

# FLORIDA PRESIDENTIAL POLL: BIDEN, TRUMP, DESANTIS, HARRIS EACH HAVE A SHOT

Our recent poll of Florida voters reveals that higher favorability does not equate to a higher chance to win the Presidency. As Biden holds steady as Commander in Chief, Trump's strength wanes slightly, DeSantis' rise is proven real, and Harris continues to struggle.

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Poll conducted September 16-18, 2021 via IVR  
among more than 450 respondents in Florida.

MoE  $\pm 4.6\%$ .





## (A) Executive Summary

Though it's only 2021, 2024's impending presidential election looms large in many people's minds, along with more questions than answers. Will Donald Trump run again? If not, will Ron DeSantis have what it takes to win the primary and the general? Will Joe Biden pursue a second term? If not, will Kamala Harris successfully fill her presumed role of heir-to-the-throne? We kept all of these questions in mind while conducting our latest poll of Florida voters. Florida has taken the spotlight as a swing state turned (marginally) red state, and if DeSantis is the Republican nominee, it could prove crucial to his victory or defeat.

In both parties' primaries, the "incumbent" (although Trump is not exactly an incumbent) holds a clear advantage. Both Biden and Trump hover around the 60% mark in terms of support, while DeSantis (30%) is a much more popular choice within his party than Harris (17%) is within hers. In his home state, DeSantis is the most popular of the four candidates, with 55% favorability, outperforming Trump (52%), Biden (51%), and Harris (47%). Not only that, but he also leads in terms of Favorability Intensity (76% overall, 83% in-party). Again, we want to emphasize that these numbers refer to Florida only; however, it should be noted that prior polling has indicated that DeSantis is an early favorite in other key states as well.

In hypothetical presidential matchups, Democrats won 3 out of 4 times. Biden narrowly defeated both Trump and DeSantis, while Harris defeated Trump but not DeSantis. Nevertheless, each matchup was decided by fewer than 2.5 percentage points. As each matchup was within the margin of error, the general trends are more important than the actual numbers. Democrats outperform Republicans, Biden outperforms Harris, and DeSantis outperforms Trump. As 2024 approaches, we'll continue closely tracking these numbers and providing relevant updates.

