



President Election Poll



16th Oct 2011

Prepared for:

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

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Methodology and Weighting

- 1013 interviews were conducted between the 10th to 12th Oct 2011 among all adults, with 935 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 surges into lead, as two horse race develops

- Sean Gallagher surges into the lead in the race for the Aras, after an astonishing gain in support from the electorate again in this week's Sunday Business Post/ RED C poll. Gallagher secures 39% of the first preference vote, which is an increase 18% since a comparable poll taken just one week ago.
- If ever anyone had the famous "momentum" he appears to in this election! However, the big shifts in support seen in the polls so far show how uncertain the electorate are in their views on this, and with two weeks to go the question is whether he can hang on to this support, and even extend it to win a majority.
- Gallagher's gains in support are across age groups, but particularly among those aged 35-44. They are also focused outside of Dublin, and among past Fianna Fail voters, who appear to have woken up to the fact that he could be a Fianna Fail candidate in disguise.
- What these gains mean now however, is that his support is now widespread across age, gender and region. He does still have some particular strengths in support, and these are among women, those aged 35-44 and those outside of Dublin. While he has made gains among Fianna Fail voters, his support is not exclusive to these voters, with strong levels of support also seen among past Fine Gael and Independent voters.
- What does this mean for Michael D Higgins, who has been in the driving seat up to now? Firstly, Higgins remains Gallagher's closest competitor, having been the only other candidate to also make gains in this poll. As a result, he secures 27% of the first preference vote, up 2% in a week; but some 12% behind Gallagher.
- Secondly, despite this gap in support, further analysis suggests that the game is not yet up for Higgins. Turnout at presidential elections is relatively poor, with the last one seeing only about 50% of the population coming out to vote.
- Thus it is worth looking at the vote intentions just among those most likely to go and vote. Among "definite" voters (those who say they are 10 out of 10 likely to vote), which suggests a turnout of about 51%, the gaps between the two candidates does close to 8%, with Gallagher dropping 1 point down to 38% and Higgins rising by 3 points to reach 30% first preference.
- Thirdly, when we begin to analyse the possible transfers from eliminated candidates, they suggest that at least initially Higgins is likely to begin to catch his rival as, Davis, Norris and Mitchell all transfer strongly to him. However, the question is whether this will be enough before Martin McGuinness is eliminated, as he transfers strongly to Gallagher.



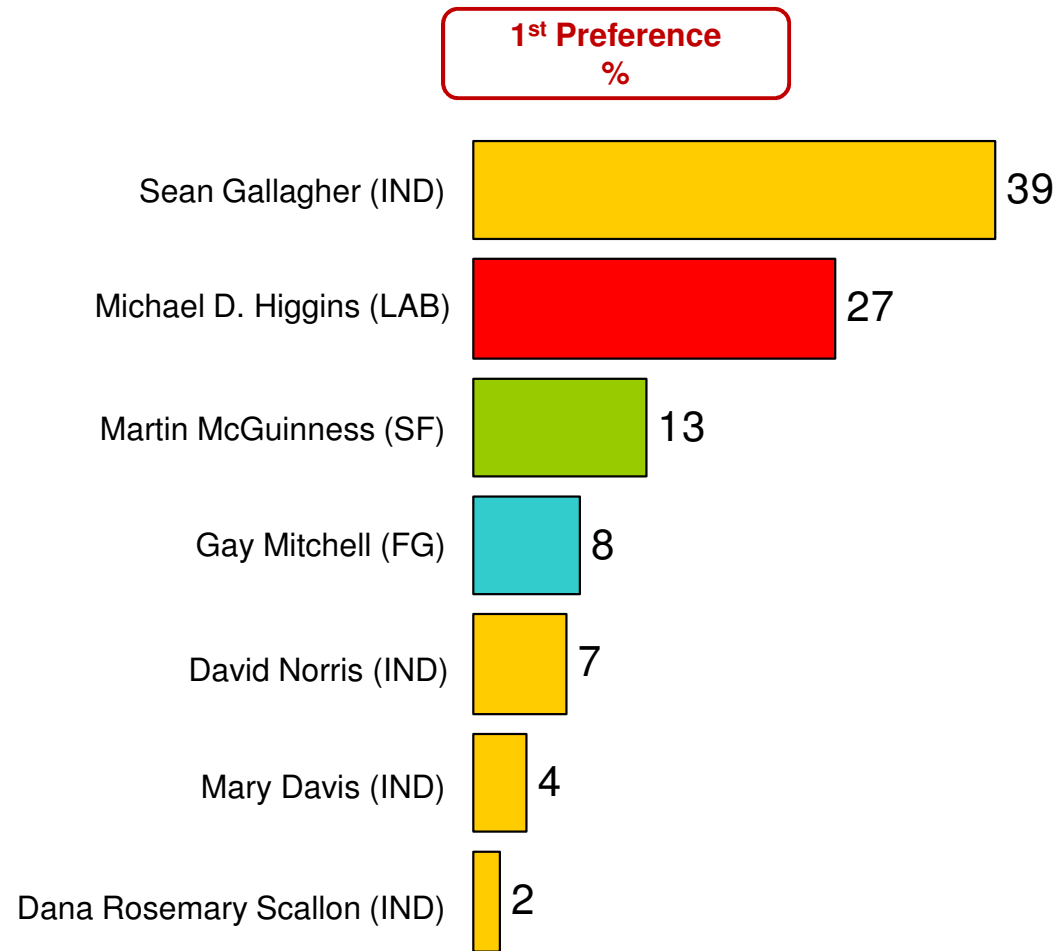
Gallagher surges into lead, as two horse race develops

