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MASTER'S THESIS

Aylin DEMİR



T.C.

ANKARA YILDIRIM BEYAZIT UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ANALYSIS OF THE CENTRAL EXAM AND PLACEMENT SYSTEM IN ENTRANCE TO CIVIL SERVICE IN TÜRKİYE

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DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Supervisor
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ANKARA, 2025

CONFIRMATION PAGE

The thesis titled “Analysis of the Central Exam and Placement System in Entrance to Civil Service in Türkiye” prepared by Aylin Demir has been accepted as a Master’s Thesis at Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt University, Graduate School of Social Sciences, Department of Political Science and Public Administration by the following jury by unanimous/majority vote.

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Prof. Dr. Muhammet Enes KALA
Director of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

PLAGIARISM PAGE

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work, that I have not committed any unethical acts that would violate patents and copyrights at any stage from the planning to the writing of the thesis, that I have obtained all the information in this thesis within academic and ethical rules, and that I have cited all the information and comments used in this thesis. (06.08.2025)

Signature
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ABSTRACT

Analysis of the Central Exam and Placement System in Entrance to Civil Service in Türkiye

The main purpose of this thesis is to analyze the process of entering the civil service in Türkiye and the phenomenon of central examination-central placement in a comprehensive manner. The study examines the transformation of the public personnel system from a centralized structure to a fragmented structure from the pre-Republic period to the present day, taking 1999 as a reference, within a historical and analytical framework. In this context, PPSE, central placement and exceptional civil servants are discussed in detail.

This research employed a mixed methodology, encompassing the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data ranging from legal regulations to official statistics (SPP, MSPC and Presidency of Strategy and Budget), to examine transformations in public personnel management. This method provided both an in-depth understanding of the topic and empirical support with numerical data.

The analyses conducted revealed that despite the efforts of public personnel administration in Türkiye to take merit and objectivity as a basis throughout the radical changes, the operation of the central placement system was significantly affected by the conditions in certain periods. The fluctuations in the number of positions and actual placements announced in central placements between 1999-2024 reveal the direct relationship between public personnel recruitment policies and political, economic and administrative developments. In addition, exceptional civil servant appointments, which narrow the scope of the central examination system and expand over time, seriously question the principles of merit and equal opportunity in civil service.

As a result, it has been understood that the central examination and placement system in Türkiye, despite targeting merit, exhibits a complex and fragmented structure due to external factors and exceptional appointments. This situation affects the effectiveness of the central system and the standardization of entry into civil service, deepening the tension between merit and political discretion. This study has made a significant contribution to the literature by addressing the public personnel system and central recruitment processes with their current dynamics.

Keywords: Central Examination & Central Placement, Merit, Favoritism

ÖZET

Türkiye'de Kamu Hizmetine Girişte Merkezi Sınav ve Yerleştirme Sisteminin Analizi

Bu tezin temel amacı, Türkiye'de kamu hizmetine giriş sürecini ve merkezi sınav-merkezi yerleştirme olgusunu kapsamlı bir şekilde analiz etmektir. Çalışma, 1999 yılı referans alınarak, Cumhuriyet öncesinden günümüze kamu personel sisteminin merkezi bir yapıdan parçalı bir yapıya dönüşümünü tarihsel ve analitik bir çerçevede incelemektedir. Bu kapsamda, Kamu Personel Seçme Sınavı (KPSS), merkezi yerleştirme ve istisnai memurluklar detaylı olarak ele alınmıştır.

Bu araştırmada, kamu personel yönetimindeki dönüşümleri incelemek amacıyla, yasal düzenlemelerden resmi istatistiklere (DPB, ÖSYM, SBB) kadar uzanan nitel ve nicel verilerin analizini içeren karma bir yöntem benimsenmiştir. Bu yöntem, hem konunun derinlemesine anlaşılmasını hem de sayısal verilerle ampirik olarak desteklenmesini sağlamıştır.

Yapılan analizler; Türkiye'de kamu personel yönetiminin köklü değişimler boyunca liyakat ve objektifliği esas alma yönündeki gayretlerine karşın, merkezi yerleştirme sisteminin işleyişinin belirli dönemlerdeki koşullardan önemli ölçüde etkilendiğini ortaya koymuştur. 1999-2024 arası merkezi yerleştirmelerde ilan edilen kadro ve fiili yerleştirme sayılarındaki dalgalanmalar, kamu personel alım politikalarının siyasi, ekonomik ve idari gelişmelerle doğrudan ilişkisini ortaya koymaktadır. Ayrıca, merkezi sınav sisteminin kapsamını daraltan ve zamanla genişleyen istisnai memurluk atamaları, kamu hizmetinde liyakat ve fırsat eşitliği ilkelerini ciddi şekilde sorgulatmaktadır.

