



# General Election Opinion Poll

7<sup>th</sup> February 2016



# Methodology and Weighting

- RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,005 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 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 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 8 to 10 are included as being those who will definitely go and vote.

***(METHOD NOTE:** After a review of findings of the UK polling enquiry, RED C has reviewed our approach to ensure we take account of any possibility of similar errors in Irish polling. Two issues were uncovered in UK, the first being internet polls not providing enough older voters and the second being too many politically interested younger voters. The older voter issue does not exist in Ireland. The key then is to ensure the younger people in our poll are representative and that we accurately predict their turnout. Having evaluated the voter profile of our likely voters vs. the two general election exit polls and post-election studies, we have made the decision to be more stringent in our likely voter analysis as this provides a profile more in line with those that have voted in the past. From today we will therefore move to only including those that say that they are very likely to vote (8-10) rather than likely to vote (4-10) used previously.)*

- In all respects the poll was completed to the opinion polling guidelines set out by both ESOMAR and AIMRO.

# Opposition Need to Make Campaign Count - I

Recently we identified the battle for floating voters as being between the desire for stability vs. a fairer society. Both strands of this argument have been clearly used by the main parties' in the first few days of the campaign proper, with "maintaining recovery" in every other sentence uttered by Fine Gael candidates; while fairness has been at the cornerstone of opposition parties.

We know from last week's poll that Fine Gael dominates when voters are asked which party the trust most with the economy. But do the electorate actually see any of the opposition as being a better option for a Fairer Ireland. Today's poll suggests the opposition has a way to go in persuading voters that they are to be trusted in terms of fairness. In fact voters most trust Fine Gael to deliver a fairer society in the next five years, with 29% (very close to first preference share) suggesting they trust the party most to deliver. Crucially it is the only party outside of Independents that registers on this issue with floating voters, where 1 in 5 suggest they most trust Fine Gael.

More importantly none of the opposition parties currently stand out as being the alternative for a fairer society. The next most trusted party for fairness is Sinn Fein (16%), closing matching their first preference vote share but certainly not exceeding it. Despite the Fianna Fail focus on fairness, just 12% of voters say they most trust them to deliver a fairer society, well below their first preference share. In fact only Labour over-indexes on trust in delivering fairness, with 2% more voters trusting Labour, than they achieve is first preference vote. Crucially almost 1 in 10 don't trust any of the parties or candidates to deliver this fairness.

The picture is very similar for a range of the most important issues that voters will use to decide how to vote. Overall Fine Gael comes close to matching or outperforming its vote share on most of the key issues, and is the only party that features significantly outside of Independent among floating voters. It matches its vote share on trust in delivering a better health service (30%), and significantly over indexes on trust in delivering employment/job creation (41%). It does fall down somewhat on delivering access to affordable/quality housing, but still manages to gain more trust than any other party (25%).

Trust in Fianna Fail falls below its first preference vote share on all these key issues, apart from the Health service, where it does perform slightly above vote share (19%). The same is the case for Sinn Fein, where apart from trust in delivering affordable housing, the party performs below its first preference vote. Those saying they will vote for Independent candidates do not appear to trust the people they will vote for to deliver any of these key attributes except perhaps fairness.

# Opposition Need to Make Campaign Count - II

The only other party that performs ahead of its current vote share is Fine Gael's coalition partner. Labour are trusted most by 12% of the likely voters on providing a better health service, and significantly over-index on providing affordable housing where 18% trust the party most. It also does well among floating voters on delivering employment and job creation.

The fact that the opposition are currently not trusted ahead of their current vote share on these issues would suggest there is little room for recruitment based on a platform of fairness. The campaign will need to work very hard for the opposition parties to change voter opinion and combat Fine Gael's strength on the economy.