- With regard to the other candidates in the field, this is not an encouraging poll, as it suggests a two horse race is developing. All the other candidates see their share of the first preference vote decline.
- Martin McGuinness secures 13% first preference, down 3%, in a week which has seen the criticism of him move from being directed by other candidates to the public confronting him about his past. He still remains in 3rd place, and retains the support from past Sin Fein voters, but support is dropping elsewhere.
- Gay Mitchell also falls back 2%, leaving him with just 8% first preference. He still hasn't made the traction he was hoping for this week, and his low rating is still fundamentally due to poor support among past Fine Gael voters. Only 15% of past Fine Gael voters say they will vote for him, and instead they divide their support between Gallagher (43%) and Higgins (30%). However, his fall is not as great as that for David Norris, which does at least mean he leapfrogs David Norris into 4th place.
- David Norris himself again sees a big drop in support. Having fallen 7% in the last poll, he falls a further 7% today, which leaves the once favourite candidate securing just 7% of the first preference vote in this poll. It suggests his decision to re-enter the race may not have been a wise one, despite his initial support on re-entering.
- Mary Davis, who had gained throughout the early stages on the campaign, appears to have been fundamentally damaged by the criticism focused on her in the first week of the real campaigning after the final candidates were announced. This coupled with the surge in support for fellow Independent candidate Gallagher means she falls back again this week, losing half her support. She secures just 4% first preference in today's poll, down 5% in the past week.
- Finally, Dana also falls back 3% leaving her securing just 2% of the first preference vote at this stage.
- So a two horse race is clearly emerging, with transfer patterns and turnout that suggest it could at this stage still be a tight race, but with Gallagher now in the driving seat. Having said that, the very large shifts in support seen so far mean that nothing is certain until Election Day with two weeks of twists and turns still to come.



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 - 732)



Higgins leads the field and has seen a 7% rise in support, but the big mover is Gallagher who sees support rise by 10%. The big loser is Norris (down 7%), with Mitchell and Davis also falling back.

