



President Election Poll



23rd Oct 2011

Prepared for:

THE SUNDAY BUSINESS POST
IRELAND'S FINANCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC NEWSPAPER

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Methodology and Weighting

- 1006 interviews were conducted between the 18th to 20th Oct 2011 among all adults, with 941 among Irish Citizens – providing a sample error of + or – 3%.
- 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 general election, compares this to the actual results, and weights the data to halfway between the two.
- In all aspects the poll was conducted to the standards set out by AIMRO (the Association of Irish Market Research Organisations) and ESOMAR (the European Society of Marketing and Research)
- Throughout the report we have used the following notations:
Higher than average  Lower than average 

Gallagher lead poll with a week to go



- Sean Gallagher has cemented his lead in the race for the presidential election, according to the latest Sunday Business Post / RED C poll, with less than a week to polling day. Despite the bookies and the media suggesting that Michael D. Higgins would close the gap, Gallagher is being seen by voters as the best bet for President. He secures 40% of the first preference vote in the poll conducted between Tuesday the 18th and Thursday the 21st of October, a gain of 1% since the previous poll a week before. This suggests the momentum he had seen behind him has levelled off in the last week, but it does confirm that the level of support he saw in last week's poll was not a blip.
- Higgins also retains most of his share of first preference, securing 26% in today's poll, which is a drop of 1% in the past week. The respective results for the two candidates first preference share, leaves a significant gap of 14% that would need to be closed through transfers, and this already feels like a bridge too far, even before second preference are even analysed.
- When we look more closely at the two candidate's transfers, it becomes apparent that as long as the first preference remains this way in the next few days, Gallagher is most likely to win the election.
- The first candidate likely to be eliminated according to this poll is Mary Davis, as she secures just 2% share of the first preference vote. Of course she has a very similar share to Dana, so in the end it could be one or the other that ends up being eliminated first. After performing strongly at the start of the campaign it now appears that her vote has moved away to Independent candidates more likely to win the election. Her transfers do not then have a significant impact, but for what it is worth a third of them are transferred to Gallagher and none to Higgins.
- Dana gets a slightly better share of first preference than Davis, with 3% share, a slight rise compared to a week ago. Again her transfers do not make a significant difference, but again almost a third of them do go to Gallagher with none going to Higgins.
- Next to be eliminated based on today's poll is Gay Mitchell. This is a shocking result for the Fine Gael candidate if replicated on polling day, as it means he has lost share in the past week, leaving him securing just 6% of the first preference vote. When eliminated his transfers do favour Higgins almost 2:1, but the crucial thing here is that Gallagher still gets a relatively good transfer from him.
- David Norris is likely to be the next candidate to be eliminated, having gained votes over the past week. He secures 10% first preference share, an increase of 3% in the past week. Again his transfers do favour Higgins, but again only in the ratio of about 2:1. This means that Higgins is closing the gap, but simply not enough because each of these candidates being eliminated is also transferring to the lead candidate Sean Gallagher.

