



## BUDGET CONTROL ACTIVITIES OF THE PARLIAMENT OF TURKEY THEORETICAL AND LEGAL ANALYSIS

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### Abstract.

The article analyzes the state control over the state budget, the important function of the state parliament, as well as the most important aspects of parliamentary control over the state budget on the example of the Republic of Turkey. The article also includes analytical and statistical data.

**Keywords:** budgetary control, parliament, speaker, executive authority.

### Introduction.

The Turkish Parliament, also known as the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, is the legislative body of Turkey. It was established on April 23, 1920, during the Turkish War of Independence, and has since undergone many changes in its structure and functions. The early years of the Turkish Parliament were marked by political instability and military coups. The first parliament was dissolved in 1923, and a new one was formed under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey. Atatürk's government implemented sweeping reforms that aimed to modernize Turkey and establish a secular, democratic state<sup>1</sup>.

In 1960, the Turkish military staged a coup and dissolved the parliament. The military junta ruled Turkey for three years before handing over power to a civilian government. However, the military continued to intervene in politics, staging two more coups in 1971 and 1980. The current structure of the Turkish Parliament was established in 1982, following the adoption of a new constitution that was drafted after the 1980 coup. The constitution created a unicameral parliament with 550 members, who are elected for a term of four years.

### Speaker.

The speaker is considered to have important powers and duties related to the activities of the Assembly and its bodies, and will focus on regulating the most pressing issues in the state administration. In general, it is necessary to separately note the respect of the Speaker, as well as the obligation to control constitutional or institutional provisions, which is also presented to the powers of this official authority. To accomplish these tasks, the speaker is assisted by Vice-speakers. First, the speaker has the right to call a meeting directly during a break or break, or at the request of one-fifth of the deputies<sup>2</sup> (Art. 93/3, Const.)

<sup>1</sup> TÜRK PARLAMENTO TARİHİ TBMM - VI. DÖNEM (3 NİSAN 1939-15 OCAK 1943). İsmet BİNARK. TÜRKİYE BÜYÜK MİLLET MECLİSİ VAKFI YAYINLARI No. : 35

<sup>2</sup>The Constitution of The Republic of Turkey. Available online: [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Turkey\\_2017.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Turkey_2017.pdf?lang=en) (Turkey 1982 (rev. 2017)



Second, the Speaker, acting as the head of the Assembly, represents the Assembly outside the Parliament. This leads to optimal solutions roughly all tasks on the outside of the state territory; chairs over plenary sittings; chairs the Bureau and sets out the agenda of the Bureau; implements the decisions of the Bureau; presides over the Board of Spokespersons; supervises compilation of the Journal of Minutes and summary of the minutes; supervises the committees of the Assembly<sup>3</sup>. The Speaker is in charge of the general administration of the Assembly including internal and external security. The Speaker also performs all other duties vested in him by the Constitution, laws, and the ROP<sup>4</sup> (Art. 14, ROP). These laws and duties are classified by the productivity and efficiency of Speaker.

Third, the Speaker, as the holder of the second rank in the order of precedence, following the President of the Republic, also serves as Acting President of the Republic and exercises the powers of the President of the Republic in the event of a temporary absence (illness, travel abroad, etc.) or vacancy (death, resignation, etc.) until the President resumes his/her functions, or until the election of a new President (Art. 106, Const.)<sup>5</sup>.

### Functions of the Turkish Parliament.

One of the primary functions of the Assembly is to scrutinize the policies and programs enacted by the government. The Assembly conducts its supervisory function through a number of mechanisms, which are outlined in the Constitution and the ROP. The formal mechanisms envisaged in the Constitution<sup>6</sup> under the title of "Means of Obtaining Information and Scrutiny" are questions, general debate, parliamentary inquiry, censure, and parliamentary investigation. Some of these are simple ways of obtaining information (questions), discussing government policies (general debate), or carrying out in-depth inquiries on specific issues (parliamentary inquiry). Other tools may result in the defeat of the government or dismissal of one of its ministers if the Assembly withdraws its confidence in the government or one of its ministers (censure) or impeachment of members of government before the Constitutional Court (parliamentary investigation). Mechanisms of budgetary oversight and vote of (no) confidence are other tools used by the Assembly to hold the government politically accountable. Parliamentary oversight of the government and the manners in which the government is scrutinized are discussed in follow.

