

Voting Intention Tracking Poll

13th Feb 2011

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



Methodology and Weighting

RED C interviewed a random sample of 1025 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 8th-10th Feb 2011.

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.

Finally 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.

SUNDAY BUSINESS POST – 13th Feb - Opinion Poll

Fine Gael upward trend continues

Fine Gael sees a further gain in first preference vote share as undecided voters begin to make up their minds, and in doing so support the party. They take 38% share of the first preference vote and while this is up 3% since a week ago, of more interest is the trend over the campaign. When polls are conducted so frequently the trend is key to the analysis, rather than the poll on poll movement. The trend for Fine Gael is very positive, with a series of poll results since the beginning of the year that has seen the party move from 32, to 35, to 33, to 37, to 35 to 38. This upward trend means on average in the past three polls (those taken in February) Fine Gael is securing 37% share overall.

Independent and other parties are the other big winner this week. Having seen the largest number of independent candidates registered in this election earlier in the week it is perhaps not a surprise that many voters are now choosing this option. Particularly when such a large number of undecided voters are past Fianna Fail supporters with no home to go to at the moment. In total Independents/others secure 14% share, up 3% since last week, and averaging out at 12% over the past three polls.

Fianna Fail could potentially be suffering as Independents gain share, given that such a large number of past Fianna fail candidates are now running as Independents. Certainly in this poll the party secures just 15% of the first preference share, down 25 since a week ago, and leaving the average share over the past 3 polls at 17%. This perhaps is the most surprising result from the poll, as many commentators myself included had suspected that the Fianna Fail vote would harden in the weeks before the election. Now it appears that despite the popular appeal of new leader Michael Martin the party may not see a late surge of undecided voters move back to the party. Even the spiral of silence analysis that we conduct suggest that the share is not significantly depressed by “shy voters”.

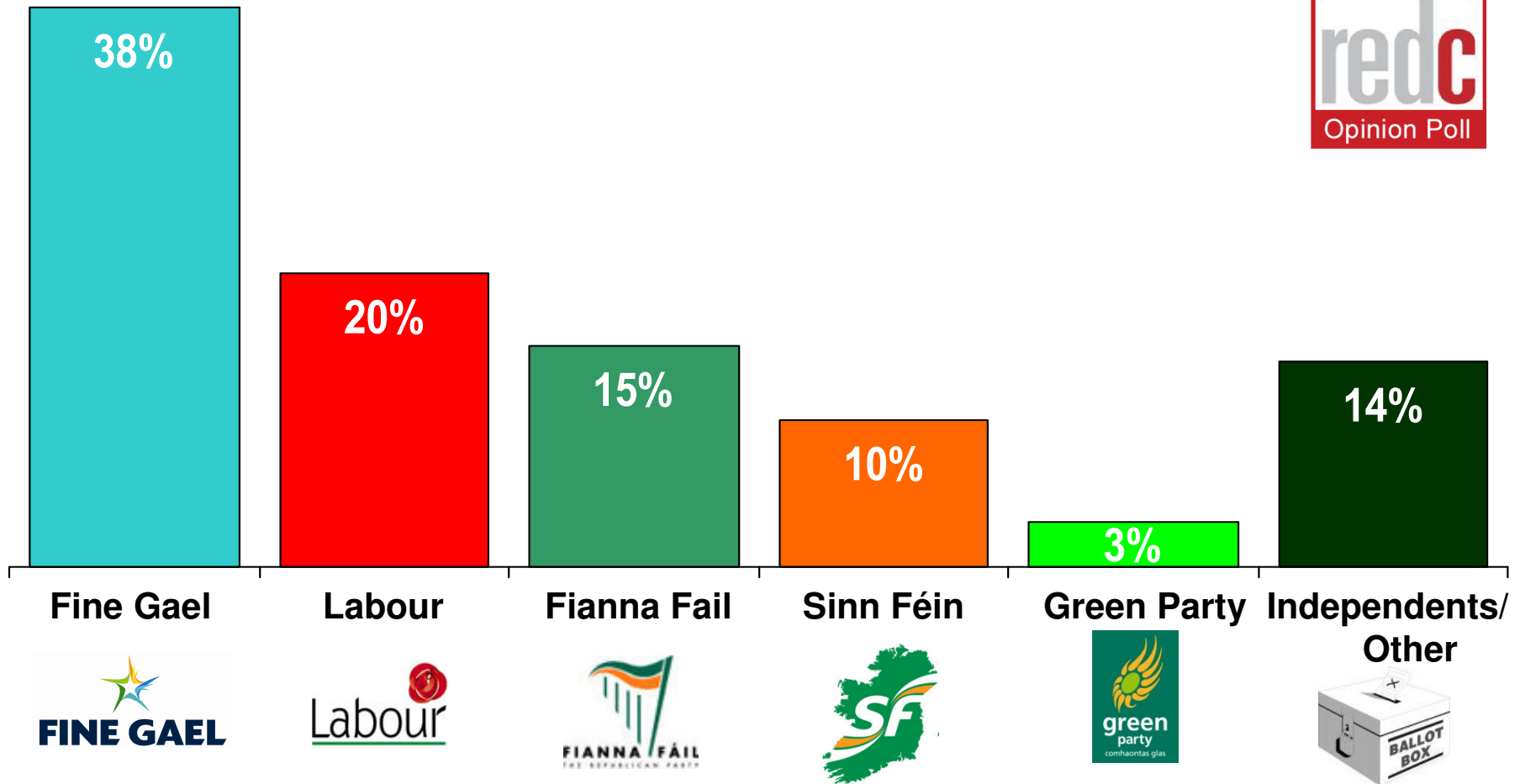
Labour will also be disappointed in today's poll, which sees the party secure 20% first preference, but this figure is also inline with recent trends that has seen the party strength of support weaken in the past few weeks. Their average for the past three polls is now relatively stable at 20%, but in order to ensure they remain in the mix of the next government the party will want to see support return to the low to mid 20's.

