



**The Sunday
Business Post**

General Election Opinion Poll

May 2018



Methodology and Weighting

- ✓ RED C interviewed a random sample of 1,015 adults aged 18+ by telephone between the 10th-16th May 2018.
- ✓ 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 recall for how people voted at the last election, compares this to the actual results and weights the data 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 8 to 10 are included as being those who will definitely go and vote.
- ✓ In all respects the poll was completed to the opinion polling guidelines set out by both ESOMAR and AIMRO.





The 8th Amendment - Repeal or Retain -

Crowd Predicts a Narrow Yes Victory - I

(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1,015)

The difficulties in predicting many referenda over the last number of years has led RED C to investigate different ways to predict the outcome. The problems with predicting a referendum are twofold.

Firstly, the subject in question is often contentious and divides the population, meaning people are less likely to want to share their views. The idea of “Shy” voters has been long examined in election campaigns, by a number of academics and pollsters. The theory is that sometimes a position or party becomes so against the general views of the media and society, that people become embarrassed to express the view that they support the said party or position. In this campaign the No side have not been as strongly represented in the media, with little political party support on the side of the No camp, and the media firmly in the Yes camp. So it wouldn’t be a surprise if voters were “shy” about telling us they plan to vote No. This is why, in our view, it is safer to assume that those claiming to be undecided are more likely to vote No.

Secondly, there is the issue of the “status quo” effect. A large part of the population is often not as interested in referenda as we may imagine, and often don’t really understand the reasons behind any change to the constitution. When you don’t fully understand why change is suggested, and don’t feel the need to engage with an issue, why would you change the constitution? It is far easier to leave the constitution as it is. This “status quo” effect has been registered in many Irish referenda of the past. The main impact on any polling analysis is that a much larger proportion of undecided voters tend to end up voting No than might be expected. Voting No keeps the status quo of the current situation and removes any danger from a change that could impact on you personally.

These two factors make correctly predicting a referendum through standard claimed recall very difficult, particularly when 20% of the population remain undecided or won’t tell you how they will vote. One of the tools we use to try and uncover shy undecided voters is called the Wisdom of Crowds. As well as asking how our representative sample of voters claim they will vote themselves, we also asked them to predict what they thought the final result might be. This aims to take into account the conversations that voters are having with family and friends about the topic, and how they see people voting on Election Day. It means we collect information on what proportion of their friends and family are saying to each other they will vote No, even if they won’t tell us directly.

The Wisdom of Crowds approach works best when families and friends are talking about a topic in detail, because that means our crowd is very well informed about how their friends and family might vote. So, it worked very well in predicting the Marriage Referendum result, with 100% accuracy. But not so well at the last General Election, when it appears that few people had worthwhile discussions with each other about how they might vote. Based on the level of conversations people are likely to have had already in the run up to the abortion referendum, the approach should also work well in this referendum.

Crowd Predicts a Narrow Yes Victory - II

(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1,015)

