

The Coup Attempt Is Bad News for Turkey's Democracy

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Erdogan brought Turkish democracy to the brink of disaster before the coup, but the officers who attempted the takeover have pushed it into the abyss.

Though we do not yet know who was behind the Turkish coup plot to overthrow the Justice and Development (AK) Party government and the country's president, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, one thing is for certain: after this attempt, Turkey will be less free and less democratic. If the military had won, then Turkey would have become an oppressive country run by generals. And if Erdogan wins, and this looks the likely outcome, Turkey will still become more oppressive.

Since coming to power in 2003, Erdogan has run the country with an increasingly authoritarian grip, cracking down on dissent as well as freedoms of expression, assembly, association and media. Initially a reformist seeking European Union accession, after winning electoral victories in 2007 and 2011 on a platform of economic good governance, Erdogan has turned conservative and authoritarian.

If part of Erdogan's electoral success has been through positive economic performance, his other, more nefarious strategy has been demonizing groups that are unlikely to vote for him. Erdogan achieves electoral victories through violent crackdowns on such demographic blocs as Gezi Park protesters, leftists and liberals, secularists, social democrats, liberal Alevi Muslims and Kurds...

[Read the full article on the Post's website. \(https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-coup-attempt-is-bad-news-for-turkeys-democracy/2016/07/16/8d357d28-4b64-11e6-bdb9-701687974517_story.html\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/the-coup-attempt-is-bad-news-for-turkeys-democracy/2016/07/16/8d357d28-4b64-11e6-bdb9-701687974517_story.html) ❖

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