

# NATIONAL GOP POLL: AHEAD OF FIRST DEBATE, TRUMP SUPPORT HITS FEVER PITCH AS DESANTIS PLUMMETS

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Poll conducted August 15-17, 2023 among 825 registered likely GOP primary voters throughout the United States. Responses were collected via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and Text-To-Web (TTW). Maximum margin of error of  $\pm 3.5\%$ . Not commissioned by any candidate or committee.





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## Executive Summary

In our first national poll of the 2024 Republican primary for President of the United States, we find Donald Trump with a 48.7-point lead over Ron DeSantis and the rest of the field. With 61% support, Trump stands in a league of his own as the only true “frontrunner” in this race. DeSantis (12%) is trailed by Chris Christie (6%), Vivek Ramaswamy (4%), and Mike Pence (4%). No other candidate tops 2% support, and 8% of the electorate remains undecided.

Trump’s dominance is maintained even in head-to-head matchups, where he bests DeSantis by 41 points and Ramaswamy by 56 points. Trump also takes the cake when it comes to favorability, with 68% of voters saying they have a positive opinion of him. In many of our previous state-level polls, we found DeSantis to have better favorability numbers than Trump, but that is no longer true in our first national poll of the cycle. Despite having the same negatives (19%), Trump holds a 17-point advantage in terms of positives (68% to 51%).

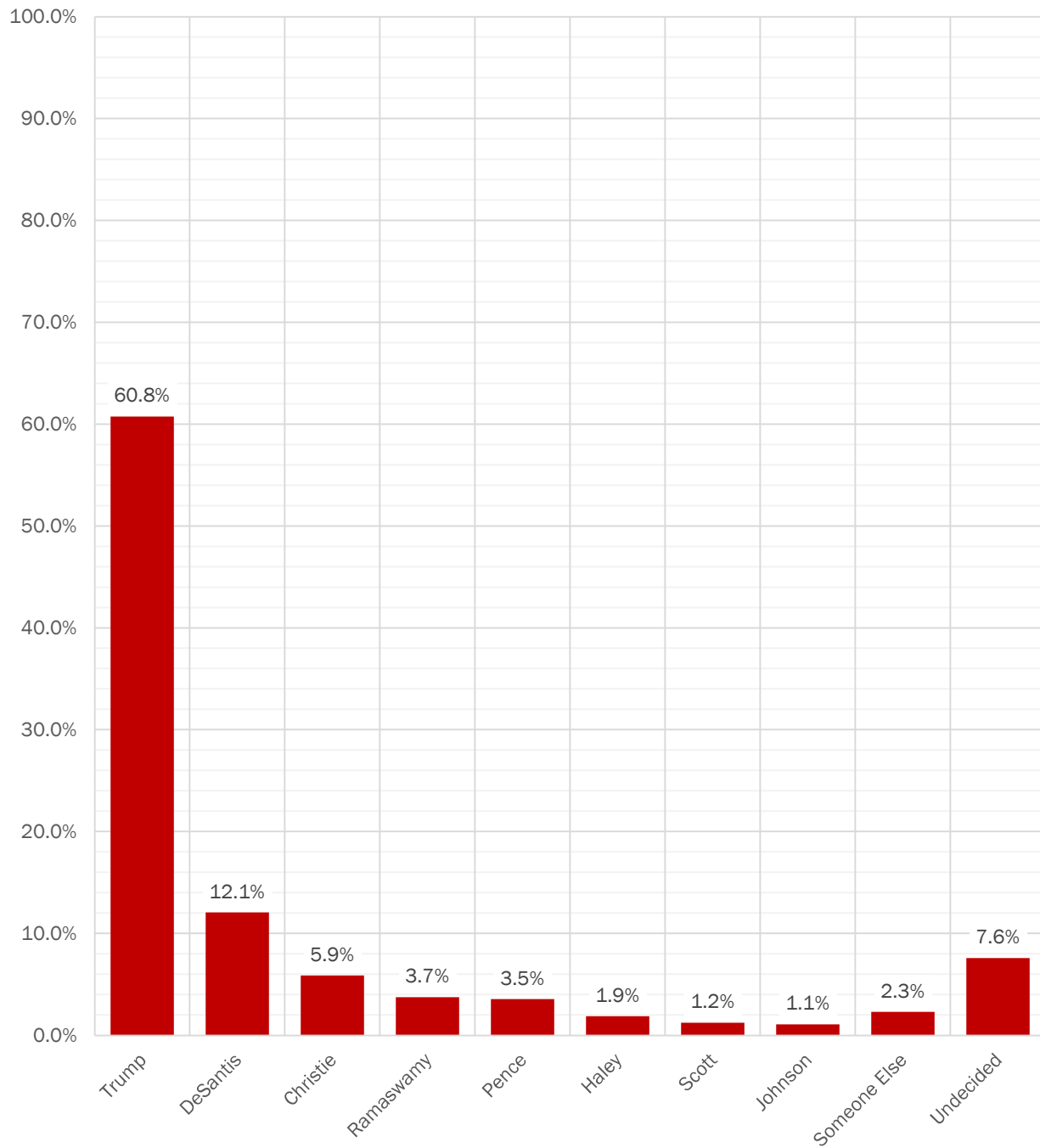
Ramaswamy and Tim Scott post the next-best favorability numbers, while Christie and Pence are disliked by the majority of the electorate. Nikki Haley falls somewhere in between, with 32% positives and 23% negatives. Meanwhile, Perry Johnson has yet to gain any significant national support, with only 4% of the electorate holding a positive opinion of him.

