Accountability Model, officially adopted by Parliament on March 19, 2008, enhanced existing tools of parliamentary oversight, integrated components of the new oversight model with existing components, and bolstered Parliament's capacity to fulfill its oversight function.

Despite these initiatives to strengthen the institution, the South African Parliament largely has failed to fulfill its oversight and accountability mandate. This was especially evident during the past decade, which was characterized by rampant corruption within the state and the administration, commonly referred to as "state capture." In response to these challenges, in 2018, the president appointed a Judicial Commission of Inquiry to investigate allegations of corruption and fraud in the public sector. The Judicial Commission's findings concluded that parliamentary oversight often proved ineffective —even when there was a willingness to oversee the executive branch. The final report, presented by the Judicial Commission in 2021, included recommendations (Chief Justice of the Republic of South Africa 2021, 461) meant to fortify oversight and enhance accountability within the legislative branch. The recommendations included procedures related to National Assembly resolutions arising from oversight activities and responses; executive-branch reports and submissions to Parliament; executive-branch attendance; selection of office-bearers in state institutions; establishment of an oversight committee over the presidency; and appointments of committee chairpersons. In response, the Rules Committee of the National Assembly convened on November 23, 2022, to review the Judicial Commission's recommendations. Currently, the parliamentary Rules Committee is engaged in deliberations regarding these recommendations.

Conclusion

Certain types of reactive legislative institutions may show varying levels of institutionalization. However, the correlation suggesting that institutionalized parliaments possess greater capability to restrain the executive branch than less institutionalized parliaments is not supported in the South African case. As a result of South Africa's party-dominance system, the legislative branch's capacity to constrain the executive branch has been significantly jeopardized. South Africa's Parliament demonstrates a substantial institutionalization in which specialized committees have jurisdiction over government departments. Moreover, they are vested with the power to initiate and amend legislation, collect evidence, and determine their agendas. However, despite the level of specialization exhibited by committees, the Parliament nevertheless is subordinated to the government, which—operating through a disciplined parliamentary majority —can minimize the Parliament's capacity to constrain the executive branch. Thus, in South Africa—where the executive branch is selected from among the MPs and consists primarily of leaders from a dominant majority party—the legislative-branch oversight has been weakened by MPs who are reluctant to scrutinize or hold accountable a government led by their own party's leaders. Moreover, the current closed party-list proportional representation electoral system intensifies party discipline because MPs often retain their seats based on the decisions of the party leadership.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author declares that there are no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research. ■

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DOES TURKISH-STYLE PRESIDENTIALISM TRIGGER DE-PARLIAMENTARIZATION IN TÜRKIYE? THE POST-2018 DEVELOPMENTS

Ömer Faruk Gençkaya, *İstanbul Medipol University, Türkiye*
Selma Gençkaya, *Freelance Researcher, Türkiye*

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The rationalization of parliament—that is, procedures bolstering productivity and expediting lawmaking—and the empowerment of the executive branch were the cornerstones of Türkiye's 1982 Constitution. Three key constitutional amendments—the popular presidential election in 2007, the judicial reform in 2010, and the so-called Turkish-Style Presidentialism in 2017—brought about "competitive authoritarianism" in Türkiye (Gençkaya and Dunbay 2024, 14–15). Following the failed coup attempt on July 15, 2016, the declaration of a state of emergency lasted for two years. During this time, the referendum for 2017 amendments to the constitution and hastily scheduled early presidential and legislative elections were conducted in 2018. The president's unrestricted executive powers, weakened legislative functions, and submission of the judiciary have resulted in a concentration of powers in a single authority (Yılmaz 2020, 269–73), as well as the erosion of democratic institutions toward authoritarianism in law and practice (Adar and Seufert 2021, 7). This article assesses the outcomes of the post-2018 developments in legislative–executive relations in Türkiye.

Despite the nondelegation of legislative powers defined by the 1982 Constitution (Article 7) principle of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (GNAT), the 2017 constitutional amendments in Türkiye enhanced the president's authority to issue executive decrees, appoint or select senior civil and judicial officials, implement a provisional budget to avert a government shutdown and curtailed legislative oversight mechanisms, thereby converting the parliament into a "rubber stamp" institution (Gençkaya 2023).

