

# SUPREME ELECTION COUNCIL



2013 International Electoral  
Awards



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# Mission

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By taking principles of equal, secret, universal direct suffrage, open counting and tabulating as basis, under administration and supervision of jurisdiction, to make or to have it done all transactions related with management and monitoring of the election from the beginning till the end, to make and implement necessary arrangements for fair and transparent execution of elections in order, to provide protection of correct, updated and integrated information on domestic and overseas voters and to announce correct and fast the results of elections to public.

# Vision

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To provide elections undertaken in fair, transparent, reliable, free and equal conditions.

# History

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Management and monitoring of elections passed through several stages and reached today. Firstly, provincial and district election boards were established by Parliamentary Elections Law dated 16th February, 1950 and numbered 5545, and also Supreme Election Council was established in order to operate in Ankara. With this Law, safety, management and monitoring of the elections were bound to rules and it was taken under provisions that works and transactions would be undertaken by election boards and they would be subject to judicial monitoring and inspection.

**Supreme Election Council was established as a constitutional institution which took part “Main Institution of Republic” section of 1961 Constitution and “Main Bodies of Republic” section of 1982 Constitution and was arranged due article 75 of 1961 Institution and article 79 of 1982 Constitution.**

In these arrangements, Supreme Election Council, from the beginning till the end of elections, was assigned with the liabilities of to make and to have done all transactions related with management and honesty of elections, to investigate and to give final decisions on all corruptions, complaints and objections during and after the elections, to accept electoral minutes of members of Turkish Grand National Assembly and Presidential election minutes.

Supreme Election Council, which is located in “Legislation Section” of Constitution, is not only a Council that executes general management and monitoring but also provides the judicial inspection and a Council of which decisions are not appealed against.

Services that should be delivered by Directorate General of Electoral Registry, Department of Administration and Finance Affairs and presidencies of provincial and district election boards, were carried into computer environment by means of SEÇSİS (Election Informatics System).

Services being delivered by using informatics infrastructure on electoral works and transactions, provides the works being undertaken in citizen focused, efficient, fast, qualified, sustainable, reliable and transparent structure.

In country general;

- In Parliamentary General Elections held on 22nd July 2007;  
Numbers of domestic voters 42.571.284,  
Numbers of overseas voters 228.019,
- In General Elections of Local Administration held on 29th March 2009;  
Numbers of voters 48.049.446,
- In Constitutional Amendment Referendum held on 12th September 2010;  
Numbers of domestic voters 49.495.493,  
Overseas voters 2.556.335,
- In Parliamentary General Elections held on 12th July 2011;  
Numbers of domestic voters 50.189.930,  
Numbers of overseas voters 2.568.979,
- In General Elections of Local Administrations held on 30th March 2014;  
Numbers of voters 52.695.832,
- In Presidential Elections held on 10th August 2014;  
Numbers of domestic voters 52.894.115,  
Numbers of overseas voters 2.798.726,
- In Parliamentary General Elections held on 7th July 2015;  
Numbers of domestic voters 53.741.838,  
Numbers of overseas voters 2.866.979,
- In Parliamentary General Elections held on 1st November 2015;  
Numbers of domestic voters 54.049.940,  
Numbers of overseas voters 2.899.069,

As of 6th June 2016, the number of domestic voters is 54.634.870, the number of overseas voters is 2.916.134 and total number of voters is 57.551.004 and an increase is being observed in each electoral period.

Between years 2007-2016, in 7 years, total 11 elections were realized, as four parliamentary general elections, 2 constitutional amendment referendum, two general elections of local administrations, 2 High Council of Judges and Prosecutors elections and one Presidential election.

Due to the provisions of special laws, elections are being held for vocational institutions serving as public institutions, bodies of political parties, labor unions and irrigation unions. Due to the increase of numbers of elections, preparation periods of elections are shortened, thus, work loads of Supreme Election Council and election boards have increased.

On the other hand, with article 1 of Law amending 13/3/2008 dated and 5749 numbered Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Voter Registers, Overseas Election Boards related to Ankara Provincial Election Board was established for providing overseas voters to exercise their voting rights.