One of the main functions of the Assembly is to review, monitor and supervise the activities of the Government and State institutions. The supervisory function of the Assembly includes not only the implementation of government programs and laws, but also certain activities of the executive branch.<sup>7</sup> Generally speaking, the official oversight functions of the

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The Grand National Assembly of Turkey shall convene of its own accord on the first day of October each year. The Assembly may be in recess for a maximum of three months in a legislative year; during adjournment or recess it may be summoned by the President of the Republic. The Speaker of the Assembly may also summon the Assembly either on his own initiative or at the written request of one fifth of the members. The Grand National Assembly of Turkey convened during an adjournment or recess shall not adjourn or go into recess again before having given priority consideration to the matter requiring the summons.// Length of legislative sessions Extraordinary legislative sessions.

<sup>3</sup>Grand National Assembly of Turkey. Kasım ERDEM (Legislative Expert) Mehmet SOLAK (Legislative Expert).

<sup>4</sup>Emergency provisions. The Constitution of The Republic of Turkey. Available online: [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Turkey\\_2017.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Turkey_2017.pdf?lang=en)

<sup>5</sup>Head of state replacement. The Constitution of The Republic of Turkey. Available online: [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Turkey\\_2017.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Turkey_2017.pdf?lang=en)

<sup>6</sup> The Constitution of The Republic of Turkey. Available online: [https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Turkey\\_2017.pdf?lang=en](https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Turkey_2017.pdf?lang=en)

<sup>7</sup> Parliamentary Oversight of the Executive. GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY of TURKEY. 2012



Assembly are carried out in various ways. First, several standing committees have been set up to provide legislative oversight. The Committee to Investigate Human Rights Violations and the Committee on State-Owned Economic Enterprises are examples of such committees that have been set up to address very specific issues. The Turkish Parliament has several functions, including legislative, oversight, and budgetary functions. As the legislative branch of government, it is responsible for passing laws and approving international treaties. Bills can be introduced by individual members of parliament or by the government. Once a bill is introduced, it is debated in committees before being brought to a vote in the plenary session.

The parliament also has an oversight function, which allows it to monitor the actions of the executive branch of government. This includes conducting investigations into government policies and practices and holding ministers accountable for their actions. The parliament can also pass votes of no confidence in individual ministers or the entire government.

One of the most important functions of the Turkish Parliament is its budgetary oversight role. The parliament is responsible for approving the government's annual budget and monitoring its implementation. The budget is prepared by the Ministry of Finance and presented to the parliament for approval. Once the budget is approved, the parliament oversees its implementation to ensure that government spending is in line with the approved budget.

The budgetary oversight function of the Turkish Parliament is particularly important given Turkey's recent economic challenges. Inflation has been high, and the value of the Turkish lira has declined significantly in recent years. This has led to concerns about the sustainability of government spending and the need for fiscal discipline.

The Turkish Parliament has come a long way since its establishment in 1920. It has undergone many changes in its structure and functions, reflecting Turkey's evolving political landscape. Despite its challenges, the parliament has played an important role in promoting democracy and protecting the rights of Turkish citizens. The budgetary oversight function of the Turkish Parliament is a crucial aspect of its work, as it ensures that government spending is transparent and accountable. As Turkey faces economic challenges, this function will become even more important in ensuring that public funds are used effectively and efficiently. Let's glance at some analytical and statistical dates on financial circumstance of Turkey.

