



General Election Opinion Poll

25th January 2015



Methodology and Weighting

- RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,005 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 19th – 21st January 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.



Same Sex Marriage Referendum Could Still be Lost - I

Despite a number of polls suggesting that voters will support the referendum for Same Sex Marriage equality, and the seemingly universal support for the measure among the political parties, there remains clear warning signs in our research once again this week that the referendum could still potentially be lost. The hard facts are that, once the various opinions of voters are analyzed, we can ascertain that at present less than half of the electorate is currently “certain” to support the referendum, without any reservations.

All too often pollsters have been attacked in referendum campaigns for suggesting some way before the vote that the electorate are generally in support of the change to the constitution, while in the event the results have been far closer or even lost. There are two main reasons for this. The first is that voters simply don't start to properly evaluate the pros and cons of a change to the constitution until the campaign starts properly. So when we poll on their views some time out, they provide a top of mind response which often reflects the mood of the coverage. The second is that the Irish electorate do not change the constitution lightly. Voters generally need to be persuaded that any change to the constitution is really going to be for the better, and if there is any suggestion or uncertainty that change might make things worse, they will retain the status quo and vote no to change.

To combat the potential that the topline poll figures on how people will vote may again oversimplify issues surrounding a referendum, RED C looked at the possible issues that may be raised in the campaign, in order to determine at this stage if these arguments could sway voters away from their current topline support.

To begin we asked voters how strongly they supported the idea of voting yes at the Same Sex Marriage referendum. While overall the great majority (77%) agree that they will vote to support the change to the constitution, in line with most recent polls that ask about vote intention directly, actually only 59% agree strongly that they will do so, with 18% only agreeing more tentatively. This already suggests that the scale of support for passing the referendum is somewhat less convincing than the headline figures suggest. This is before the campaign has started properly, and historical evidence of previous referenda suggest that the campaign will if anything most likely raise further doubts to more voters and see the yes support fall back during.

Same Sex Marriage Referendum Could Still be Lost - II

Over and above the strength of support then we need to try to understand the possible impact that the campaign might have. As such we looked at voter's possible reservations with issues surrounding the vote that will almost certainly be brought to bear during the campaign. The first of these was concerning reservations that voters may have about adoption by gay couples, an issue which 38% agree that they do have reservations with. In itself this appears to match those who earlier said they would not vote in support of the referendum.

However, the reality is that over a third of those of had claimed they would support the referendum, still have reservations about gay couples adopting. It is entirely plausible to suggest that those with reservations around issues that will be used in the campaign are not sure to vote in favour of it, and as such only 48% of voters can actually be described as "secure" yes voters.

This view is further emphasized when we raised the issue of whether voters despite saying they will vote yes in favour of the referendum, had any reservations about the idea of same sex marriage. An even higher proportion of voters (42%) who had previously suggested they would vote yes, claim to still have reservations with the basic concept of the referendum. While it is not certain that this means those voters will change their mind as the campaign begins, it certainly suggests that they cannot at present be relied upon to vote in favour come the referendum day.

Once this analysis is taken into account, and as an extreme measure all those with reservations about same sex marriage and gay adoption are taken out of the yes camp, the proportion "certain" to vote yes at the referendum collapses from the reported highs of 77% to just 44% of all voters. This is far different prospect for those looking to pass the referendum, and suggest there is still much to be done to secure those who currently claim they will vote yes, but also currently harbor reservations about that decision.

First Preference Vote Intention – January 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
24% +3

Labour
9% +3

Fianna Fail
19% =

Sinn Fein
20% -4

Independent/
Other
28% -2

Undecided Voters
12% =

REDC

First Preference Vote Intention – January 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	2011 Election Results
	%	%	%	%	%
Fine Gael	20	20	21	24	36
Labour	7	8	8	9	19
Fianna Fáil	16	15	16	19	17
Sinn Féin	18	18	18	20	10
Independent candidates	22	21	22	24	13
Green Party	2	2	2	2	2
Socialist Party	*	*	*	*	1
Other Party	2	2	1	2	1
Undecided	13	14	12		