**Read on for more results, charts, and analyses.**

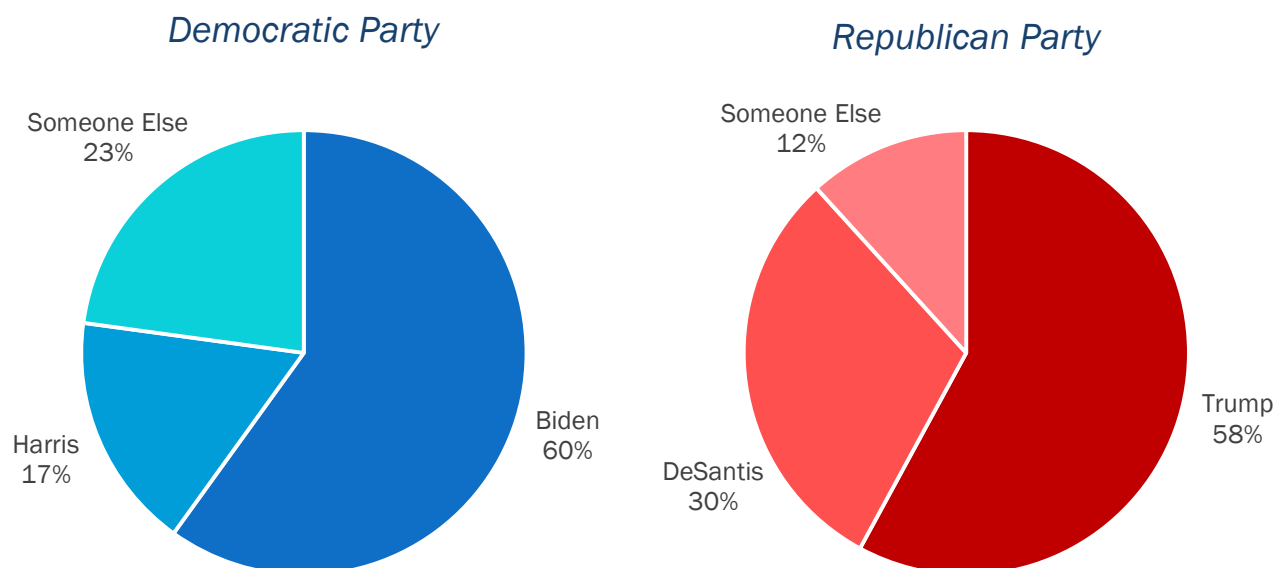
## (B) This Poll's Partisan Composition

Our poll very accurately represents the partisan makeup of the Florida electorate. Just as is the case with the actual Florida voter rolls, Democrats slightly outpace Republicans in terms of