According to tradingeconomics.com Turkey's government deficit widened to TRY 132.5 billion in April 2023, from TRY 50.17 billion in the same month last year. Total revenues surged 38.6 percent to TRY 164.1 billion, with tax income increasing 46 percent to TRY 136.3 billion. Total expenditure rose 84 percent to TRY 214.3 billion and spending excluding interest payments was TRY 195.1 billion, rising an annual 92.1 percent. At the same time, the primary balance, which excludes interest payments, posted a deficit of TRY 31 billion in April<sup>8</sup>. And also, Turkey Central Government Budget Balance is significant. The government budget balance is the difference between government revenues and expenses. The budget is balanced when outlays equal to receipts, the country reports budget surplus when revenues are higher than expenses and deficit when expenses exceed the revenues.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> <https://en.hmb.gov.tr/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://tradingeconomics.com/turkey/government-budget-value>



Actual	Previous	Highest	Lowest	Dates	Unit	Frequency	Current Prices, NSA
- 132.47	-47.22	143.98	- 170.56	1994 - 2023	TRY Billion	Monthly	

Chart 1: Turkey Central Government Budget Balance

And also in accordance with some statistics the budget of Turkey is colliding with several issues related to budgetary deficit. Following analytical dates lead the eligible information.

### Turkey Budget Deficit Widens in April

Turkey's government deficit widened to TRY 132.5 billion in April 2023, from TRY 50.17 billion in the same month last year. Total revenues surged 38.6 percent to TRY 164.1 billion, with tax income increasing 46 percent to TRY 136.3 billion. Total expenditure rose 84 percent to TRY 214.3 billion and spending excluding interest payments was TRY 195.1 billion, rising an annual 92.1 percent. At the same time, the primary balance, which excludes interest payments, posted a deficit of TRY 31 billion in April<sup>10</sup>.

### Turkey Budget Deficit Narrows in March

Turkey's government deficit narrowed to TRY 47.22 billion in March 2023, from TRY 68.97 billion in the same month last year. Total revenues increase 31.9 percent to TRY 286.8 billion, with tax income surging 30.2 percent to TRY 278.1 billion. Total expenditure rose 82.7 percent to TRY 334 billion and spending excluding interest payments was TRY 289 billion, rising an annual 94 percent. At the same time, the primary balance, which excludes interest payments, posted a deficit of TRY 2.1 billion in March<sup>11</sup>.

### Turkey Government Budget Balance Swings to Deficit

Turkey's government posted a budget deficit of TRY 170.56 billion in February 2023, compared with a TRY 69.74 billion surplus in the same month last year. Total revenues increase 13.7 percent to TRY 218.8 billion, with tax income surging 31.9 percent to TRY 179.6 billion. Total expenditure rose 105 percent to TRY 389.4 billion and spending excluding interest payments was TRY 355.2 billion, rising an annual 127 percent. At the same time, the primary balance, which excludes interest payments, posted a deficit of TRY 136.3 billion in February.

It is not to challenge to obtain basic information that, budgetary control in The Parliament of the Republic of Turkey is not suitable the requirements of the period. The activities of the Turkish Parliament are managed by several laws, including the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, the Law on the Rules of Procedure of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, and the Political Parties Law. Additionally, there are various other laws and regulations that govern specific aspects of the Parliament's work, such as the Law on Parliamentary Immunity and the Law on Elections<sup>12</sup>.

The Turkish Parliament plays a crucial role in budgetary oversight, which is governed by the Law on the Rules of Procedure of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the Public Financial Management and Control Law<sup>13</sup>. The Parliament's budgetary oversight activities include the approval of the annual budget, the review of government spending, and the

<sup>10</sup> <https://tradingeconomics.com/turkey/government-budget-value>

<sup>11</sup> <https://en.hmb.gov.tr/>

<sup>12</sup> Law on the Rules of Procedure of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, No. 2820, art. 87-92 (1983).

<sup>13</sup> Public Financial Management and Control Law, No. 5018 (2003).



examination of public accounts. The Parliament also has the power to request information and documents from government agencies related to budgetary matters.

In addition, the Parliament's Budget Committee is responsible for scrutinizing the government's budget proposals and making recommendations to the full assembly. The Committee also reviews and approves amendments to the budget during the legislative process.

Furthermore, the Parliament's Audit Committee is tasked with examining the government's financial statements and reports, as well as conducting audits of government agencies. The Committee reports its findings to the full assembly and makes recommendations for corrective action if necessary. Overall, the Turkish Parliament plays a critical role in ensuring transparency and accountability in government spending through its budgetary oversight activities.

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