LAW MAKING AT THE GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF TURKEY:
ROLE OF INFORMATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Mehmet Ali KUMBUZOĞLU
Secretary General of GNAT
April 2019, ASGP Meeting
Doha/QATAR
The history of Parliament in Turkey extends to Meclis-i Umumi which was established in 1876 with the declaration of Constitutional Monarchy and was a bicameral parliament consisted of Meclis-i Mebusan (lower house) and Meclis-i Ayan (upper house).
Grand National Assembly of Turkey was founded on April 23, 1920, during the struggle for national independence and since then it has been an important actor in the democratization process in Turkey.
The constitution that was adopted after the 1980 coup, has been amended many times until now. As part of the democratization process that was carried out with determination, members of the GNAT adopted another constitutional amendments package on 20 January 2017. The amendments were approved by 51.4% of the public in the referendum held on 16 April 2017.
Eligibility age for a seat has decreased from 25 to 18.
The number of MPs has increased from 550 to 600.

Presidential and parliamentary elections will be held together every five years. If the president decides to renew the parliamentary elections, his/her term will come to an end with the elections as well.

The president will be held responsible both politically and criminally for any kind of his/her activities and acts.

The principle of impartiality of the judiciary was added into the constitution and the judicial body was civilianized, and the Council of Judges and Prosecutors (HSK) was restructured.

GNAT will elect 7 of the 13 members of the HSK.

Since the administrative organization of public institutions will be carried out through the Presidential Decrees, the GNAT will not waste time with the regulations on bureaucratic structuring.

With the facilitation of referral to the Supreme Court, the power of legislative body to scrutiny the executive has been increased.
With the elections held on June 24, 2018, which is the milestone of the new government system, both the legislative and executive organs were formed. Six candidates competed in the presidential election, and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was elected President by getting 52.6% of the votes.
With the elections held on June 24, 2018, the structure of the GNAT for the 27th legislative term was also shaped.
In the last parliamentary election, political parties were able to enter into elections by forming alliances for the first time. Thanks to this new regulation, many political parties, which are not in a position to overcome the election threshold alone, have been entitled to be represented in the Parliament. Nine political parties and independents receiving 99.9% of the votes are represented in the Assembly.

### Distribution of Seats

- Justice and Development Party: 291
- Republican People’s Party: 142
- Peoples’ Democratic Party: 65
- Nationalist Movement Party: 49
- Good Party: 39
- Felicity Party: 2
- Workers Party of Turkey: 2
- Democrat Party: 1
- Grande Unity Party: 1
- Independents: 3
Mustafa ŞENTOP was elected as the 29th Speaker of GNAT by getting 336 votes at the election held on 24 February 2019.
With the constitutional amendments adopted through the referendum on April 16, 2017, a major reform has taken place in the government system.

With the new system, the legislative and the executive bodies have been completely separated from each other and separation of powers has been established.

While clarifying the separation between legislative and executive bodies, powerful checks and balances mechanisms have been established to allow both bodies to control each other.

It is no longer a rule that the party that has a majority in the legislative body and the party constituting the government is the same.

The current ruling party does not have a majority in the GNAT for the first time since 2002. Legislative power was granted exclusively to the GNAT and the government was prevented from dominating legislation through government bills.
With the new system, the GNAT has gained a stronger position against the executive body, and the effect of the parliamentarians on the decision-making process has increased.

In this new system, legislation is solely in the authority of the GNAT. The source of the laws will be the deputies themselves not the government as it was the case before the amendment. In the parliamentary system, the omnipotence of the government in the legislative process can be seen from the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legislature</th>
<th>Number of laws</th>
<th>Government initiated bills</th>
<th>Deputy initiated bills</th>
<th>Proportion of government initiated bills to total bills adopted (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>548</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>93.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>92.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>97.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3006</td>
<td>2812</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>93.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Because the legislative power solely belongs to the GNAT with the new system, the administrative organization of the GNAT has to work more efficiently and fast. In this context, The General Secretariat of the GNAT has carried out activities in order to provide more intensive use of information and information technologies. In this context, our practices are noteworthy, and also serves as a model to some other parliaments:

1) Mobile application for phones and tablets
2) Electronic minutes services
3) Information notes prepared by the Research Services Department
Thanks to the mobile application, all legislative activities have become accessible from outside the parliament. Information on the whole legislative process, such as the stage a certain bill is at, who has submitted it, and the reports prepared by committees can be accessed through the application.
24/7 ACCESS TO THE PARLIAMENT

In addition, minutes of all plenary meetings can be accessed through the application. With the “latest minutes” option, the minutes of the speeches in the General Assembly can be followed momentarily. It is also possible to search minutes by date or by name.
The application also provides access GNAT's scrutiny activities over the executive body. The questions submitted by deputies and the answers given to these questions by the government can be accessed through the application.
The plenary sittings of the GNAT can be watched live through the Meclis TV. The public is constantly informed thanks to the transparent working methods of the GNAT. In addition, there is access to the activities of deputies via the news portal.
Information Source of Legislative
Library of Grand National Assembly of Turkey
The library is ready to provide information to our deputies through hundreds of thousands of books, e-books and visual archives. The library can be accessed through the mobile application, library catalog can be searched and e-books can be downloaded and read in pdf format.
Our Principles

Accuracy and Simplicity
The studies shall be accurate, reliable, short, concise and comprehensible.

Impartiality
The studies shall be objective, non-partisan (shall not represent any political view), and equidistant to different political groups and perspectives.

Analytic Style
The language used in studies shall be non-prescriptive; it shall be descriptive, documentary and analytical.

Fit for Purpose
The scope, form and preparation period of the studies shall be suitable to the MPs' purpose of use.

Confidentiality
Identity of the request owner and subject of the request are kept confidential.

Contact Us

+90 312 420 68 38  +90 312 420 78 00
iletisim.armer@tbmm.gov.tr

TBMM Ek Hizmet Binası, Atatürk Bulvan No: 153 Bakanlıklar / ANKARA

http://tbmm.intranet/armer

Economy and Finance Section
+90 312 420 80 14  em.armer@tbmm.gov.tr

Law Section
+90 312 420 80 17  hkm.armer@tbmm.gov.tr

Public Administration and Political Science Section
+90 312 420 80 99  kysb.armer@tbmm.gov.tr

Social Policy Section
+90 312 420 80 05  sp.armer@tbmm.gov.tr

International Relations Section
+90 312 420 66 65  ul.armer@tbmm.gov.tr

GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF TURKEY
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH SERVICES

Tailored information to MPs
Since 1982, the department, with its 60 staff specialized in their field, has been supporting the legislative process by preparing correct, nonpartisan, tailored and analytical information documents in accordance with the demands of our deputies and committees. Deputies can forward their requests for information via e-mail, fax, telephone, or face-to-face.

### Secretary General
- Deputy Secretary General
  - (Responsible from information and)
- Head of Department
- Deputy Heads of Department

### Types and numbers of the documents prepared during the 26th Legislative period (2015-2017)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Product</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Briefing</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Info Note</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document compilation</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information compilation</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Information</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers to ECPRD</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1010</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Merci de votre attention