

# *German Chancellor Wants Greece to Remain in Eurozone*

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Rome, January 24 (RHC)-- German Chancellor Angela Merkel says Berlin wants Greece to remain in the eurozone as polls show that anti-bailout opposition party Syriza is likely to sweep to power in this weekend's election and will then determine whether Athens stays in the single currency bloc.

"At the heart of our principles lies solidarity. I want Greece, despite the difficulties, to remain part of our story," Merkel said at a press conference with Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi in Florence on Friday.

A recent opinion poll showed that Greece's leftist Syriza party, which seeks an end to austerity measures and a debt write-off from the EU, holds a lead over the ruling conservatives, and is expected to win the largest share of votes in tomorrow's election. According to the survey, Syriza would get 31.5% of the vote against 28% for the liberal-conservative New Democracy party of Prime Minister Antonis Samaras.

Greece has been relying on international rescue loans since 2010. It has received 240 billion euros, the equivalent of USD 330 billion in international loans. In exchange, Athens has implemented harsh austerity measures.

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