Gallagher lead poll with a week to go

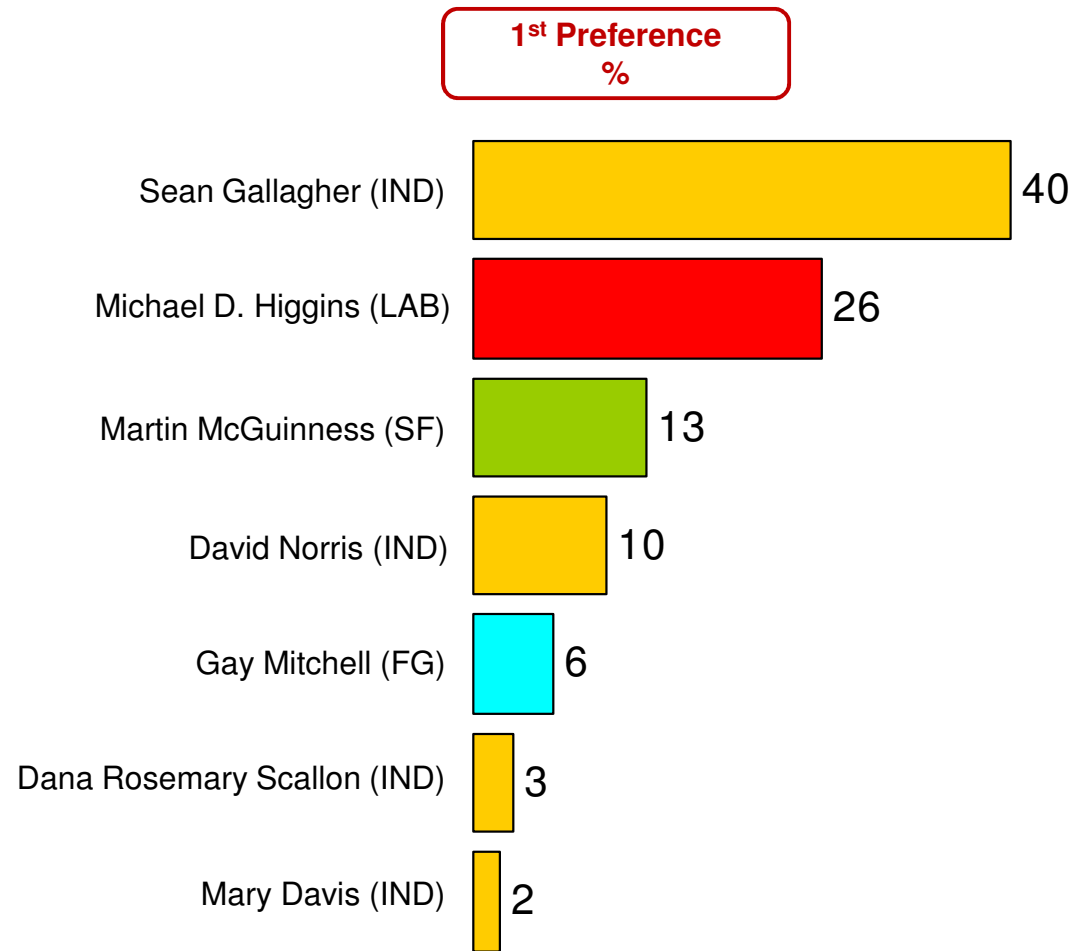


- It is possible, but unlikely that Gallagher will actually achieve quota at this stage. So the final results will depend on the transfers of the final candidate to be eliminated, which is Martin McGuinness. McGuinness secures 13% of the first preference vote, but as he transfers almost equally to each of the two lead candidates, all his transfer will do is take the candidate already in the lead at this stage over the finish line.
- The other factor we need to take into account is turnout, which has been historically quite low for Presidential elections. However, when we look at vote intention among those definite to vote (10 out of 10 on a likelihood to vote scale), the result does not change materially. In fact Gallagher now actually gains share when only those definite to vote are included, securing 42%, while Higgins loses share to secure 24%. The only other candidate that sees some gains among definite voters is Gay Mitchell, whose share improves somewhat to leave him securing 8% share overall.
- So who is supporting Gallagher? His support is across demographics with steady support among men and women, and most age groups. He does get highest levels of support from those in the 35-44 year old age groups, and lowest among those aged 65+, but even here his support is still at 27%. Regionally his support is also slightly lower in Dublin and higher in Munster. But of perhaps most interest is his support among different party voters. He now secures 65% of those who voted Fianna Fail in the last election, and when we look further back to 2007 election when Fianna Fail did much better, it is interesting that he also secures close to 50% of these past Fianna Fail supporters. But Gallagher's appeal goes far beyond his links to Fianna Fail. He also secures 47% of Independent voter's first preference, 40% of Fine Gael voter's first preference and perhaps most shocking, he also secure 20% of Labour supporters first preference. Again this suggests that the electorate is not picking a candidate based on party lines.
- For Michael D. Higgins this leaking of Labour support to his arch rival is crucial. He now only secures 48% of his own parties voters. If he could persuade those Labour voters who say they will currently back Gallagher, to toe the party line, then the contest would be much closer with Gallagher on about 36% and Higgins on 30% first preference. If some of the Fine Gael vote was also then persuaded to cross over to Higgins, transfers may well play an important part.
- The fact that this poll very closely matches that taken a week ago, suggests that many people may have potentially made up their mind at this stage. There are still 10% of the electorate that are likely to vote who say they are undecided, but this is a relatively low figure when we compare it to a past general elections a week before polling day. However, there is of course still a week from when the last interviews were conducted on this poll and the election itself, and a week is a long time in politics! Given the significant shifts we have seen in the past, this means things could still change in the week ahead. But based on this poll it is very much Gallagher's election to lose.

Presidential Election

Share of first preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate - 745)



In the final run up to the Presidential Election, Gallagher's success continues as he gains (+1%) on first preference, with Higgins noting a slight decline (-1%). While Mc Guinness remains unchanged, Norris sees a slight uplift (+3%), while Mitchell drops back (-2%).

(Q5a)

(6)