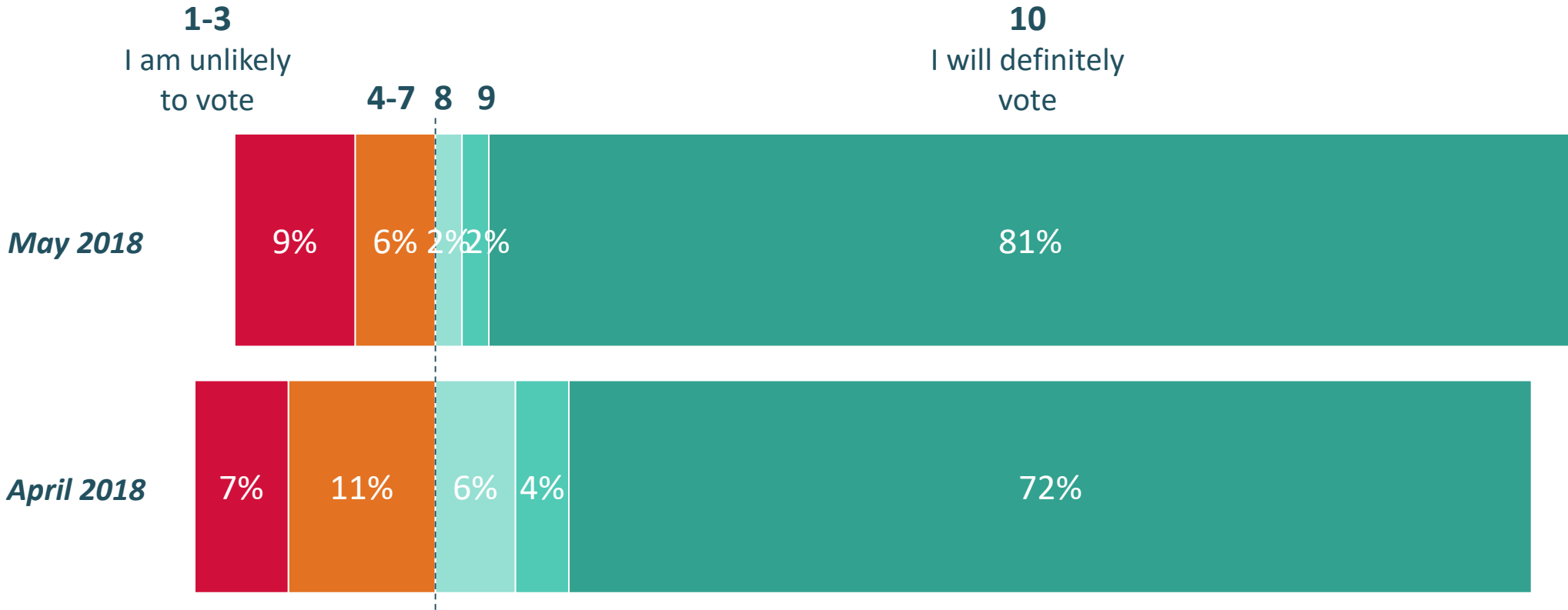
When we ask people in our final pre-election poll how they will vote, 56% say they will vote Yes, quite a lot higher than seen in other face to face polls. While 27% say they will vote No, 14% say they remain undecided and 3% refuse to tell us how they will vote. Compared to the last poll it appears that those undecided voters making up their minds in the past month are distributing to the same proportion as those who were already decided. If you were simply to remove the undecided voters and assume they will vote the same as those that tell us, you would end up with 67% Yes vs. 33% No.

However, we know from previous Referenda that just reallocating the undecided voters in this way simply isn't an accurate way of doing things. The undecided voters that are left are far more likely to vote No due to the status quo and shy voter effects, and our analysis of their underlying attitudes to abortion suggest this will be the case again. In fact, our analysis suggests that 80-90% of undecided voters that go and vote, could vote No on the day.

We therefore look to our Wisdom of Crowd analysis to help us understand the real dynamic behind claimed voter intention. The Crowd predictions suggest a Yes vote of 56% and a No vote of 44%. This is potentially a much closer result than suggested by the claimed vote intention, with a 11% swing from yes to No. That tells us that despite our target suggesting they will vote Yes in greater numbers they are very conscious that many of their friends and family will vote No. It gives further credence to our decision to allocate at least 80-90% of the undecided voters to the No camp. Overall then we expect the Yes vote to be in and around 56%-58% at this stage, and barring any major interventions in the campaign over the next week that is the most likely result. Still enough for the Yes camp to win the referendum, but closer than top line vote intentions suggest.

Likelihood to Vote in Referendum regarding 8th Amendment

(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1,015)



Higher level of planned voting behaviour in the upcoming referendum.

The Wisdom of Crowd Approach

The Wisdom of Crowds is the idea that the collective estimation of a random crowd is superior to even the smartest people within it, so long as a small number of conditions are met.

The conditions have been defined as follows.

1. Diversity of opinion: each person has some information, even if it is an eccentric interpretation of known facts.
2. Independence: opinions are not influenced by anyone else contributing to the crowd's response (which cannot be the case within an opinion polling setting).
3. De-centralisation: people are able to draw on local knowledge.
4. Aggregation: some method exists for turning private judgements into a collective decision; for us, any opinion polling methodology is appropriate.

Now well into the Referendum campaign and based on significant success of this approach at the Marriage Equality referendum where it predicted the result exactly, we have used this approach again as a means of uncovering the possibility of “Shy” No voters.

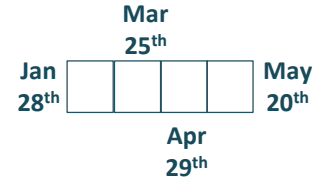
The question asked people “as a bit of fun”, to try and estimate what they thought the result of the referendum would be, based on what they had heard so far during the campaign and the conversations they had had on the subject with friend and family.

The results show an interesting informed perception among voters that the result will be closer than is currently being measured by stated claimed vote intention itself.