# First Preference Vote Intention – 7<sup>th</sup> February 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)



Fine Gael  
**31%** +2

Labour  
**10%** =

Fianna Fail  
**17%** =

Sinn Fein  
**17%** -2

Independent/  
Other Party  
**25%** =

Undecided Voters  
**13%** +1

**REDC**

# First Preference Vote Intention – 7<sup>th</sup> February 2016

*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 (8-10)	Excluding Undecided	Prompting on Other Parties	2011 Election Results
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Fine Gael	27	27	27	31	31	36
Labour	8	8	9	10	10	19
Fianna Fáil	15	15	15	17	17	17
Sinn Féin	17	16	14	17	17	10
Independent candidates	14	15	17	19	19	13
Green Party	1	1	2	2	2	2
Renua	*	*	*	*	1	-
AAA-PBP	1	1	1	1	3	1 (socialist party)
Social Democrats	2	2	2	2	3	-
Workers Party	-	-	-	-	-	*
Other	*	*	*	*	*	1
Undecided	15	15	13	n/a	n/a	n/a

\*Less than 1%

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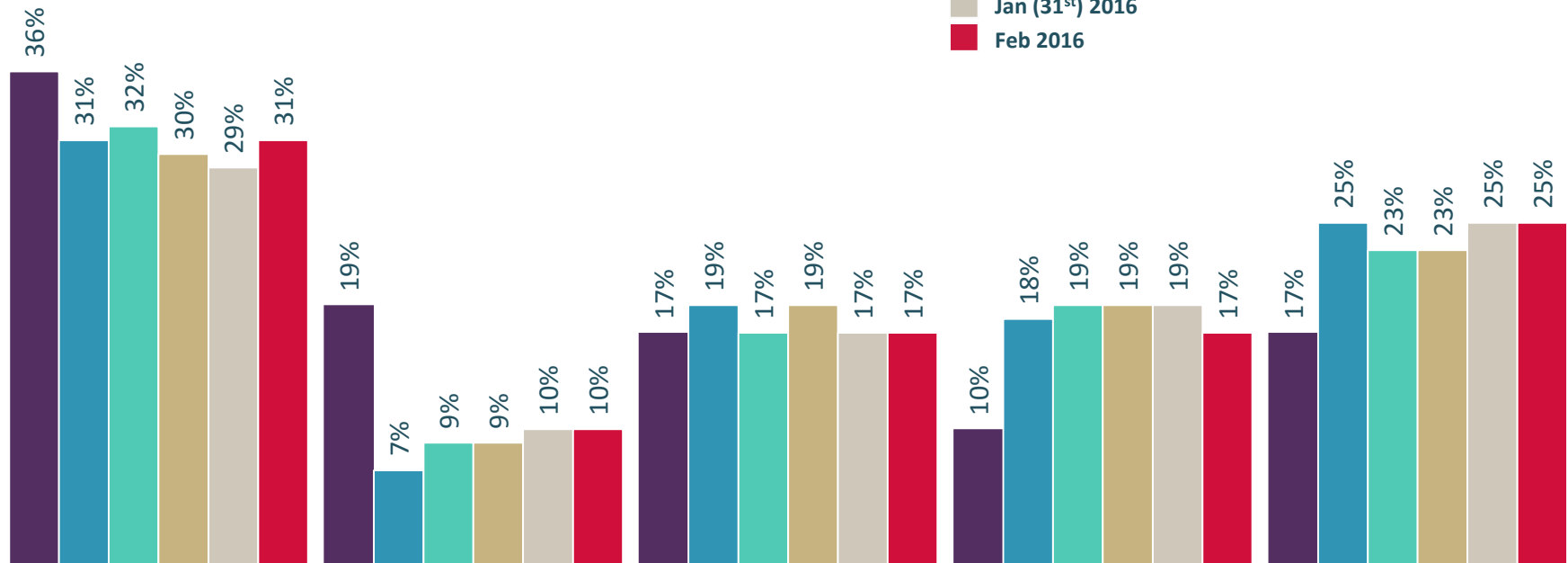
# First Preference Vote Intention – Nov '15 – Feb '16

*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 )



General election 2011  
Nov 2015  
Dec 2015  
Jan (17th) 2016  
Jan (31<sup>st</sup>) 2016  
Feb 2016



