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Report warns of deepening social fractures in Germany



Los Angeles/DNA (ots) -

Social trust in Germany is declining, a new report based on the Berggruen Governance Index (BGI) ahead of Germany's February 23 parliamentary election warns. However, a possible new government under the conservative CDU/CSU alliance and its candidate for the chancellorship, Friedrich Merz, seems poised to exacerbate divisions rather than resolving them, the researchers say.

In their report ["Germany 2025 - Slow decline in governance performance erupts into crisis of government as geopolitics worsen"](#) the researchers conclude that the country's government and administrative systems have appeared increasingly sclerotic and hesitant to adopt necessary reforms. Effective, often painful reforms are urgently needed, but political and economic constraints make them difficult to implement, the scientists write.

For the report, the Los Angeles-based Berggruen Institute think tank collaborated with the Luskin School of Public Affairs at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) and the Hertie School, a German university.

The [2024 Berggruen Governance Index \(BGI\)](#) measures democratic accountability, delivery of public goods and state capacity on a scale from 0 to 100. It analyses the years from 2000 to 2021. According to the report, Germany has lost ground on all three measures.

Germans go to the polls early after the ruling three-party coalition consisting of the Social Democrats (SPD), the Greens and the liberal Free Democrats (FDP) collapsed in November. Intra-government fighting over how to get the country's ailing economy back on track was a main factor of the break-up.

Germany's economic difficulties heighten uncertainty and discontent, the report argues - with migration emerging as the other major flashpoint. That debate has been exacerbated by a recent deadly stabbing in which a migrant facing deportation from Germany is the main suspect.

Rhetoric on economic scarcity is used to heighten tensions over migration, which are being exploited by both the extreme right and left. Yet immigration is essential to Germany's future growth, the BGI report says: "Any future government will have to attempt to reconcile anti-immigrant attitudes with the social reality of integration and the economic necessity of attracting foreign-born workers."

Friedrich Merz, the CDU/CSU candidate, is promising a hard line on migration in case of an election victory, pledging to introduce permanent checks on all German borders and turn back all migrants attempting to enter the country illegally, including those who may be entitled to protection.

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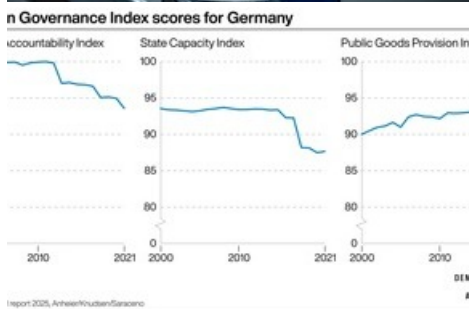
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A new German government led by conservative candidate Friedrich Merz (front) could, if elected, exacerbate divisions in the country rather than resolve them, a report based on the Berggruen Governance Index says. (Photo by Michael Kappeler/dpa) / More 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 Berggruen Governance Index for Germany for the years 2000 to 2021 shows mostly negative developments in most recent years. In the areas of Democratic Accountability, State Capacity, and Public Goods Provision the numbers for 2021 are lower than they were in 2000. (Infographic: PA Media 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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