



Democracy Under Attack

The European Movement International's Democracy Checklist

Democracy and the rule of law are founding principles of the European Union and have been key elements in the process of European integration over the past seven decades.

In recent times, they have been under immense pressure in several EU Member States and other European countries, experiencing serious democratic backsliding, interference in the judiciary, unfair dismissal of judges, state control of the media, violent crackdown on civil society, nepotism and corruption.

In light of the shifting political dynamics within Europe, the European Movement International's (EMI) **Democracy Checklist** will serve as an early-warning system to monitor the state of democracy across Europe and detect democratic erosion and authoritarian tendencies.

A well-functioning democracy needs the following



The **independence of parliaments**, democratically elected in free and fair elections with the participation of different political forces;



The **freedom and independence of the judiciary**, capable to apply the law and to make sure the rule of law is respected without any pressure or interference;



The **independence of media**, including support for media pluralism, investigative journalism, and fact-based reporting;



The **freedom of organised civil society** to serve as the voice of citizens and a watchdog to promote transparency and provide checks and balances to governments;



Countering corruption and nepotism with effective anti-corruption and integrity mechanisms;



The **defence of human rights** and **promotion of diversity and inclusion in society**, based on the acceptance of every individual's differences and on the active participation and representation of diverse groups. In this respect, the **right to dissent and protest** is sacrosanct. The criminalisation of dissent must be avoided, including by use of violence and coercion;



Trust in and support for science and independent academia as public common goods that cultivate social cohesion and reduce misinformation, while promoting progress and innovation.