Sinn Fein also lose share in this poll, down 3%, to leave the party back at 10% and back to the same levels seen before the Donegal by election surge. This is a very similar pattern to that the party had at the last election, and may mean they do not benefit as much as had been hoped for. Finally the Green party secure 3% of the vote which is remaining relatively steady as the campaign progresses, but still may not be enough to see them take any seats.

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+)

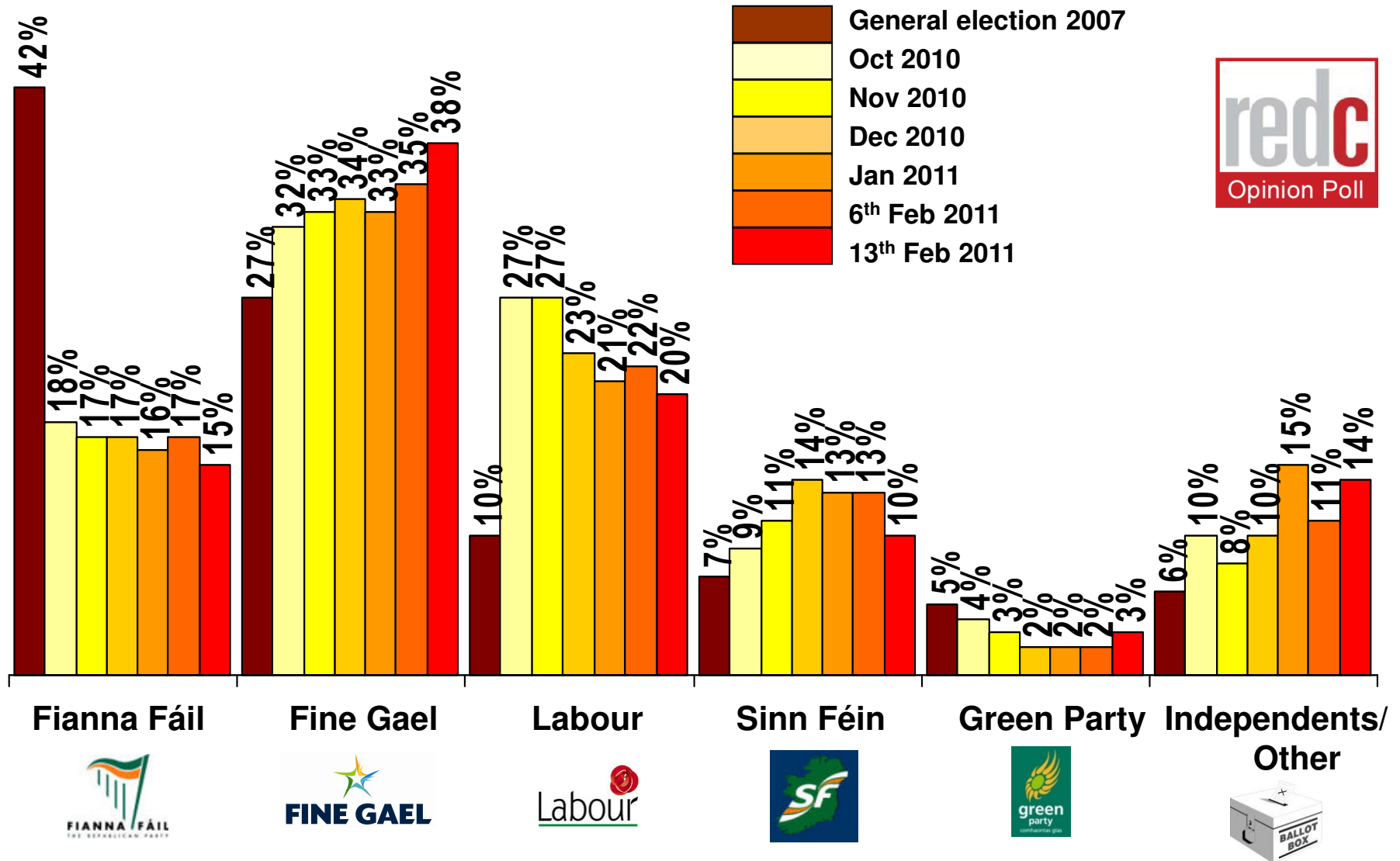
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CURRENT FIRST PREFERENCE SUPPORT			
	Core figures 13th Feb 2011	Excluding undecided	2007 Election Results
	%	%	%
Fine Gael	31	38	27
Labour	16	20	10
Fianna Fáil	12	15	42
Sinn Féin	8	10	7
Green Party	2	3	5
Independents/ Others	14	15	6
Undecided	17		

Spiral of Silence Allocation of Undecided Voters.