This is Donald Trump’s race to lose. With 3 in 5 GOP voters already saying they’re backing Trump, and his most serious challenger barely holding on to double-digit support, the former president is in an excellent position. Assuming Trump doesn’t participate in the first RNC-sanctioned debate next week, the candidates on stage won’t really be fighting for the nomination – they’ll be fighting for second place.

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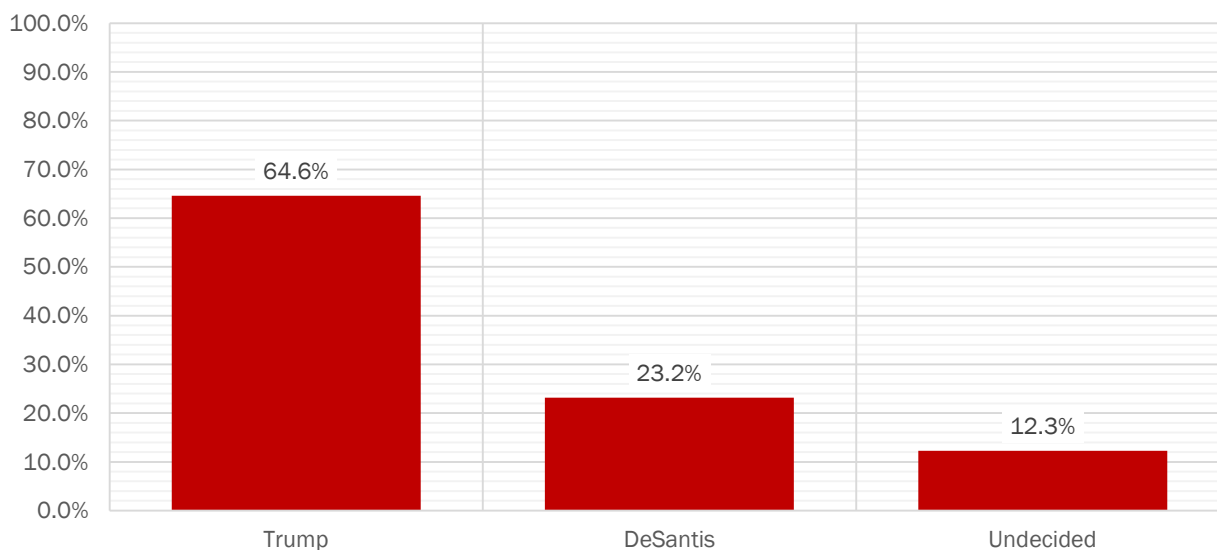
## National Republican Primary Ballot

