

## TURKEY

**Date of Elections:** October 14, 1973

### **Purpose of Elections**

Elections were held for all the members of the National Assembly and one-third of the Senators upon the normal expiry of their term of office.

### **Characteristics of Parliament**

The bicameral Parliament of Turkey, the Grand National Assembly, comprises the National Assembly and the Senate.

The National Assembly is composed of 450 Deputies elected for 4 years.

The Senate is composed of 150 members elected for 6 years, a third of whom are renewed every 2 years. It furthermore consists of 15 members, appointed by the President of the Republic, as well as of *ex-officio* members (the Chairman and the members of the National Unity Committee who signed Law No. 157 of December 15, 1960) and former Presidents of the Republic, together currently amounting to 20.

### **Electoral System**

All Turkish citizens, of either sex, at least 21 years old and in possession of their civil and political rights are eligible to vote in the constituency in which they have resided for 3 months.

Electoral registers of each constituency are revised 6 months before the election. Voting is not compulsory.

Every citizen, male or female, who has attained the age of 30 is eligible to be elected Deputy. Ineligible are persons unable to read and write Turkish, under a legal disability, in the official service of a foreign State without permission, barred from public service, sentenced to 5 years' imprisonment, convicted of certain dishonourable offences and persons who have not performed their military service without being excused from it. Judges, army officers, non-commissioned officers, military employees and persons employed in national or local administrations are not entitled to be candidates or to be elected unless they resign from these posts.

Every citizen of 40 years of age who has completed his university education and is eligible to be elected a Deputy may be elected to the Senate. Senators appointed by the President are chosen from among people distinguished for

their accomplishments in various fields; at least 10 of such Senators have no political party affiliation.

Applications of candidacy as Deputy must be submitted at least 30 days before the elections.

For electoral purposes, the country is divided into 67 constituencies corresponding to the 67 provinces. In each, Deputies and elected Senators are elected by party list system with proportional representation according to the d'Hondt method. The seats won by each list are allotted to the candidates in the order in which their names appear on the list.

Should a seat fall vacant in the National Assembly more than one year before the end of the term of the legislature, a by-election is held. No by-election, however, is held to fill an elected Senator's seat; such vacancies, as those of the Assembly when necessary, are filled every 2 years at the same time as the senatorial elections. Seats of appointed Senators are, for their part, filled within one month of the vacancy.

#### General Political Considerations and Conduct of the Elections

On September 26, 1973, the martial law that had been decreed in Turkey 30 months earlier was lifted in the last parts of the country; the way was therefore cleared for free legislative elections to take place within the constitutional limits.

The 1973 elections included those for all the 450 seats of the National Assembly and for 52 in the Senate. This latter total represented 2 more than the 50 (one-third) normally due for renewal, as 2 seats had become prematurely vacant.

A total of 8 lists of candidates and a number of independents contested these seats.

Main contenders were once again the outgoing majority Justice Party (JP), led by former Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, and the social democratic Republican People's Party (RPP), headed by Mr. Biilent Ecevit. They were challenged especially by the nationalist and pro-Islamic National Salvation Party (NSP), founded in 1972; the rightist Democratic Party, a 1970 break-away group from the JP; and the Republican Reliance Party, formed in 1973 by a fusion of the Reliance and Republican (dissident RPP) parties and a group of Independents.

During a lively campaign, marked by large outdoor meetings and increased use of the mass media, RPP called for socio-economic reforms aiming at a more equal distribution of wealth, free university education and rural development, as well as release of political prisoners. Right-of-centre JP equally

focused on rising prices and a reduction in income tax. The smaller parties spoke up against the majority party.

Following a fair turnout, JP and RPP experienced a remarkable turnabout. While the former lost nearly 100 Assembly seats since the previous elections, RPP, supported well in the cities, became the party with the most Deputies.

In the Senate elections held in 27 provinces, RPP gained 3 more seats than JP but still trailed the latter by a big margin in overall Senate membership.

As RPP still fell short of absolute parliamentary majority, Prime Minister Ecevit was compelled to form a coalition Government. He did so on January 26, 1974, joining up with NSP.

Statistics

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

Number of registered voters. . . . .	.16,798,164
Voters. . . . .	.11,223,843 (66.8 %)
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	.500,185
Valid votes. . . . .	.10,723,658

Political Group	Votes obtained	,/ %	Number of seats
Republican People's Party (RPP) . . . . .	3,570,583	33.3	185
Justice Party (JP). . . . .	3,197,897	29.8	149
National Salvation Party (NSP). . . . .	1,265,771	11.8	48
Democratic Party. . . . .	1,275,502	11.9	45
Republican Reliance Party. . . . .	564,343	5.3	13
National Action Party. . . . .	362,208	3.4	3
Turkish Unity Party. . . . .	121,759	1.1	1
Nation Party. . . . .	62,377	0.6	—
Independents. . . . .	303,218	2.8	5
			450

\* One of the 6 Independents joined RPP, increasing its representation to 186.

2. Results of the Elections and Distribution of Seats in the Senate

Number of registered voters. . . . .	.6,761,157
Voters. . . . .	.4,412,727 (65.26 %)
Blank or void ballot papers. . . . .	.211,170
Valid votes. . . . .	.4,201,557

Political Group	Seats won in 1973 Elections	Total Seats held
Justice Party. . . . .	22	80
Republican People's Party. . . . .	25	42
Republican Reliance Party. . . . .	1	9
Democratic Party. . . . .	—	6
National Salvation Party. . . . .	3	3
Independents. . . . .	1	<u>10</u>
	~52~	150*

\* Elected Senators.