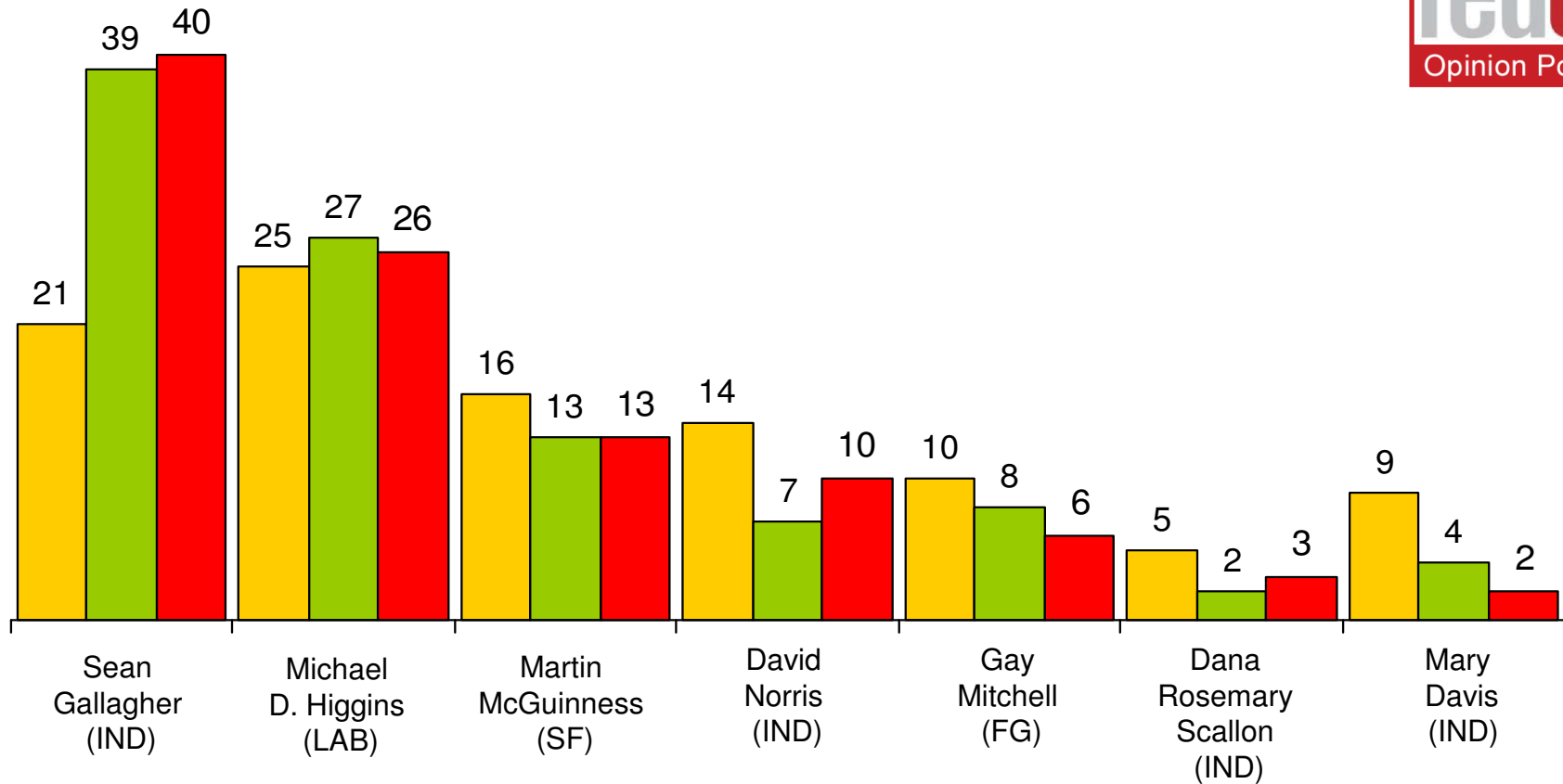
Share of first preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate - 745)



1st Preference
%

■ Paddy Power 6th Oct 2011
■ SBP 16th Oct 2011
■ SBP 23rd Oct 2011



Gallagher has maintained his jump witnessed in mid October, pulling away significantly from nearest rival Higgins. The trending declines are impacting greatest on Mitchell and Davis. Although Norris has pulled back slightly, he has still not regained the level of support he noted previously.

(Q5a)

(7)