Trump holds a dominant lead over the Republican primary field. With more than 60% support, he holds a 48.7-point lead over DeSantis, his closest challenger. 5.9% of the electorate is backing Christie, who has made it his mission to run a decidedly anti-Trump campaign thus far. Ramaswamy is next, narrowly leading Pence. Haley, Scott, and Johnson bring up the rear, in that order, each with less than 2% of the vote. 2.3% of the electorate says they support someone else for the nomination, and 7.6% remain undecided.



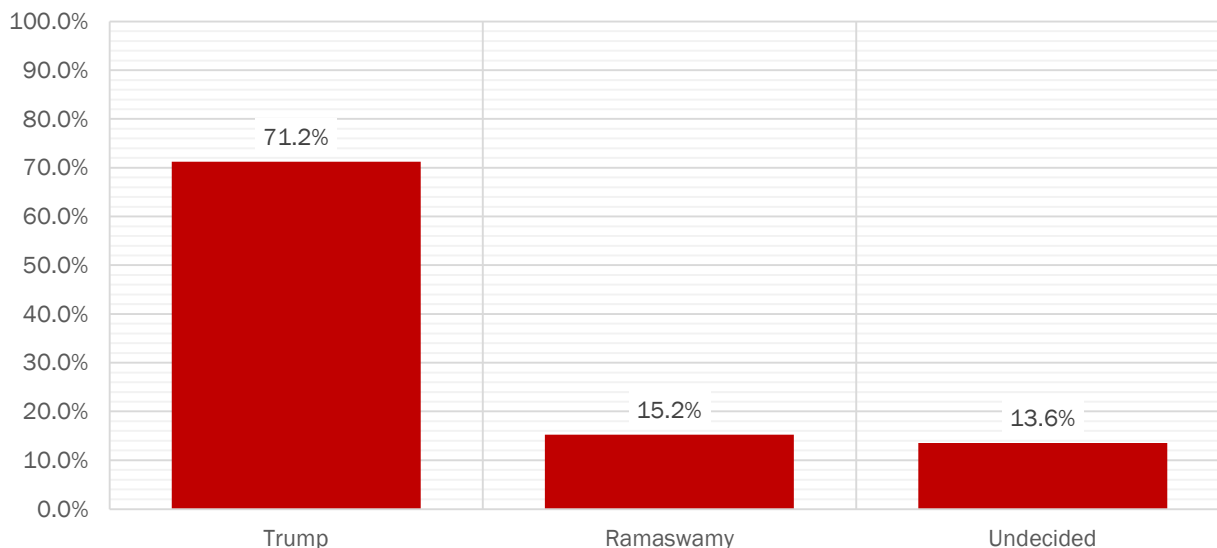
## Head-To-Head: Trump vs. DeSantis

If the Republican primary field were whittled down to only Trump and DeSantis, Trump would still trounce the Florida governor, if the election were held today. Even in this head-to-head matchup, Trump holds a lead of more than 40 points. About 12% of voters would remain undecided between the two GOP powerhouses.



