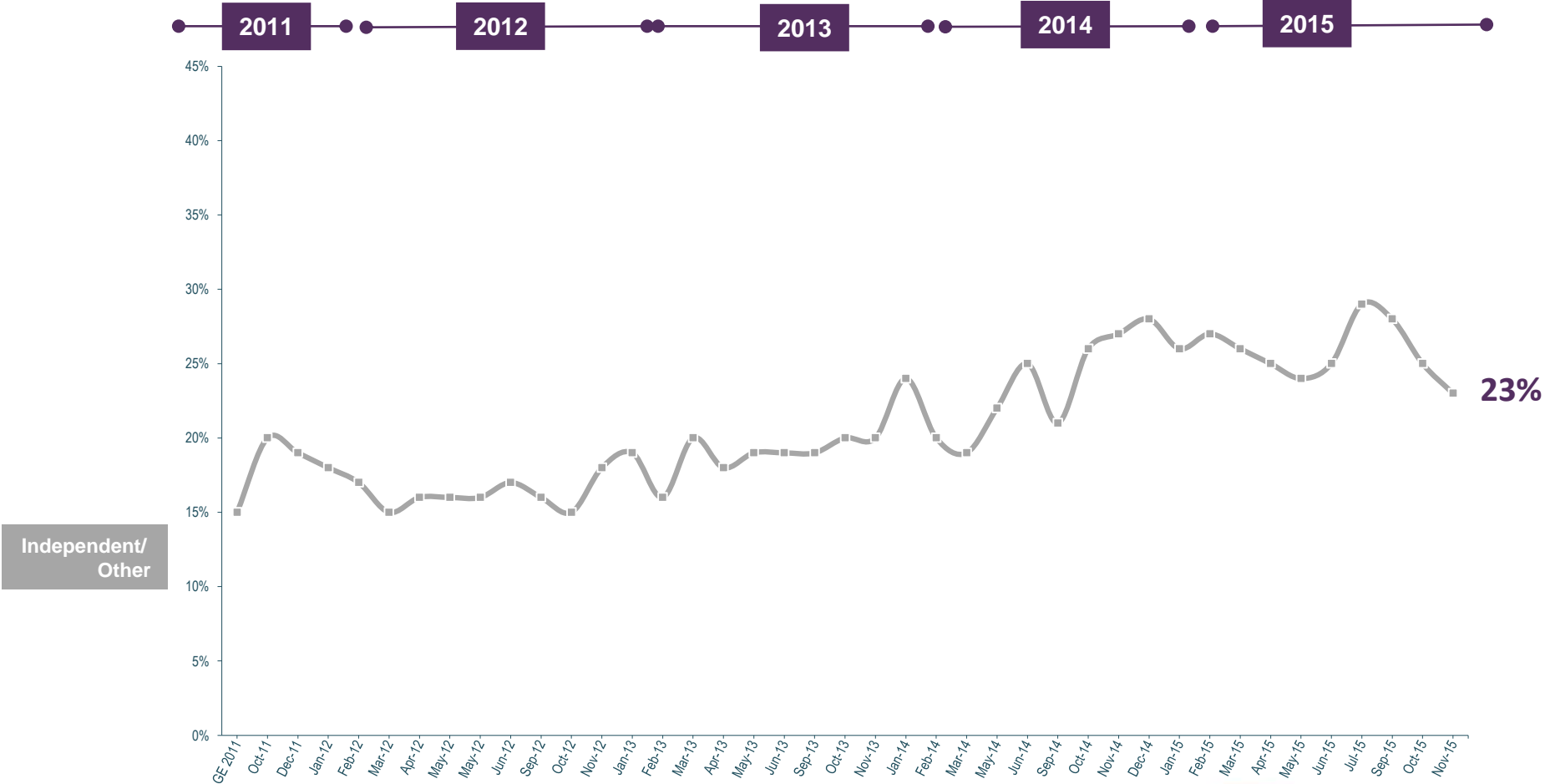
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote )



# First Preference Vote Intention – 2011 to 2015 – Independents/Other

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)