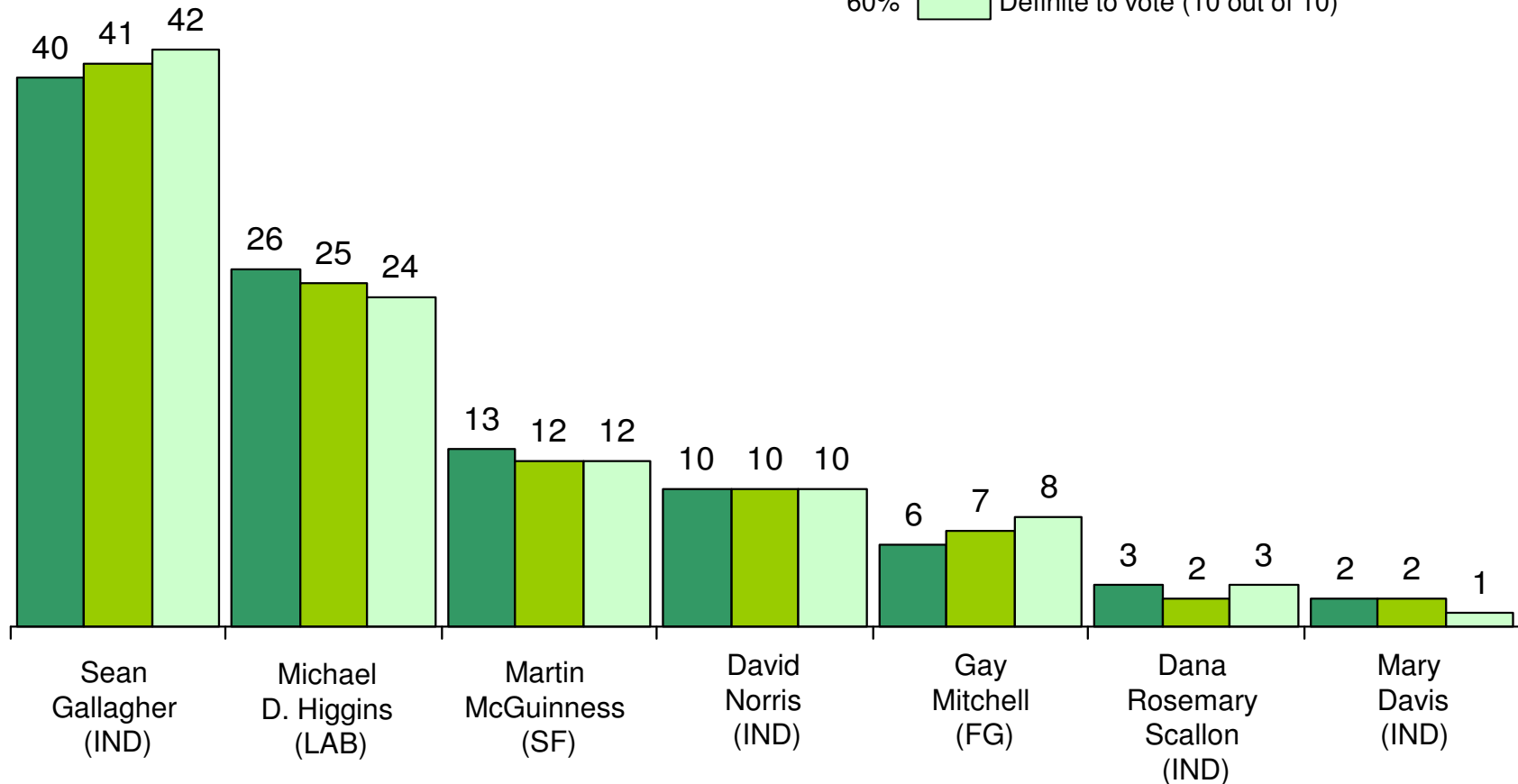
Share of first preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland – 23rd Oct 2011

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate - 745)



1st Preference
%

88% Likely to vote (4-10 out of 10)
78% Very likely to vote (7-10 out of 10)
60% Definite to vote (10 out of 10)



The higher the likelihood is to vote, the greater Gallagher's support on first preference becomes, bringing him up to 42% first preference share among those definite to vote. The opposite effect is noted for Higgins however, which sees him declining as certainty to vote increases.

(Q5a)

(8)

Share of first preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland x Demographics



(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a 1st preference for a candidate-745)

	Total	Gender		Age						Region			
		Male	Female	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	Dublin	ROL	Munster	Conn/ Ulster
Sean Gallagher (IND)	40%	40%	40%	38%	43%	47%	41%	38%	27%	33%	42%	46%	38%
Michael D. Higgins (LAB)	26%	27%	26%	18%	23%	25%	25%	35%	32%	30%	25%	22%	29%
Martin McGuinness (SF)	13%	15%	11%	12%	17%	12%	15%	16%	4%	10%	13%	12%	17%
David Norris (IND)	10%	9%	11%	27%	6%	8%	9%	5%	10%	16%	11%	6%	6%
Gay Mitchell (FG)	6%	4%	9%	2%	6%	3%	5%	4%	18%	7%	4%	9%	6%
Dana Rosemary Scallon (IND)	3%	4%	2%	-%	3%	6%	1%	1%	6%	1%	3%	4%	3%
Mary Davis (IND)	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	3%	3%	1%	1%

1. Gallagher's strength appears relatively evenly split across demographics, with those aged 35-44 and those residing in Munster a particularly key group of support. However, his weakness lie slightly among older age groups and Dublin residents.
2. Higgins gains his support from Gallagher's weaknesses.
3. McGuinness is weak among older age categories, while he holds a stronger position among Conn/Ulster and 25-34 year olds.
4. Norris still does well among younger voters and still does relatively well in Dublin.