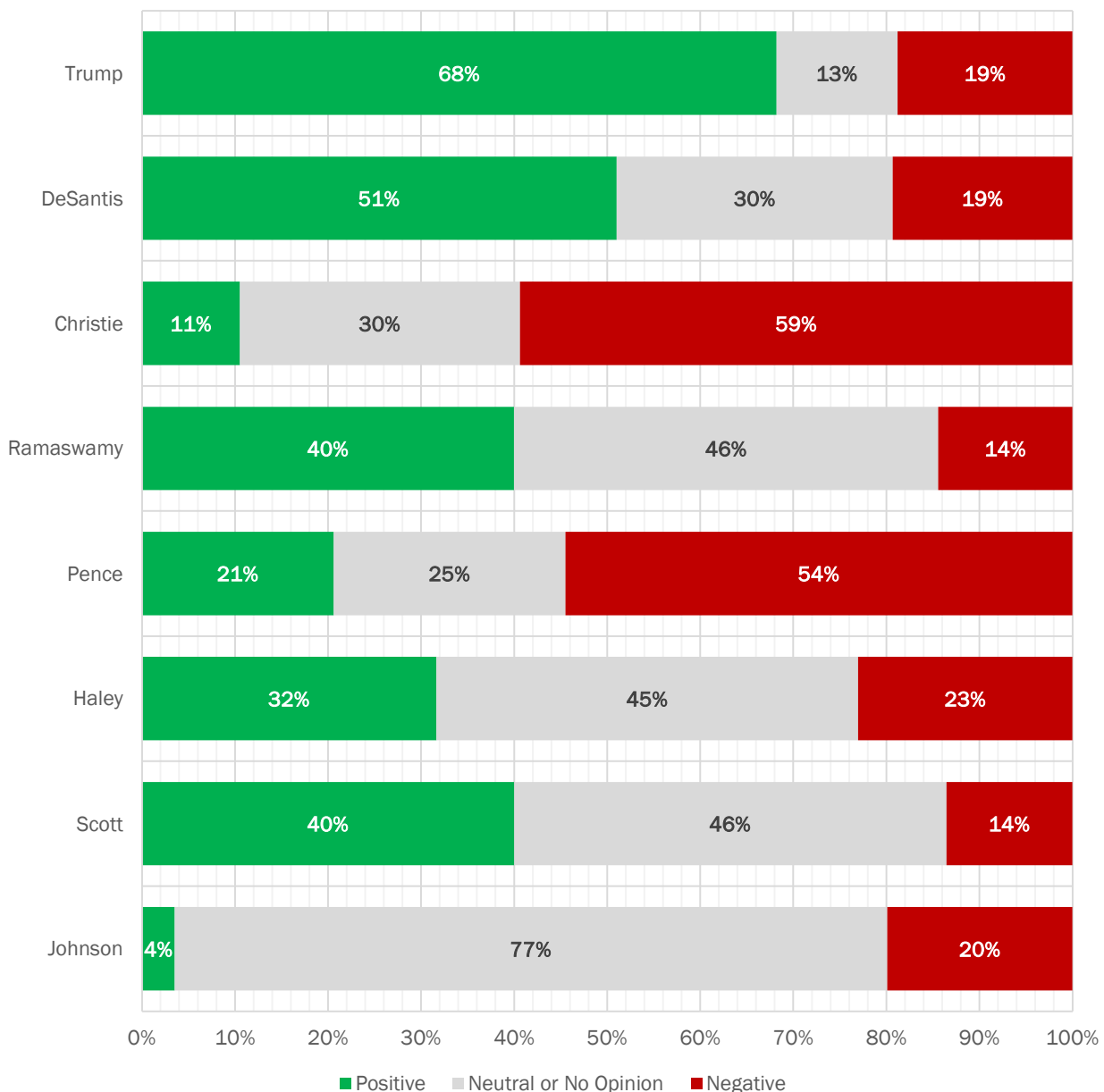
## Head-To-Head: Trump vs. Ramaswamy

We also asked voters who they would support in a hypothetical head-to-head matchup between Trump and Ramaswamy. Ramaswamy underperforms DeSantis, and Trump picks up a couple of points, resulting in a 56-point Trump lead. To be fair, Ramaswamy's underperformance compared to DeSantis could be attributed to his comparative lack of Name ID, as shown on the next page.