Article 5 of Law Amending 9/5/2012 dated and 6304 numbered Law on Basic Provisions of Elections and Voter Registers and first clause of article 94/A of 298 numbered Law, was changed as:

“In overseas voters to exercise their voting rights, Supreme Election Council decides the implementation of voting on custom gates or in electronic environment either separately or individually, due to the type of elections and conditions of the country, upon taking the opinion of Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In works and transaction related with voting of voters registered to Overseas Electoral Register, informatics infrastructure of Ministry of Foreign Affairs may be used. Ministry of Foreign Affairs takes necessary measures for establishing and safety of informatics infrastructure that will be used within methods and principles determined by Supreme Election Council.

With this change, voters registered to overseas electoral registry may exercise their voting rights in ballot boxes located in the foreign country and at custom gates due to the decision of Supreme Election Council.

In the latest parliamentary general elections which was held in 2015, ballots were located in 113 diplomatic missions in 54 countries and 1.284.964 voters exercised their voting rights in abroad and at custom gates. Contribution rate to elections by overseas voters was realized as %44.3 and this can be considered as high rate in comparison with world numbers.

## Supreme Election Council

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Elections and referendum are executed with the principles of equal, secret, universal direct suffrage, open counting and tabulating principles under administration and supervision of jurisdiction.

With Article 79 of Constitution, Supreme Election Council is assigned from the start till the end of elections in order to manage the order of elections with honesty, to undertake or provide undertaking all necessary transactions, to examine all electoral complaints and objections and to give final decisions on such complaints and to accept electoral minutes of members of Turkish Grand National Assembly and minutes of presidential elections.

Supreme Election Council, which takes place in “Chapter of Legislation” and executes the administration and supervision of elections, is composed of seven original and four reserve members. Six of the members are elected by general councils of Court of Cassation and five from Council of State among their members with the majority of full members with secret ballot. These members choose one president and one vice president with majority in secret ballot.

Furthermore, political parties which have the four highest voting amounts in recent parliamentary general elections and political parties that have groups in Turkish Grand National Assembly, may assign one original and one reserve representative in Council with the condition of having consent of political party leaders. These representatives attend all meetings and discussions of the Council but they are not allowed to vote. Since 02/04/2011, political party representatives have been attending activities of Council (as of 2016, AKP, CHP, MHP, HDP have political party representatives).

As seen, Supreme Election Council is a sui generis independent board which is assigned with administrative and electoral jurisdiction and appeal is not allowed to any other institutions against its decisions.

## **Missions and Authorizations of Supreme Election Council :**

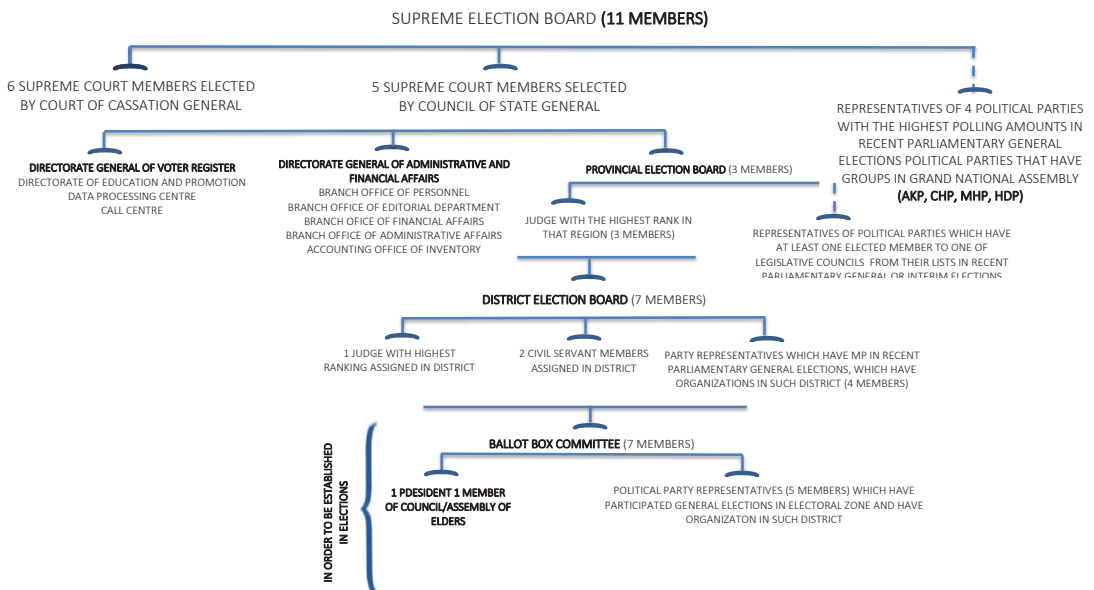
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1. To get adequate number of envelopes having Republic of Turkey Supreme Election Council watermark in different colors and sizes other than in market or in the warehouses of State Supply Office for different colors or sizes for each election when considered necessary in which ballot papers will be put in, all phases for envelopes, beginning from the dough stage to manufacture and delivery to provincial election board stages, considering size, duration and specification of the work, the make the work undertaken under the on manufacture and on delivery site supervising of its member or members or president of provincial election boards or judge or judges it assigns and to send these envelopes to provincial election boards at the necessary amounts in return of certificate of receipts.