First Preference Vote Intention – Sept 2014 – Jan 2015

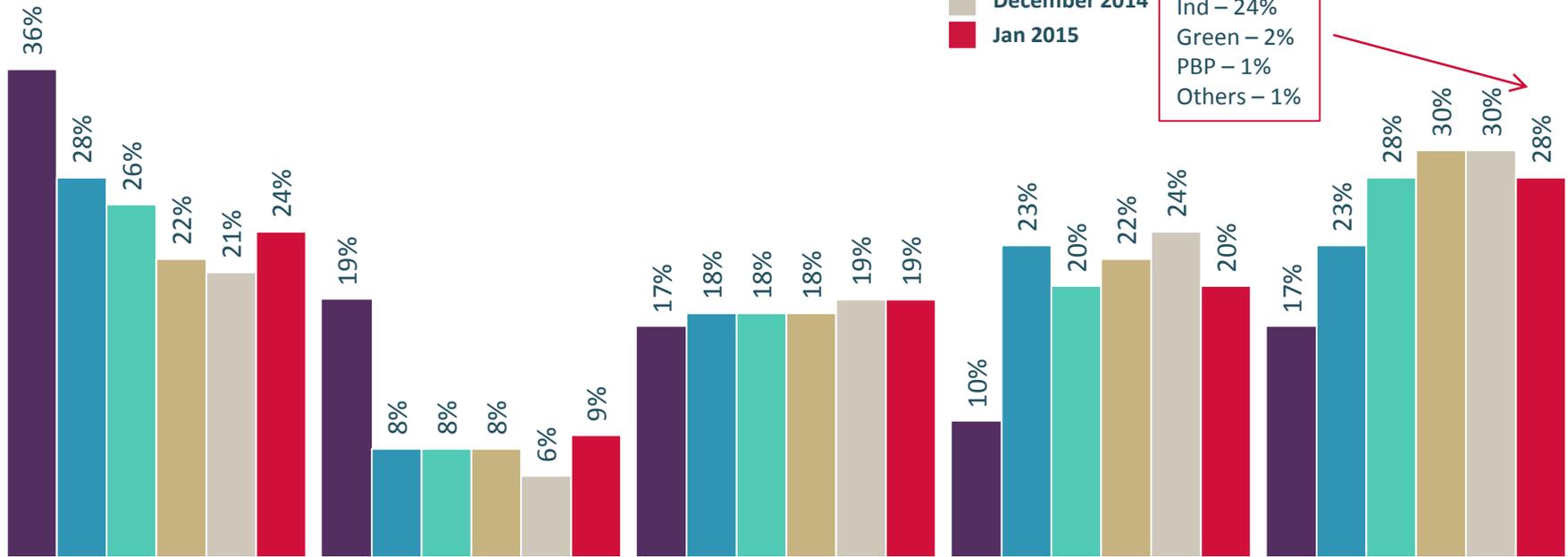
If the general election was tomorrow which party or independent candidate do you think you would give your first preference vote to? (Past vote weighted)

(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)

- General election 2011
- Sept 2014
- Oct 2014
- Nov 2014
- December 2014
- Jan 2015