Sonuç olarak, Türkiye'deki merkezi sınav ve yerleştirme sisteminin, liyakati hedeflemesine rağmen, dışsal faktörler ve istisnai atamalar nedeniyle karmaşık ve parçalı bir yapı sergilediği anlaşılmıştır. Bu durum, merkezi sistemin etkinliğini ve kamu hizmetine girişteki standartlaşmayı etkileyerek, liyakat ile siyasi takdir yetkisi arasındaki gerilimi derinleştirmektedir. Bu çalışma, kamu personel sistemi ve merkezi alım süreçlerini güncel dinamikleriyle ele alarak literatüre önemli bir katkı sunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Merkezi Sınav ve Merkezi Yerleştirme, Liyakat, Kayırmacılık

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ICONS AND ABBREVIATIONS INDEX

AEE	:	Academy Entrance Examination
ARS	:	Assistant State Revenue
CGORP	:	Central Government Organization Research Project
CSE	:	Civil Servants Examination
CSL	:	Civil Servants Law
DGPP	:	Directorate General of Personnel and Principles
EUA	:	European University Association
FLE	:	Foreign Language Examination
GA	:	General Ability
GC	:	General Culture
GDBFC	:	General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control
JDP	:	Justice and Development Party
MNE-AEE	:	Ministry of National Education Academy Entrance Examination
MSPC	:	Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre
NPM	:	New Public Management
NSC	:	National Security Council
OECD	:	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
PABL	:	Public Administration Basic Law
PAITME	:	Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East
PARP	:	Public Administration Research Project
PPSE	:	Public Personnel Selection Examination
SEEs	:	State Economic Enterprises
SPD	:	State Personnel Department
SPO	:	State Planning Organization
SPP	:	State Personnel Presidency
TFKT	:	Teaching Field Knowledge Test
US	:	United States

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INTRODUCTION

The public personnel system in Türkiye is one of the important parts of the functioning of the state. As stated in Article 128 of the 1982 Constitution, 'The basic and permanent duties required by the civil services of the State, public economic enterprises and other public legal entities tasked with carrying out the civil services in accordance with the principles of general administration are carried out by civil servants and other public officials.' (Constitution of The Rebuplic of Turkey, 1982). This constitutional principle places public personnel in a central position in the functioning of the state mechanism. This study aims to comprehensively analyse the central examination and central placement phenomenon by examining the process of entering the civil service in Türkiye.

Subject and Purpose of the Study

The selection and appointment of public personnel in Türkiye has a deep-rooted history dating back to the Ottoman Empire and has undergone a continuous transformation according to the needs of society and the state. In the early years of the Republic, personnel recruitment, which was carried out through political appointments and local representatives, eventually led to the need to establish a merit-based and fair system. In this context, the central examination system began to be discussed with the reform processes that began in the 1980s. In 1999, a radical change was made in Türkiye's public personnel selection system and a central examination and placement system was put into practice. The Civil Servants Examination (CSE) was first implemented in 1999 for positions defined as Group B cadres. For career professions, after a period when institutions previously conducted their own exams, a central examination called the Central Elimination Exam for Institutions was conducted in 2001. In 2002, these two examination systems were combined and the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) was introduced (Polat, 2022). The main purpose of PPSE is to create a merit-based, centralized and standardized examination system for personnel recruitment to public institutions. Organized by MSPC (Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre), this exam aims to measure candidates' knowledge on various subjects such as general ability, general culture, and field knowledge.

This study examines this transformation in the public personnel system from a historical perspective. In particular, the practices in the new period that began with the implementation of the central examination system in 1999 and the changes in this process are comprehensively analysed. In addition to the central examination and central placement practices in civil services, the institutional transformation of public personnel administration is also addressed. In this context, the fragmented structure that emerged in public personnel administration, especially with the transition to the Presidential System, with the closure of the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) and the distribution of its duties to different institutions, is also examined (Albayrak, 2020).

Contribution of the Study to Literature

Although there are intense discussions in the literature on the role and effectiveness of PPSE and similar exams in entering civil service, studies on the broader effects of these systems on the public administration structure in Türkiye and the historical development of this structure are limited. This study stands out with its comprehensive examination of the historical evolution of public personnel administration system from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Türkiye and the structural changes during the period when PPSE was implemented. In addition to an evaluation based solely on exam results, how the public administration system has been shaped and transformed in this process is also analysed.

This thesis, in addition to addressing the comprehensive and current effects of the transition to the Presidential System on the public personnel administration system, also makes a significant contribution to the existing literature by analysing the numerical data of central placement from the past to the present with a detailed and historical perspective. The reflections of concrete institutional transformations such as the closure of deep-rooted institutions the closure of the State Personnel Presidency (SPP), the transfer of its duties to different institutions (or in some cases, leaving it ownerless) on the public personnel system have been examined in detail in the light of these data analyses. This study fills the information gap in the literature by also including the current legal and administrative changes in 2024 and 2025 and offers an original perspective on the current dynamics of public personnel administration. A critical analysis of this fragmented structure that emerged in the public personnel system and human resources planning approaches similar to the private sector constitute the main originality of the thesis.