(Q6a)

(5)

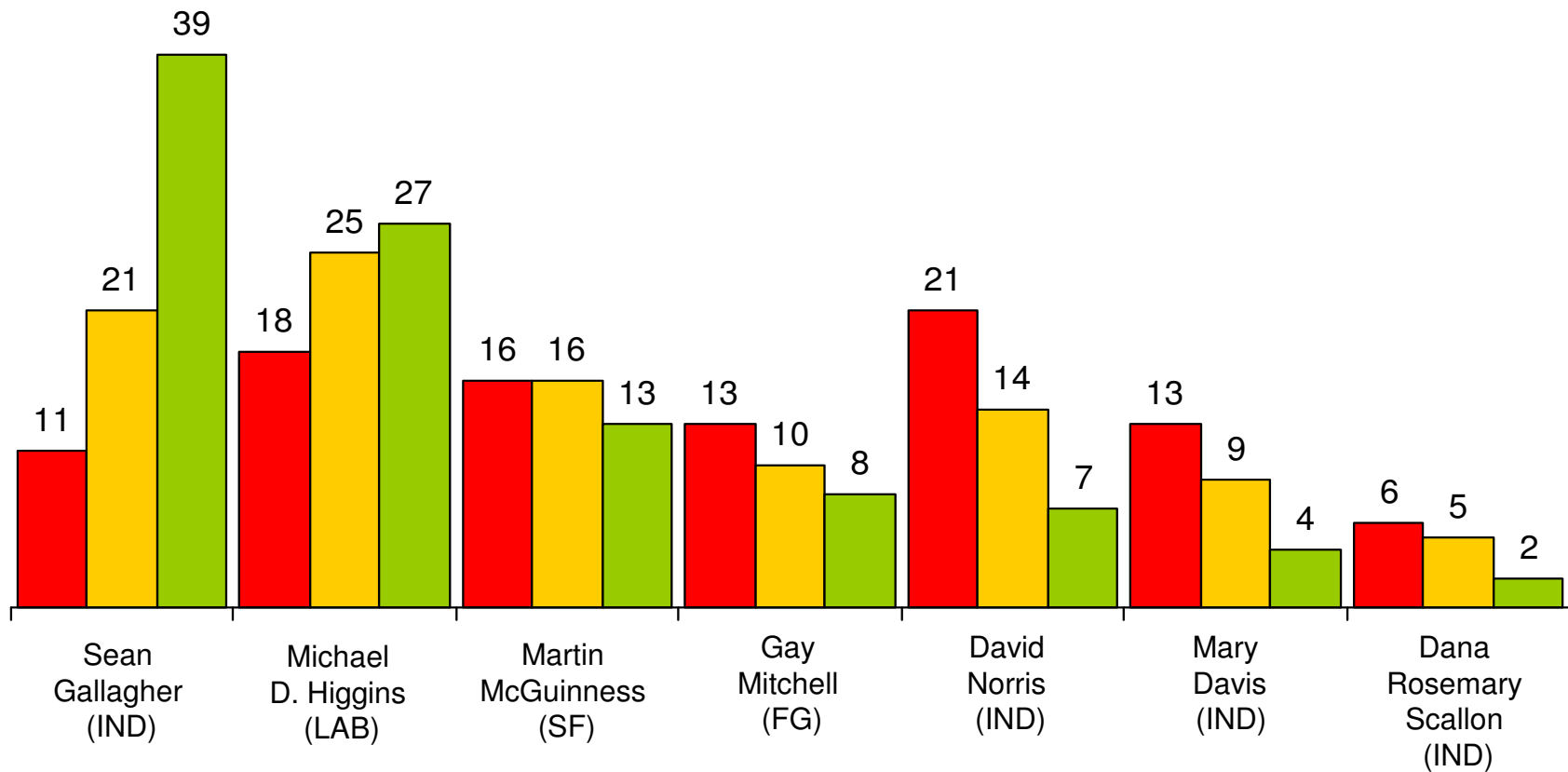


Share of first preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate - 709)

1st Preference
%

SBP 25th Sept 2011
Paddy Power 6th Oct 2011
SBP 16th Oct 2011



Higgins leads the field and has seen a 7% rise in support, but the big mover is Gallagher who sees support rise by 10%. The big loser is Norris (down 7%), with Mitchell and Davis also falling back.