Fine Gael  
**31%**

Labour  
**10%**

Fianna Fail  
**17%**

Sinn Fein  
**17%**

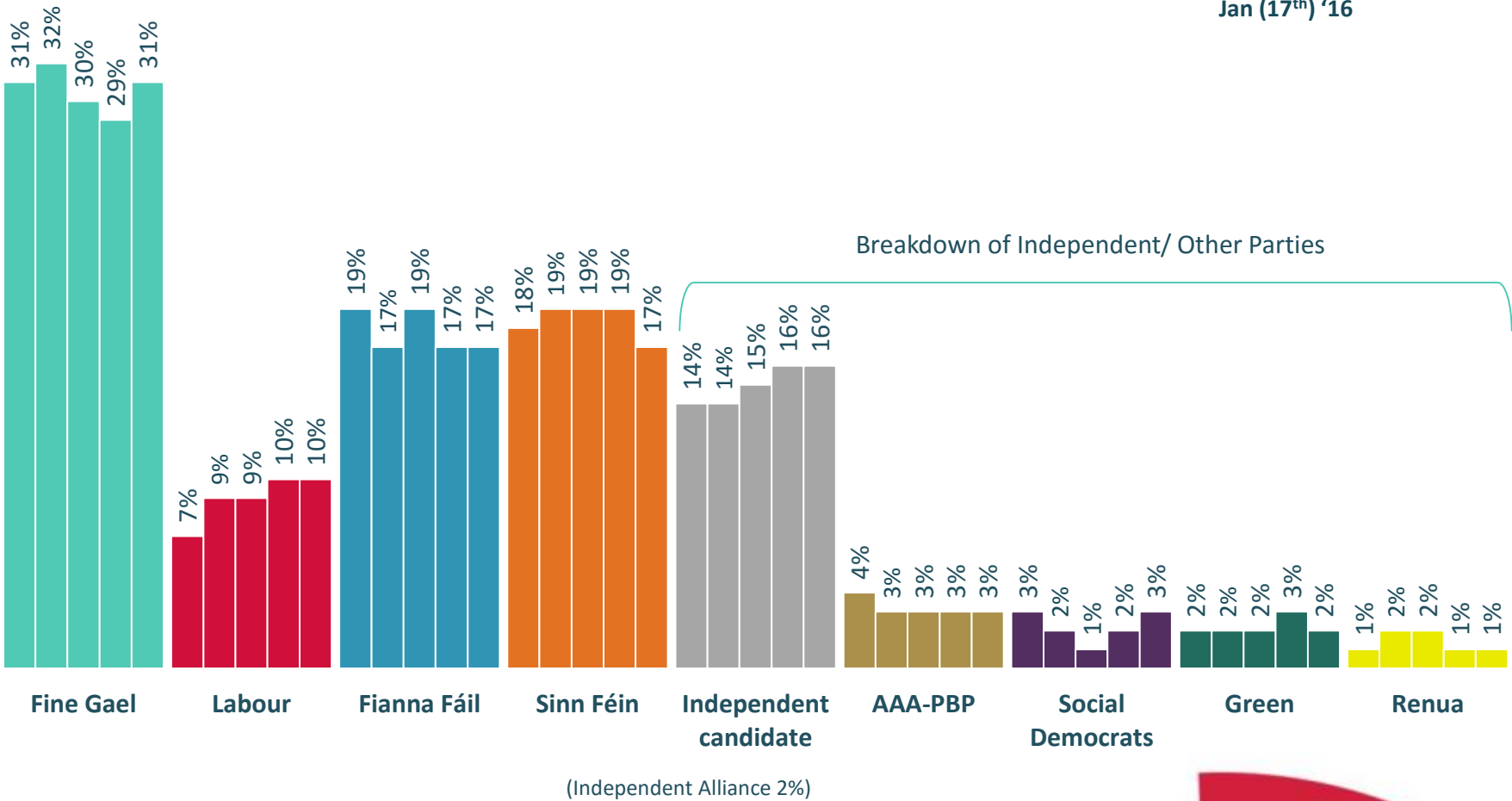
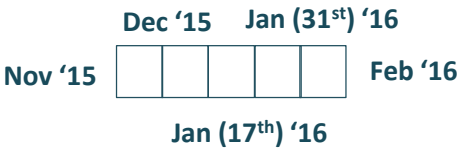
Independent/  
Other Party  
**25%**

**REDC**

# First Preference Vote Intention – Nov '15 to Feb '16

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)