Method of the Study

This study was used mixed research methods which including qualitative and quantitative data analysis. The qualitative dimension of research refers to a subjective-interpretive process involving data collection techniques such as observation, interviews, and document analysis related to the solution of a problem. Qualitative research aims to identify previously known or unnoticed problems and to address relevant phenomena realistically (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2008, p. 39). In particular, the document analysis method has enabled the analysis of documents from the past to the present regarding the selection and placement processes of public personnel. In this context, legal regulations, regulations, laws, decree-laws regarding public personnel recruitment processes, statistical data published by the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) and the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (MSPC) and the specialization theses of the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) were systematically scanned, classified and interpreted. For example, the public personnel system in the Ottoman Empire and the central examination system in Türkiye from its beginning to the present were evaluated together with the political and social conditions of the period. With this method, a more detailed and objective analysis was made regarding the historical roots and structural characteristics of the public administration system.

The quantitative aspect of the study involved the collection and analysis of numerical data, particularly the number of central placement positions and actual appointments between 1999 and 2024, and their distribution by educational level. These data supported the qualitative findings by empirically revealing periodic fluctuations and changes in public personnel recruitment policies. This mixed approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of the issue and supported the resulting conclusions with both qualitative interpretations and quantitative data.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study is based on the process of entering civil service in Türkiye and the phenomenon of central examination-central placement. The research particularly covers the new period that started with the central examination system coming into force in 1999 and the practices during this period. These changes have been revealed through legal regulations, regulations and various official documents regarding the selection and placement process of public personnel. The main limitations of the study are that civil servant groups with their

own recruitment processes such as academic personnel, members of security, members of the judiciary (judges and prosecutors) and the personnel of institutions that employ their own employees through institutional placement are not included in the detailed analysis. These limitations were established to ensure that the thesis focuses exclusively on the central examination and central placement system within the civil service entry process, and consequently, that the analysis does not encompass other public employment methods.

This study consists of five sections, excluding the introduction. The first section is devoted to literature review and conceptual framework. The second section addresses the historical development of Turkish public personnel administration; the paths followed in selecting and managing public personnel from the Ottoman Empire to the proclamation of the Republic, the period from 1960 to 2002 and the processes from 2002 to the present are examined in detail and the transformations experienced in Turkish public personnel administration are evaluated from a historical perspective. In particular, the effects of the transition to the Presidential System and the closure of the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) on public personnel administration are examined. In addition, the institutional structure and general characteristics of public personnel administration are also addressed in this section and the characteristic features of the current system are emphasized.

In the third section, entrance exams for civil service are examined in detail. In this section, the exams conducted by institutions in public personnel recruitment processes based on the concept of merit are detailed. In addition, the distinction between oral exams and interviews, which play a role in the selection of public personnel, is discussed, and the functioning and effects of these exam types are explained. The phenomenon and types of favoritism, which negatively affect public personnel recruitment processes by opposing the principle of merit, are also comprehensively evaluated in this section. In this context, current discussions such as allegations of favoritism, especially in recruitments with interviews, are addressed, and the general function of the exams conducted by MSPC in public personnel recruitment is analysed in depth. In addition, also the recruitment processes for special professional groups and the new teaching exam that will be put into effect are briefly evaluated.

The fourth section presents the process of entering civil service in Türkiye and the data on central exam placement in detail. The periods before and after 1999 were separately addressed, and the development of the central placement system and the importance of the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) in this process were analyzed. In particular,

the fluctuations in the central placement cadre and actual appointment numbers from 1999 to 2024 were presented with detailed graphs and tables, and their relationship with political, economic and administrative developments affecting public personnel recruitment policies was revealed. In addition, the content of PPSE and the changes that occurred after the central system came into force were evaluated; the exceptions to the central placement system were also emphasized. Finally, the thesis was completed with the conclusion and recommendations section.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study aims to analyse the basic dynamics of the Turkish public personnel system, changes and transformations in the historical process, and the processes of personnel employment. For this purpose, it is of great importance to review the literature and create a conceptual framework, to determine the theoretical infrastructure of the study, and to discuss and analyse the basic research questions of the study. This analysis focuses on the central examination system and placement process in public personnel recruitment. The aim of the study is to examine the objectivity of this process and its relationship with the principle of merit in detail. In addition, it aims to deeply understand the principles of public personnel administration and the problems encountered in this area, taking into account the development of personnel employment over time. In this section, theoretical approaches and basic concepts specific to the field will be discussed, current discussions in the literature will be evaluated, and a theoretical framework will be created for the research questions of the thesis.