2. To exercise making of envelope size moulds and watermark "Republic of Turkey Supreme Election Council" moulds necessary for manufacture of special envelopes and ballot papers to keep the moulds after manufacturing adequate amount of envelopes, to have split tickets manufactured which can be transformed into envelopes after folding over the edge and stick carrying "Republic of Turkey Supreme Election Council" watermark with the condition each package composed of 400 units have the same number and to transmit one package for each ballot to district election boards on time.
3. To have done design and print of all kinds of imprinted papers such as forms, papers and lists required for aforementioned transactions and to transmit to provincial and district election boards on time and with adequate amount,
4. To determine and declare the names of all political parties which have completed their first general councils due to their regulations and which have completed their organizations in at latest half of the provinces six months prior on the second week of the months foreseen for reestablishment of district election boards,
5. To provide establishment of provincial and provincial election boards, to declare final decisions to any claims of establishment, transactions and decisions of provincial election boards before the day of voting and with adequate speed that the subject of claim requires,
6. To give final decisions about objections related with candidacy in competence with this Law and special laws,
7. To immediately examine and decide the objections related with voting day transactions raised by provincial election boards,
8. To examine and give final decisions on claims raised against written minutes arranged by provincial election boards,
9. To examine and give final decisions on any objections and claims raised within defined period of time, which may have a significant effect on the results of elections and may require the cancellation of election of that area or cancellation of written proceedings of one or more electee without considering the sequence and duration of the objections,
10. To answer immediately the issues raised by presidencies of provincial election boards on the subjects related with the executions of the works and to take necessary measures for proper undertaking of elections throughout the country and to declare necessary circulars for this purpose,
11. For political parties to attend to parliamentary general and interim elections, elections for mayors and provincial council memberships interim and general elections, they

have to complete their first general councils due to their regulations and complete their organizations in at latest half of the provinces six months prior to day of voting or they should have group in Turkish Grand National Assembly. Organization in one province requires being organized at least two third of the districts of such province including central district. To determine and declare political parties which may attend elections within these principles ten days before the beginning of elections and in five days following the announcement of elections in case elections are renewed,

12. To determine principles related with establishment and administration of Directorate General of Electoral Registry and other works, to declare regulations, to prepare programs and to undertake monitoring,
13. To make necessary arrangements for establishment of Overseas election board and to provide necessary conditions for participating of overseas citizens to the elections,
14. To assign one of the members of Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the level of head of department by taking into account the opinion of the Ministry to perform the missions ordered by Overseas Election Board during the schedule of elections on abroad election works and,
15. To undertake other missions assigned by the Law.





## Provincial Election Board

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Provincial Election board meets once in every two years and is composed of two senior members of district election board after president and headed by the eldest judge serving in the central district. Provincial Election board established with these principles, stays in duty for two years.

In recent parliamentary and Republican Senate general and interim elections, from the political parties which have at least one member in Turkish Grand National Assembly and of which eligibility to attend elections are determined and announced by Supreme Election Council, and which have organizations in such province and district, have one representatives each.

### Missions and Authorizations of Provincial Election Boards:

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1. To take all necessary precautions for proper execution of the elections within provincial election area and to monitor election works,
2. To send ballot boxes to district election boards and other devices necessary for elections,
3. To examine and to decide objections raised against establishment, transactions and decisions of district election boards,
4. To answer the issues asked by district election boards immediately on executing of electoral works,
5. To take and announce candidate declarations or lists and to examine the objections related with these and to decide on the invalid ones among such declarations or lists to send permanent or final candidate lists to their areas and to announce them,
6. By combining written minutes of district election boards, to arrange single written minute for provincial election area,
7. To exercise other duties defined by Law.