registration. However, Florida leans red, and this is reflected in Republicans' slight advantage in terms of which party respondents aligned with.

Party	Registration	Alignment
Democratic	39.3%	42.5%
Republican	38.3%	42.7%
Nonpartisan/Other	22.5%	14.8%

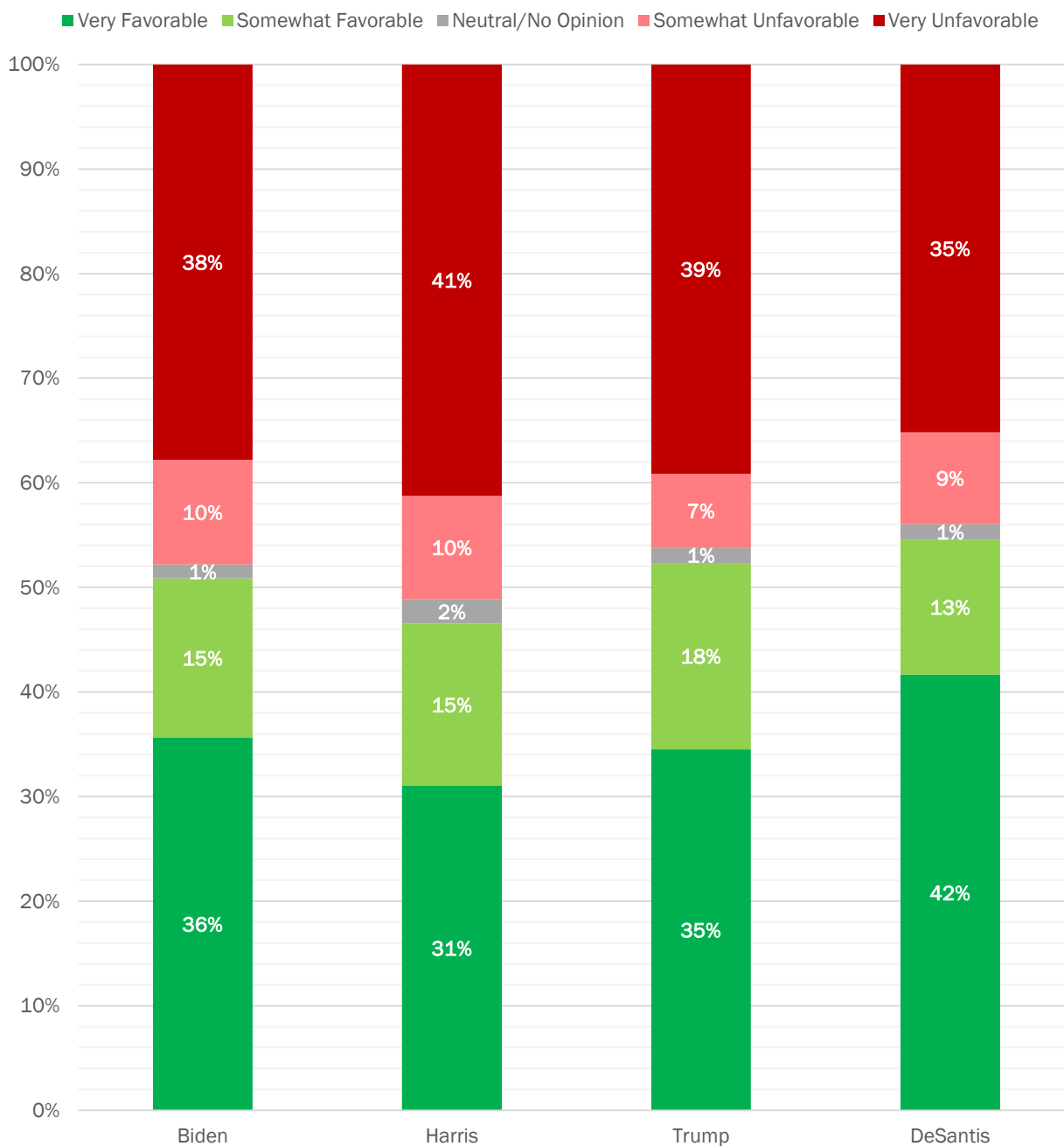
## (C) Presidential Nominee Preferences by Party