(Q6a)

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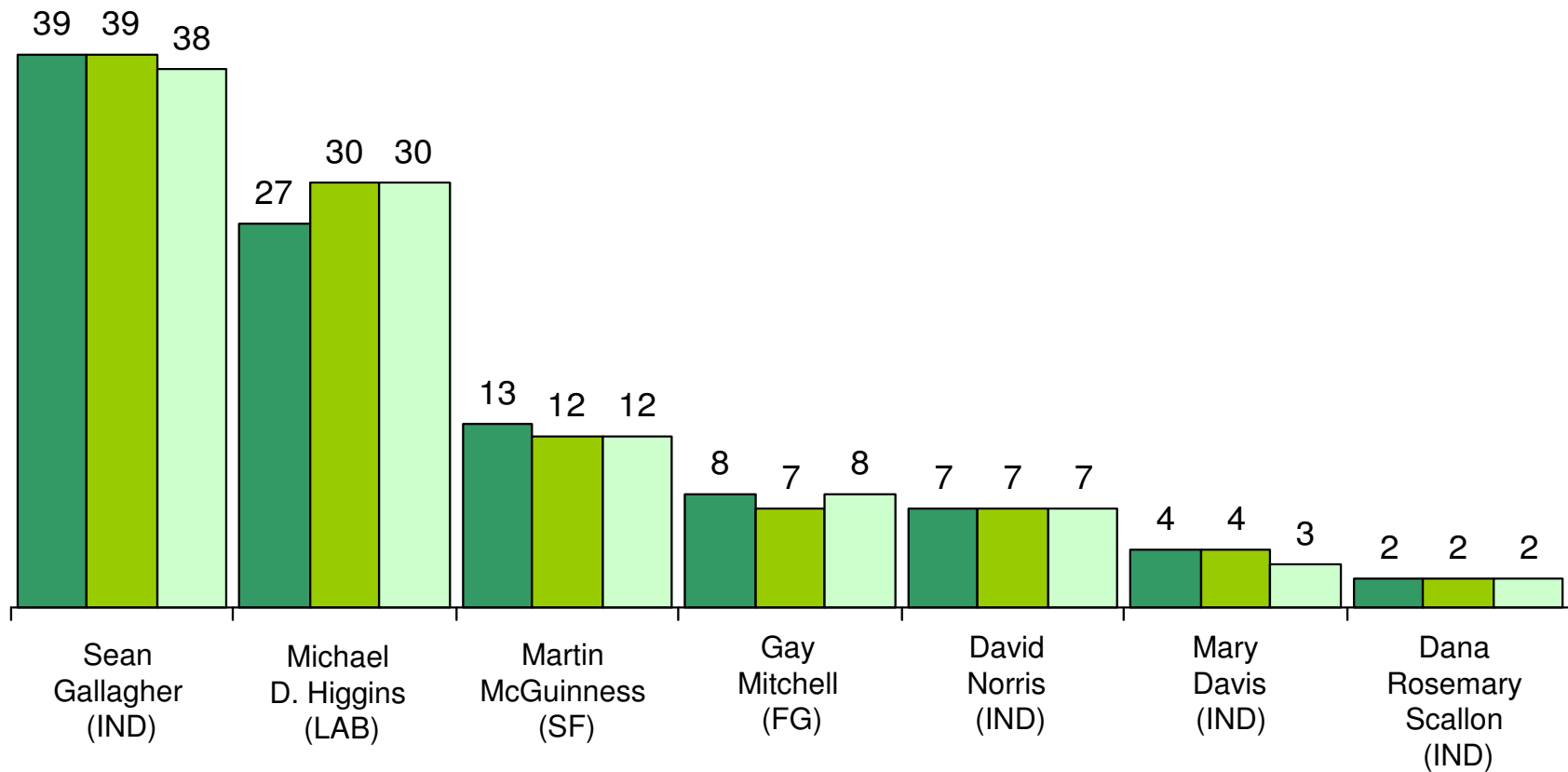


Share of first preference vote across candidates for the next President of Ireland – 16th Oct 2011

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate - 709)

1st Preference
%

76% Likely to vote (4-10 out of 10)
66% Very likely to vote (7-10 out of 10)
51% Definite to vote (10 out of 10)



Higgins leads the field and has seen a 7% rise in support, but the big mover is Gallagher who sees support rise by 10%. The big loser is Norris (down 7%), with Mitchell and Davis also falling back.