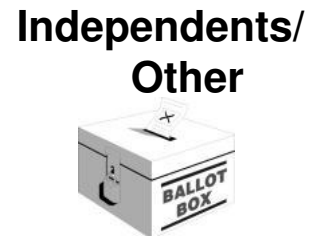
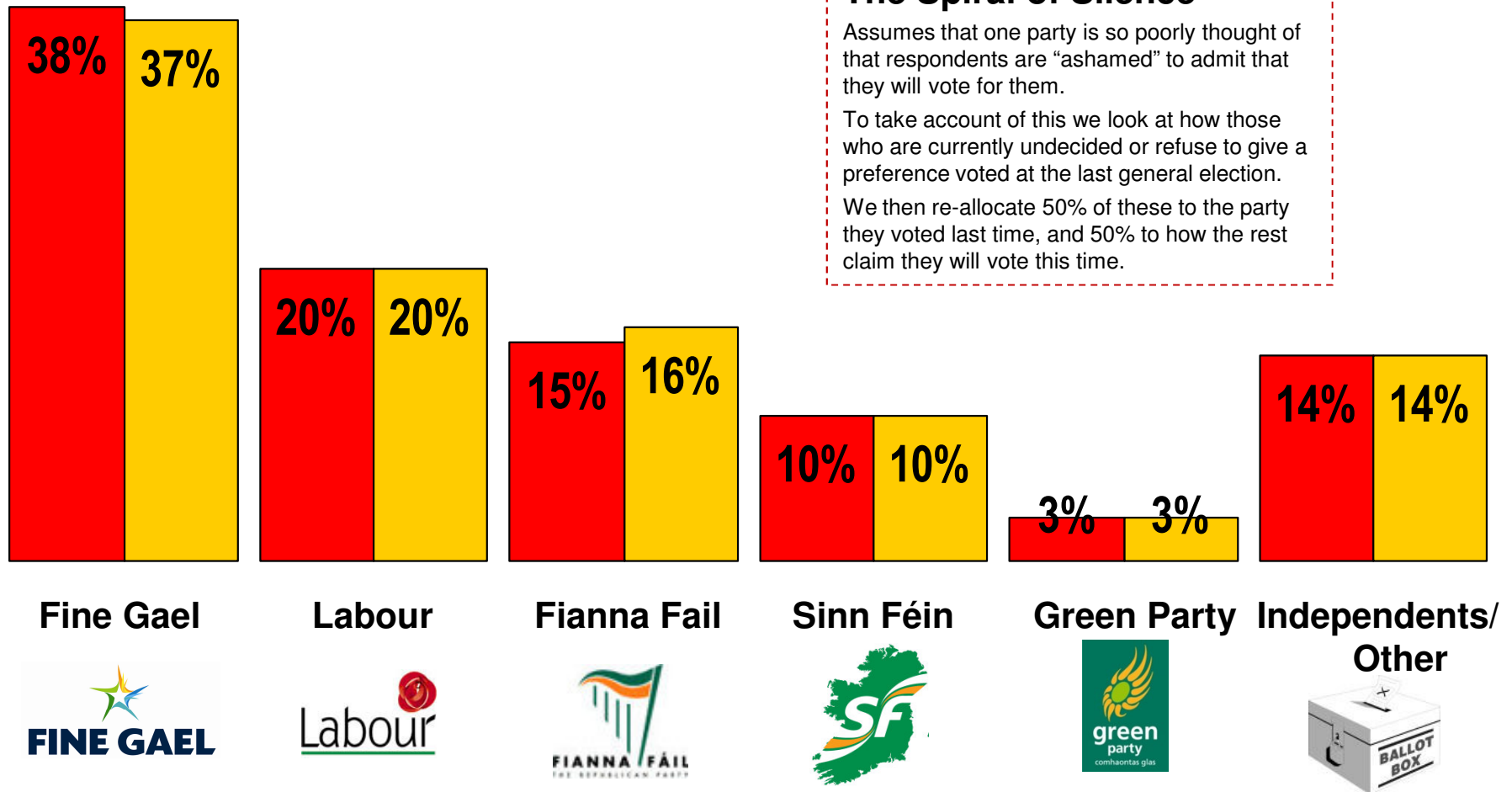
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■ Normal D/K allocation ■ Past Vote weighted D/K Allocation

The Spiral of Silence
 Assumes that one party is so poorly thought of that respondents are “ashamed” to admit that they will vote for them.
 To take account of this we look at how those who are currently undecided or refuse to give a preference voted at the last general election.
 We then re-allocate 50% of these to the party they voted last time, and 50% to how the rest claim they will vote this time.