Due to the nature of the thesis, when the concepts at the centre of the public personnel system literature are examined, the terms "civil service" and "civil servant" are closely related to the functional and structural meaning of public administration. Although there are many discussions in the literature on the concept of civil service, according to Gözübüyük and Tan (1998, p. 293), "It is defined as the work and transactions carried out by the administration using public authority and procedures, under direct or close supervision, control and responsibility, in order to meet some common needs of the society." Civil servants are also authorized in the performance of civil services. In this regard, it is stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Türkiye (1982), "the primary and permanent duties required by civil services are carried out by civil servants and other public servants." When the literature on public servants is examined, according to Gözler and Kaplan (2018, p. 560), public servants are officials employed by a public legal entity under a public law bond. According to Gözübüyük (2008, p. 199), the human element of public administration is called a public servant and public servants are generally referred to as "public personnel". According to Albayrak, based on the definition in the Constitution, they are classified under the title of public personnel as civil servants, other public servants and auxiliary public personnel. This issue will be analysed in detail in the thesis and will take its place in the literature.

When the literature on entry to civil service in Türkiye is examined, Ateş has revealed its nature by defining the central system. According to Ateş (1995, p. 64), "The central system is the system of recruitment of persons to be recruited into civil service by a central body or organization. In the central system, all public institutions and organizations report the number of personnel they need, their educational status and similar qualifications to the central body of the state authorized in this regard. This central organization evaluates the personnel requests from various public institutions and organizations according to predetermined procedures and principles, and then selects the persons to be recruited into civil service within certain procedures and principles and distributes them among the requesting organizations." The organizations here are primarily the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) and then MSPC (Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre), which organize central exams and carry out the placement procedures of candidates. The main actor is the State Personnel Presidency and there are also supporting actors who play a role in this regard. The Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) is a central and widespread examination in which secondary school (high school), associate degree and undergraduate graduates in Türkiye participate in order to be appointed to public office. It is carried out as Group A cadre and Group B cadre. Particularly the qualifications of the Group B cadre, the appointments made with this cadre, and its exam are the research subjects of this thesis. With the transition to the central system, it is aimed to employ personnel based on merit. The principle of merit has a wide area of discussion in the literature. According to Şen (1995, p. 81), the merit system is a system that emerged as a result of the negative consequences of the political favouritism system in practice. However, when it comes to practice, the principle of merit has not become functional and favouritism continues. Despite the introduction of a centralized examination system, there have been discussions that the oral examination, pre-selection and subsequent interviews violate the principle of merit and clearly pave the way for favouritism (Eminoğlu, 2019; Kızılkan, 2019; Yılmaz, 2020). The sub-questions of the thesis will answer questions such as what merit is, its relationship with the central exam. According to Birgül Ayman Güler (2005, p. 152), "Merit means that entry to civil services, assignment and promotion within the service are open to all citizens and that these processes are based on criteria of suitability for duty, competence and success. The two basic conditions of the merit system are suitability for service and impartiality." The criteria for suitability for service are exams. However, this is not enough in this system. In this study, the adoption of the principle of merit through exams in public personnel

employment in Türkiye, but how this is not put into practice and what kind of problems are encountered will be analysed.

When the history of Turkish public personnel administration is examined in the literature, it is divided into periods and analysed based on the characteristics such as what these periods brought, their changes. It is generally examined over the periods as 1923-1960, 1960-1980, 1980-2000 and after 2000. The first period is defined as the foundation and search years of the Republic, the second period is defined as the institutionalization period with the adoption of the Civil Servants Law No. 657 and the third period is defined as the beginning of changes. After 2000 is defined as the period with concrete examples of the new public management approach (Acar, 2019). In this study, first the public personnel system during the Ottoman Empire will be discussed and then the Republican Period will be classified as the foundation and early years of the Republic, the period from 1960 to 2002 and the period from 2002 to the present. The public personnel system in the Ottoman Empire, the emergence of the conditions for recruitment, the period up to and after the Tanzimat will be analysed, as well as these situations defined in the literature. The period starting with the declaration of the Republic has a broad perspective in the literature. For this period, which was addressed with legal regulations, the "Memurin Law" accepted in 1926 defined the status of civil servants and formed the basis of the personnel regime (Demir, 1973). The establishment of the State Personnel Department (SPD) in the 1960s was one of the first important steps towards the adoption of a centralized personnel management approach, and the first activity of the department was the preparation of the Civil Servants Law No. 657. From the 1980s onwards, the restructuring of public institutions and privatization practices came to the agenda under the influence of the free market economy approach. In this period, especially the employment of contract personnel began to spread. After 2002, with the Justice and Development Party coming to power, new reforms began to be implemented in public administration with the new public management approach, and with the transition to the Party-Based Presidential Government System in 2018, a new era was entered in public personnel administration (Albayrak, 2017). In this system, regulations such as strengthening the central organization, affiliation of some public institutions and organizations to the Presidency, closure of long-established institutions, establishment of new institutions, and changes in the appointment procedures of senior managers were implemented (Albayrak, 2020). With these regulations, the merit principle completely lost its functionality and a public personnel system dominated by favouritism emerged.