(Q5a)

Share of 1st preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland X party voted for in last general election on 25th Feb 2011

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate and are likely to vote - 745)



	Total 1 st Preference %	Fianna Fáil %	Fine Gael %	Labour %	Sinn Féin %	Independent %
Sean Gallagher (IND)	40%	63%	40%	20%	16%	46%
Michael D. Higgins (LAB)	26%	15%	29%	48%	4%	26%
Martin McGuinness (SF)	13%	6%	4%	12%	73%	4%
David Norris (IND)	10%	8%	7%	17%	5%	13%
Gay Mitchell (FG)	6%	4%	15%	-%	1%	2%
Dana Rosemary Scallon (IND)	3%	5%	3%	1%	1%	4%
Mary Davis (IND)	2%	*%	1%	1%	-%	5%

Gallagher has strong support from both Fianna Fáil and Independent voters in the general election earlier this year. Higgins continues to hold strong among Labour voters, as does Norris. Unsurprisingly McGuinness' strength lies exclusively in Sinn Féin voters.

(Q5a/3)

* Caution - Base size small for Sinn Fein (61) and Independent (81) & too small to show those who voted for Green Party (10)

Share of 1st preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland X party voted for in last general election on 24th May 2007

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate and are likely to vote - 745)



	Total 1 st Preference %	Fianna Fáil %	Fine Gael %	Labour %	Sinn Féin %	Independent %
Sean Gallagher (IND)	40	51	38	25	26	34
Michael D. Higgins (LAB)	26	20	26	52	5	31
Martin McGuinness (SF)	13	12	3	9	68	20
David Norris (IND)	10	7	8	9	1	9
Gay Mitchell (FG)	6	4	21	-	-	-
Dana Rosemary Scallon (IND)	3	5	2	3	-	4
Mary Davis (IND)	2	*	2	2	-	3

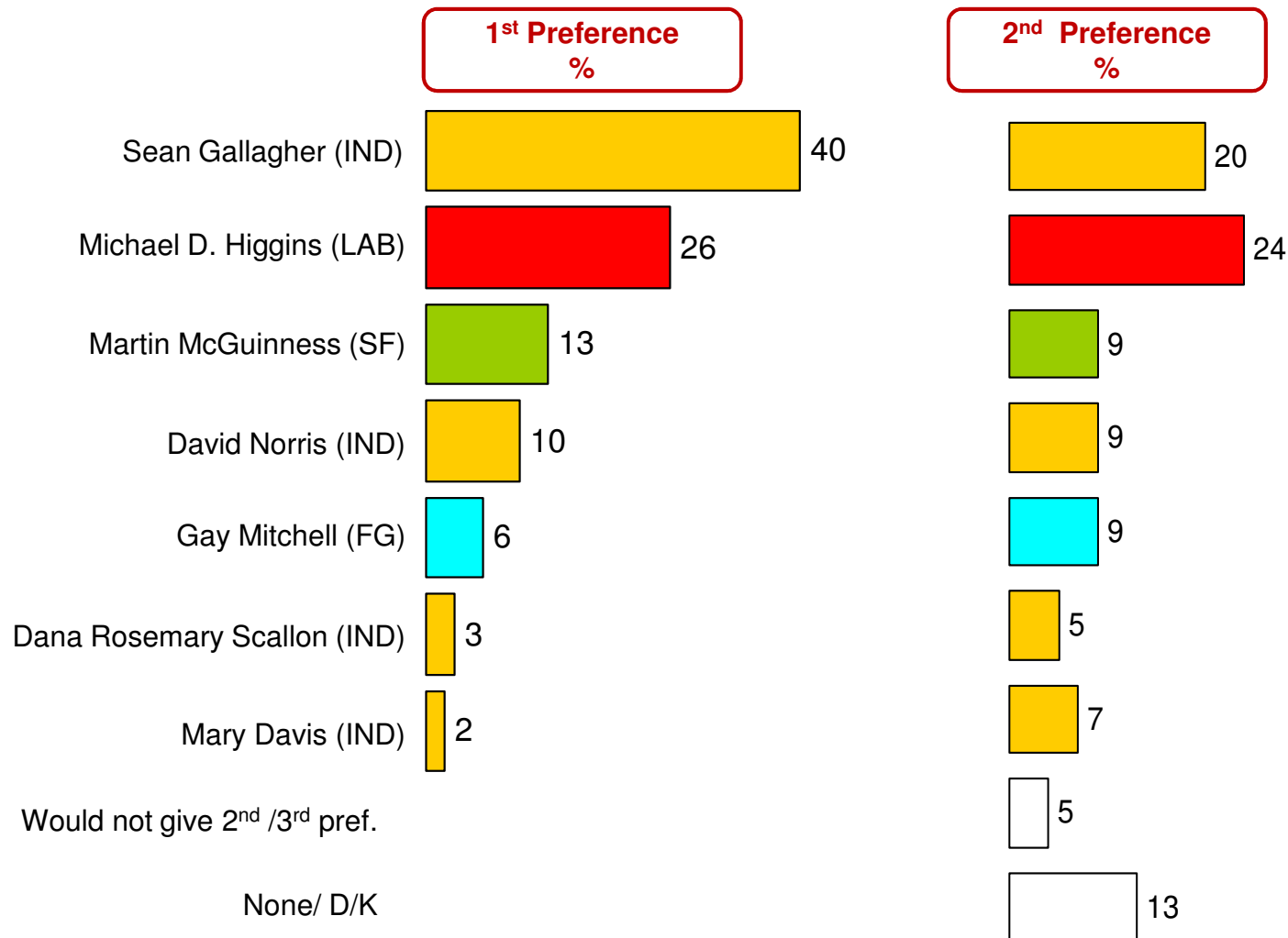
Gallagher has over 50% support among those who voted for Fianna Fáil in the general election of 2007, but does not see the same support among Independent voters of 2007 as he does in 2011. Higgins support lies again among Labour, but also among those who voted Independent in 2007.