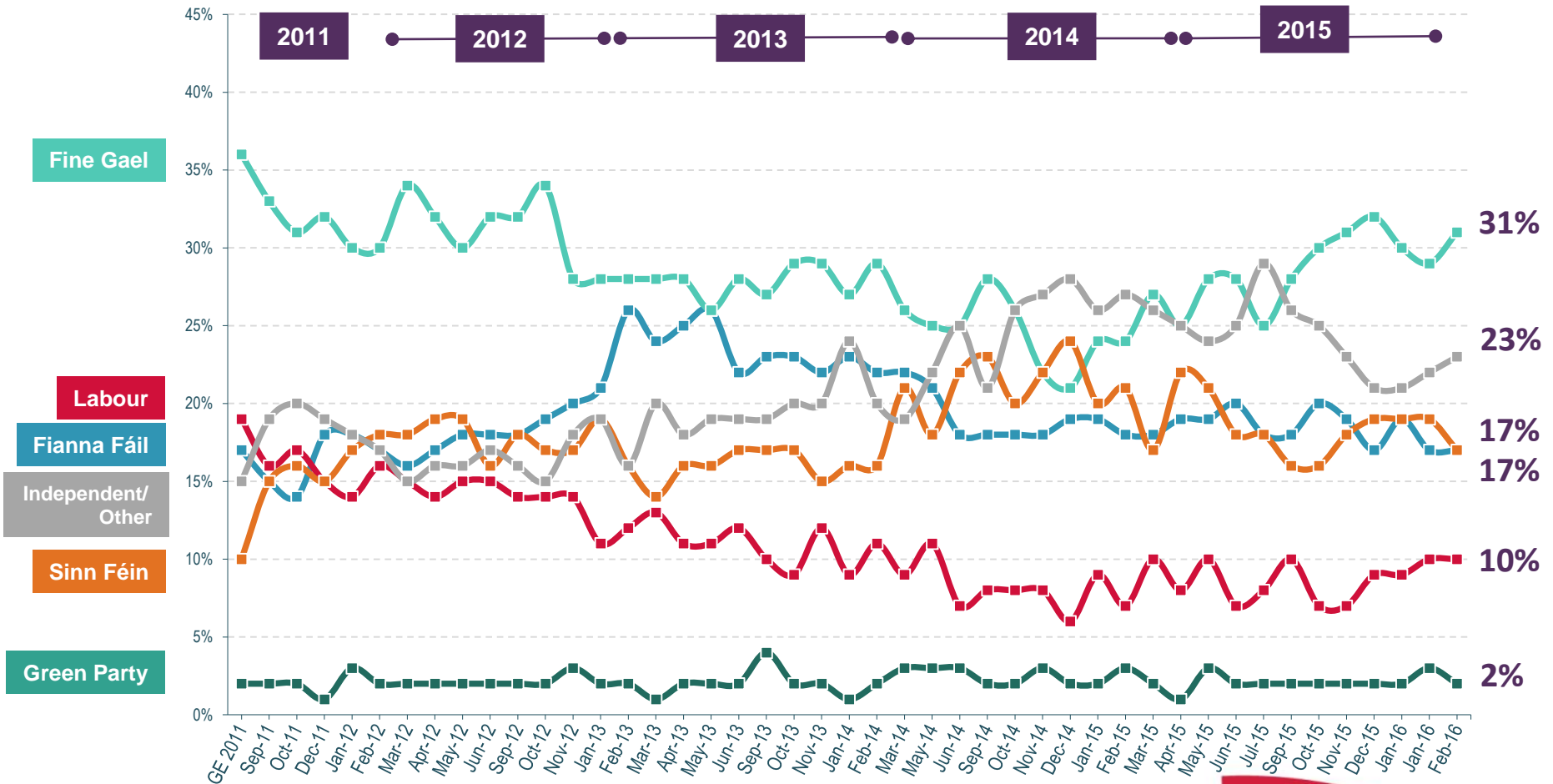




# First Preference Vote Intention – 2011-2016

*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