



## General Election Opinion Poll

29<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Prepared for:

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

Job No: 48911

## Methodology and Weighting



- RED C interviewed a random sample of 1017 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> April 2012.
- 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.
- Finally, some people tell RED C that they intend to vote, and have a good past voting record, but say they don't know who they would vote for or refuse to answer the question. Whenever such people say which party they voted for in the last election, RED C ascribe 50% to the party they voted for previously. We have seen from analysis of past elections that this is the most likely outcome and this reallocation tries to overcome the effect of the “spiral of silence” where voters are do not want to admit who they will vote for.
- In all respects the poll was completed to the opinion polling guidelines set out by both ESOMAR and AIMRO.

## EU Treaty Yes Vote Comes Under Pressure

The past two weeks has seen the start of serious campaigning on the EU Treaty with a noticeable shift in news about the No camp. This has involved a series of Trade unions announcing that they are recommending that their members should vote No, and has also included some doubts being thrown on the treaty by Frances Presidential Election, where the lead candidate has suggested he will re-visit the treaty anyway if he is elected.

The impact of this new focus on the No vote is to give it something of a boost, but perhaps not as much as might have been anticipated. In today's poll the No vote increases by 2% to 35%, while correspondingly the Yes vote drops back by 2% to leave it at 47%, with 18% still undecided. However once the Don't Knows are stripped out of the analysis, this actually ends up with still 42% in the No camp and 58% in the Yes camp due to rounding.

The shift from Yes to No is of course worrying for the government, as it does suggest that a well run No campaign could have an impact. But at the same time this shift is still relatively small and within the parameters for ordinary sample error. So the poll leaves us somewhat unsure of how much, if any, of a soft underbelly the Yes vote really has.

When we analyse the change in vote by demographics it appears that the move from Yes to No is focused among men and those in older age groups. It is also particularly noticeable among those in Dublin and to a lesser extent in Connaught & Ulster, and those that also intend to vote Fianna Fail.

Those still undecided are spread across the political spectrum and so there is no indication here as to how they might eventually vote. However the evidence from previous referendums, that people who are unclear about what they are voting for will vote No, does not really apply in this referendum. The reason being is that unusually, in this instance voting No is not the status quo, and as such there is an impact in voting either Yes or No. One thing is clear, the fight is not over yet and the result is far from predictable at this stage.

## Fine Gael share remains relatively strong despite Household and Water Charge, while Sinn Fein consolidates second place.



Despite what many have seen as tough month for the Government parties, with the Household Charge and Water meters dominating, the government parties have survived relatively well in this months Sunday Business Post/RED C poll.

Fine Gael's share of the vote is down 2%, but this is after a very strong showing in March, and means they still retain 32% of the first preference vote overall. This is a little down on that proportion they secured at the last election, but suggests they have weathered the storm of the last month better than many might have expected.

Labour share is also down 1% month on month, and this is perhaps somewhat more worrying for the party, who end up securing just 14% share of the first preference vote. This matches their lowest share for the past few years, and does suggest that as the junior partner in government they are being somewhat squeezed.

Sinn Fein benefit somewhat from these declines with a 1% gain which leaves them securing 19% of the first preference vote. This is another high for the party in terms of RED C polls, and rubber stamps their position as the second largest party in the state. It is interesting to note however that they are now very much in virgin territory for the brand, with no undecided voters having voted for the party in either 2007 or 2009, so they have a job to do to convert voters from other parties to continue to make these gains.

Fianna Fail also make some small gains this month, with a 1% rise in support, leaving the party securing 17% of the first preference vote. The party have been in and around this share of the vote since the election, and this suggests that the party are on a steady if unspectacular course, but do not appear to be falling away as some commentators suggested they might.



This is backed up by the fact that when we look at current undecided voters, a third (33%) voted for Fianna Fail in 2007 and the same proportion voted for Fine Gael in 2011. At present these voters don't have a home to go to – the question is whether in time they return to their origins in Fianna Fail, or alternatively find a new party to call their home. But what is clear is that they are open for conversion.

Independent candidates and Other parties also see a small rise in the share they secure this month. When this is broken down it is clear that this is more independent candidates than for any party, as the Green party falls back to 2%, and the Socialist Party remains at 1% share.