(Q5a/3)

* Caution - Base size small for Sinn Fein (32) and Independent (35) & too small to show those who voted for Green Party (14)

Share of first and second preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a 1st preference for a candidate - 745)



Second preference is slightly more positive for Higgins, but only marginally. Second preference is relatively evenly split across the rest of the candidates, with the exception of Davis and Scallon who perform poorly.

(Q5a/b)

(12)



2nd Preference Vote x 1st Preference Vote

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a 1st preference for a candidate-745)



		1ST PREFERENCE VOTE						
	Total 2 nd Preference %	Sean Gallagher (IND) %	Michael D. Higgins (LAB) %	Martin McGuinne ss (SF) %	David Norris (IND) %	Gay Mitchell (FG) %	Mary Davis (IND) %	Dana Rosemary Scallon (IND) %
Sean Gallagher (IND)	20%	0	44%	26%	21%	28%	33%	26%
Michael D. Higgins (LAB)	24%	33%	0	30%	32%	54%	2%	1%
Martin McGuinness (SF)	9%	13%	7%	0	8%	1%	18%	27%
David Norris (IND)	9%	10%	11%	11%	0	1%	16%	11%
Gay Mitchell (FG)	9%	11%	11%	5%	11%	0	5%	11%
Mary Davis (IND)	7%	12%	4%	*	6%	4%	0	10%
Dana Rosemary Scallon (IND)	5%	5%	5%	8%	4%	5%	6%	0

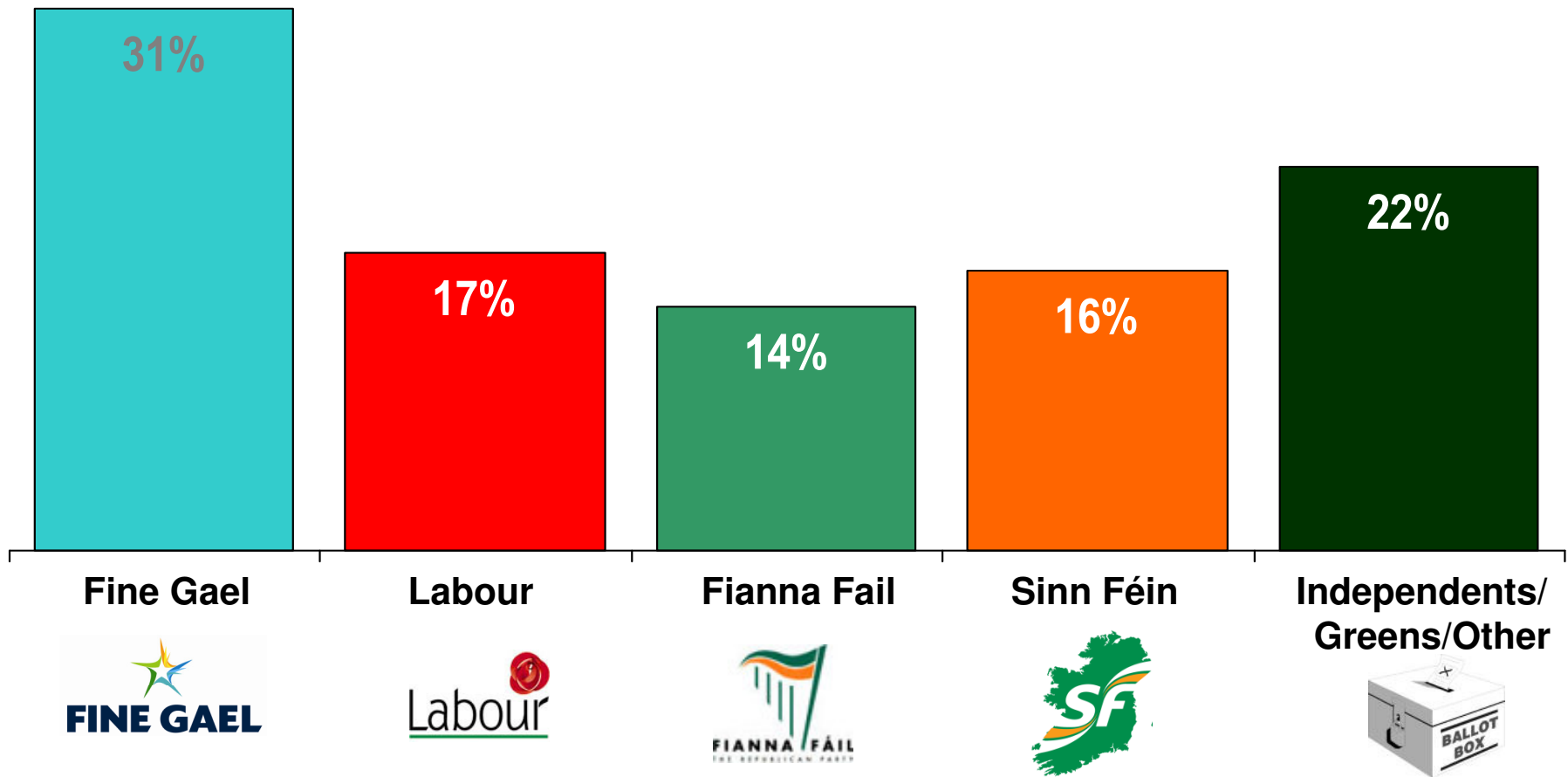
Higgins does well out of Mitchell's transfers in particular, but also makes gains from McGuinness and Norris. Gallagher however, makes positive gains from Davis and Scallon.