(Q6a)

(7)

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-732)

	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)	39%	36%	42%	31%	38%	57%	37%	36%	31%	26%	45%	42%	43%
Michael D. Higgins (LAB)	27%	27%	27%	16%	21%	23%	30%	32%	40%	41%	16%	28%	26%
Martin McGuinness (SF)	13%	16%	10%	20%	15%	7%	18%	7%	13%	13%	13%	14%	12%
Gay Mitchell (FG)	8%	10%	6%	10%	11%	2%	6%	12%	7%	8%	8%	9%	5%
David Norris (IND)	7%	6%	7%	11%	9%	6%	8%	6%	2%	5%	11%	4%	8%
Mary Davis (IND)	4%	3%	6%	8%	6%	4%	1%	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	5%
Dana Rosemary Scallan (IND)	2%	1%	2%	5%	*	1%	1%	3%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%

1. Higgins strength is in the older age groups and in Dublin
2. Gallagher does well among younger voters – perhaps less likely to get out and vote. He also does well in Munster
3. McGuinness is weak among women – his strength regionally is in Connaught and Ulster
4. Norris still does well among younger voters, but poorly among older voters. He still does relatively well in Dublin.

(Q6a)

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

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate and are likely to vote - 732)



	Total 1 st Preference %	Fianna Fáil %	Fine Gael %	Labour %	Sinn Féin %	Independent %
Sean Gallagher (IND)	39%	54%	43%	35%	14%	45%
Michael D. Higgins (LAB)	27%	22%	30%	47%	5%	23%
Martin McGuinness (SF)	13%	8%	2%	5%	69%	13%
Gay Mitchell (FG)	8%	5%	15%	3%	7%	1%
David Norris (IND)	7%	4%	6%	6%	6%	9%
Mary Davis (IND)	4%	4%	3%	4%	1%	7%
Dana Rosemary Scallon (IND)	2%	3%	1%	-	-	4%

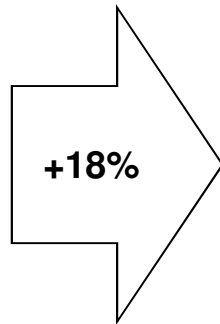
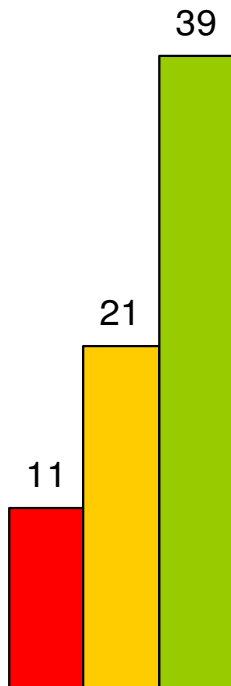
McGuinness is the only party candidate to really hold on to party supporters. Higgins only retains 28% of Labour supporters, with a large chunk still supporting Norris. Mitchell does very poorly among Fine Gael supporters, only securing 15%, while Gallagher takes 25% and Higgins 27% of the Fine Gael vote. Independent candidate voters are evenly split across the top four candidates.

(Q6a/3)

* Caution - Base size small for Sinn Fein (62) and Independent (73) & too small to show those who voted for Green Party (9)