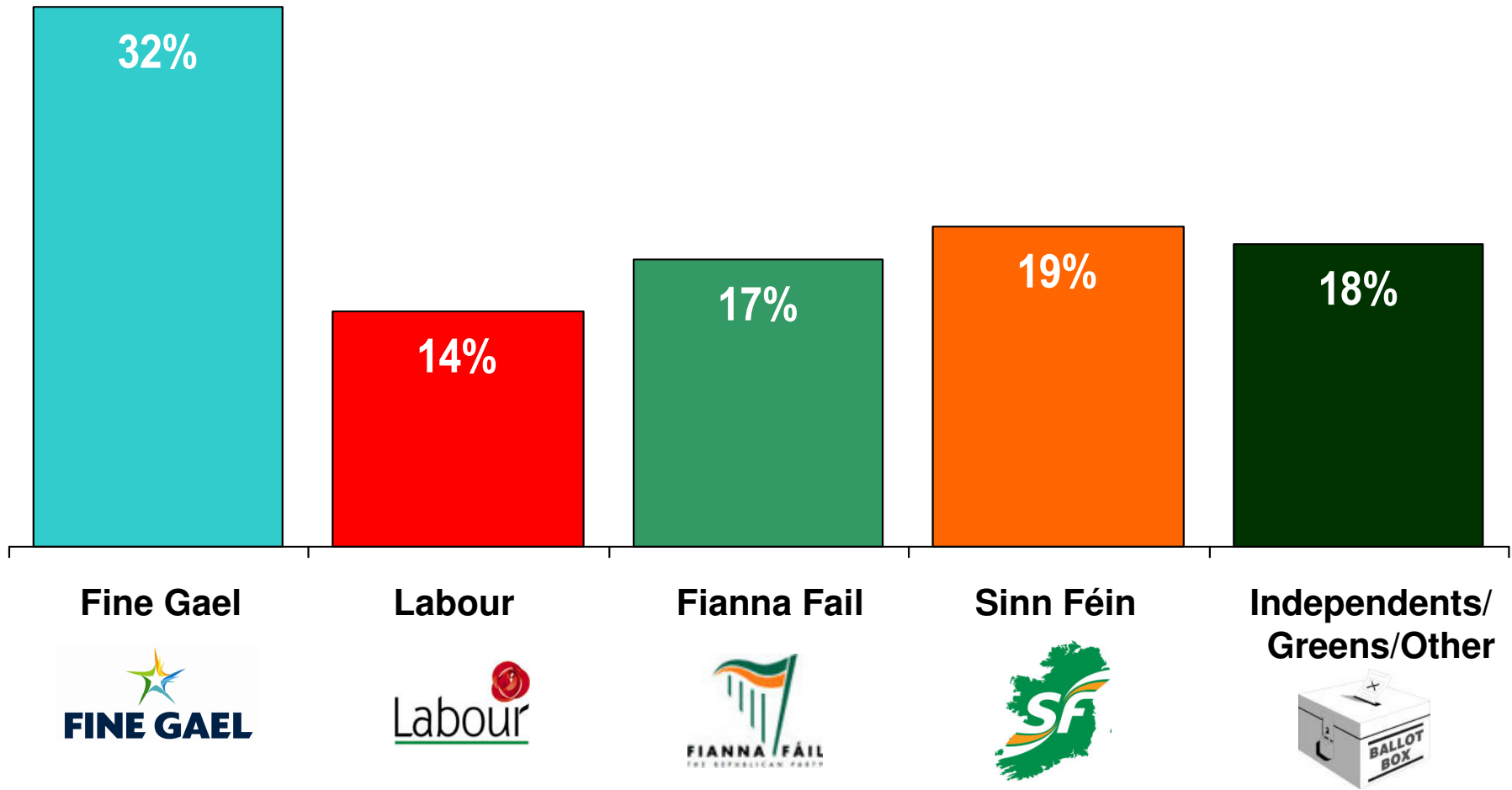
# General Election

# 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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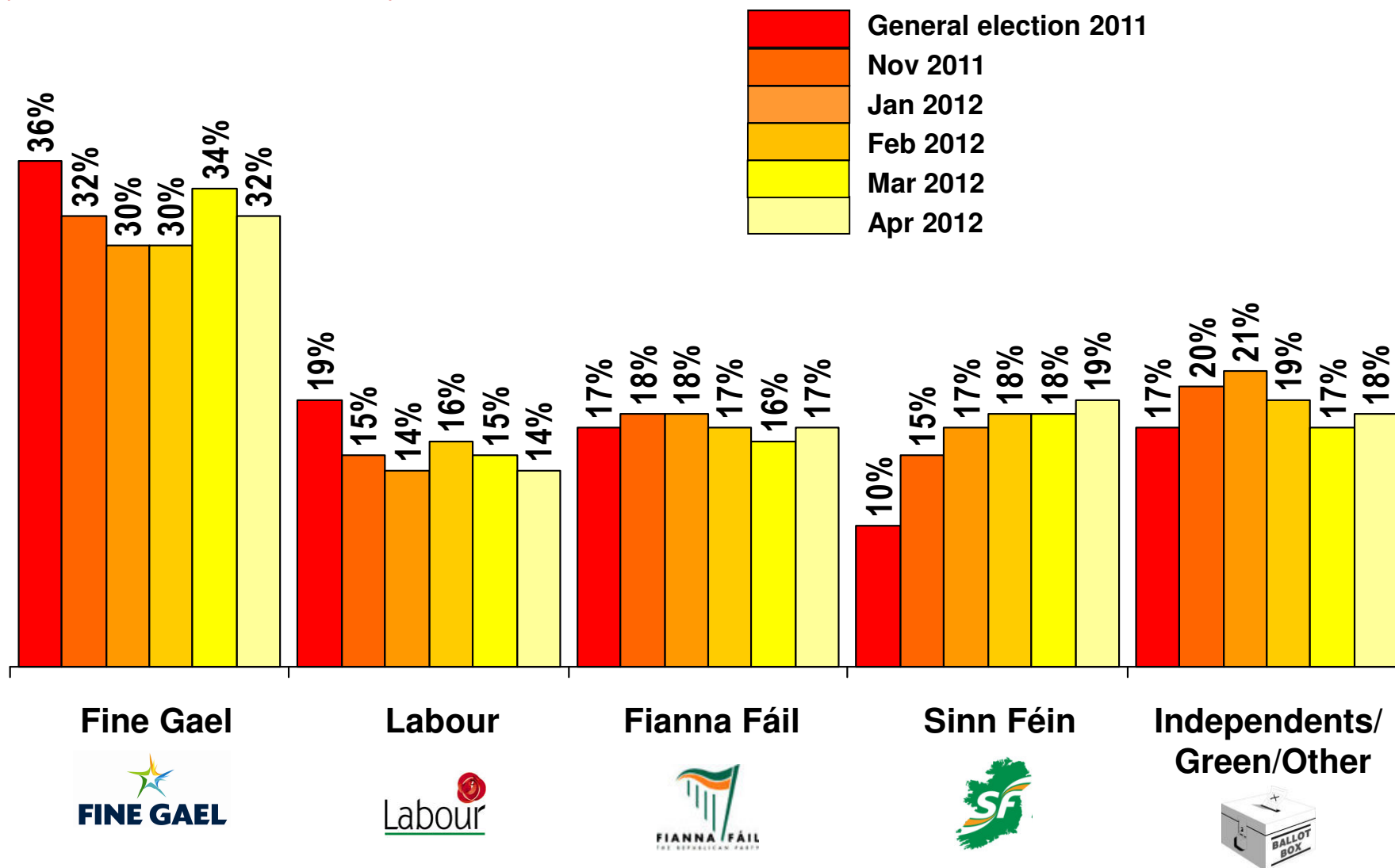
RESEARCH EVALUATION DIRECTION CLARITY

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CURRENT FIRST PREFERENCE SUPPORT			
	Core figures 29 <sup>th</sup> April 2012	Excluding undecided	2011 Election Results
	%	%	%
<b>Fine Gael</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Labour</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Fianna Fáil</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Sinn Féin</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Independent candidates</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Green Party</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Socialist Party</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Other Party</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Undecided</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>