This study aims to analyse the central public personnel placement system, central examination, personnel selection and recruitment process in the Turkish public personnel administration system, in line with the principles of "merit" and "objectivity" and their changes over time. While examination systems are seen as an important tool of the merit principle, issues such as interview practices and employment of contracted personnel bring about different discussions on the implementation and effectiveness of this principle. Concepts such as new public management approach, civil service, civil servant and merit in the literature will be used to create the analysis framework in this study. This section has revealed the basic conceptual and theoretical infrastructure of the public personnel administration system through literature review, and presented its historical development and current application forms. The discussions in the literature have determined how the thesis will seek answers to the research questions and which areas should be focused on. The following sections of the thesis will be built on this theoretical framework and more in-depth analyses will be made in the context of the central examination and placement system, the selection of public personnel, the employment of personnel and the merit principle.

2. TURKISH PUBLIC PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

2.1. Historical Development

Turkish public personnel administration has been shaped in a process extending from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic period and from there to the present day. Public personnel administration in the Ottoman Empire period has gone through a series of processes that have tried to take shape with legal regulations, from its centralized and hierarchical structure based on loyalty and servant understanding rather than competence, to the ideal of merit in the early years of the Republic, but with political influences. In this process, the Memurin Law enacted in 1926 was an important step, but some deficiencies in public personnel recruitment and administration continued. From the 1960s onwards, with the establishment of institutions such as the State Personnel Department (SPD), personnel planning and a centralized approach were adopted, and the status, personal rights, obligations and duties of public personnel were regulated with the Civil Servants Law No. 657. The economic and political changes experienced as of the 1980s brought with them the free market understanding and caused public institutions to be shaped according to new needs. In the period after the 1980s, with the effect of centralized personnel policies being seen, the Civil Servants Examination (CSE) was put into practice in 1999, and in the period after 1999, especially the PPSE and the central placement system were more widely adopted, and the effort to create a merit-based and more objective central system in the recruitment of public personnel continued. With the Justice and Development Party (JDP) coming to power in 2002, the winds of change began to blow, and the New Public Management (NPM) approach has been adopted and concrete steps have been taken in this regard in the field of public administration. During this period, a process was experienced in which the new public management approach and information technologies were more intensively integrated into the public personnel system, performance-oriented approaches came to the fore, and the centralized structures of public institutions were updated, and collected in one hand With the transition to the Party Presidential Government System in 2018, as a result of the changes and transformations made, the JDP government, which has been in power for 22 years, was perhaps impossible to predict that it would remain in power today until 2024. All these processes will be analysed in detail.

2.1.1. The Public Personnel System in the Ottoman Empire

The basic organizational structure of the Ottoman State was a land regime shaped by the Timar Law, which was established by its founder Osman Ghazi (Onar, 1966; Giritli, 1979, p. 36). The organization, which had a simple structure during its founding period, began to institutionalize as the state's lands expanded through conquests (Ateş, 1995, pp. 85-86). During the founding years of the Ottoman Empire, during the reign of Osman Ghazi and then Orhan Bey and Murat I, the sultans played the role of providing unity and coordination among the margraves rather than being absolute rulers. At the beginning of the period in question, the social difference between the sultan and his circle was minimal. The border lords governed newly conquered regions and had their own armies; however, in times of danger, they combined their activities and submitted them to the sultan's command (Karpat, 2000, p. 128). However, from the reign of Fatih Sultan Mehmet onwards, the sultan's authority was become absolute over all political, administrative and military structures. During this period, all administrative and military units of the state were made directly subordinate to the sultan and the state adopted a centralized-absolute management approach. The sultan became the sole authority in the administration and had a strong power. The central and provincial administrative units of the state and the army were organized as a whole that was directly subordinate to the sultan. At the centre of this whole was the sultan and the palace organization, and all units all over the country were managed from this centre (Armağan, 2011, p. 147). As a result, an idiosyncratic state organization, administrative structure and management approach were emerged (Ateş, 1995, p. 86).

The organizational structure of the Ottoman Empire, which underwent serious transformations from a principality to an empire, can be considered as a dual structure, consisting of a central and a provincial organization. It is possible to examine the central organization under six headings: a) The Sultan and the Palace b) The Imperial Council and the offices attached to it c) The Grand Vizier and the Sublime Porte d) The Sublime Fatwa and the Ilmiye organization e) The Financial office and Finance corps f) The Kapıkulu Hearths and the Navy (Ortaylı, 1979, p. 132). The basic administrative unit of the provincial organization is also examined as the "Sancak". However, over time, the increase in conquests, especially in Rumelia, made it necessary to establish a category on the sanjaks, and upon this necessity, the institution of "Governor" was established (Albayrak, 2006, p. 63). Sanjak is the administrative unit where the timar system is applied and a typical Ottoman province is a whole consisting of sanjaks where the timar system is applied. In this sense,

sanjak is the main unit of the provincial organization of the Ottoman Empire within the timar system in terms of military, administrative and financial aspects (Ortaylı, 1979 pp. 185-186).