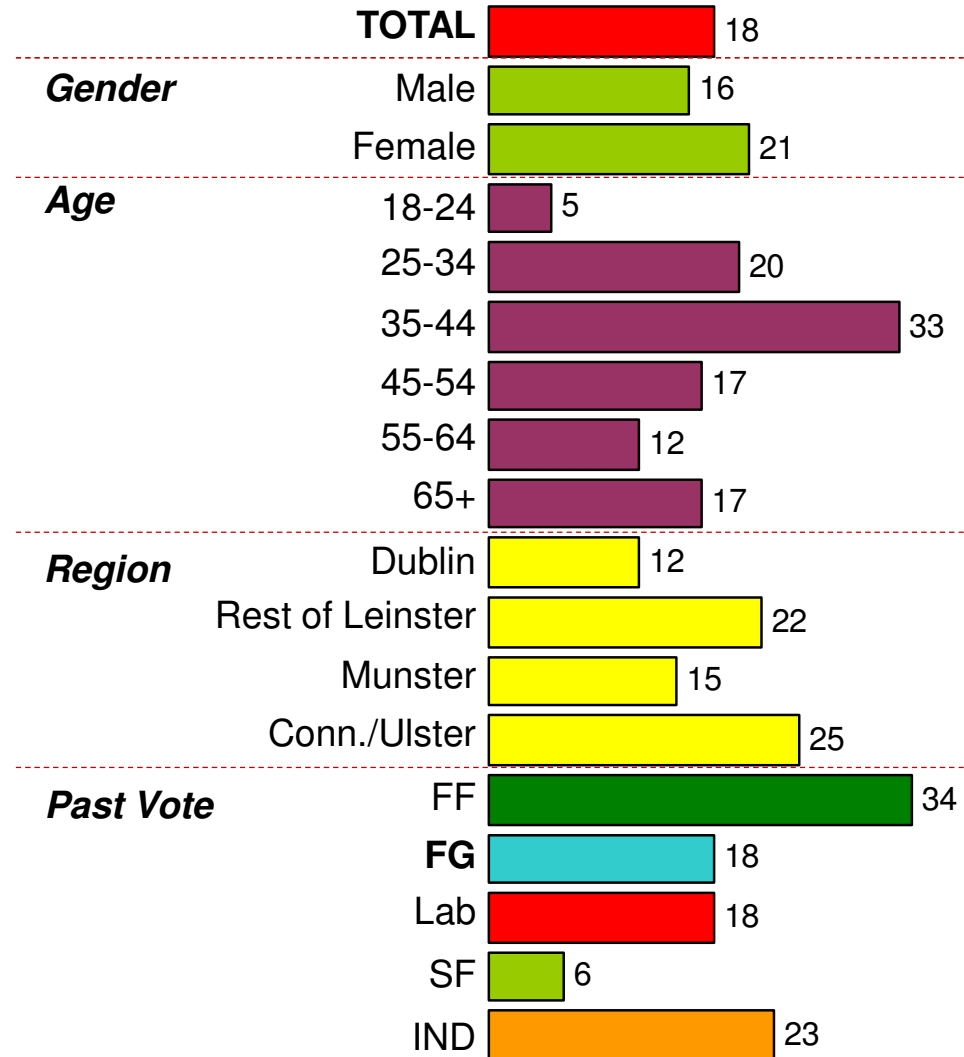
Where have Sean Gallagher gains come from?

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a preference for a candidate - 709)



Sean
Gallagher
(IND)

