

Key candidates to replace Shinzo Abe

The new leader of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party will become prime minister following Shinzo Abe's resignation for health reasons

Shigeru Ishiba, 63

Former Defence Minister

Vocal critic of Abe is public's top choice for prime minister but is less popular with LDP lawmakers



34.3%*

Yoshihide Suga, 71

Chief Cabinet Secretary

Abe's right-hand man since 2012 is expected to receive backing of several major factions within LDP



14.3%*

Taro Kono, 56

Defence Minister

Backed by **Shinjiro Koizumi**, high-profile son of popular former premier **Junichiro Koizumi**



13.6%*

Fumio Kishida, 63

Former Foreign Minister

Low-key member of parliament is widely seen as Abe's preferred successor but lacks popular support



7.5%*

**Candidate's popularity according to Kyodo News telephone survey of 1,050 randomly selected respondents between Aug 30-31*

TOP PRIORITIES FOR NEW CABINET (according to same survey)

Coronavirus pandemic

72.9%

Economy and employment

32.1%

Social welfare

19.2%