Split;
 Ind – 24%
 Green – 2%
 PBP – 1%
 Others – 1%



Fine Gael
24%

Labour
9%

Fianna Fail
19%

Sinn Fein
20%

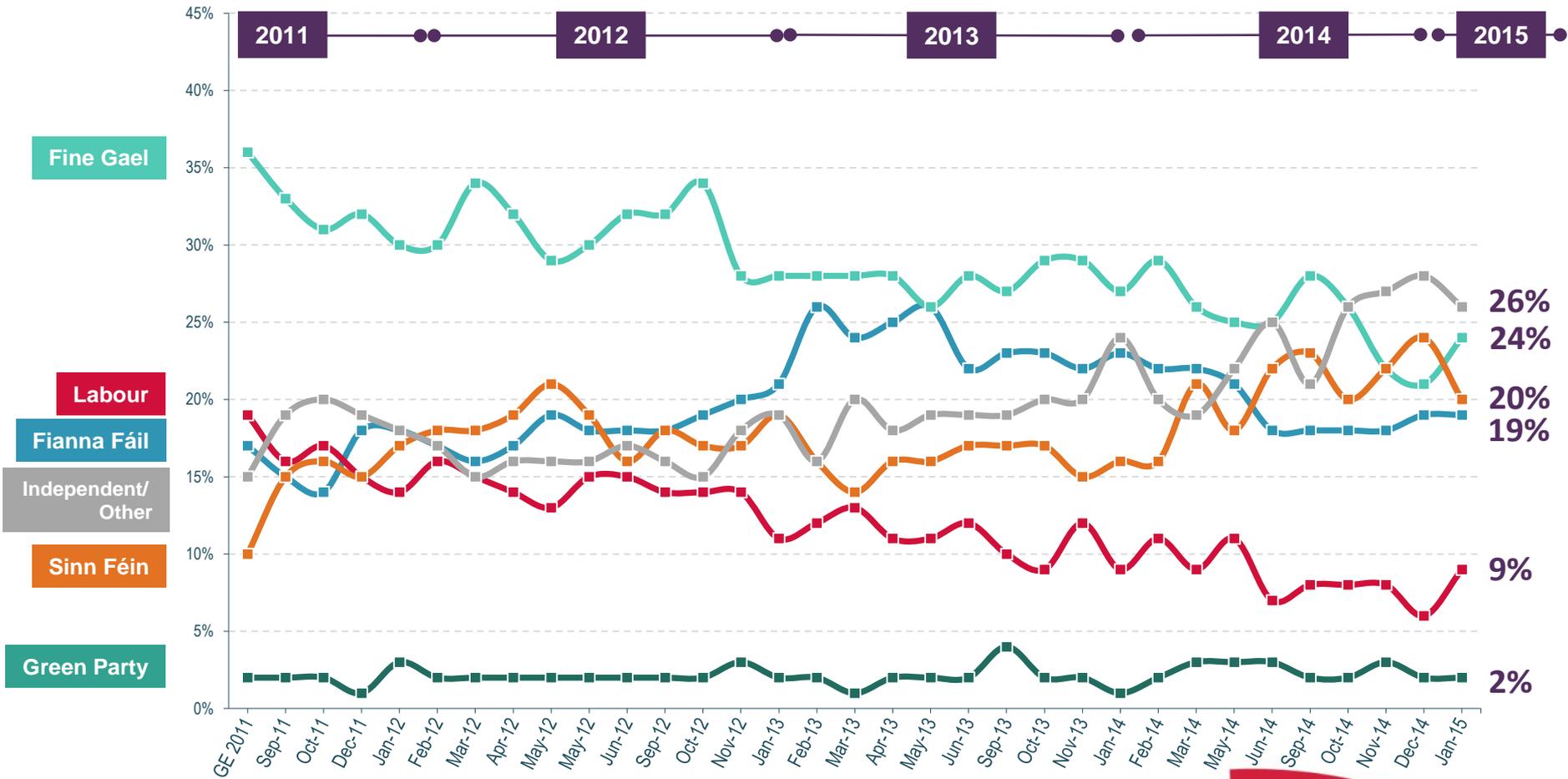
Independent/
 Other
28%



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)