Support for Repealing or Retaining the 8th Amendment in the Constitution

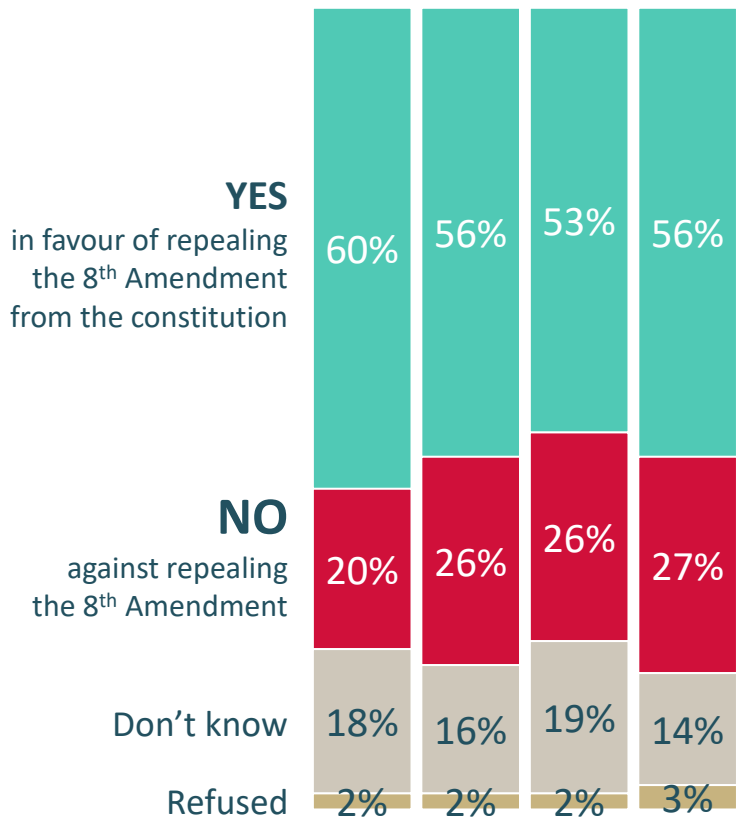
(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1,015)



Q. On 25th May this year a referendum will be held on whether or not to repeal the 8th Amendment in the constitution. How do you think that you will vote in the referendum? Will you vote to Repeal the 8th Amendment or vote to Retain the 8th Amendment in the constitution?

Stated Repeal the 8th Vote Intention

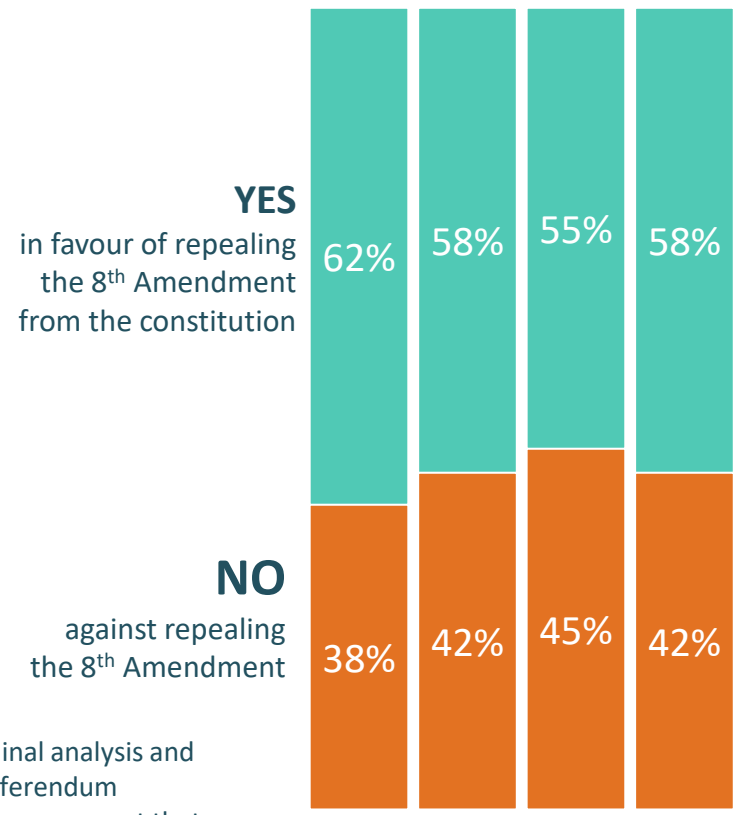
Stated vote intention to interviewer on the phone



Attitudinal analysis and past referendum behaviours suggest that the majority will vote No

