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Europe's future threatened beyond far-right surge, says new report



Brussels/DNA (ots) -

With an increasing number of voters expected to opt for far-right parties in the upcoming European Parliament elections, the latest research from global governance experts says certain government policies are behind the shift. The report based on the Berggruen Governance Index (BGI) blames years of austerity-driven economic and social policies in many countries for sewing discontent that will see far-right parties possibly make substantial gains at the polls during the elections being held June 6-9.

The findings of *"Right-wing Populism, the State, and Democracy: Governance Performance and the 2024 European Parliament Elections"* were released in Brussels on Tuesday, less than two weeks before Europeans begin casting their ballots. The report was conducted by researchers from the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) in co-operation with the Los Angeles-based Berggruen Institute and the Hertie School, a university in Berlin, Germany.

Increasing economic and social anxiety

Through its examination of state democracies, BGI's focus on Europe, a wealthy region that remains the envy of many parts of the world, presents a negative long-term outlook for the continent's high quality of life. Behind a veneer of stability, the report presents a dire situation that, if not properly addressed, could spiral into what it calls a "vicious cycle" that would see continued far right gains amid a fraying social fabric.

The report details how the far-right ascent began over a decade ago during the aftermath of the global financial crisis and Eurocrisis, the lingering effects of which are now coming home to roost. The authors detail how prolonged budget cuts and austerity measures have worsened the state capacity and weakened democratic accountability in many EU countries.

According to the report, with austerity measures having often been supported by centre-left parties, the resulting economic fallout left many people in search of a political choice, leading them to look towards extreme options, mostly the far-right. As a result, right-wing parties have capitalised on the insecurities and grievances in European regions affected by harmful economic policies by driving fears around migration.

Proactive measures needed

To begin rebuilding faith in democracy, the report urges governments to put an end to austerity policies that are increasing polarization and weakening Europe's institutions. However, its warnings are likely too late to stem the tide of an expected surge in right-wing support when polls open across Europe.

But to improve the long-term outlook, the report says that in order to drive growth, reduce inequalities, and tackle the duel

challenges of climate change and migration, actions need to be taken to increase economic productivity, and governments should start delivering on policy promises to boost public investments. "Public sector reforms and strategic investments in state capacity and democratic resilience are urgently needed", the report states.

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Plenary hall of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France: 720 new representatives from the EU member states will be elected in the elections from 6 to 9 June. (Photo: Philipp von Ditzfurth / dpa) / More information via ots and 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.



The election campaign is still underway in Europe, with election posters hanging in many places, such as here in Brussels, Belgium. The European Parliament will be elected from 6 to 9 June. (Photo by Kenzo Tribouillard / AFP) / More information via ots and 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.



Red marked countries suffered a decline in public goods provisions in the years 2010 to 2021, blue marked countries could increase access to public goods, according to the 2024 Berggruen Governance Index. All 15 EU countries shown in colours simultaneously experienced a decline in both democratic accountability and state capacity. (Graphics: Factstory for DNA) / More information via ots and 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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