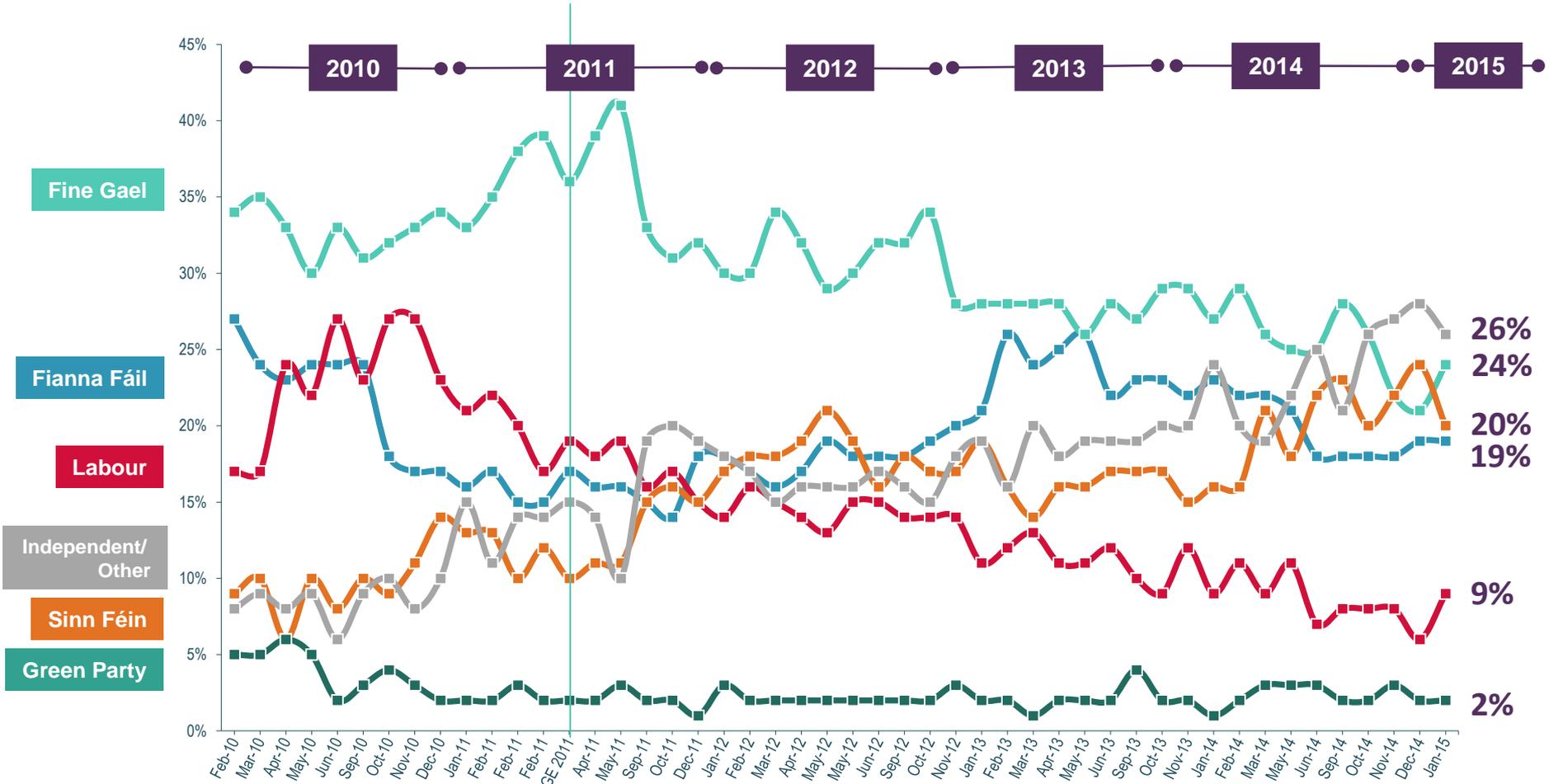
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



First Preference Vote Intention – 2010-2015

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)