(Q5a/b)

General Election

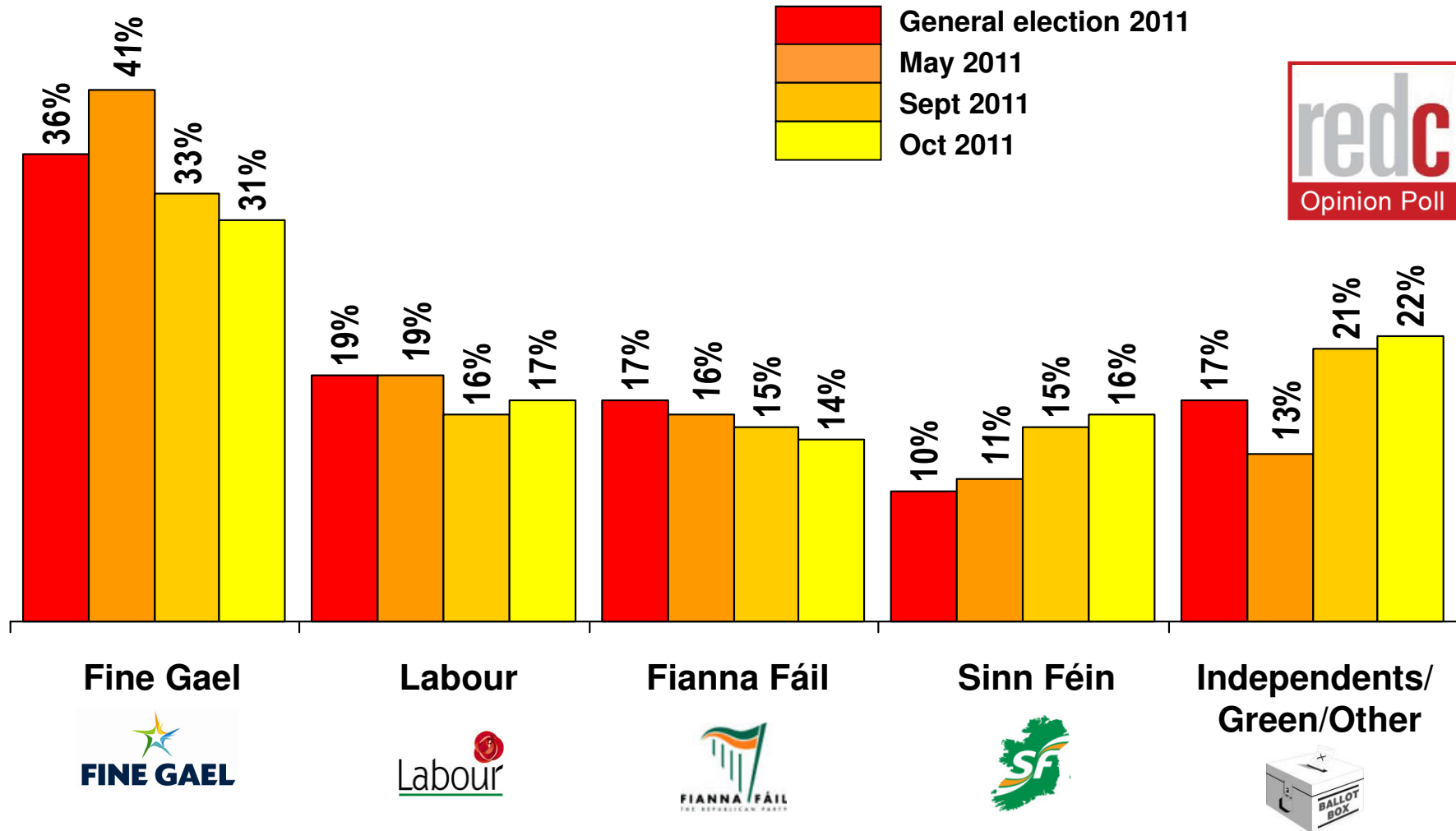
If there were a *general election* tomorrow, to which party or independent candidate would you give your first preference vote?