)*

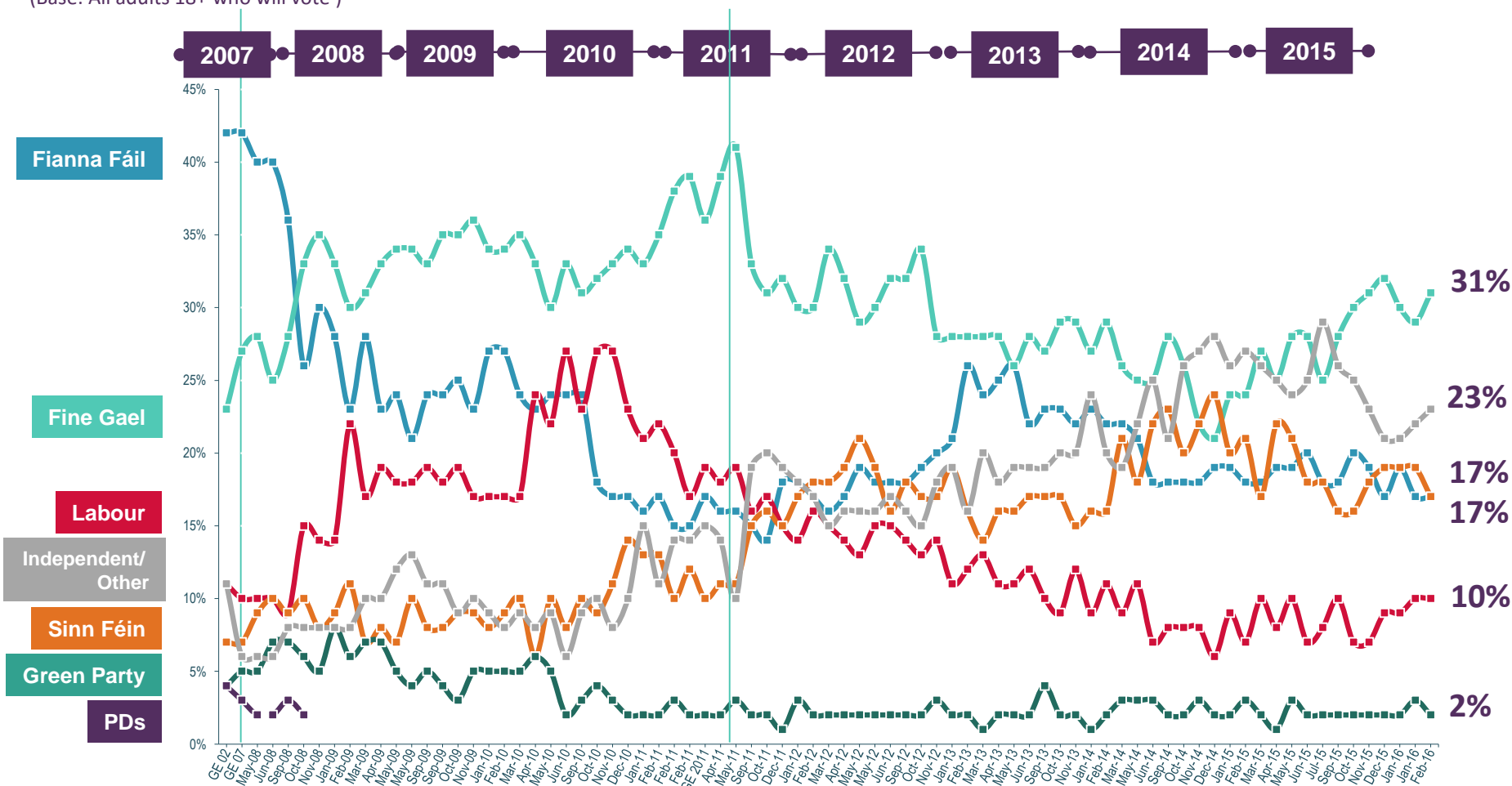
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote )



# First Preference Vote Intention – 2007 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 )





**Most Trusted  
Parties to...**

# Stable Economy vs. Fairer Society – Who is Trusted Most?

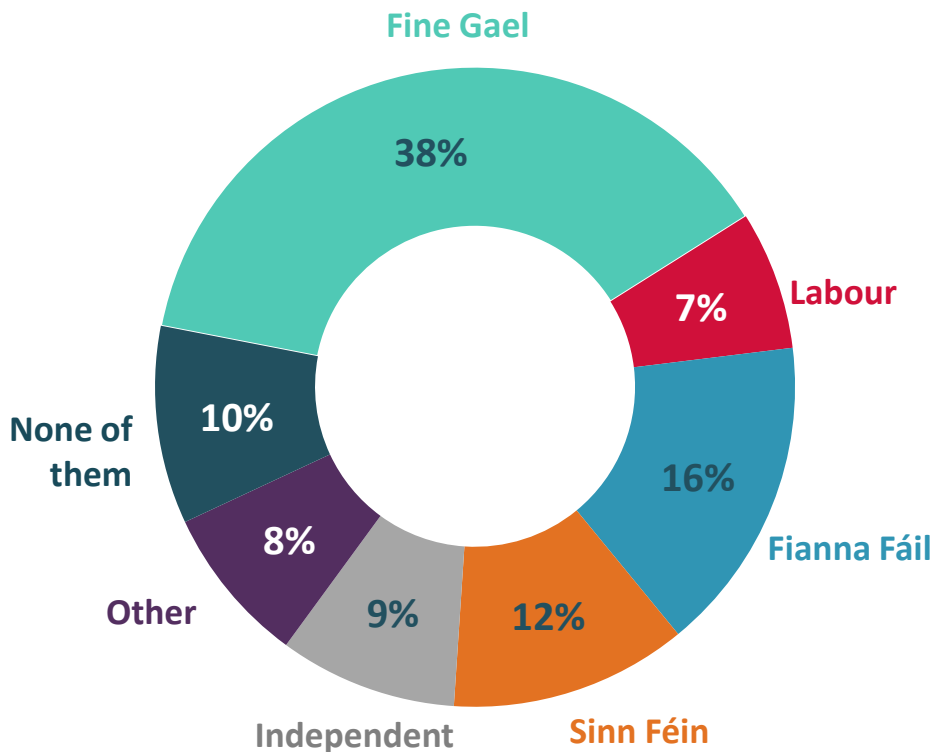
Regardless of whom you would give your first preference vote to, which party or Independent candidate, if any, do you trust the most to...

1 - Manage the economy over the next 5 years

2 - Provide a fairer society over the next 5 years

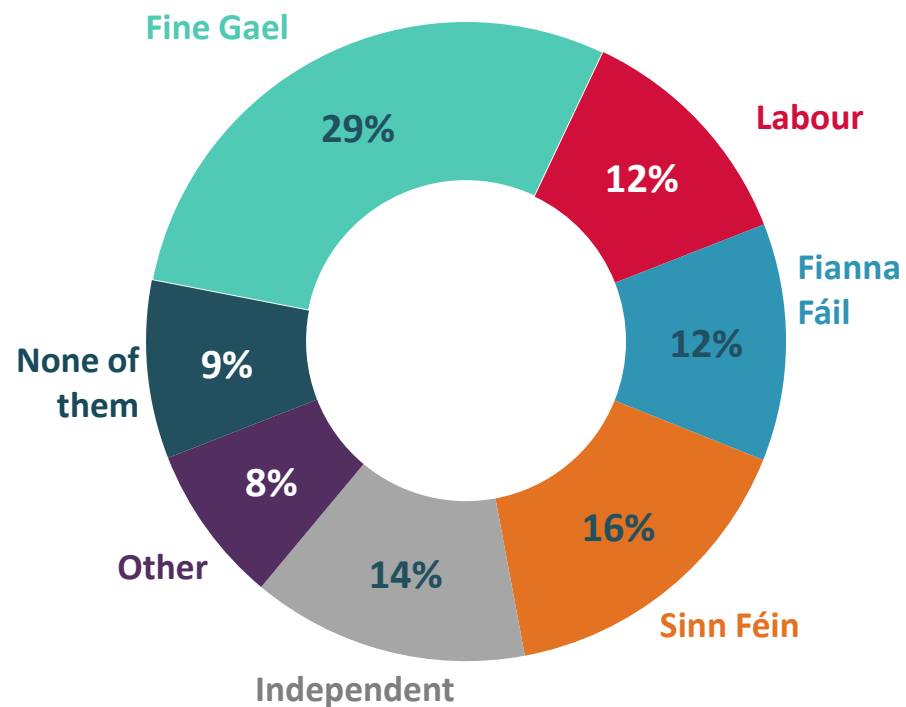
All Likely Voters who express a preference

## Manage Economy



vs.