Before the Tanzimat, the Ottoman State's need for civil servants was met through a system called "autodidactic" (Özdemir, 2001, p. 194) and based on the master-apprentice relationship. In this system, especially the children of civil servants or notables would enter and exit public institutions as "apprentices" starting at the age of twelve-thirteen and receive education. After this apprenticeship process lasted three-five years, the young people became candidates for civil service as "lieutenant" and were then appointed to vacant civil service positions. "Devshirmeh" were mostly appointed to administrative positions that could be called high-level bureaucrats. These devshirmeh, who received a long education in "Special school in the ottoman palace", were appointed to military and civil administration positions according to their merits (Özdemir, 2001, p. 194). Special school in the ottoman palace has a very important position in the public personnel system. This school, founded by Murat II, was further developed during the reign of Mehmet II and many people were trained for the classes divided into ilmiye, seyfiye, kalemiye and mülkiye in the state administration (Acar, 2019, p. 123). Until the end of the 18th century, eighty-nine grand viziers, three sheikhs-ul-Islam, thirty-six admirals in chief, poets, writers, calligraphers and musicians were trained (Günay, 2005, p. 195).

In the Ottoman Empire, civil servants were divided into (4) service classes (Akgüner, 2001, p. 10):

The Ilmiye Class: Those who work in this class are active in scientific and educational services, judiciary, administrative and municipal services. The Ilmiye class has three main functions: 1. Tedris (education), 2. Ifta (fatwa duty), 3. Kaza (judiciary) and administrative duty (Ortaylı, 1979, p. 165). Sheikh-ul-Islam, mufti and judges were included in this class (Akgüner, 2001, p. 10).

Seyfiye class: This class includes civil servants responsible for the management of the Janissary and Spahi organization in various levels of responsibility of the military services. Janissaries and grenadier, excluding senior military officials, are included in this class (Akgüner, 2001).

Kalemiye class: This class includes the officials who keep the necessary records regarding the state's land and manage state communications. The bureaucrats working in this class were called "Hacegan" (hodja, ottoman bureaucrat) (Albayrak, 2006, p. 64).

Mülkiye class: It consisted of the heads of the Ottoman government, high commanders, viziers, beylerbeys, sancakbeys, etc. administrative cadres. Public officials

belonging to the Mülkiye class were generally appointed from among those trained in Enderun (Örnek, 1989, p. 186).

In the Ottoman Empire, civil servants, especially those belonging to the civil service class, and high-ranking civil servants of other classes were appointed by the sultan. Loyalty to the sultan was essential in the appointments. However, every Ottoman sultan, especially until the decline period, took care to ensure that the person he appointed was merit (Ateş, 1995, p. 87). Differences such as religion, language or ethnicity were never taken into account when appointing people to public office. On the contrary, talented children and young people were educated in public schools and prepared for important positions, regardless of their religious or ethnic background. However, during the periods of stagnation and regression of the Ottoman Empire, the administrative structure and organization of the state also began to decline and even collapse (Ateş, 1995). In the past, the sultans entrusted the administration of the state to talented and knowledgeable people. However, over time, people who lacked a sense of responsibility and talent began to have a say and power. These administrators, who thought only of their own interests, made it impossible to govern the state, and this led first to military failures and then to rebellions and unrest throughout the country. This deterioration in state administration gradually spread to the lowest level, and the effects of bad administration were seen throughout the country.

The internal weaknesses that emerged as of the 17th century, the dysfunction of traditional Ottoman institutions (the deterioration of the Timar system, indiscipline in the imperial courts, etc.) and the weakening of the central authority, combined with the fundamental deterioration of both the internal vulnerability of the empire and its competitive power with the outside world. As a natural result of this process, the Ottoman Empire entered a long-term period of power loss, which is generally described by historians as "Stagnation" and then "Regression". In the face of this crisis situation and increasing external pressures that the state faced, the need to stop the current negative course, re-establish the disrupted order and restructure the state according to the requirements of the age was increasingly felt. During the Period of Stagnation experienced by the Ottoman State in the 17th century, reform efforts were undertaken in the administrative, financial, social and military fields in order to find solutions to various problems that the state faced. These reforms, which were limited to the lives of the sultans, were also met with the reaction of the people who were not yet ready. The Janissary rebellion dethroned the sultan and the 17th century Period of Stagnation ended. When the 18th century Period of Regression began, the military and technical superiority of Europe began to be accepted and the West was taken as an example

in reforms. A large part of the reforms made were aimed at modernizing the army. The opening of new military schools, the bringing in of experts from Europe, and the establishment of new military units were distinct characteristics of that period. However, these reforms generally remained superficial and could not provide radical solutions to the fundamental problems of the state. Although important steps were taken to stop the Period of Regression, the reforms of this period were not successful due to the reactions and inadequacies encountered. The efforts in this period prepared the ground for more comprehensive reform movements in the following century.