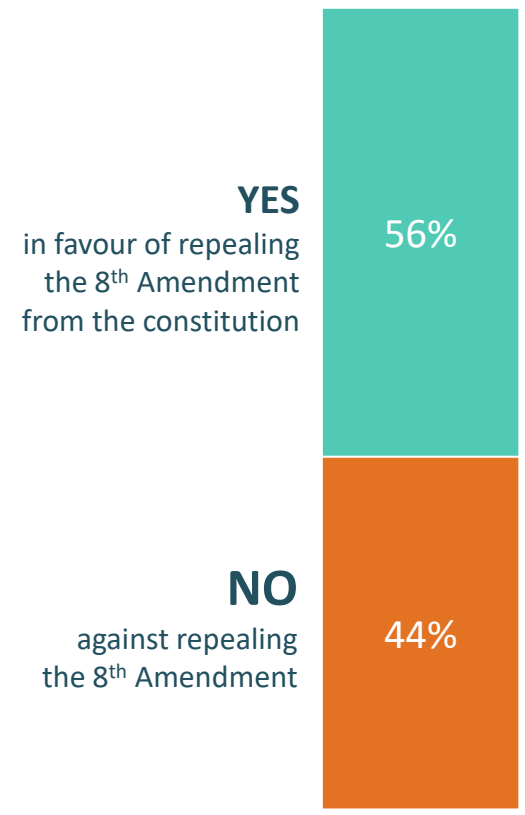
Re-Allocation of Undecided Voters

Past experience that SHY undecided voters most likely to vote No, RED C reallocate D/K based on attitudinal analysis



Wisdom of Crowds Prediction

Prediction of the result among our 1000 people sample



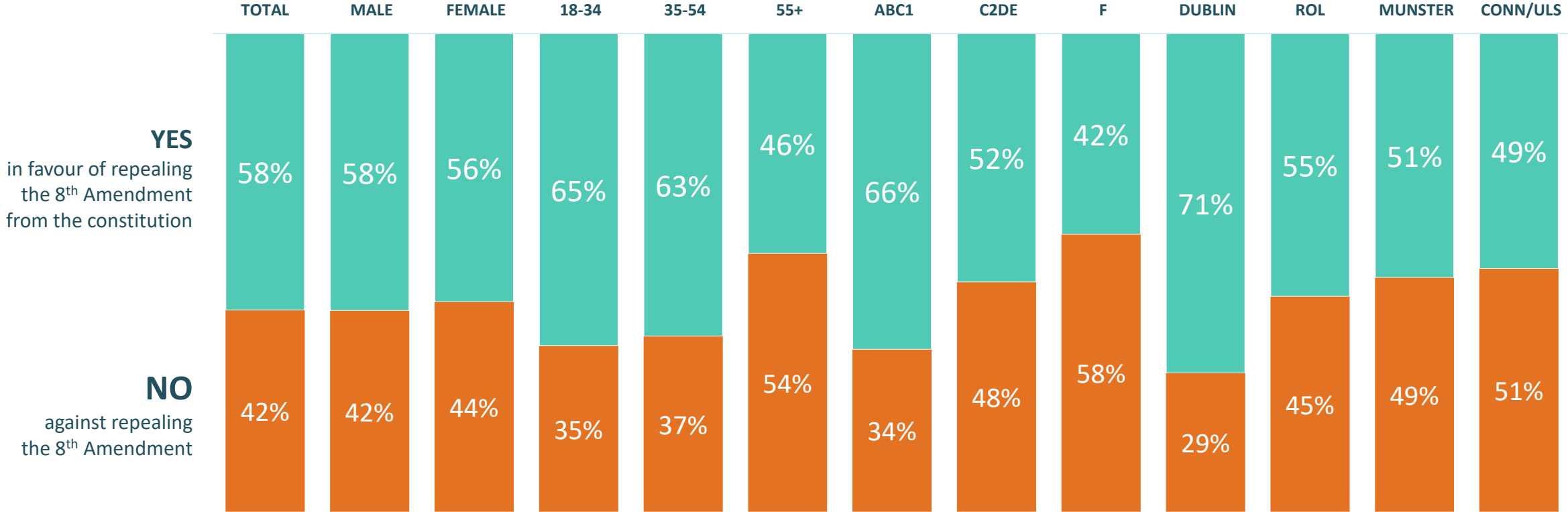
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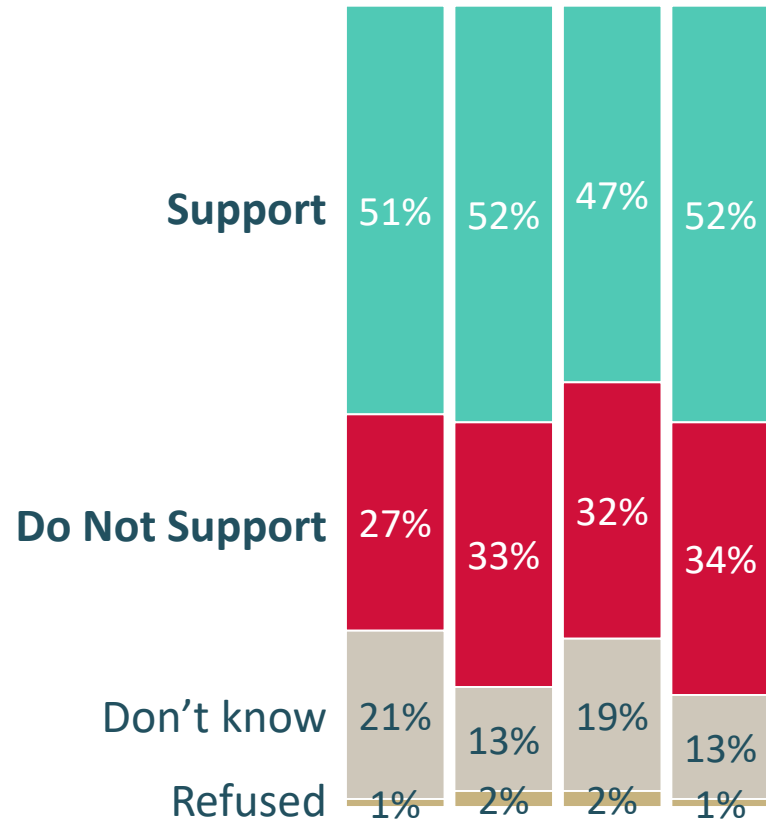
Support for Oireachtas Committee recommendations to allow abortions up to the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