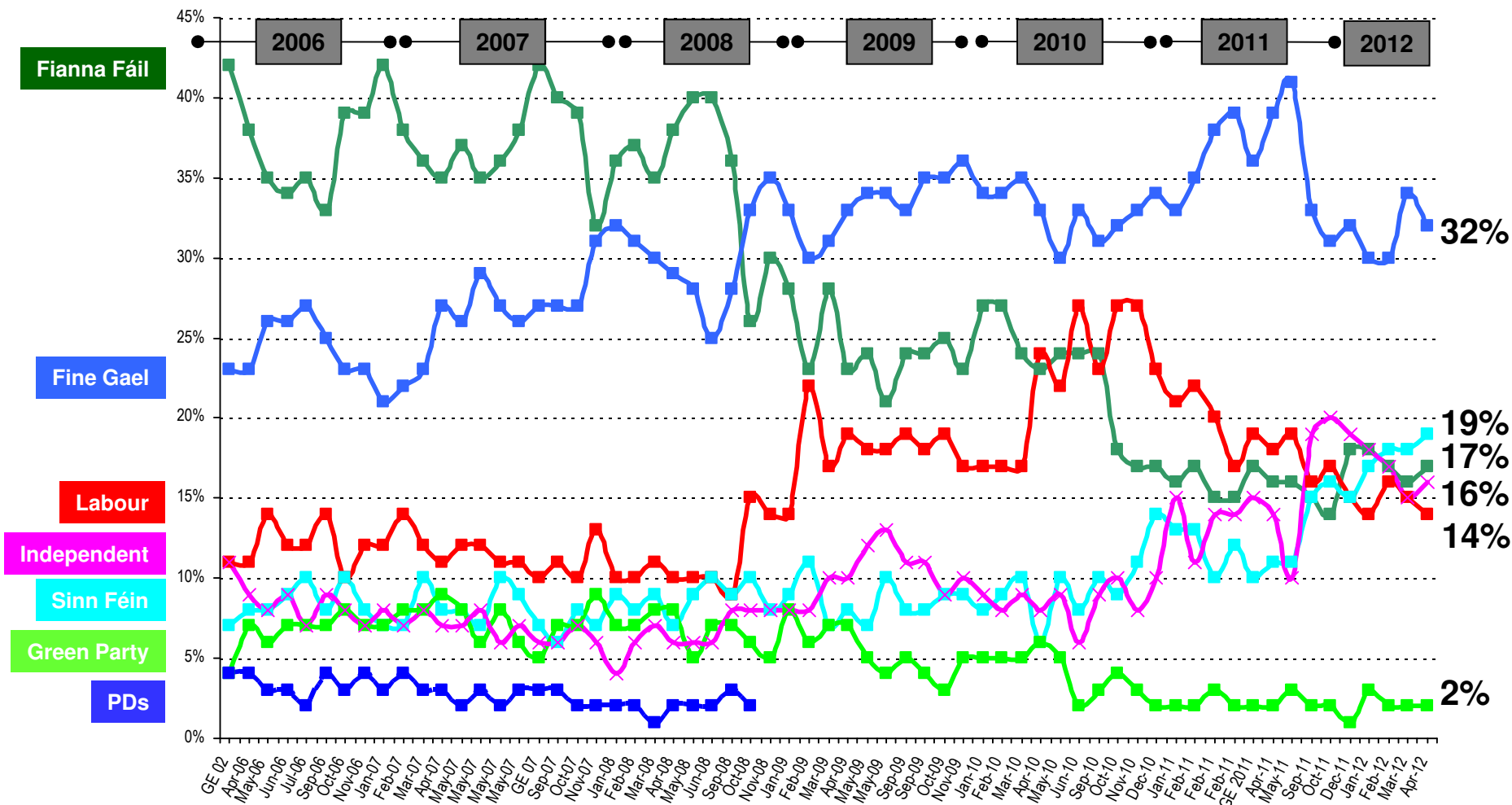
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