The Ottoman State entered a period of collapse after period of stagnation and regression. Efforts to stop and correct that negative trend were brought to the agenda. Various reform movements were initiated within this scope. The Tanzimat Edict, prepared by Mustafa Reşit Pasha and known as the "Imperial Edict of Gülhane", was declared by Sultan Abdülmecid in 1839. This edict included regulations regarding the security of individuals' property and life, legal and judicial processes, as well as the administration and financial structure of the state. However, although it was stated that laws would be enacted regarding the organizational structure of the state, no provision was made regarding civil service. The "Edict of Reform" declared on February 22, 1856 stated that citizens of the Ottoman Empire, regardless of their nationality, would be accepted to government service and civil service, and that they would be subject to the provisions valid for everyone according to their qualifications and abilities (Gözübüyük and Kili, 1982, p. 10). Following the Edict of Reform, the first Ottoman Constitution that adopted a constitutional form of government, the Kanun-i Esasi, was declared in 1876. With the 1876 constitution, civil service was also given a status, and Article 19 states that "All citizens are accepted to suitable positions in civil service according to their qualifications and abilities." Following the Ottoman Basic Law, the idea of regulating the necessary conditions for entering civil services emerged in the Ottoman Empire. That is why the decrees of 1879 and 1881 were put into effect. After the Tanzimat, the general conditions for entering civil service were as follows: being a citizen of the Ottoman State, being over twenty years of age, having good morals, proving that one has the necessary knowledge for the civil service one will enter with a diploma from the school one graduated from or by taking an exam before a council, not having been sentenced to imprisonment for more than one year, not being deprived of civil rights, not having any connection with military service, and not having any illness (Özdemir, 2001, p. 199). The conditions for entering the civil service introduced for the Ottoman Empire are largely similar to the conditions sought for entering civil service today

(such as age, education, military service, health and criminal record) (Albayrak, 2006, p. 67).

There are many regulations made in this period such as the Reform Edict following the Tanzimat Edict, the First and Second Constitutional Monarchy, the General Organization published for all civil servants in 1846. The Şura-ı Devlet (Council of State) established in this period, the Divan-ı Muhasebat (Council of Accounts), the Ottoman Basic Law of 1876, the registration obligation for civil servants in 1877, the Machete Decree of 1880, the Memurin-i Mülkiye Terakki ve Tekavüt Decree of 1881, the regulations made in the Municipality and Provincial Special Administrations, institutions such as the Military College and the Civil Service formed the foundations of the public personnel regime that would be inherited from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic, and the modernization efforts experienced in this period were inherited by the Republic of Türkiye (Akgüner, 2001, p. 11; Güler, 2005, p. 151; Aslan, 2012, p. 22; Şener, 2013, p. 571; İzci and Yıldız, 2017, pp. 35-36).

2.1.2. The Public Personnel System in the Proclamation of the Republic and in the Republic's First Years

The declaration of the Republic in 1923 was a significant turning point in the Turkish public administration and personnel system. The traditional system inherited from the Ottoman Empire began to be reshaped under a new state structure and ideology. In the early years of the Republic, the establishment of the principle of "status law" in the public personnel system resulted in the regulation of being a civil servant rights by law and the establishment of a certain systematic framework. On April 20, 1924, the 1924 constitution was put into effect by the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye. This constitution brought about significant changes in the Turkish public personnel system. Article 92 of the 1924 constitution titled “Civil Servants” states that “Every Turk who has political rights has the right to become a civil servant according to his/her competence and entitlement.” Article 93 also states that “The qualifications, rights, duties, salaries and allowances, appointments and dismissals, promotions and advancements of all civil servants are determined by special law.” In this period, the elements of merit and competence to become a civil servant were established on a constitutional basis. Regulation by law was taken as the basis for other issues. Based on this, the “Memurin Law” dated 18/03/1926 and numbered 788 is the first law defining the legal, financial and social status of civil servants (Albayrak, 2006, p. 75).

Law No. 788 covered all public personnel except soldiers and included two employment types: "civil servant" and "employee" (Ateş, 1995, p. 90). In Article 1 of the law, a classification was made for "civil servant" and "employee" as follows: “A person who is assigned to perform state service and receives a salary from the public or private budgets in accordance with his/her registered status is called a civil servant. A person who is employed in state affairs for a fee and is not registered in the civil servant's registry and does not benefit from the rights and authorities of civil servants is called an employee.” (TBMM, 1926). Article 4 of the law also lists the necessary conditions to become a civil servant (Demir, 1973, p. 28):

1. Being Turkish,
2. Having the capacity to use political rights,
3. Being of good moral character and not having been convicted of a crime that offends dignity and honour and an act that requires heavy imprisonment or a similar level of punishment,
4. Being at least a secondary school graduate, (If there are many applicants who meet this condition or if there are no secondary school graduates among the candidates, they are accepted into service through competition.)
5. Having completed active military service or being placed in the reserve or being determined to be unfit to perform military service or being postponed,
6. Not having contracted contagious diseases or not having a physical or mental disability or illness that prevents them from performing their duties continuously,
7. Not being married to foreign girls and women.