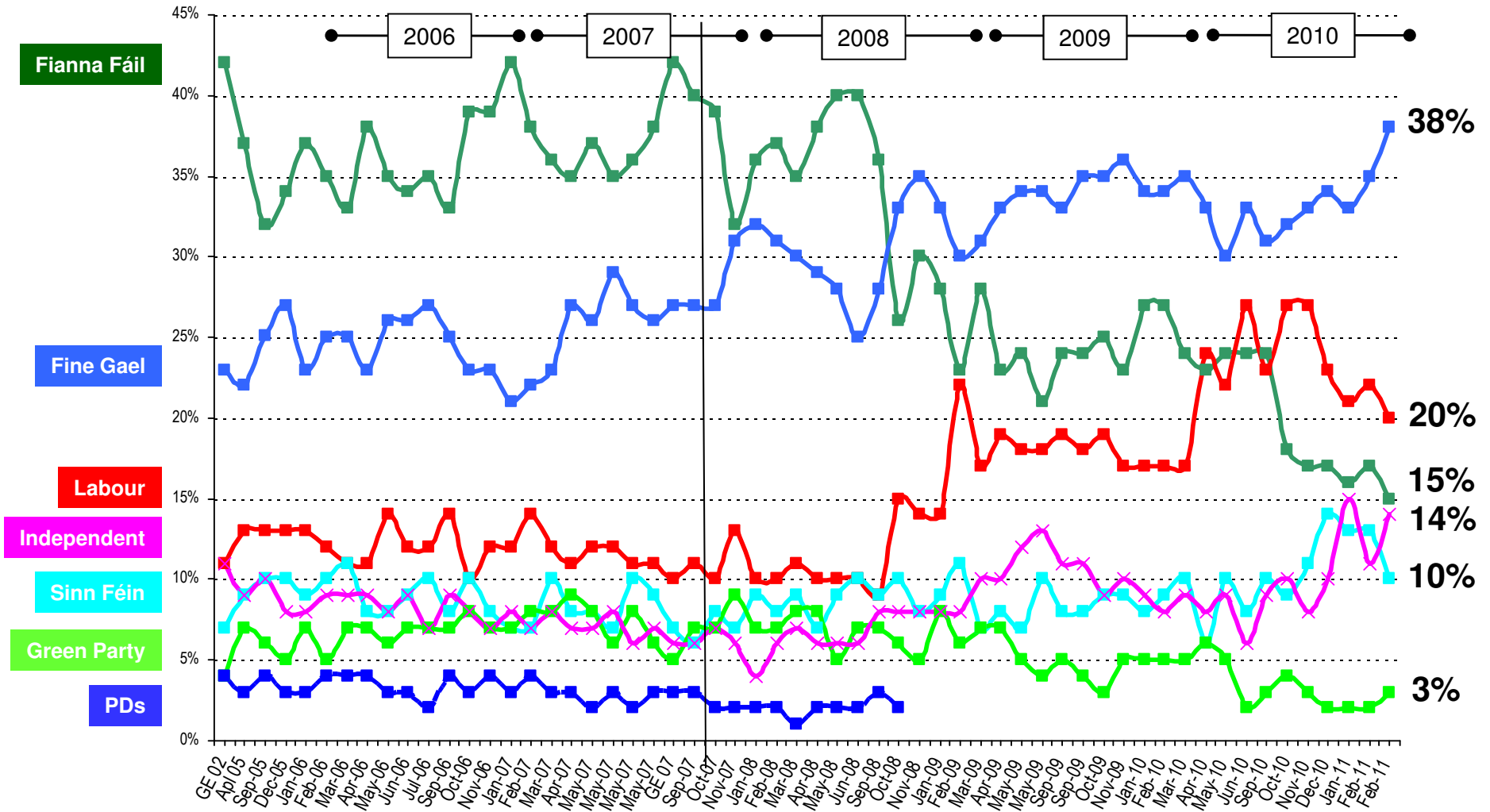


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