(Base: All adults WHO WILL VOTE 18+)



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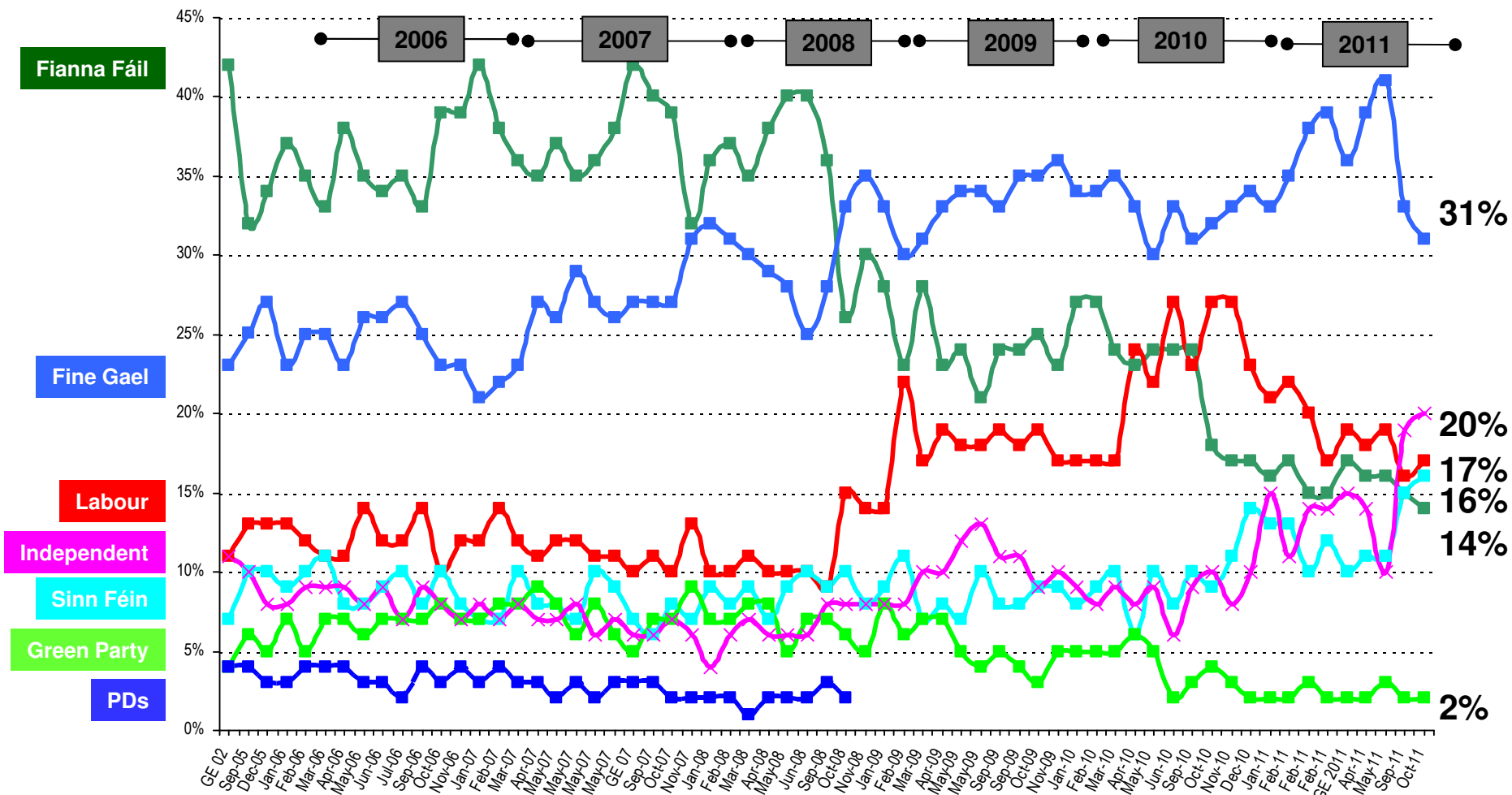


CURRENT FIRST PREFERENCE SUPPORT			
	Core figures 25th Sept 2011	Excluding undecided	2011 Election Results
	%	%	%
Fine Gael	25	31	36
Labour	15	17	19
Fianna Fáil	11	14	17
Sinn Féin	13	16	10
Independents/ Green / Others	18	22	17
Undecided	18		

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(Base: All adults 18+)

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