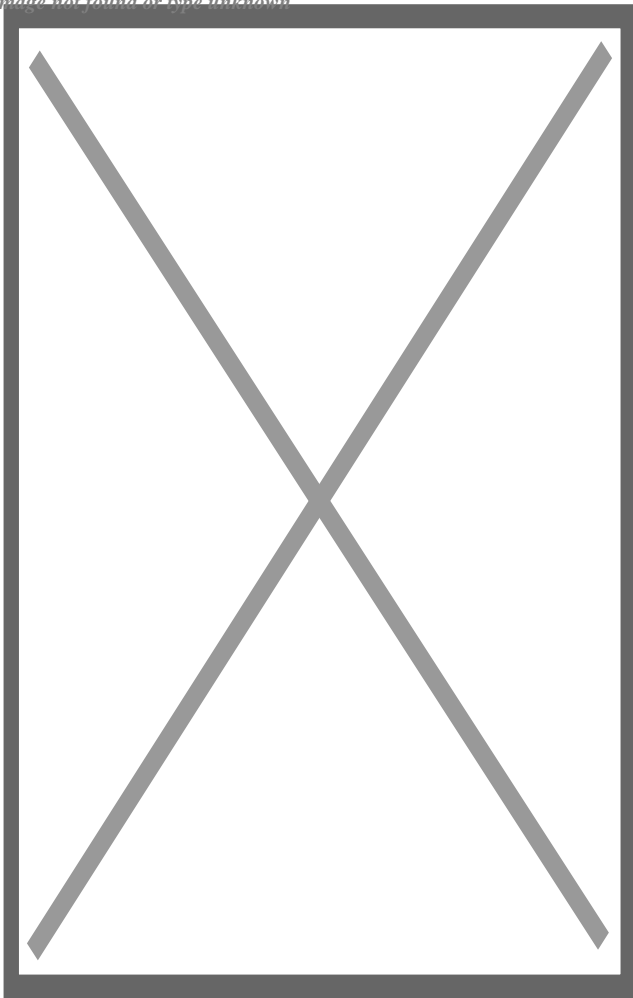


Elon Musk backs Germany's far-right AfD before elections

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Berlin, December 20 (RHC)-- U.S. billionaire Elon Musk has backed the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party as the European country gears up for elections in February.

The AfD is running second in opinion polls and might be able to thwart either a centre-right or centre-left majority. However Germany's mainstream, more centrist parties have promised to refuse to form a coalition with the AfD at the national level.

“Only the AfD can save Germany,” Musk wrote on Friday in a post on his social media platform, X. Europe’s largest economy is expected to vote on February 23 after a centre-left coalition government led by Chancellor Olaf Scholz collapsed.

Musk, who is set to join US President-elect Donald Trump’s administration as an adviser, has already expressed support for other far-right, anti-immigration parties across Europe.

The German government said it has taken note of Musk’s post but declined to give any further comment at its regular news conference.

Scholz told reporters at a news conference that freedom of opinion “also applies to multibillionaires” and “means that you can say things that are incorrect and do not contain good political advice”.

Musk, the world’s richest person, previously voiced support for the AfD last year when he attacked the German government’s handling of undocumented immigration. Last month, Musk called for the sacking of Italian judges who had questioned the legality of government measures to prevent irregular immigration.

German lawmakers from across the mainstream parties reacted with outrage to Musk’s comment. “It is threatening, irritating and unacceptable for a key figure in the future US government to interfere in the German election campaign,” Dennis Radtke, a member of the European Parliament for the centre-right Christian Democratic Union, told the Handelsblatt daily.

Radtke called Musk a “threat to democracy in the Western world”, accusing the world’s richest man of turning X, previously called Twitter, into a “disinformation slingshot.”

Alex Schaefer, a lawmaker from Scholz’s centre-left Social Democrats, said Musk’s post was “completely unacceptable”. “We are very close to the Americans, but now bravery is required towards our friend. We object to interference in our election campaign,” Schaefer told the Tagesspiegel daily.

Former Finance Minister Christian Lindner from the pro-business Free Democratic Party, said some of Musk’s ideas had “inspired” him but urged the Tesla boss not to “rush to conclusions from afar”.

“While migration control is crucial for Germany, the AfD stands against freedom, business – and it’s a far-right extremist party,” the politician posted.

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