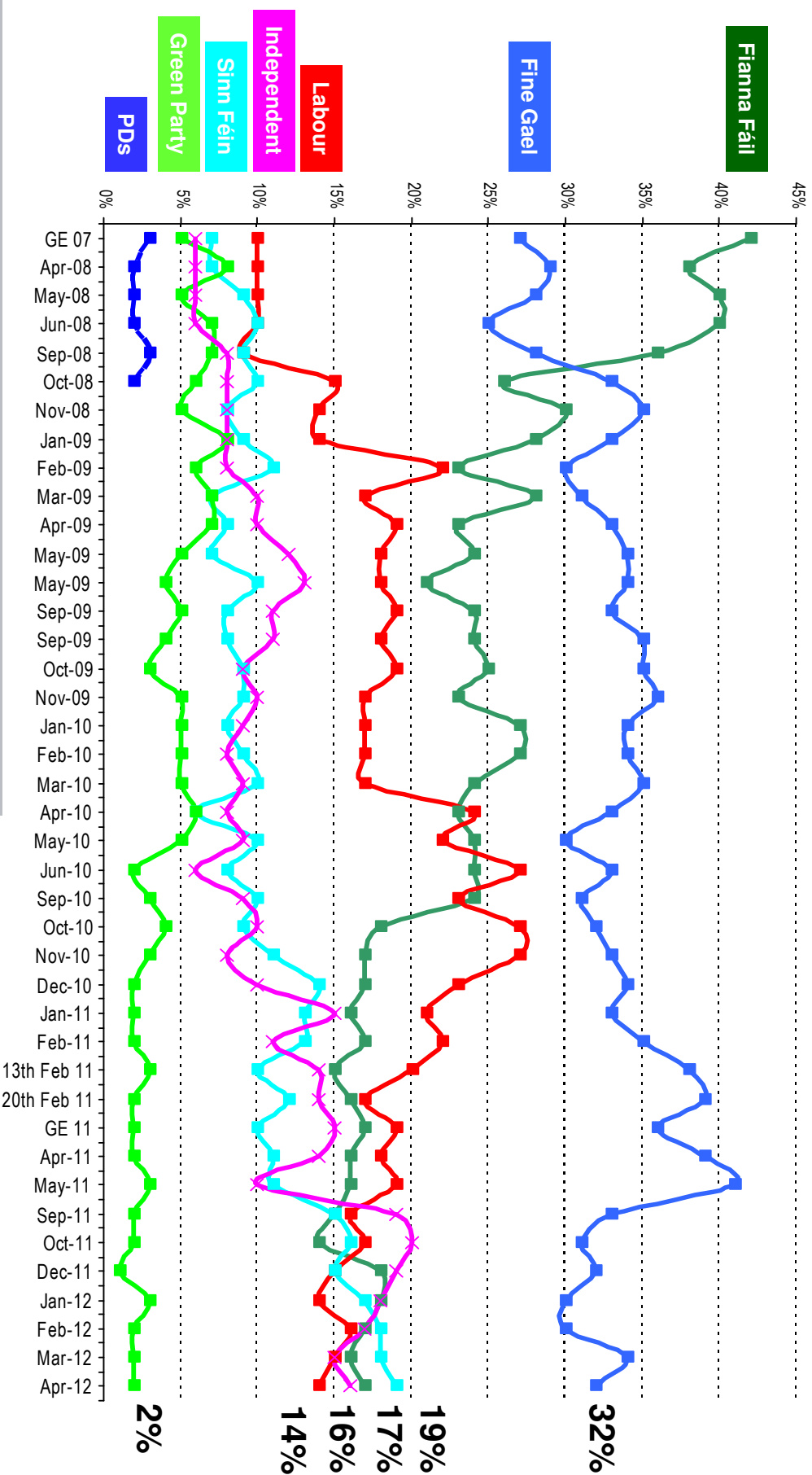
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 (Base: All adults 18+)