The changes in GNAT rules and procedures in 2018 further allowed the president to influence the legislative process. The agendas of the parliamentary standing committees—where the People's Alliance (i.e., "parliamentary coalition"), composed of the Justice and Development Party and the Nationalist Action Party, control the majority—are set by their chairs. The opposition parties' proposals are unlikely to be included on the agendas, limiting the parliament's deliberative capacity (Bakırcı 2018, 222–24; Gençkaya 2022, 274–75). Since 2015, and especially after the implementation of presidentialism, the Consultative Council —which is composed of the party groups and presided over by the

speaker or deputy speaker of the GNAT—has been unable to create a consensus-based agenda for the plenary (Yeşilırmak 2022). Majoritarian principles underpin the current legislative process in standing committees and the plenary. Autocratization gives prominence to instrumental legislation, expedited legislative processes, and omnibus legislation that disregards the scrutiny of legislation with procedurally compromised elements (Drinóczi and Cormacain 2021, 274).

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In this new system, Members of Parliament (MPs) propose laws. Nevertheless, it is widely accepted that the president's administration prepares or preapproves proposals from the ruling party's MPs before they are submitted to the GNAT. Throughout the 27th (i.e., July 7, 2018 to April 23, 2023) and the initial two years of the 28th legislative terms (i.e., May 15, 2023, to September 30, 2024), 6,432 bills (i.e., 5,339 and 1,093 in corresponding terms) were submitted to the GNAT. Only 41 new acts and 93 omnibus bills (that amended multiple laws) were approved, compared to 209 international treaties that were debated procedurally by the plenary.

Omnibus bills have scattered content that is deliberated only by the Plan and Budget Commission, not by any relevant secondary commission with sufficient elaboration before being voted on in the plenary. Simultaneously, the president issued 162 decrees, 88 of which were revisions to previous decrees. More than 5,000 presidential decisions, including urgent expropriation, the setting of tax rates, and the appointment of public officials, were issued and only 4,488 were published in the Official Gazette.

During the same legislative years, a mere 12,082 (14%) of the 85,506 submitted questions were answered, typically superficially or procedurally. The number of parliamentary inquiry motions exceeded 10,000, with less than 3% being accepted. Although the president, deputy president, and ministers are subject to criminal liability (1982 Constitution Articles 105 and 106), no motion of parliamentary investigation has been submitted since July 2018. This is simply because a qualified majority of MPs is required to tabulate a motion of investigation (by absolute majority, 301); accept a motion and open an investigation (by three-fifths majority, 367); and submit the person(s) in charge to the Constitutional Court/Supreme Criminal Tribunal (by two-thirds majority, 400).

Despite the claims made by promoters of the presidential system, the GNAT's oversight function has not improved since the 2018 system change (Bakırcı 2021). The GNAT has not examined the audit reports of the public institutions' accounts prepared by the Turkish Court of Accounts (TCA) on behalf of the parliament. Türkiye's V-Dem legislative indicators (V-Dem 2023) are far lower than the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) averages. The GNAT's investigative capacity (-2.09) and executive branch oversight (-2.17) are practically insufficient. The legislative constraints on the executive index decreased to a lower level (0.17). Without sufficient deliberation, the executive branch frequently bypasses the parliament in the preparation of legislation (-0.24), and the quality of regulations is weak (-0.24).

The president appoints and dismisses cabinet members and deputy ministers without legislative approval. Illiberal employment policies, which were not merit based, led to an increase in the executive branch's control over institutional accountability mechanisms and loyalty to it (Soyaltin-Colella 2023). Presidential Decree No. 3 entitles the president to appoint and remove more than 2,000 public officials, including higher civil servants such as governors, ambassadors, university rectors, and directors. In October 2023, the Constitutional Court (Constitutional Court Decision 2023/171) revoked this decree, ruling that presidential decrees can regulate appointment criteria only for public officials who appear in the annexed tables of Decree No. 3.

The members of the Constitutional Court, the Court of Cassation, the Council of State, and the TCA are appointed by the president, either directly or through the Council of Judges and Prosecutors (CJP) or a majority of the GNAT. The CJP is composed of 13 members: the minister of justice is the president and the deputy minister is the ordinary member, with no other members elected by judges among peers; four are elected by the president; and seven are elected by the GNAT with a majority vote. Group of States Against Corruption (2023) found that the president's influence on the judiciary was incompatible with European standards and threatened judicial independence. The effect of the executive branch on the judiciary is demonstrated in Türkiye's V-Dem scores, which are lower than the OECD averages (V-Dem 2023). Although constitutional and legal audits of presidential decrees and decisions are possible, the new judicial structure or noncompliance with judicial decisions render the audit ineffective. Neither do the executive and judicial authorities comply with the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights.

