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## US governance decline: 'Democracies rarely implode quickly'



Los Angeles/DNA (ots) -

Los Angeles (DNA) - After the turmoil of recent US election cycles - with a 2024 rematch underway between the oldest presidents in history, one facing multiple indictments - the United States is now being mentioned in the same sentence with systems veering into autocracy by a group of international governance researchers.

Helmut Anheier, principal investigator on the 2024 Berggruen Governance Index (BGI), was discussing the successful democracies that saw their scores for democratic accountability fall during the studied period of 2010-2021.

"We are concerned about some countries having significant drops. That includes the United States. It includes Hungary, and Poland dropped," he said in an interview in Los Angeles.

On a 100-point scale, Hungary slid from 80 to 60. Poland had an even wider drop, but last year voters toppled the illiberal populist government that had ruled the eastern European state since 2015. The United States slipped from 95 to 86 points - still a strong rating - after Donald Trump's 2016 election and January 2021 attempt to disrupt the transfer of power.

"We should be concerned about those countries where we see a significant drop because that can easily get us to a tipping point, right? And we don't know where that tipping point is", Anheier said. "Democracies rarely implode quickly. They decline slowly. And sometimes you won't even notice it. So there's small steps backward, right? There's a certain democratic backsliding that occurs."

The US performance on a separate index of state capacity, which looks at the quality of government, was even worse, dropping during 2010-2021 from 79 to 64 points out of a possible 100.

Alexandra Lieben, deputy director of the Burkle Center for International Relations at the University of California, Los Angeles, who participated in the release of the BGI, described the US situation as partly a failure to address socio-economic stresses from globalization.

"We sacrificed people in our own regions," she said in an interview. "And we have opened up the arena to right-wing parties, to populist leaders who are coming in and catering to that discontent, to that disaffection."

"Those findings were presented Wednesday in a report, titled "Democracy Challenged", by the Luskin School of Public Affairs at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA), which collaborated on the project with the Berggruen Institute, a think tank headquartered in Los Angeles, and the Hertie School, a German university.

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Contact:

Christian Röwekamp, Democracy News Alliance, [roewekamp.christian@dpa.com](mailto:roewekamp.christian@dpa.com)

#### Medieninhalte



*After the turmoil of recent US election cycles the United States still has a strong rating in the Democratic Accountability Index, a component of the 2024 Berggruen Government Index, but the country is now being mentioned in the same sentence with systems veering into autocracy by the investigators of the BGI report. (Photo by Jim Watson / AFP) / More information via ots and [www.presseportal.de/en/nr/174021](https://www.presseportal.de/en/nr/174021) / The use of this image for editorial purposes is permitted and free of charge provided that all conditions of use are complied with. Publication must include image credits.*

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