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# European Treaty

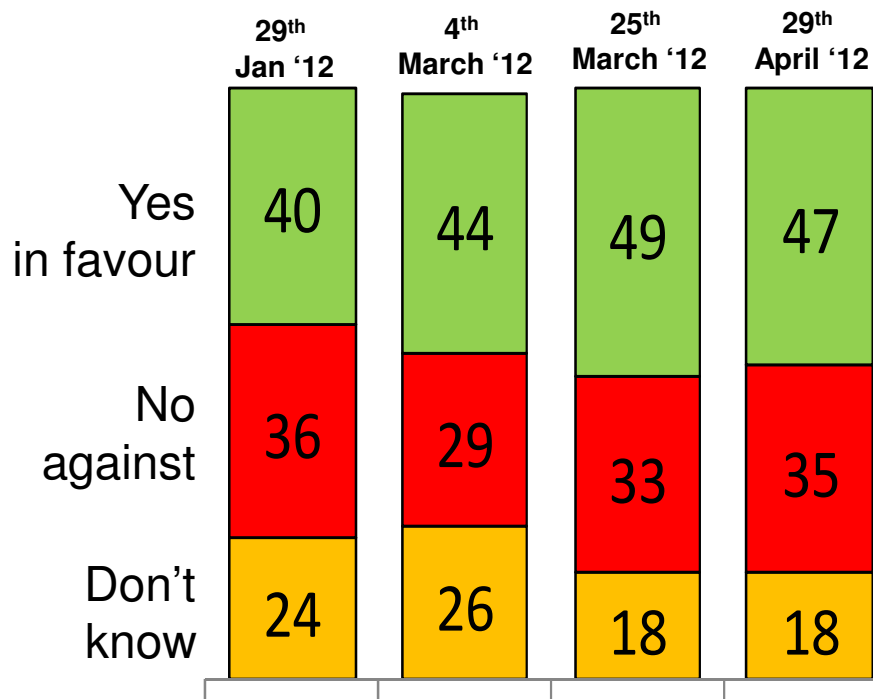
# Likely vote behaviour towards the European Treaty

(Base: All adults 18+/ all adults 18+ likely to vote)



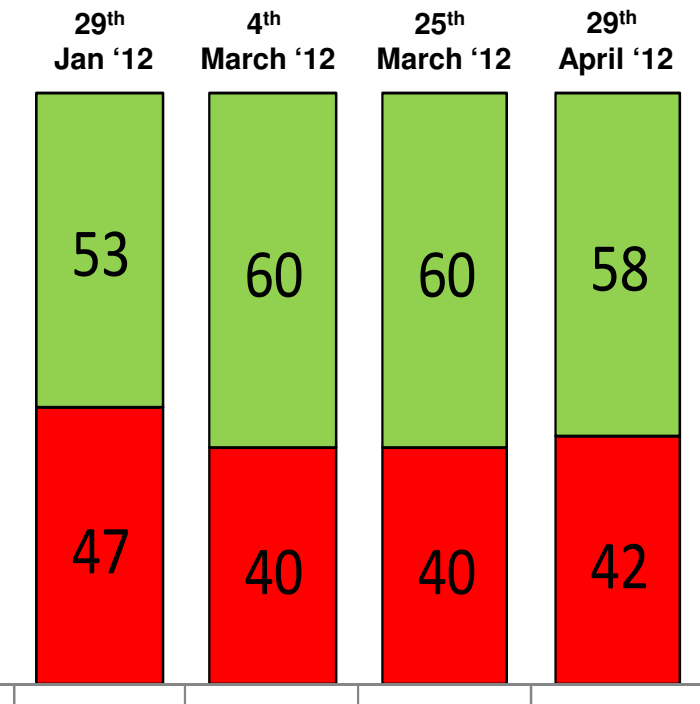
## How do you think you would currently vote in such a referendum?

%



## Treaty Vote Intention (excl Don't Knows)

%



Q. European Union country leaders have agreed on a new European Fiscal Stability Treaty in 2012, that would entail greater oversight by the EU over member states budgets. In the upcoming referendum, you will have the option to vote YES in favour of Ireland ratifying the treaty, or NO against Ireland ratifying the treaty. How do you think you would currently vote in such a referendum?

**\*March 25<sup>th</sup> Onwards Includes Question about likelihood to vote**

# How do you think you would currently vote in the EU Treaty referendum – excluding those not likely to vote?

(Base: All adults 18+ excluding those not likely to vote)



How do you think you would currently vote in such a referendum?	Total %	Gender		Age			Class		Region			
		Male %	Female %	18-34 %	35-54 %	55+ %	ABC1 %	C2DE %	Dublin %	ROL %	Munster %	Conn/ Ulster %
Yes	47	49	46	48	44	51	48	44	43	48	53	45
No	35	41	29	34	36	34	36	36	41	31	32	35
Don't Know	18	10	25	18	20	15	16	20	16	21	15	20

