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DEMOCRACY RESEARCH

The Grand National Assembly of Turkey and Municipal Councils in April 2021

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April was a busy month for the Turkish Grand National Assembly. During the period in which two law proposals and plenty of motions were discussed, the agenda of the Turkish Grand National Assembly included many issues from the pandemic to the economy.

Law Proposals:

Legislative proposal no. 254, or “Law Proposal on the Procedure of Collection of Public Receivables and the Law Proposal Amending Various Laws” was one of the bills that came to the agenda of the parliament. The prominent articles of the proposal, in which the negotiations continued for a week, were as follows:

- It should not be possible to benefit retrospectively from the premium incentives, supports, and discounts provided by the Social Insurance and General Health Insurance Law and other laws.
- Calculation of temporary incapacity benefit paid in cases of maternity and sickness should be based on average earning for the last 12 months. (In the case before the offer, the last three months’ earnings were taken as the basis)
- Electronic or physical messages sent to the convict should be stored digitally or physically to protect the public order, to prevent crime, to ensure the security of persons, institutions, and society.
- Those who cannot benefit from the current monetary support should be paid 50 TL per day for the period of unpaid leave for April and May 2021.

In the last week of April, the Turkish Grand National Assembly was discussing the legislative proposal no. 253. The salient articles of the bill regarding the amendments on licensed survey cadastre engineers and offices were:

- The licensed map cadastral engineering exam should be lifted.
- In order to perform map and cadastral engineering licensed, it is necessary to have worked in the public or private sector for ten years in this field. (Previously, this requirement was five years)
- To be able to do map and cadastral engineering with license, 50 thousand TL must be deposited and blocked on behalf of the General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre. (Previously, this was 10 thousand TL)

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- Licensed map cadastral engineering offices must be obliged to employ at least three people from professional engineering or technician titles.

Motions:

Apart from the law proposal discussions, another part of the agenda of the TGNA was the motions made by the opposition. Some of the proposals submitted to the general assembly in April were as follows:

- The research proposal that Engin Altay, Özgür Özel, and Engin Özkoç submitted to determine to whom the 128 billion dollars in the Central Bank was sold, the problems caused by the depletion of foreign exchange reserves, and the people who are responsible, as well as the evaluation of the banning of posters where citizens ask where 128 billion dollars are,
- The research proposal submitted by Garo Paylan to investigate the corrupted public affiliate appointments and multiple salaries,
- The research proposal submitted by Yasin Öztürk to investigate the status of employees who were terminated with code 29 by the employer during the period when the dismissal was prohibited due to the pandemic, to determine the measures to be taken to prevent the abuse of the practice that removes the obligation to pay compensation to the employer,
- A research proposal issued by Dursun Ataş to investigate the damage caused to the economy of the country by the increase in the value of the dollar after the Central Bank Governor's sudden dismissal by the Presidential decree at midnight,
- A research proposal submitted by Musa Piroğlu to investigate the problems of unemployed young people and various professional groups with university graduates awaiting public appointment,
- The research proposal submitted by Meral Daniş Beştaş and Hakkı Saruhan Oluç to determine the harmful effects of withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention,
- Tekin Bingöl's research proposal to examine the damage caused by hydroelectric power plants to nature,
- Research proposal submitted by Mahmut Tanal aiming to determine the problems of lawyers and law school graduates,
- Parliamentary investigation proposal submitted by Aylin Cesur to investigate the reasons for the failure to manage the epidemic and the Government's failure

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to achieve its goals to determine necessary steps to take to stop the third wave before it becomes even more severe, and to find solutions to the problems in the vaccine supply and vaccination process,

- Parliamentary investigation proposal by Ayşe Acar Başaran to determine the measures to be taken to prevent women's poverty,
- Lütfü Türkkan's proposal for a parliamentary investigation to discuss the legal status, limits of the duties and powers, and politicized activities of Fahrettin Altun, who served as the Presidency's Directorate of Communications,
- Parliamentary investigation proposal made by Veli Ağbaba to examine the allegations of municipalities engaging in human trafficking by organizing trips outside their purpose,
- Dursun Müsavat Dervişoğlu's research proposal to determine the possible effects and consequences of the US President Joe Biden's statements mentioning the term "genocide" and discussing and determining the political decisions and measures that the Republic of Turkey should take on this matter,
- Research proposal submitted by Necdet İpekyüz to identify the problems of the tourism sector and bringing solutions
- Ayhan Erel's research proposal in pursuance of TRT returning to public broadcasting and developing a publishing policy under the principle of neutrality,
- The research proposal Meral Daniş Beştaş and Hakkı Saruhan Oluç submitted to determine the outcome of deaths during the Kobani protests.

All listed proposals were among the ones that were refused to be discussed by the votes of the ruling party.

The Agenda of Municipal Assemblies in the Previous Month

While Izmir and Ankara Metropolitan Municipal Councils were continuing their work in April, the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipal Council gave a short break to their work by postponing their sessions this month.

Izmir

On the agenda of the Izmir Metropolitan Municipal Council in April were the elections of the deputy chairman of the council, council clerks, members of the council members, the members of the specialization committees, the Audit Committee and activity reports for 2020, and the proposals from the Presidency and the Commissions. Some of these motions were as follows:

- A protocol should be signed between Izmir Metropolitan Municipality Directorate and LÖSEV-Foundation for Children with Leukemia to provide the transportation service of the donated household items, to support the citizens living in Izmir who are receiving treatment for leukemia.
- For the games played and to be played during the pandemic period at Bornova Aziz Kocaoğlu Stadium, which is owned by Bornova Municipality, a 90% discount should be made on the rental price the clubs will pay.
- Beach arrangements should be made for disabled individuals by Izmir Metropolitan Municipality in Çeşme (Ilıca), Dikili (Public Beach), Menderes (Gümüldür Public Beach), Seferihisar (Akarca Public Beach), Selçuk (Pamucak Public Beach), Karaburun (Ardıç Public Beach) and Aliağa districts.
- The Cittaslow Metropol Project should be carried out by the Izmir Metropolitan Municipality and the municipality should carry out the necessary procedures for the Cittaslow Supporter status. (Cittaslow is an international organization seeking an alternative to fast consumption in cities.)

Ankara

Ankara Metropolitan Municipal Council examined the Audit Committee and activity reports for 2020 while making the elections of the deputy chairmen of the council, council clerks, members of the council, members of the specialized commissions.

The notable motions on the agenda of the ABB Assembly were as follows:

- Located within the borders of Ankara, the effect of the quarries on the groundwater level should be investigated.
- To protect the vegetation in Ankara, the “Seed Exchange Event” held in 2019 should be reorganized.
- Children should be informed on the history and culture of Ankara, and the sense of belonging of youth should be investigated.



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