(Base: All Adults aged 18+ - 1,015)

Q. Do you support or not support the Oireachtas committee recommendations to introduce legislation to allow abortion on demand during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy only or not?

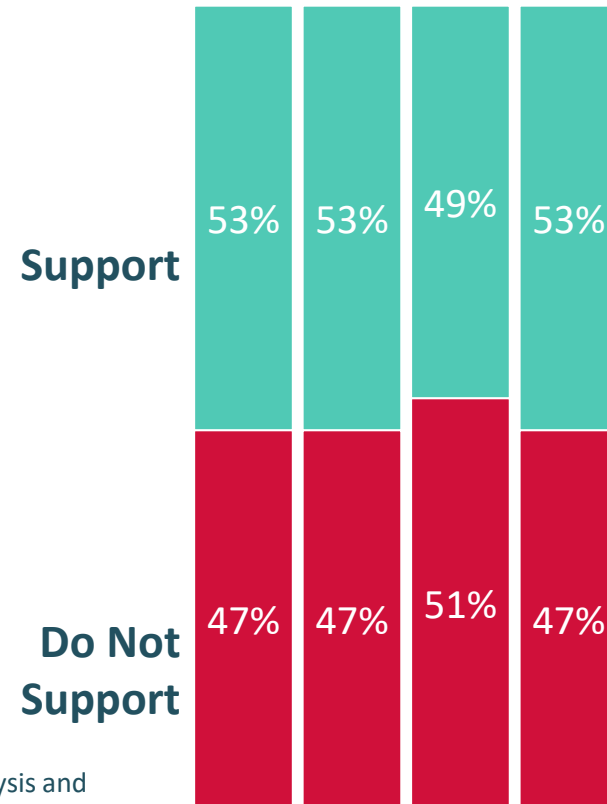


Oireachtas Committee Recommendations



Re-Allocation of Undecided Voters

Past experience that SHY undecided voters most likely to vote No, RED C reallocate D/K based on attitudinal analysis



Attitudinal analysis and past referendum behaviours suggest that the majority will vote No



Party Vote Intention

First Preference Vote Intention – 20th May 2018

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)