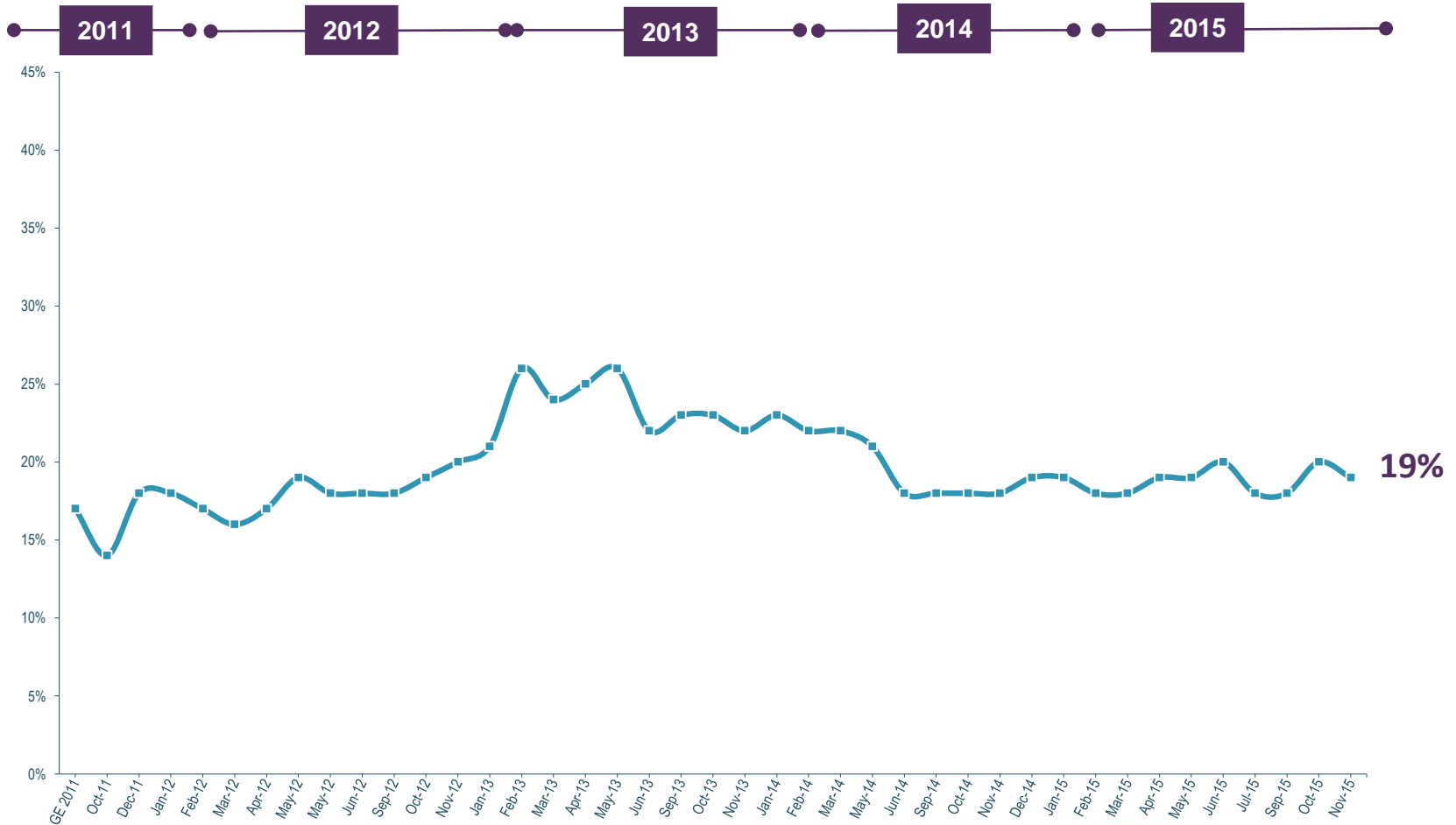
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote )



# First Preference Vote Intention – 2011 to 2015 – Fianna Fáil

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)