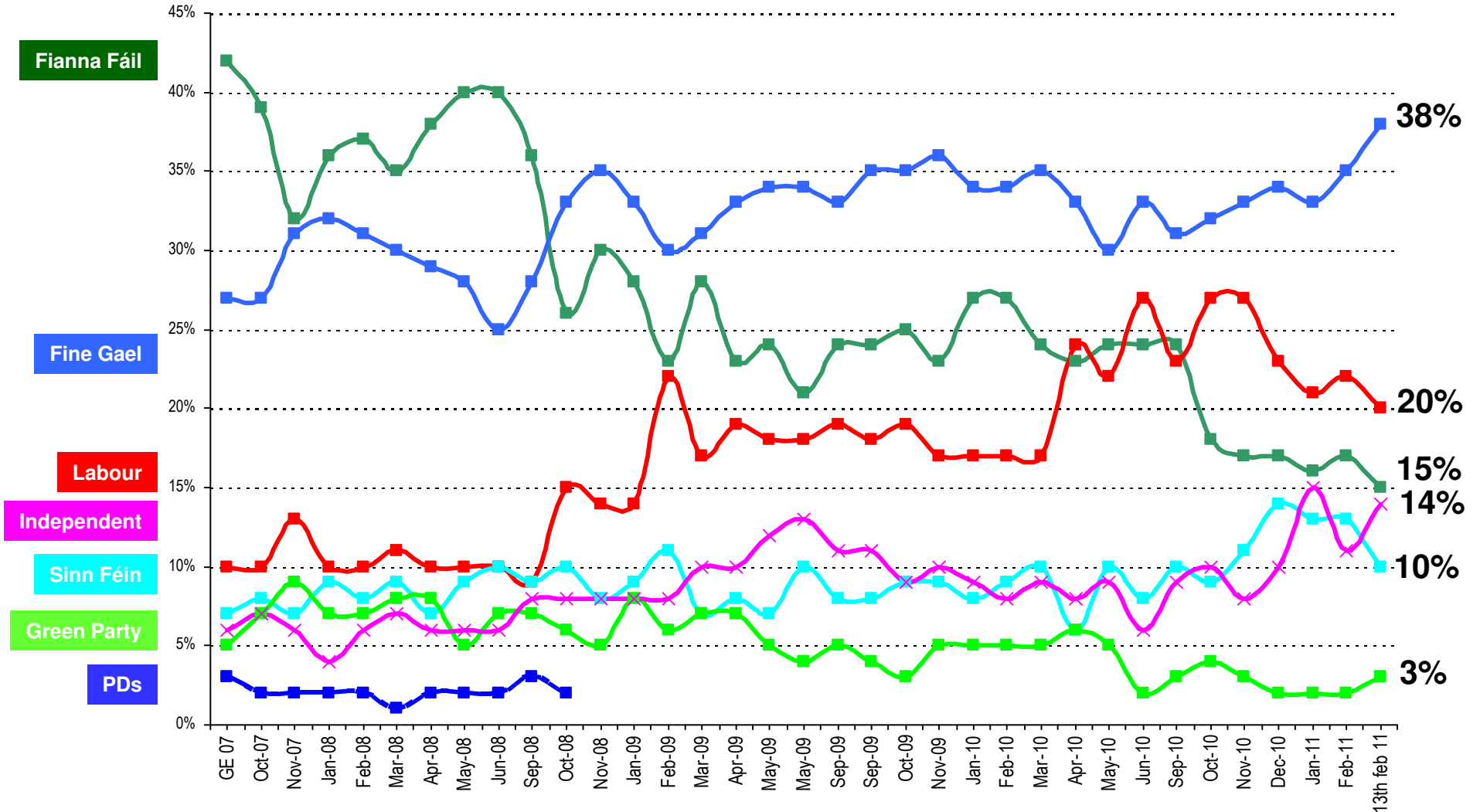