As an alternative to the current presidential practice, the six-party opposition alliance (i.e., the Nation Alliance), led by the Republican People's Party, introduced a "strengthened parliamentary model" with an efficient checks-and-balances mechanism before the early-2023 elections. However, it failed to win a majority in the GNAT due to a dispute over the presidential candidate and the lack of an election strategy. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and his party, which faced a landslide loss in the municipal elections on March 31, 2024, follow a political softening; however, it may not result in a return to the parliamentary system.

To conclude, after six years of experience, concentrating all powers in the executive branch in Türkiye has led to de-parliamentarization, de-institutionalization, and eventually de-democratization. Restoring the rule of law, the separation of powers, and the independence of the judiciary through the

efficient operation of democratic institutions such as GNAT is the highest priority of the current agenda.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research. ■

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LEGISLATIVE–EXECUTIVE RELATIONS IN UKRAINE'S WARTIME CONDITIONS

Khrystyna Pelchar, *West Virginia University, USA*
Erik S. Herron, *West Virginia University, USA*
Geir Flikke, *University of Oslo, Norway*

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Legislative–executive relations in Ukraine have been contested since the country declared independence in 1991. Power has shifted formally between the legislative and executive branches through constitutional change and the declaration of martial law in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022. This Spotlight article investigates the dynamics in legislative–executive relations since the declaration of martial law, highlighting public attitudes about interbranch relations.

Legislative–Executive Relations under Zelensky

Since its independence, Ukraine has witnessed tension over the distribution of power between the president and the parliament (Wise and Brown 1999). This has led to three major amendments to the constitution that regulate the relations between the legislative and executive branches. The 2014 amendment reinstated the 2004 reform, which passed the government-formation process from the president to the parliament (Constitution of Ukraine, Article 114). The law reduced presidential power; however, the substantial victory of the pro-presidential Servant of the People Party in the early-2019 elections increased President Volodymyr Zelensky's authority because it secured enough seats in parliament to control the agenda and form the cabinet (Vahina and Komar 2020). This victory created a single-party majority in parliament for the first time in Ukraine's independent history. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine and the introduction of martial law magnified presidential power.

The president's strength vis-à-vis the parliament is enhanced by the right of legislative initiative (Constitution of Ukraine, Article 93). In the ninth convocation of the parliament, President Zelensky proposed 250 draft laws, with a 73% approval rate by deputies (i.e., 182 became laws)—surpassing the government's draft law approval rate (i.e., 24%) (Zabolotna 2023). Although concerns were expressed about the feasibility of Zelensky's agenda with his declining popularity in the pre-invasion period (Iwański et al. 2020), he has been able to pass legislation and gain public support—particularly after the full-scale invasion (Onuch and Hale 2023).

Legislative–Executive Relations under Martial Law

Ukraine entered a special legal regime following Russia's full-scale invasion on February 24, 2022. President Zelensky declared martial law—a declaration that was supported by the parliament through the adoption of corresponding legislation. Compared to peacetime powers, martial law introduces extraordinary powers for executive-branch authorities, military commands, and local self-governmental bodies. Under martial law, the parliament carries out legislative regulation of defense issues and continues to work during a state of war and emergency.

The constitution reinforces parliament's central role in wartime by stipulating that "in the event of the end of the term of office, the parliament continues to perform its functions until the moment when after the abolition of martial law…a new parliamentary composition is elected" (Constitution of Ukraine, Article 83). Parliament partially amended one resolution to work continuously in plenary sessions and adopted another to instruct the Chairman of the Council to determine the time and place for plenary sessions and voting on legislation.

Although trust in the president increased with the onset of war (Herron and Pelchar 2023), trust in the parliament lags behind that trust. Throughout 2022, the Verkhovna Rada (i.e., the unicameral parliament of Ukraine) witnessed shifts in coalition dynamics, evolving from an informal coalition to a more unified "defense coalition" in response to the threat. Despite unity on the issues of war, the decisions about nonmilitary initiatives faced criticism for lack of both cohesion and transparency due to security measures (Zabolotyi 2023). Parliament has been conducting its business, but the majority party has faced challenges. In early 2024, parliament encountered significant obstacles with absenteeism, thereby preventing action on legislation. The