While there are few surprises here, there are some interesting comparisons and statistics to point out. First of all, Trump and DeSantis shore up support from 88% of the Republican Party, whereas Biden and Harris only obtain 77% from the Democrats. In other words, Trump and DeSantis unite the Republicans better than the sitting (Democratic) President and Vice President unite the Democrats. Additionally, while Biden and Trump have approximately the same grip on their party in seeking re-nomination (60% and 58%, respectively), DeSantis holds a much more prominent second place spot than Harris (30% to 17%). Of course, while Harris is the Vice President, DeSantis is the sitting Governor, so it makes sense that he'd have high popularity within his party.



## (D) Favorability by Candidate

We asked poll respondents if they had a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Biden, Harris, DeSantis, and Trump, and several key patterns emerged. First of all, DeSantis had the highest favorability (55%), followed by Trump (52%), Biden (51%), and Harris (47%). DeSantis also had the highest “Very Favorable” percentage (42%), as well as the lowest “Very Unfavorable” percentage (35%), indicating he’s in a strong position in his home state. Harris, on the other hand, had the highest “Very Unfavorable” percentage and the lowest “Very Favorable” percentage, indicating that she maintains very low popularity in the state.

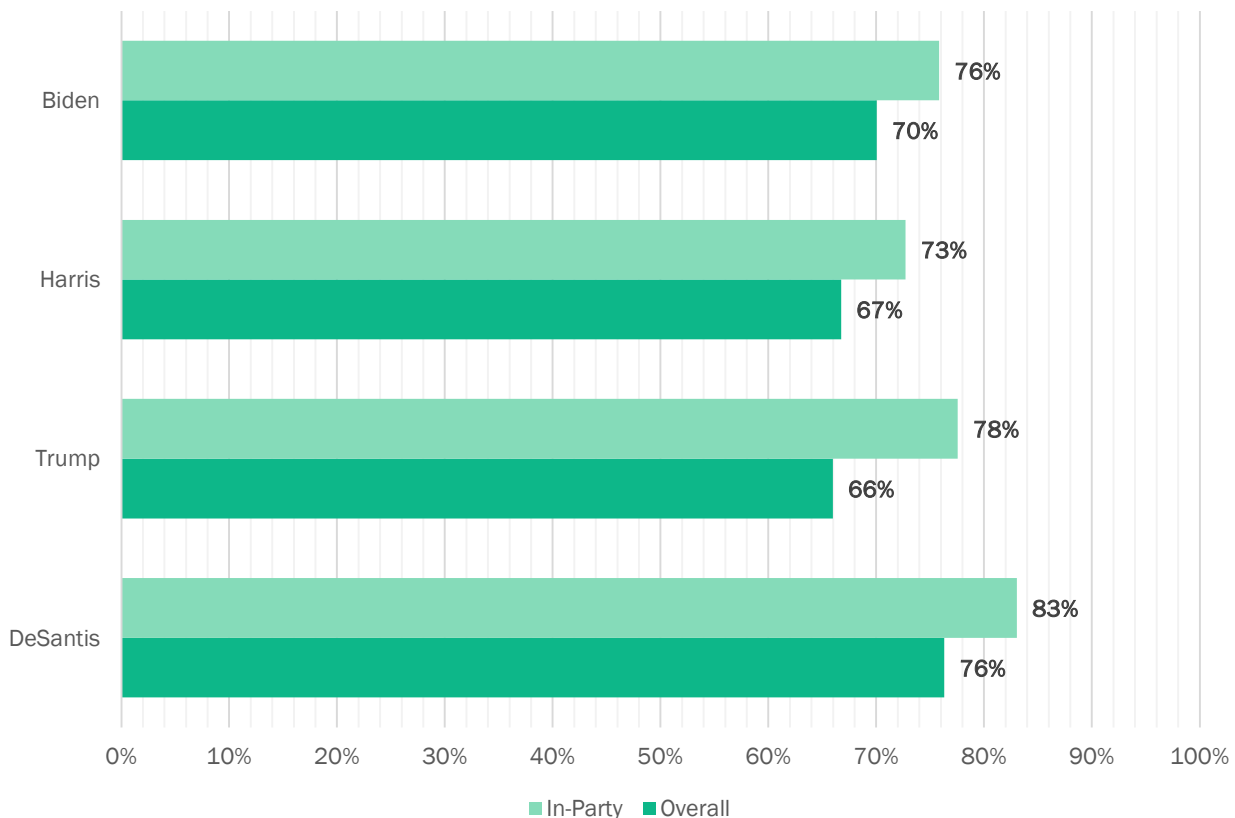




## (E) Favorability Intensity

Favorability Intensity refers to the proportion of respondents who hold a “Very Favorable” opinion of each candidate out of all respondents who hold a favorable opinion of each candidate. Essentially, it measures not the magnitude of support, but rather the fierceness of support. Two values are reported for each candidate: their overall favorability intensity, as well as favorability intensity among voters who belong to that candidate’s party. DeSantis has the highest overall favorability intensity of all four candidates (76%), which corroborates former polling. He’s followed by Biden (70%), Harris (67%), and Trump (66%). DeSantis also leads in terms of in-party favorability intensity (83%), leading Trump (78%), Biden (76%), and Harris (73%).

There are two main takeaways from these figures. First, DeSantis has fervent supporters, evidenced by the fact that he leads in both in-party (+5%) and overall (+6%) favorability intensity. Second, Trump’s appeal is much stronger within the Republican Party than it is across party lines. He has the highest difference between in-party and overall favorability intensity, and he jumps from last place overall to second place in-party. This partially explains why Trump’s endorsement is extremely helpful in Republican primaries and often detrimental in general elections.

