

TURKEY

Date of Elections: 20 October 1991

Purpose of Elections

Elections were held for all the seats in Parliament following premature dissolution of this body more than one year before the end of its normal term. General elections had previously been held in November 1987.

Characteristics of Parliament

The unicameral Parliament of Turkey, the Grand National Assembly, comprises 450 members elected for 5 years.

Electoral System

All Turkish citizens who reach the age of 19 years during the election year, except military students and persons serving their compulsory military service, are entitled to vote. Disqualified are the insane, prisoners and persons ineligible for or withdrawn from public service. Electoral registers are revised every four years. Voting is compulsory, abstention being punishable by a fine of TL 50,000.

Qualified electors who are at least 30 years old and have completed their primary education may be candidates for Parliament provided they have completed their compulsory military service (for men) and have not been convicted of certain crimes listed in the Constitution or sentenced to imprisonment of at least one year. Judges, prosecutors, members of high courts, university professors, members of the Higher Educational Council, certain public officials, civil servants or public employees, and members of the armed forces may not stand for election unless they resign from their posts.

Candidates may either be nominated by political parties or run as independents. They must be supported by a given number of electors (which varies according to the population of the constituency) and make a monetary deposit, which is reimbursed if they are unsuccessful.

For election purposes, Turkey is divided into 104 constituencies. In each, selection of Assembly members is according to a party-list proportional representation system and the d'Hondt method, with restricted options and a double barrier (at the local and national level). A candidate from a political party can only be elected if the party has: (a) completed its organization in at least half of the provinces and one-third of the districts within these provinces; (b) nominated two candidates for each parliamentary seat in at least half of the provinces; (c) obtained at least 10% of the valid votes cast nationwide; and (d) received, in the constituency in question, valid votes at least equal to the simple electoral quotient.

Subject to certain conditions and exceptions, by-elections are held to fill Assembly seats which become vacant between general elections.

Background and Outcome of the Elections

The general elections - announced in August 1991 - were held more than a year earlier than due on decision of the Grand National Assembly, the normal parliamentary term expiring on 29 November 1992. Among the six parties confronting the ruling, center-right Motherland Party (ANAP) of Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz were especially the conservative True Path Party (DYP), led by former Prime Minister Siileyman Demirel, and the center-left Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP) headed by Mr. Erdal Inonii. Campaign debate focused above all on issues relating to the country's economy, particularly the question of its modernization and ongoing problems such as inflation and the large budget deficit. Mr. Yilmaz defended his overall record in this sector and advocated further free market policies, including privatization of state industries. Mr. Demirel likewise supported such an approach and promised to reverse the inflationary trend. Other campaign issues concerned the personal governing style of President of the Republic Turgut Ozal and the situation in Kurdish-populated south-east Turkey. SHP had concluded an electoral alliance with the Kurdish nationalist People's Labour Party.

Polling results were generally inconclusive; ANAP - whose support had eroded steadily since the previous (1987) elections - lost its absolute parliamentary majority and DYP, in line with opinion polls, increased its total. After inter-party negotiations on formation of a new Government, DYP and SHP signed a coalition pact on 19 November. The Cabinet - with 11 SHP and 22 DYP members - was announced the next day, Mr. Demirel becoming Prime Minister once again and Mr. Inonii his Deputy.

Statistics

1. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Grand National Assembly

Number of registered electors.	29,979,123	
Voters.	25,157,123	(83.9%)
Blank or void ballot papers.	740,423	
Valid votes.	24,416,700	

Political Group	Candidates	Votes obtained	%	Number of Seats
True Path Party (DYP)	856	6,596,548	27.03	178(+119)
Motherland Party (ANAP)	856	5,849,555	24.01	115 (-177)
Social Democratic Populist Party (SHP)	856	5,060,804	20.75	88 (-11)
Prosperity Party (RP)	856	4,103,887	16.88	62 (+62)
Democratic Left Party (DSP)	856	2,619,868	10.75	7 (+7)
Socialist Party (SP)	856	108,087	0.44	-
Independents	47	32,721	0.14	-
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2. Distribution of Deputies according to Profession

Engineers	90
Public administrators	89
Trade and private managers sector	60
Private sector administrators	42
University faculty	31
Medical doctors	29
Fanners	25
Pharmacists	17
Industrialists	15
Press-publication, journalists	13
Teachers	10
Architects	9
Trade unionists	7
Military	7
Public officers	7
Banking	5
Financial advisers and accountants	4
Diplomats	4
Advisors	4
Authors	3
Dentists	3
Veterinarians	2
Lawyers	2
Others	156

634*

* Because some members have more than one occupation, total number of professions is higher than total membership.

3. *Distribution of Deputies according to Sex*

Men	442
Women	8
	450

4. *Distribution of Deputies according to Date of Birth*

1911-1920.3
1921-1930.41
1931-1940.89
1941-1950.225
1951-1961.92
	450