## District Election Board

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District election board is gathered on the last week of January once in each two years with one chairman, six permanent and reserve members. The judge with the highest

seniority in district acts as president of the board. Boards gather with permanent members.

Chairmanship of central and district election boards is executed by judges with the highest seniority following the judge acting as the president of provincial election board.

## **Missions and Authorizations of District Election Boards:**

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1. To provide proper execution of elections in district electoral area, to take necessary precautions and supervise electoral works,
2. To establish ballot box committees,
3. To send necessary electoral materials and ballots to ballot box committees in the district,
4. To examine and decide on any objections rose against establishment, transactions and decisions of ballot box committees,
5. To answer the questions of presidencies of ballot box committees immediately on the execution of electoral works,
6. To arrange district election written minute by combining written proceedings coming from ballot box committees around district, to deliver such proceeding to provincial election board along with other necessary documents,
7. To perform other duties assigned by Law.

## **Ballot box committee**

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BALLOT BOX COMMITTEE is the board established with the purpose of providing voting transactions undertaken within the methods and principles defined in 298 numbered Law on Basic Provisions on Elections and Voters Registers.

Overseas ballot box committee is composed of one president, one public officer and representatives of each three political parties taking the highest amounts of votes who were notified by political parties, reserve members are selected with the same method.

Domestic ballot box committee is composed of one president, one member of council of elder/delegation (public officer) and members of five political parties which take the highest five voting amounts in recent parliamentary general elections (Members of the committee can not be more than three)

## Missions and Authorizations of Ballot Box Committees:

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1. Ensuring the order around ballot box belongs to president of ballot box committee while in polling station it belongs to responsible of building. In cases where building responsible does not exist, this authorization is used by member assigned by president of the ballot box committee with smallest number.(298/71-1, 82/1, 83/3),
2. To determine the place of ballot in the polling station and to put necessary guiding signs on the head of streets and to announce the place with regular means, (298/71-2),
3. To determine the place of ballot in the polling station in penal institutions by taking the opinion of penal institution administration under the supervision of district election boards (298/85),
4. To provide ballot box committee presidents and members, building responsables, security officials assigned authorized in ballot boards and individuals assigned by district election board to transfer members of ballot box committees to their area of duties who are registered in another ballot box lists, upon the documents they take from related district election boards, to write their names at the bottom of the lists, to take their signatures and to deliver the documents to district election board,
5. To count and tabulate envelopes and ballot papers taken from the ballot boxes and transmit the results to minutes,
6. At least two members of the board, whose names have been determined by the president of the board by drawing lot, deliver the sealed sacks, sealed with the stamp of the ballot box committee with the signatures of president and the members, including separate packs each of which are signed and sealed, composed of ballot papers which are included into counting and considered valid, minutes prepared by ballot box committees, counting calendars that have been signed by the board that are used in counting and tabulating, ballot papers that are considered invalid and excluded from counting and ballot papers that are subject to objection, envelopes that are not included into counting to related district election board(298/107-1),
7. To examine and to decide any objections on voting transactions, to write and to sign the decisions on minutes, (298/71-3-4),
8. To register and undersign the Ballot Box Committee minutes and other necessary minutes,

9. To send objections against Ballot Box Committee decisions, the counting and tabulating of votes into the minutes to the District Election Boards. (298/128-3), to make decisions upon the counting and tabulating of votes into the minutes and ballot boxes,
10. Perform other duties imposed by the law and Supreme Election Council Memorandums and decisions (298/71-6).

## Overseas Election Board

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Overseas Election Board is a board set up to handle voting procedures for overseas voters to exercise their voting rights. It is set up under Ankara Provincial Election Board. It consists of a chairman, two council of elders (public servant) members and highest voted four political party members.

