

60 Plus ranked choice poll examines the Republican presidential field after first debate

60 Plus ran an unscientific national poll of 730+ likely Republican presidential primary voters following the first Republican presidential debate on August 24. The ranked choice poll provides more information on voter preferences, including voters' backup choices and which candidate they prefer if their favorite drops out of the race. **The memo below outlines topline and key findings, including:**

- Trump leads in first place votes with 28% to DeSantis' 21%
- However, when other candidates are eliminated, Ron DeSantis leads in the end under a ranked choice voting tabulation beating Trump head-to-head 55%-45%
- If Trump were not in the race, DeSantis and Ramaswamy would benefit. Second-choice preferences provide valuable information on voter preferences: DeSantis (35%) and Vivek Ramaswamy (31%) are by far the most common second choices for Trump voters.
 - DeSantis would beat Ramaswamy head-to-head 63%-37%

Trump leads in 1st place votes; but, doesn't consolidate support when other candidates are removed.

Respondents were asked to rank the presidential candidates in order of preference. Donald Trump is the first choice of 28% of respondents, a narrow lead over second-place finisher Ron DeSantis (21%).

Ranked choice voting provides more information on voter preferences, including which candidate voters prefer if their favorite drops out of the race.

In our ranked choice voting tabulation, Ron DeSantis wins a majority (50% + 1) in round 8 after several of his competitors are eliminated. When the tabulation is run down to the final two candidates, DeSantis beats Trump 55%-45%.

Ranked choice voting tabulation

candidate	round 1	round 2	round 3	round 4	round 5	round 6	round 7	round 8
DeSantis	21%	21%	22%	25%	26%	28%	33%	55%
Trump	28%	28%	28%	28%	29%	30%	34%	45%
Haley	14%	14%	16%	18%	21%	28%	33%	
Vivek	11%	11%	12%	13%	14%	14%		
Christie	8%	9%	9%	9%	10%			
Youngkin	6%	6%	7%	7%				

Scott	5%	5%	6%					
Pence	4%	5%						
Burgum	3%							

Haley was in third place among voters' first-choice preferences; but, lost narrowly in the 7th round to DeSantis and once eliminated, the secondary preferences of her supporters consolidated more behind DeSantis than Trump giving DeSantis the lead in a head-to-head matchup.

Ranking reveals candidate viability across the field

- DeSantis is ranked in the top 3 by over half of voters. No other candidate has that level of consensus support
- Trump was unranked on 56% of ballots, more than the other top tier candidates (DeSantis, Haley).

	Ranked 1st	Ranked in top 2	Ranked in top 3	Ranked in top 4	Ranked in top 5	Not ranked
DeSantis	21%	40%	53%	58%	63%	37%
Trump	28%	34%	38%	41%	44%	56%
Haley	14%	29%	41%	50%	57%	43%
Vivek	11%	26%	37%	44%	49%	51%
Christie	8%	13%	19%	24%	29%	71%
Youngkin	6%	12%	20%	30%	37%	63%
Scott	5%	19%	38%	53%	60%	40%
Pence	4%	11%	18%	24%	31%	69%
Burgum	3%	7%	14%	20%	26%	74%

Head-to-Head Match-ups

- DeSantis beats every other candidate head-to-head
- Haley beats every candidate except DeSantis head-to-head

	DeSantis	Trump	Haley	Vivek	Christie	Youngkin	Scott	Pence	Burgum
DeSantis		55%	60%	63%	74%	73%	63%	77%	78%
Trump	45%		47%	54%	62%	59%	48%	60%	67%
Haley	40%	53%		53%	76%	67%	51%	76%	77%

Vivek	38%	46%	47%		66%	61%	46%	65%	71%
Christie	26%	38%	24%	34%		45%	28%	49%	58%
Youngkin	27%	41%	33%	39%	55%		34%	57%	60%
Scott	37%	52%	49%	54%	72%	66%		71%	77%
Pence	23%	40%	24%	35%	51%	43%	29%		55%
Burgum	22%	33%	23%	29%	42%	40%	23%	45%	

What if Trump were not in the race?

2nd choices of Trump voters

DeSantis	35%
Vivek	31%
No other choice	16%
Scott	8%
Haley	3%
Youngkin	3%
Pence	2%
Burgum	1%

Methodology

Respondents were invited to participate via email and social media. The sample was not statistically selected and results are not statistically representative of all GOP voters nationally. Duplicate responses were not permitted. Voters were an even mix of “Very Conservative” and “Somewhat Conservative” and represent voters in 45 states. Voters in Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada, and South Carolina represent 6% of the total responses. Michigan was the top state for responses.