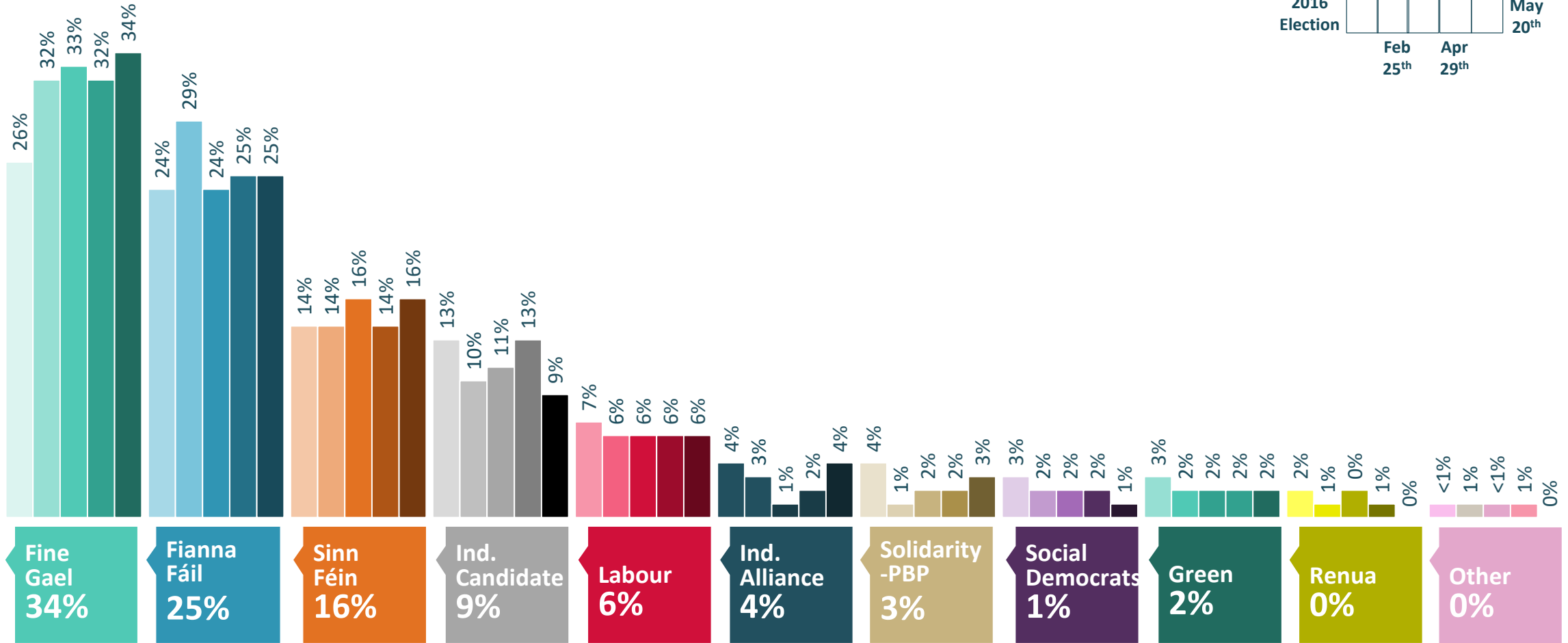
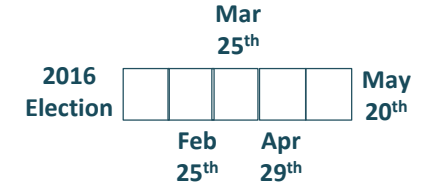
Undecided Voters
13%



First Preference Vote Intention – May '18

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)