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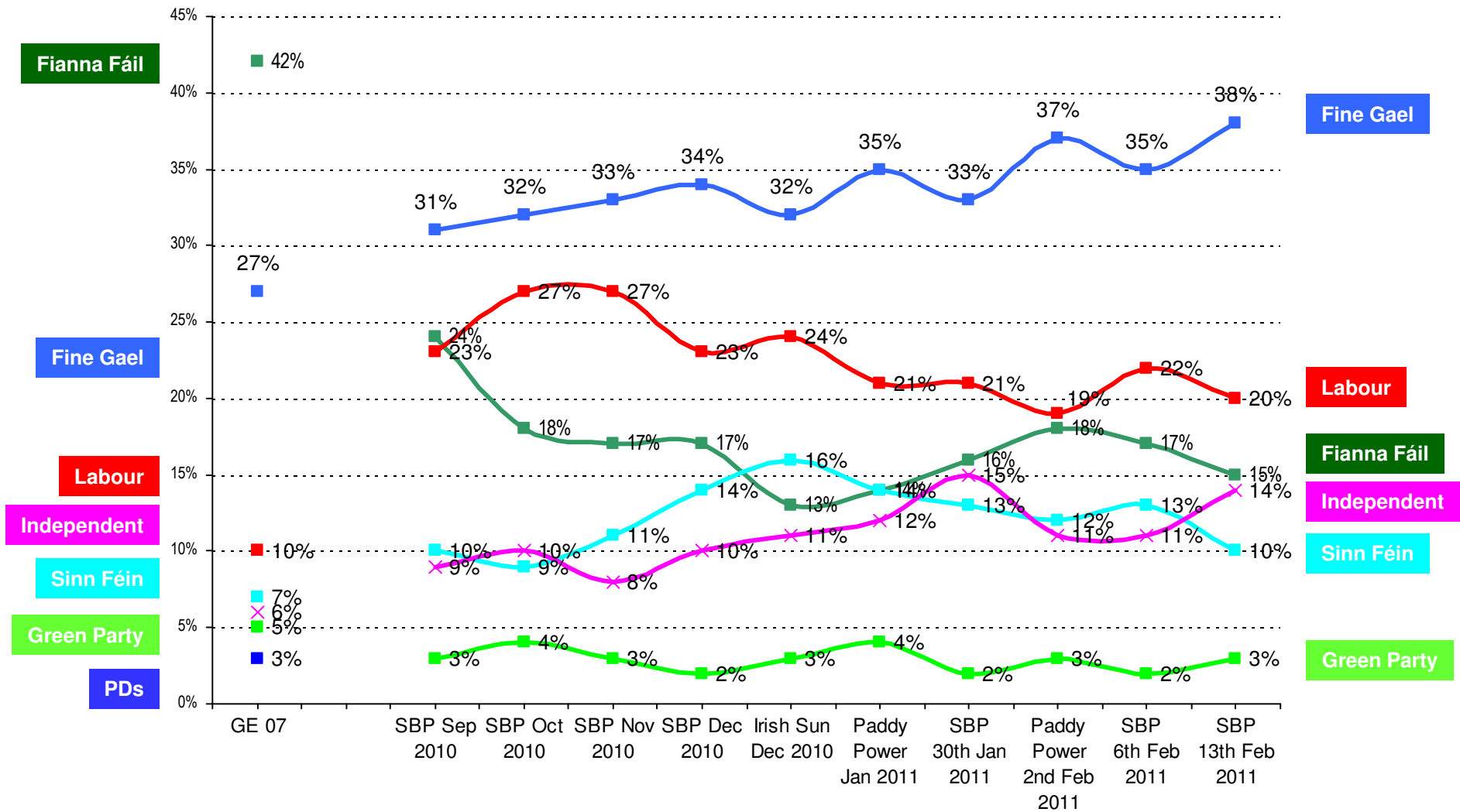
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General Election 2011

Run Up and Campaign 1st Preference Poll Trends

(Base: All adults 18+)