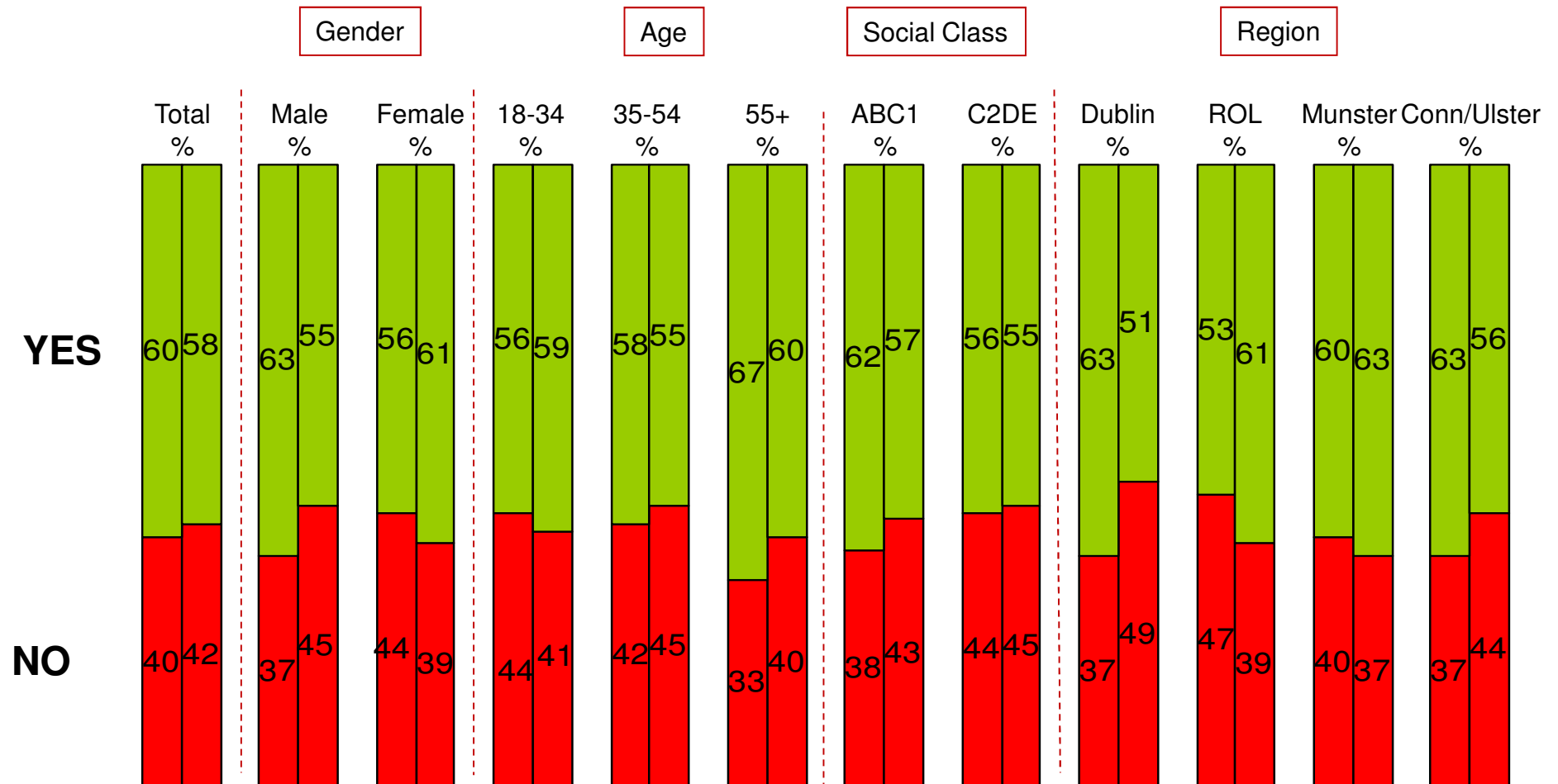
How do you think you would currently vote in such a referendum?	Total %	PARTY SUPPORT					
		Fianna Fail	Fine Gael	Labour	Sinn Fein	Ind.	Undecided
Yes	47	43	73	55	27	34	41
No	35	39	16	36	60	54	22
Don't Know	18	18	11	9	13	12	37

# How do you think you would currently vote in the EU Treaty referendum – excluding Don't Knows and those not likely to vote?

(Base: All adults 18+ excluding those not likely to vote)



Mar '12   Apr '12





# How do you think you would currently vote in the EU Treaty referendum – excluding Don't Knows and those not likely to vote?

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Mar '12   Apr '12

Current Party Support