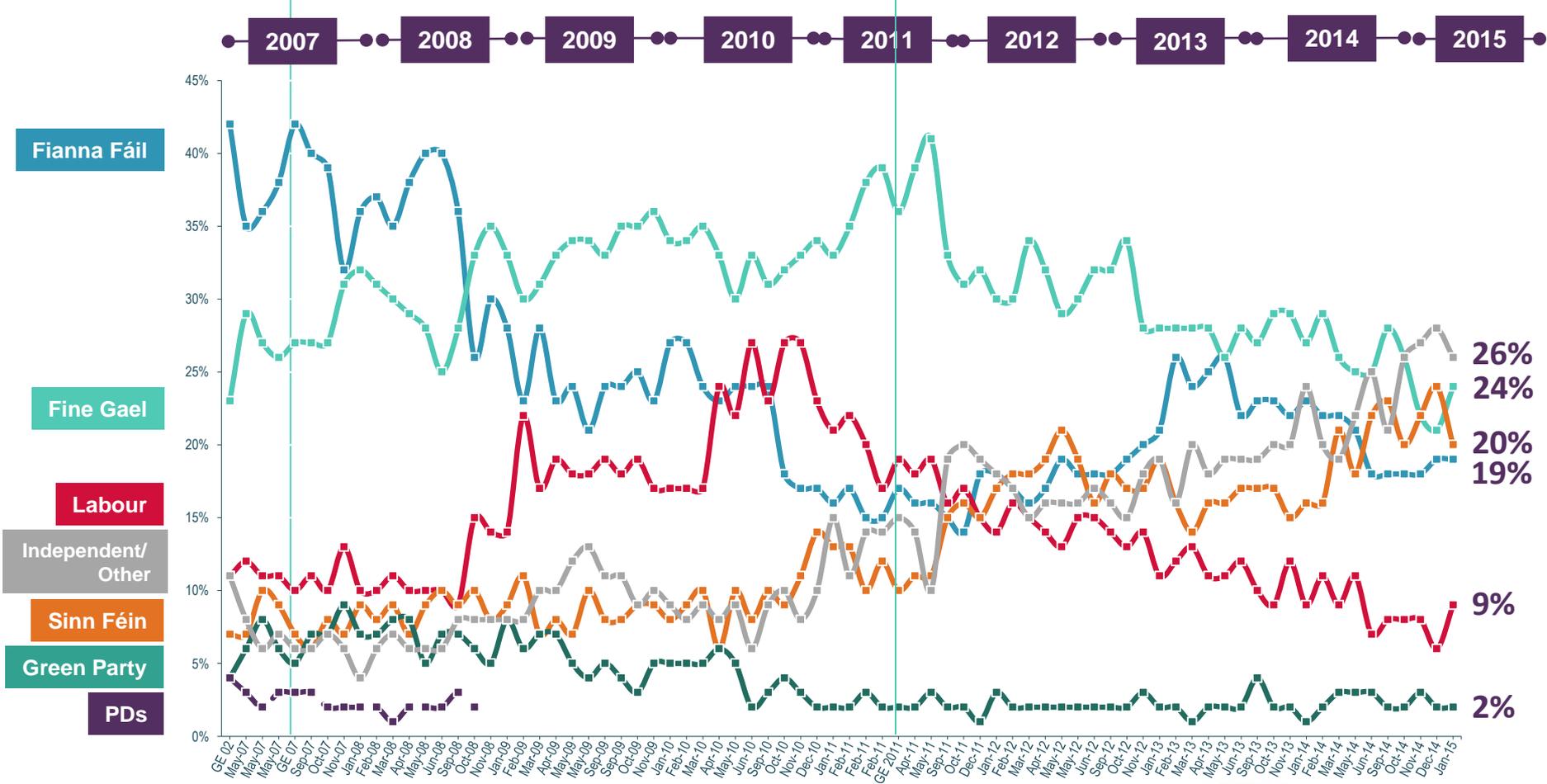
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



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)





Same Sex Marriage

Attitude to Same Sex Marriage

(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1,005)

% Disagree

% Agree

**Change vs.
Feb '14**

People in same sex relationships should be able to have **the same rights** as traditional families

19%

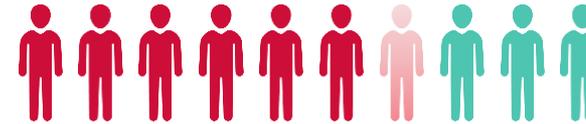


81%

+1%

I have some reservations about **adoption** by gay couples

62%

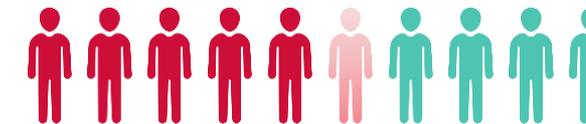


38%

-3%

I believe in equal rights for gay people but I have **some reservations** about same sex marriage

54%



46%

-3%

REDC

How secure is the Yes vote?

(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1,005)