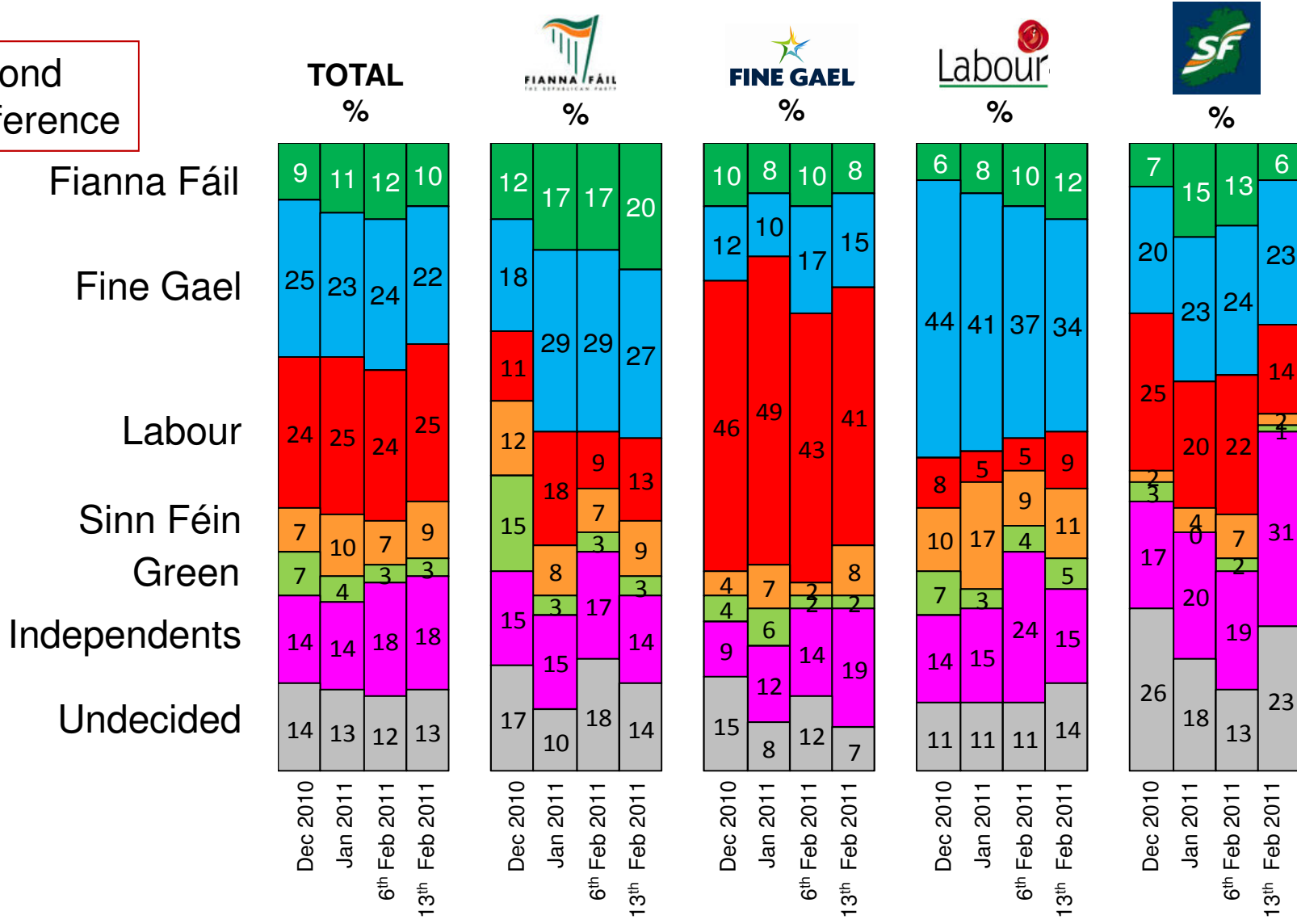


Second Preference among First preference voters



First Preference

Second Preference



Attitude to 1st Preference Voting for this Party at Next General Election

(Base: All Adults Likely to Vote – 913)

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%



%



%



%



%

Definitely Will
Likely To
Might Do
Probably Won't

Definitely Won't

D/K Refused