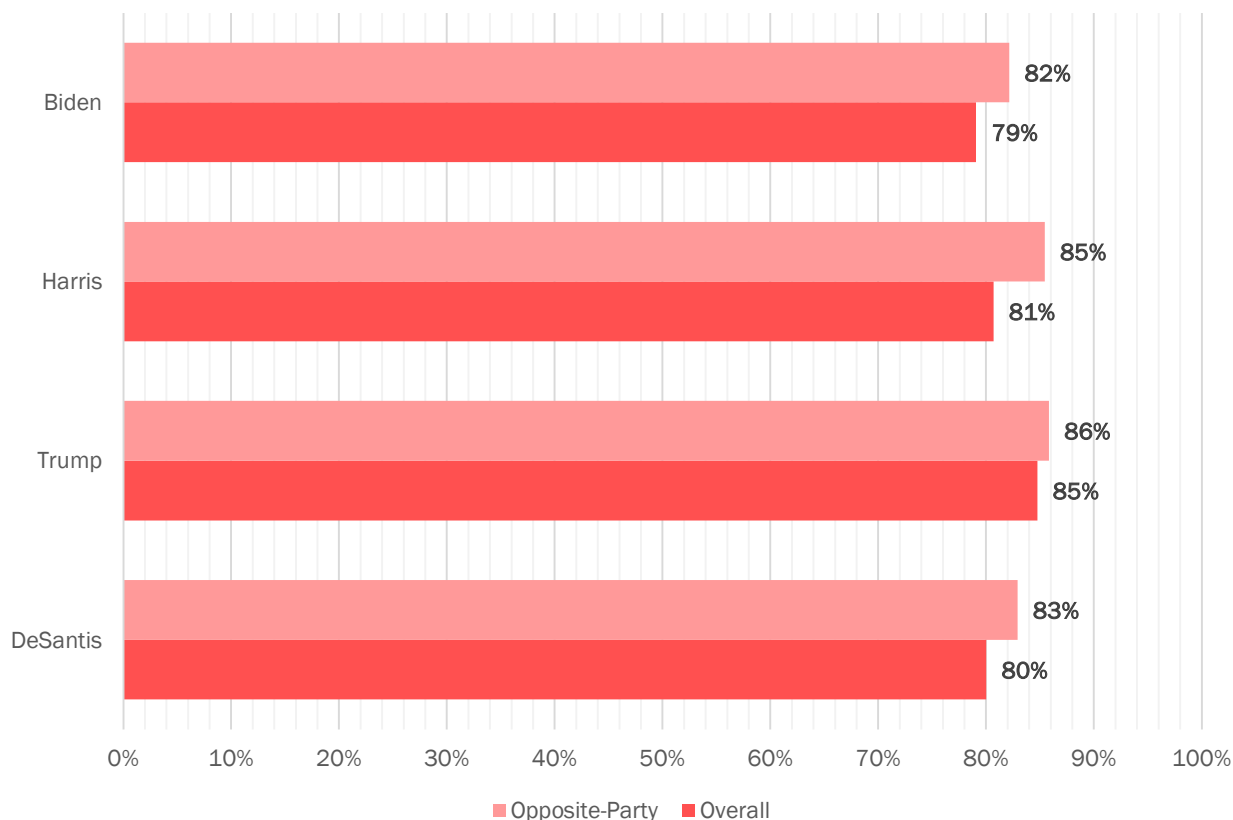




## (F) Hatred Intensity

We deem the opposite of Favorability Intensity as the “Hatred Intensity.” This value indicates the proportion of respondents who hold a “Very Unfavorable” opinion of each candidate out of all respondents who hold an unfavorable opinion of each candidate. The “Hatred Intensity” name comes from the fact that this value measures how many voters *hate* rather than simply *dislike* political candidates. The two reported values for each candidate refer to this index among both the overall population (“Overall”) and voters who align with the opposite party as the candidate in question.

As one might expect, Trump maintains the highest Hatred Intensity of all four candidates, both in terms of opposite-party and overall Hatred Intensity. In other words, those who dislike Trump have strong feelings about it. Another clear pattern is that Hatred Intensity is consistently and significantly higher than Favorability Intensity. What this means is that voters vote *against* candidates more than they vote *for* candidates. In other words, the *push* away from a “bad” candidate is stronger than the *pull* towards a “good” candidate. This has political strategy implications: attack ads make sense, painting your opponent as a radical ideologue is common-sense, and stirring up anger wins votes.



## (G) Candidate Matchups: Presidential Election

We posed various hypothetical presidential matchups to respondents and asked whom they'd vote for, with all four matchups of Biden/Harris vs. Trump/DeSantis included. Though it was very close – and within the margin of error – the Democrat defeated the Republican three out of four times, and Harris vs. DeSantis was the only matchup that yielded a Republican victory. In general, Biden performed better than Harris, and DeSantis performed better than Trump.



Joe Biden ✓ (+2.31%)

•51.2%



Donald Trump

•48.8%



Joe Biden ✓ (+2.04%)

•51.0%



Ron DeSantis

•49.0%



Kamala Harris ✓ (+1.32%)

•50.7%



Donald Trump

•49.3%



Kamala Harris

•49.4%



Ron DeSantis ✓ (+1.18%)

•50.6%





## (H) Demographic Verification

The following section shows some of the key metrics used to ensure the poll results closely mirror the actual electorate for in Florida presidential elections. The approximate demographics from prior statewide elections are displayed alongside the demographics of the poll in order to transparently validate the accuracy of the poll's results. Please note that these were not the *only* variables considered, but rather some of the most important.

Age	Actual Electorate	Poll	Difference
18-30	11.5%	11.8%	+0.3%
31-45	18.3%	17.8%	-0.5%
46-60	27.9%	27.9%	0.0%
61-75	30.1%	30.1%	0.0%
76+	12.1%	12.5%	+0.4%

Party Registration	Actual Electorate	Poll	Difference
<i>Democratic</i>	39.4%	39.3%	-0.1%
<i>Republican</i>	40.5%	38.3%	-2.2%
<i>Nonpartisan/Other</i>	20.2%	22.5%	+2.3%

Congressional District Region	Actual Electorate	Poll	Difference
<i>Central: 7, 9, 10, 11, 15</i>	19.1%	20.0%	+0.9%
<i>East Coast: 4, 6, 8, 18</i>	17.5%	16.5%	-1.0%
<i>North/Panhandle: 1, 2, 3, 5</i>	14.5%	15.9%	+1.4%
<i>Southeast: 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27</i>	22.6%	22.0%	-0.6%
<i>Southwest: 17, 19, 25</i>	10.5%	10.5%	0.0%
<i>West: 12, 13, 14, 16</i>	15.9%	15.2%	-0.7%



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