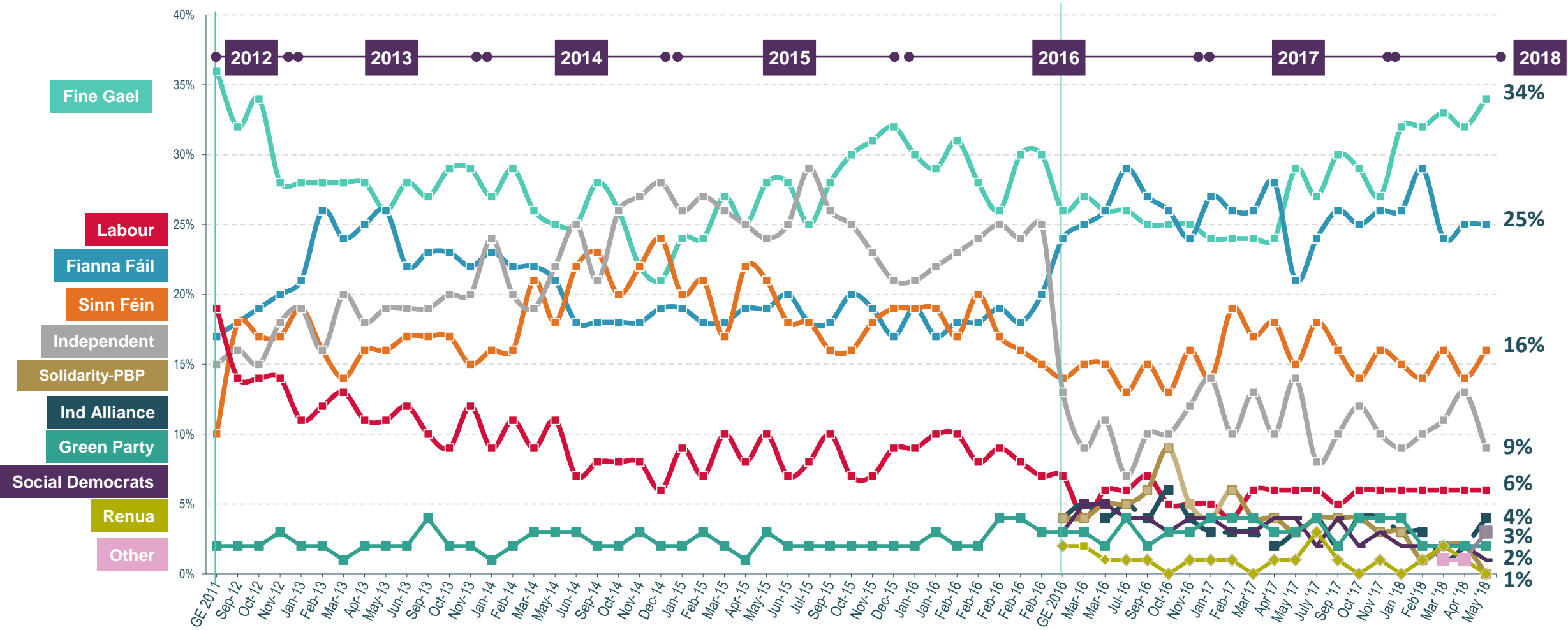
(Base: All adults 18+ who will vote)



First Preference Vote Intention – 2012-2018

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)