% Increase 6th Oct vs. 16th Oct 2011



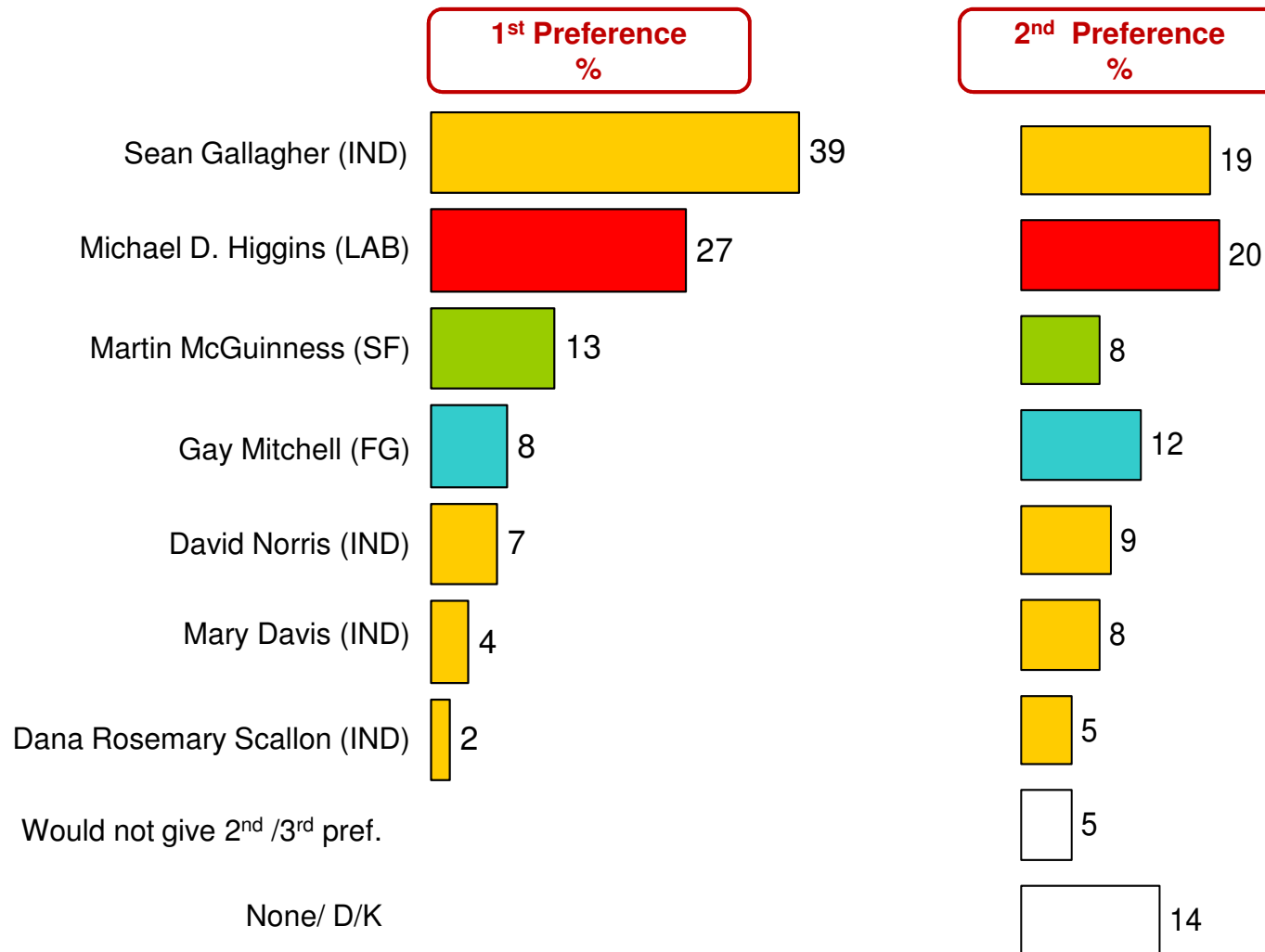
Seven in ten Irish Citizens claim they will go and vote at the Presidential election – with lowest intention among younger voters, Farmers and those who support Sinn Fein





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 - 732)



Second preferences are quite evenly split across candidates, apart from McGuinness who does poorly, with Mitchell not that much better. Higgins and Gallagher both take similar transfer patterns. Mitchell does do better in third preferences.

(Q6a/b)

(11)



2nd Preference Vote x 1st Preference Vote

(Base: All Irish Citizens 18+ who gave a 1st preference for a candidate-732)



		1ST PREFERENCE VOTE						
	Total 2 nd Preference %	Sean Gallagher (IND) %	Michael D. Higgins (LAB) %	Martin McGuinne ss (SF) %	Gay Mitchell (FG) %	David Norris (IND) %	Mary Davis (IND) %	Dana Rosemary Scallon (IND) %
Sean Gallagher (IND)	19%	0	36%	34%	21%	26%	18%	19%
Michael D. Higgins (LAB)	20%	32%	0	9%	40%	32%	28%	7%
Martin McGuinness (SF)	8%	12%	7%	0	4%	8%	12%	8%
Gay Mitchell (FG)	12%	14%	13%	10%	0	14%	13%	13%
David Norris (IND)	9%	10%	12%	6%	10%	0	4%	0
Mary Davis (IND)	8%	12%	9%	4%	5%	0	0	10%
Dana Rosemary Scallon (IND)	5%	5%	4%	8%	6%	2%	3%	0

McGuinness does well out of Scallon's transfers who is likely to be eliminated first. Then Gallagher performs strongly among Davis possible transfers suggesting he could push Higgins initially. After this however Higgins dominates suggesting he remains very much in the driving seat.

(Q6a/b)