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DEMOCRACY RESEARCH

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

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From the last days of February to the last week of March, the agenda of the Turkish Grand National Assembly was quite full. While law proposals filled a large part of the agenda, proposals from the opposition front were the subject of discussions of the past month.

Legislative proposal no. 251 for amending the content of the Financial Leasing, Factoring and Financing Companies Law was accepted and became law after the discussion of articles such as;

- The minimum capital of Savings Finance Companies being 100 million Turkish Liras,
- Providing the customer the right of withdrawal from the savings financing contract within 15 days without any justification,
- Savings finance companies operating according to interest-free financing principles,
- Prohibiting the usage of the savings fund pool assets for any purpose other than complying with savings financing contracts.

Legislative proposal no. 220 was discussed and passed by the general assembly in the last month. Some of the prominent items of the law proposal number 220, which was shaped around the security investigation and archive research, were as follows:

- Personal data obtained during the security investigation and archive research must not be deleted or destroyed before the decision concludes in case of a lawsuit against the transaction.
- Confidentiality must be respected at all stages of the security investigation and archive search, and the relevant information and documents must not be given to anyone other than those who have a legal obligation to know.
- Archive research -examination of the records- should be made about the person assigned or reassigned in the civil service or the public office.
- Archive research and security investigation should be carried out together on public personnel, judges, and prosecutors to be employed in the Ministry of National Defense, General Staff, gendarmerie, police, coast guard, and intelligence agencies.

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- Archive research should cover final court decisions and whether there are restraints on the person.
- Archive research should cover ongoing or finalized investigations and prosecutions against the person.

Legislative Proposal No 252 suggested that due to the floods in the Seyhan River in 1949 and 1951, the ownership of the land allocated to the citizens by the State Hydraulic Works could be sold to these citizens at fair value. The proposal was approved and became law after it was discussed in the parliament.

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

- The proposal made by Ebru Günay upon the determination of the necessary precautions in order to use the right to use the mother tongue,
- The proposal made by Lütfü Türkkkan to solve the problems experienced by families with disabled children,
- The proposal made by Ayşe Acar Başaran to prevent the injustice women are subjected to in the workplace
- The proposal of Meral Sanış Beştaş and Hakkı Saruhan Oluç to determine the problems and solutions created by the non-implementation of the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights,
- The proposal of Aylin Cesur to determine measures that must be taken to prevent epidemic waves that may be caused by mutated viruses and to determine the adequacy of restriction measures,
- The proposal made by Çetin Arık to examine the working conditions of the healthcare personnel in the risk group during the pandemic and to identify the respective problems,
- The proposal made by Engin Altay, Özgür Özel, and Engin Özkoç for the Assembly to start a general discussion on the social and legal problems the annulment of the Istanbul Convention would cause.

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

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In the sessions of the **Ankara Metropolitan Municipality Council**;

- Organizing a workshop by cooperating with the relevant Ministry and Non-Governmental Organizations against the drought risk of Ankara Metropolitan Municipality,
- Providing free eye screening service for citizens living in rural areas by Ankara Metropolitan Municipality,
- Inspection of the stores that apply exorbitant prices in cleaning and food products during the pandemic period by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality,
- Publishing a magazine called “farmer’s bulletin” for farmers in Ankara to access up-to-date information more easily,

were among the proposals. These proposals were approved after the discussions.

In the sessions of the **Izmir Metropolitan Municipality Council**;

- Building a monument to encourage volunteering in İzmir,
- Under April 23 National Sovereignty and Children’s Day, children between the ages of 06–15 to be able to enter İzmir Wildlife Park free of charge between 17–25 April,
- Payment of social balance compensation between 01/01/2021–31/12/2021 to public officials who work in ESHOT General Directorate and IZSU General Directorate, were discussed.

The aforementioned proposals were passed after the negotiations.

In **Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Assembly** meetings;

- The sum that ISPARK (Istanbul Parking Operations Co.) will pay to the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality for the right to operate the taxi stands and parking

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spaces to be adjusted from the gross income to 10% + VAT and extended for five years, effective from 2019,

- The audience with tickets and accreditation who will watch the UEFA Champions League Final Match, which will be played in Istanbul on May 29, 2021, benefiting from public transportation free of charge,
- Participation of Istanbul in the Milan Urban Food Policy Pact, of which cities such as Milan, Berlin, London, and Paris are also signatories,
- Formalizing the C40 membership process in order to increase the capacity of Istanbul to provide qualified services in combating climate change,
- Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality in Turkey in cooperation with the Federation of Women Associations establishing a “Women’s Support Line” in Istanbul that will operate 24/7 and multilingually.

The aforesaid proposals were accepted and recorded.



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Center for Democracy Research (CDR) strives to bolster political expression in Turkey and enhance its effects on political power structure through forming inclusive and democratic public spheres.

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