### Missions and Authorizations of Overseas Election Boards:

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1. To take all measures and supervise election procedures to provide smooth performance of the election for registered overseas voters,
2. To establish overseas ballot box committees,
3. To send ballot papers, voting envelopes stamped with own stamp at the back and other tools and supplies seven days before (latest) elections take place through Ministry of Foreign Affairs to diplomatic missions. Or if considered necessary, to ask for ballot boxes, voting booths from premises through Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
4. To examine and immediately resolve on objections to formation, procedures and decisions of overseas ballot box committees,
5. To answer immediately any questions forwarded by chairmen of overseas ballot box committees with respect to performance of election procedures, to finalise direct objections or objections received via consulates in public review period of the overseas electoral registers. To send decisions taken to General Directorate of Civil Registration and Nationality and to take necessary actions of registration and correction.
6. To verify and send address declaration forms forwarded directly or by District Election Boards of citizens who originally live abroad, however are in the country

due to any reason during the overseas electoral register public review period and register them into overseas electoral registers. After verifying these forms, they are sent to General Directorate of Civil Registration and Nationality.

7. To accept and to register overseas electoral registers' (direct or through District Election Board) applications of discharged military officers who are not registered under overseas electoral register and those with expired constraint period.
8. To decide whether to suspend registration of military rank/file, military school students and voters restricted by final court order under arms (even if they are off duty) who are registered at Overseas Electoral Registry.
9. To decide whether to include voters in the interim electoral registers at Overseas Election Boards who were accepted during public review period, however did not have their names in the list and to send it to Directorate General of Electoral Register.
10. To set up sufficient Electoral Committees consisting of a chairman, a public servant, and one principal one alternate representatives from three of the highest voted political party representatives in the last parliamentary general elections after receiving stamped ballot sacks from abroad according to general principles after elections close in Turkey. Under control of this Electoral Committee, ballots are opened and tabulated, minutes are kept and combined as well as temporary customs gate results are combined by electoral committees and sent to Ankara Provincial Election Board.
11. To perform other duties imposed by the Law.

## Directorate General of Electoral Registry

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Supreme Election Council affiliated units "Directorate General of Electoral Register" in Ankara and "Bureaus of Electoral Registers" were established in provinces. Electoral Registers were created by designing, planning, management and performance of procedures by the Directorate General of Electoral Register established by the Supreme Election Council in accordance with the law.

The objective of operation of the Directorate General of Electoral Register is to provide gathering, classifying, storing, processing and rendering usable, communicating to where necessary and distribution of information to provide determination of all voting citizens completely in accordance with laws, prevent repeated registration, provide easy, rapid and correct voting of voters, obtain quick results of voting, prevent repeated voting by voters, enable voters to exercise their political rights at high level in accordance with their duties and responsibilities.

Directorate General of Electoral Register shall perform its activities under principles to be established by the Supreme Election Council in accordance with projects, programs, reporting methods and developed techniques.

The principles and method of auditing of the Directorate General shall be established and applied by the Supreme Election Council. The importance, methods of regulations of Electoral Register, the duties of voters, the contributions and benefits of these activities on the lives of citizens and of the state, techniques used in such activities and information related thereto shall be publicised by the Supreme Election Council with continuous campaigns covering the entire country and all citizens.

Basis for having voter capacity shall be the Electoral Registers.

It is essential that Electoral Register contains the name, surname, father's name, year of birth, province of birth, domicile address of the voter.

An **"Electoral Register"** is a mass of information determined by the Supreme Election Council taking as basis voters' Turkish Republic ID numbers and information on the address registration system under law no.298 Key Provisions of Elections and Electoral Registers.

**"Overseas Electoral Register"** is a mass of information Citizens residing in other countries taking as basis voters' information on the address registration system.

The aim of the establishment of the Directorate General of Electoral Register is to provide gathering, classifying, storing, processing and rendering usable, communicating to where necessary and distribution of information to provide determination of all voting citizens completely in accordance with laws, prevent repeated registration, provide easy, rapid and correct voting of voters, obtain fast results of voting, prevent repeated voting by voters, enable voters to exercise their political rights at high level in accordance with their duties and responsibilities.

Directorate General of Electoral Register shall perform its activities under principles to be established by the Supreme Election Council in accordance with projects, programs, reporting methods and developed techniques.

Directorate of Training and Publicity, Directorate of Centre of Information Technologies, Directorate of Call Centre serve under Directorate General of Electoral Register.

# Department of Administration and Finance Affairs

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“Department of Administration and Finance Affairs” was established to run secretarial, personnel, administrative, financial and other services, under Supreme Election Council.

Directorate of Personnel, Directorate of Editorial Office, Directorate of Financial Affairs, Directorate of Administrative Affairs, Directorate of Accounting Office for Equipment and Office Supply Inventory serve under Department of Administration and Finance Affairs.

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