## Fairer Society



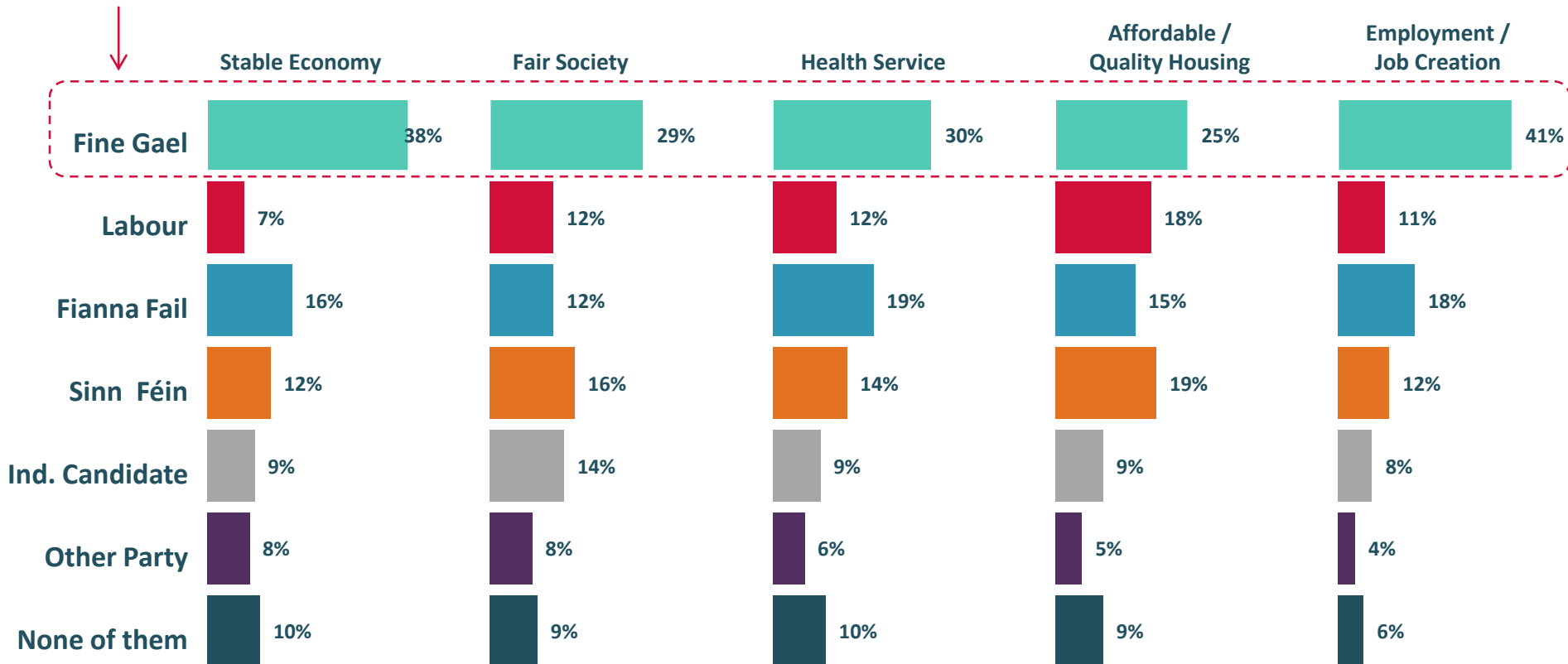
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# Trust Across Different Areas for the Next 5 Years

Regardless of whom you would give your first preference vote to, which party or Independent candidate, if any, do you trust the most over the next 5 years to for...