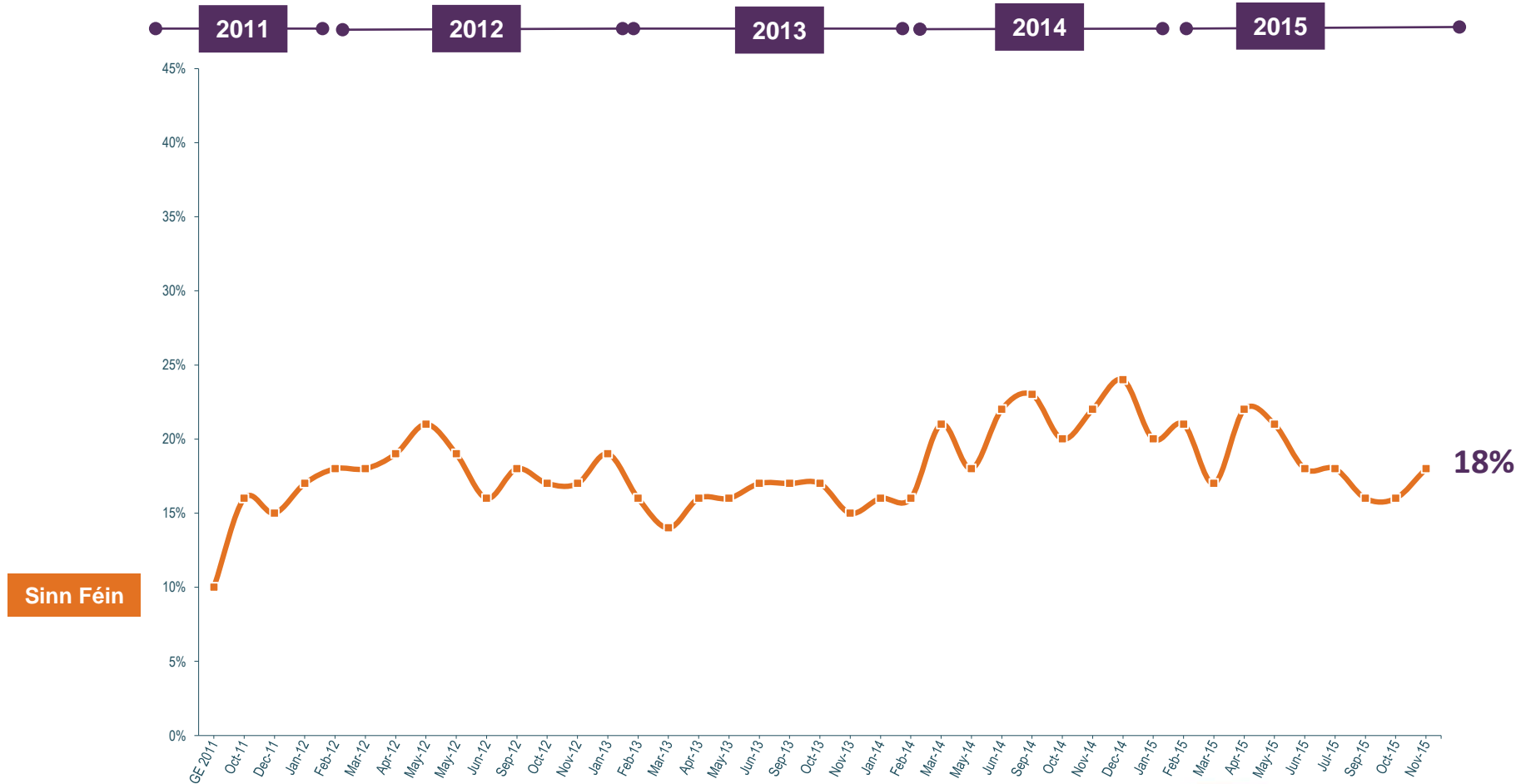
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote )



# First Preference Vote Intention – 2011 to 2015 – Sinn Féin

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)