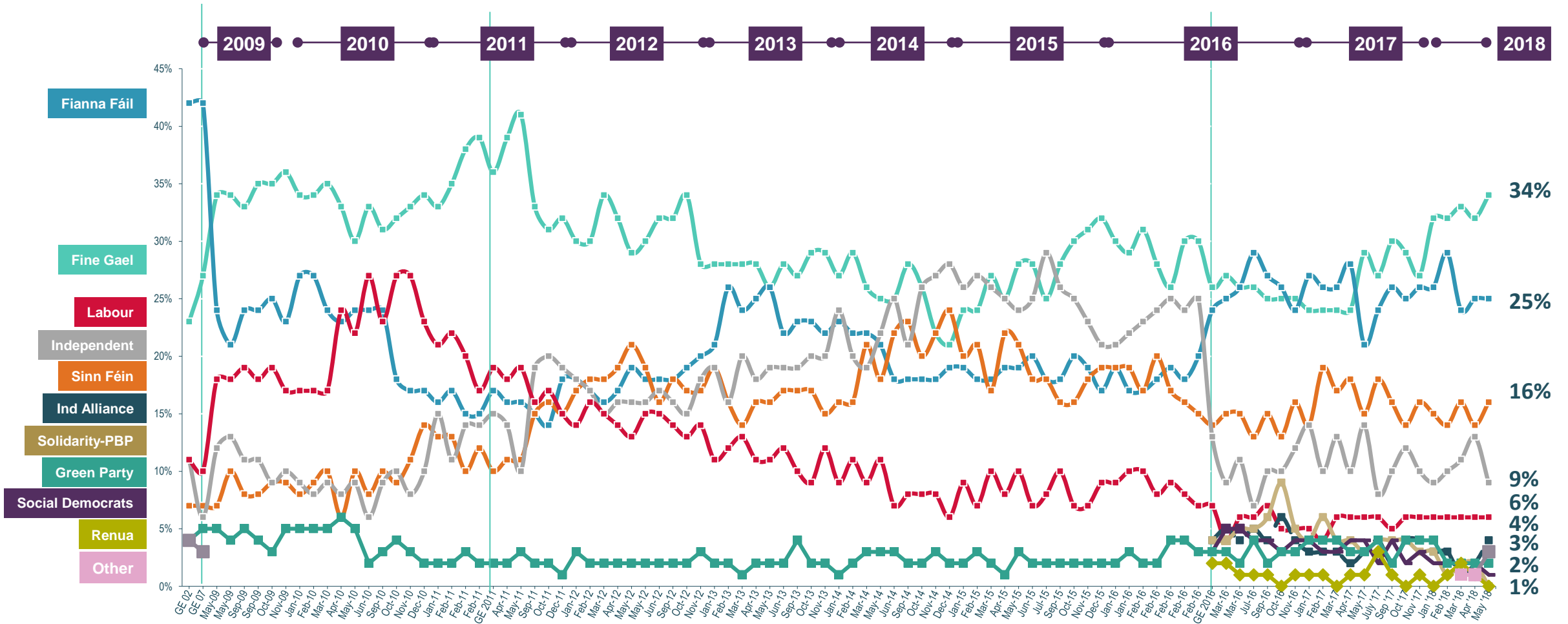


Note; From GE 2016 Onwards, 'Independents/Others' split out to show Solidarity-PBP, Social Democrats & Renua separately

First Preference Vote Intention – 2009 to 2018

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)

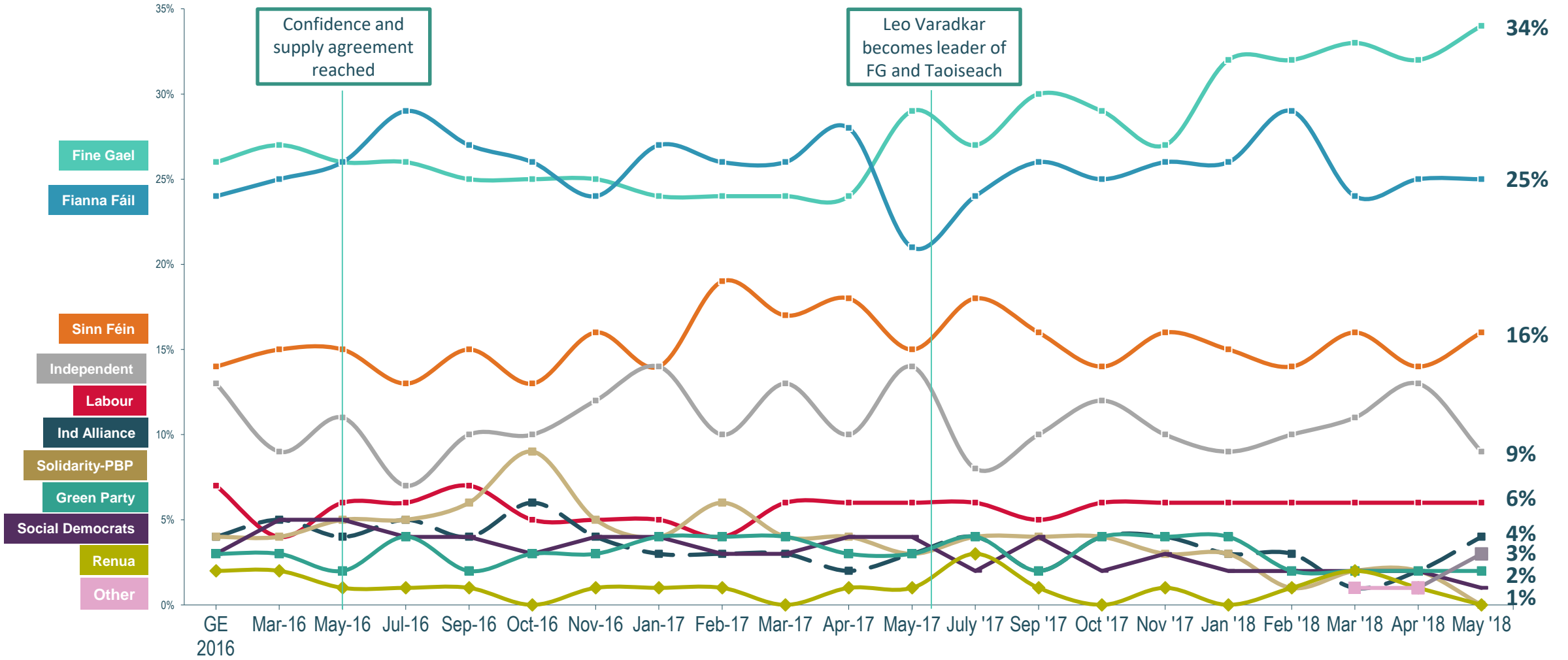


Note; From GE 2016 Onwards, 'Independents/Others' split out to show Solidarity-PBP, Social Democrats & Renua separately

First Preference Vote Intention – Since GE 2016

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)



**THANK
YOU**

REDC