

**CENTER FOR
DEMOCRACY RESEARCH**

REPORT

**LGBTI+ VISIBILITY IN THE
GRAND NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF TURKEY**

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In this case, we looked into how much LGBTI+ people who struggle for basic human rights in Turkey are represented in the Parliament by the deputies elected by public.

Method Followed

The reason why the 2002-2021 period was chosen while the report was being prepared, AK Parti (Justice and Development Party) government was in power alone between these dates. In the other hand, it had been influenced in our choice to the date selection was to ensure that all the proposals discussed on these dates were come-at-able to all of the Parliamentary sources we scanned. In our scans, we came to the conclusion that the proposals highlighting the problems or demands of LGBTI+s were not discussed aloud in the congresses held by the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TBMM). Therefore, we made this scanning to all proposals came to TBMM, regardless of whether they were discussed or not.

In this process, we used the “Assembly Inquiry Form” systems, where we can view all the proposals submitted to the Plenary of the Assembly between 2002-2021. In the surveys we conducted under the titles of Parliamentary Research Proposal, General Discussion Proposal, Written or Oral Questionnaire and Law Proposals, we determined the words used by the deputies when they were making proposals on the subject as our keywords. Key words used in the scans are: LGBT, Trans, Transgender, Homosexual, Bisexual, Intersexual, Gay, Lesbian, Gay, Sexual Orientation, Gender and Genderless.

In this scanning process, we used the “Assembly Inquiry Form” systems, where we can view all the motions submitted to the Plenary of the Assembly between 2002-2021. In the research, we conducted under the titles of Parliamentary Inquiry, General Debate Motion, Written or Oral Inquiries and Bills, we determined the words used by the deputies when they were making proposals on the subject as our keywords. Key words used in the scans are: LGBT, Trans, Transgender, Homosexual, Bisexual, Intersexual, Gay, Lesbian, Gay, Sexual Orientation, Gender and Genderless.

Parliamentary Inquiry

Using the method followed, we got a result that only eight Parliamentary Inquiries that could be associated with LGBTI+ individuals were submitted to the Plenary of the As-

sembly between 2002-2021. Seven of these motions belonged to the CHP (Republican People's Party) and one of them to the HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party). None of the motions submitted were discussed in the Plenary of the Assembly, and the three motions submitted in the past were rendered null and void after the end. The other five motions still appear as "On the Agenda" and are awaiting discussion. All of the motions demanded an investigation of access problems and discrimination in the health sector, hate crimes against LGBTI+ individuals.

General Debate Motion

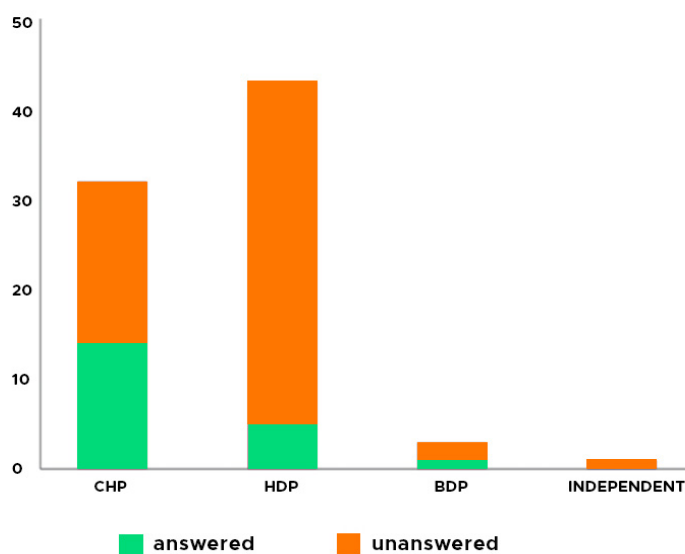
Between 2002-2021, only one general debate motion was submitted to the Plenary of The Assembly. The motion was given by HDP and was not discussed in the Plenary of the Assembly and is still waiting to be discussed. The motion was expecting from the government to make policy to end violence against women and LGBTI+s.

Written or Oral Inquiries

Among the dates we choose, the motion with the highest number was the Written or Oral Inquiries. During this period, a total of 79 motions were submitted. Out of 79 motions, 20 of them were answered.

Political Party Distribution of LGBTQ Inquiries

2002-2021



Only one of the answers given was answered within the 15-day period determined by the codes. All 19 other motions were answered months after the 15-day response time was exceeded. The motions given, on the other hand, centered on the violence and discrimination that LGBTI+s are exposed to. 32 of the 79 motions were submitted by CHP, 43 by HDP, 3 by BDP -which kind of former version of HDP- and one by Aylin Nazlıaka, who was an independent deputy during these days. Ömer Faruk Gergerlioğlu was the deputy who gave the most motions about the topic. Gergerlioğlu submitted for 16 motions regarding the living conditions of transgender individuals in prisons. He had not received any response from the Ministry of Justice, which was the addressee of the motions.

In order to exemplify of the answers from the government to the parliamentary inquiries, we examined the motion of CHP deputy İbrahim Özden Kaboğlu on the statement of +18 brought by the ministry on LGBTI+ and rainbow-containing products on 22.12.2020. Kaboğlu asked the Minister of Trade Ruhsar Pekcan the legitimacy of imposing a suspension on advertisements for products including the words “Equality”, “Pride”, “Peace” and added how the exclusionary consequences of the “+18” phrase would be explained. In response, Former Minister of Trade Ruhsar Pekcan stated that product advertisements were stopped upon the complaints of 23 people and the phrase “+18” was put in line with the protection of children. Regarding the exclusionary results, the answer given is that not only LGBTI+ individuals but also all promotions containing sexuality and eroticism are censored with the phrase “+18” in product promotions. As seen in this example, LGBTI+ visibility is limited to eroticism according to a minister.

Bills

Within the 2002-2021 period, while opposition parties had problems in enacting bills, none of these bills that guaranteed LGBTI+ rights or resolved the problems experienced by individuals under the umbrella of LGBTI+ could not be enacted. Even though it was included in bags of bills between 2002-2021, LGBTI+ rights were not seen in the legislative branch of the country. Mahmut Tanal is an foremost person who has prepared bills on LGBTI+ rights in the given time period. With his proposal, Tanal would have liked ensuring the rights of transgender individuals within the framework of human rights and preventing discrimination while benefiting from

social services. However, this offer belonged Mahmut Tanal in the winter of 2015 was deemed null and void twice, and the process was restarted with Tanal's request for renewal. The bill is still waiting to pass the commission and come to the agenda of Plenary of the Assembly still.

Overall, in the light of this report, it is clearly seen that the legislative power of Turkey, TBMM, could not contributed the LGBTI+ visibility between the years 2002-2021. By the thought there are the motions which are null and void of the deputies exercising legislative power of TBMM, we can realize the Parliament cannot represent the huge part of citizens.

Source:

The data set we used while preparing the report

<https://cutt.ly/fmNeLTX>

Parliamentary Research Proposals Inquiry Form

https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/meclis_arastirma_onergeleri.sorgu_son_donem

Parliamentary General Discussion Proposals Inquiry Form

https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/meclis_genel_gorus_onergeleri.sorgu_son_donem

Written Questionnaires Inquiry Form

https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/yazili_sozlu_soru_sd.sorgu_baslangic

Bills Inquiry Form

https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/tasari_teklif_sd.sorgu_baslangic



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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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