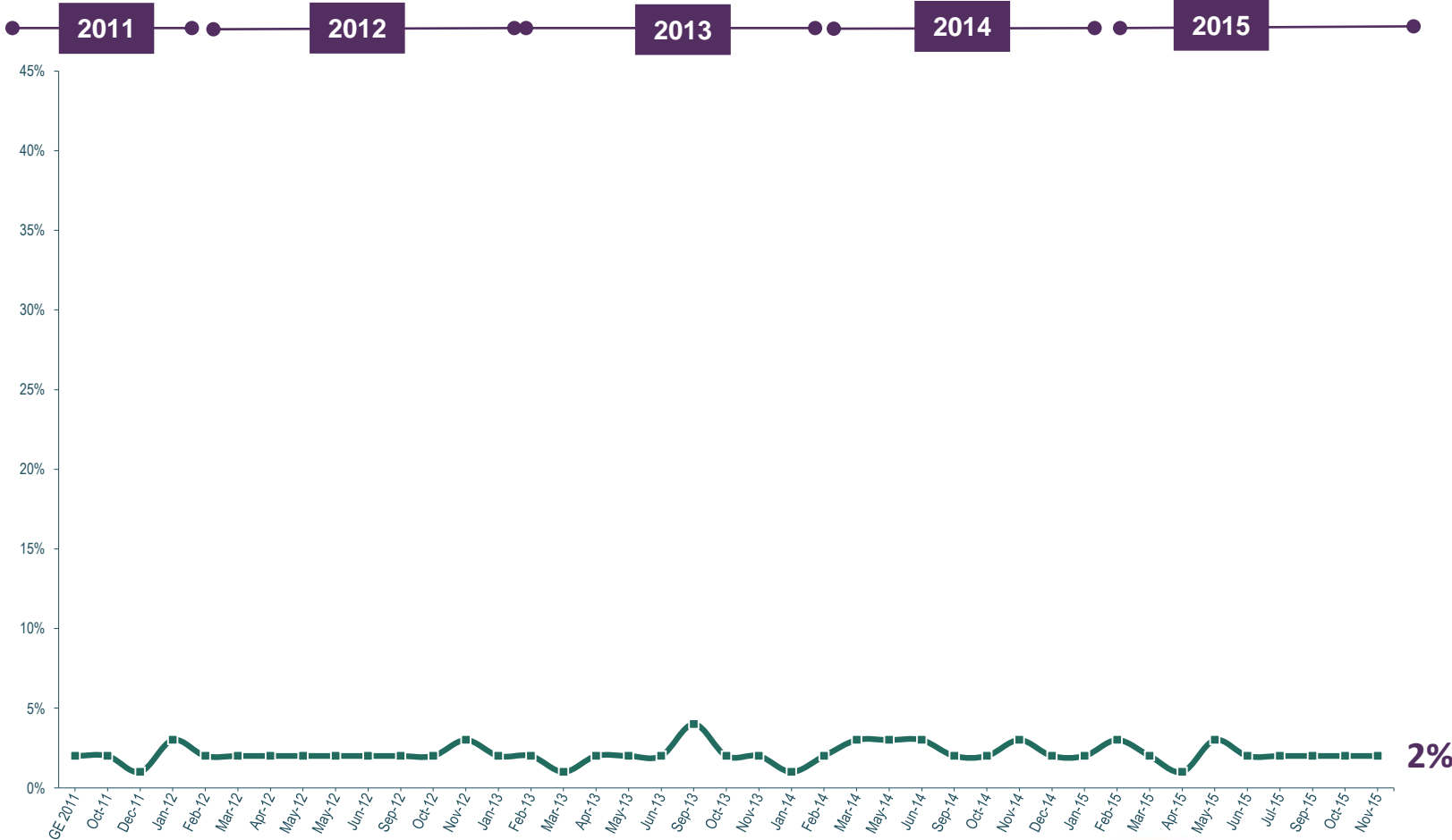
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote )



# First Preference Vote Intention – 2011 to 2015 – Green Party

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 )



Green Party