All Likely Voters who express a preference

Most trusted in across all aspects

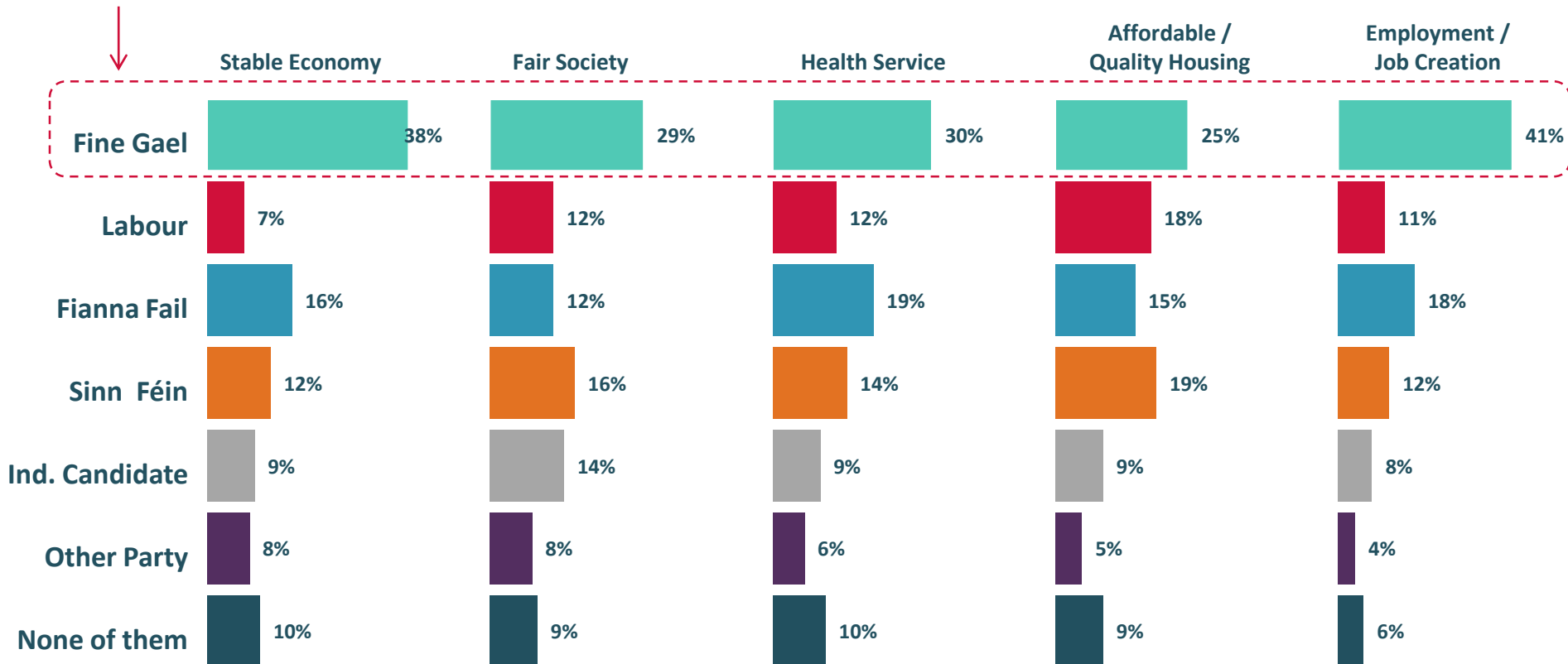


# Trust Across Different Areas for the Next 5 Years

Regardless of whom you would give your first preference vote to, which party or Independent candidate, if any, do you trust the most over the next 5 years to for...

All Likely Voters who express a preference

Most trusted in across all aspects



# Most Trust in Delivery vs. First Preference Vote Share

Regardless of whom you would give your first preference vote to, which party or Independent candidate, if any, do you trust the most over the next 5 years to for...

All Likely Voters who express a preference

Most trusted in across all aspects



Stable Economy

Fair Society

Health Service

Affordable /  
Quality Housing

Employment /  
Job Creation

Fine Gael

11%

1%

2%

-3%

13%

Labour

-2%

3%

3%

9%

2%

Fianna Fail

1%

-3%

4%

-1%

2%

Sinn Féin

-4%

0%

-1%

4%

-4%

Ind. Candidate

-7%

-2%

-7%

-7%

-8%

Other Party

-1%

-1%

-3%

-4%

-5%

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# Who do 'Floating Voters' Trust Most?

Defined as; Those who voted for Fine Gael or Labour in 2011, AND currently say they would vote for an 'Independent Candidate' or is Undecided

(Base: All Floating Voters 18+ - 98)

## All Floating Voters who express a preference

*Potential for Fine Gael to achieve further support*