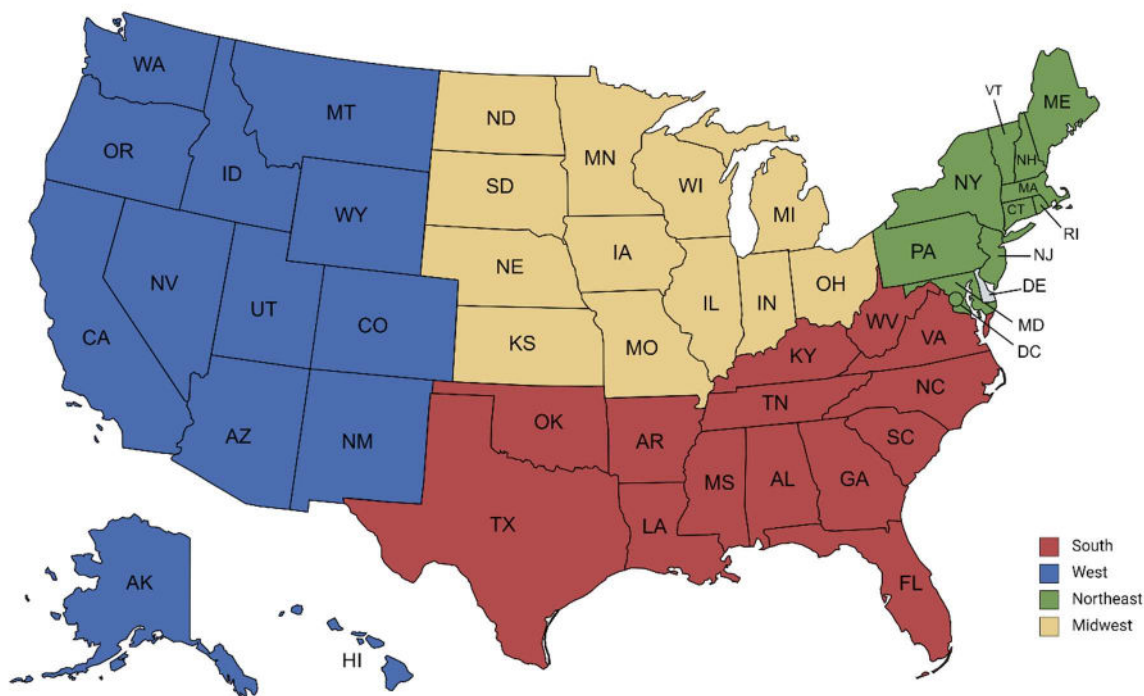
## Favorability

Trump is the most popular candidate by a long shot, with 68% of Republican primary voters saying they have a positive opinion of him. DeSantis is next with 51% positives, while Ramaswamy and Scott are tied for third, with 40% positives. It's clear that two candidates are in serious hot water with the broader GOP base: Christie is viewed negatively by 59% of the electorate, while Pence is viewed negatively by 54%. Christie's positives are at only 11%, lower than every other candidate listed besides little-known outsider Johnson. Haley lands in an awkward middle ground, with approximately equal Name ID as Scott and Ramaswamy, but lower positives and higher negatives.



## Demographics and Sampling

We conducted this poll using a mixture of Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and Text-To-Web (TTW) among a random sample of registered likely GOP primary voters throughout the United States. The 825 valid respondents to our poll hailed from 38 states and represented every corner of the nation. 36% of our sample was from the South, 24% from the Midwest, 23% from the West, and 18% from the Northeast. The map below shows which states we consider as belonging to each region for weighting and analysis purposes.



Our sample was almost perfectly balanced between males and females, with each group making up 50% of the sample. Like the GOP primary electorate, our sample was made up largely of older voters, with 42% of responses coming from voters aged 70 or older, 32% from those 55 to 69, and 25% from those 18 to 54. Also mirroring the GOP primary electorate, voters of European descent made up the vast majority of our sample – just over 89%. About two-thirds (68%) of respondents had voted in the 2016 presidential primary election, and just slightly more (69%) had voted in the 2020 presidential primary election. Every respondent had voted in Republican primaries in the past.



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