Also article 5 of the law lists the necessary conditions to become an employee. Of the conditions specified in Article 4, the conditions in paragraphs 1, 3 and 6 were accepted as is, the condition of 'not being banned from public rights' was added instead of paragraph 2, and no other condition was sought. With this law, women were also granted the right to become civil servants and employee. When the general conditions for entering civil service are examined, it is considered an important step to include civil service within the scope of status law and to seek certain conditions for entering this status (Güran, 1980, pp. 219-220).

The Memurin Law No. 788, which regulates the working conditions of civil servants who will carry out civil services of the New Republic, addresses issues such as candidacy, record, discipline, suspension from duty, change of location, leave and retirement. It is stated in the temporary article of this law that a regulation regarding salaries will be made in the future. With the “salary”, “tawhit and teadul” laws, which have been put into force since

1927 and later referred to as the “law regulating official salaries” (Maliye Bakanlığı, 1966; Avaner, 2007, p. 629), the personnel system has started to be shaped and filled in the system (Albayrak, 2020, p. 1524). Based on this, the first general regulation was made with the Salary Law No. 1108 dated 20/06/1927. Serious problems were experienced due to the failure of this law to establish a system, and in order to eliminate this, the “Law on the Unification and Uniformity of Civil Servants’ Salaries” dated 18/05/1929 and numbered 1452 was put into effect. This law, which is also considered one of the first law regulating official salaries and whose main purpose was to simplify the salary regime (Avcıoğlu, 1958, p. 19), divided civil servants into three basic groups as A, B and C based on a 20-degree simple classification, and their salaries were determined according to their place in this rating (Albayrak, 2015, s. 30). In the new regulation, the salaries of civil servants are divided into three different categories and the basic salaries are determined according to these categories:

(A) Series: Valid for civil servants from the first to the fifth degree.

(B) Series: Valid for civil servants from the sixth to the thirteenth degree.

(C) Series: Valid for civil servants from the fourteenth to the twentieth degree.

The basic salaries in each category are different. So, the net salary of the civil servant is calculated by multiplying the basic salary by a coefficient determined for each degree.

In 1939, the Law No. 3656 on the Unification and Uniformity of Salaries of Civil Servants entered into force. This law brought about changes such as regulating the salary regime and determining public employment methods. For the first time, the "exam" requirement for entering civil service was made mandatory with this law. With this regulation, competition and qualification exams were determined for entering civil service, and a "competitive exam" was foreseen in case of too many candidates applying for vacant positions, and a "qualification exam" was foreseen in case of equal or fewer candidates applying. Another change made by this Law is the introduction of temporary and permanent servant employment (Demir, 1973, p. 35). Although the introduction of an examination system in addition to the conditions determined for entry into civil services is an important step for the development of the system, the lack of sub-regulations such as statutes and regulations to support this arrangement in practice has prevented the system from realizing its full potential.

Efforts to create a rational structure in the public personnel system gained significant momentum in the mid-20th century. During this period, a tradition of foreign expert reports began. In particular, United States (US) experts examined the current structure and problems of the public personnel system and offered solutions and ways to improve it. These reports

had a significant impact on the transformation of the public personnel system and laid the foundations for the reforms that were made in the following years. This period can also be described as the years of preparation for reform. The reports named Door (1933), Hines (1933), Neumark (1949), Thornburg (1949), Barker (1951), Martin-Cush (1951), Leimgruber (1952) made many suggestions regarding the public personnel system and as a result of these suggestions, preparations for a new law were initiated (Demirci, 2010, p. 154).

Foreign expert reports that are considered to have contributed to the development of the public personnel system will be included in this section of the study. The first of the foreign expert reports that is considered to have made significant contributions to the public personnel system is the Hines Report. The Hines Report explained the burden of the sugar import ban on the public and expressed an opinion that the way for imports would be paved (Kara, 2006, p. 152). It is considered one of the first studies focusing on public problems and conducted in this area. The Dorr Report prepared by Goldthwaite H. Dorr is also an important study on the transformation of the public personnel system. The report emphasized that development could be achieved by focusing on the private sector and made suggestions such as eliminating red tape, delegating authority and reducing the number of civil servants. The report also addressed a wide range of national issues such as economy, agriculture and customs. However, this broad scope made it difficult to implement the report. The Thornburg Report also consisted of two reports obtained from the examinations conducted by Max Weston Thornburg, who worked with Graham Spry and George Soule at American Standard Oil between 1949 and 1950. These reports were part of a larger study prepared by the Twentieth Century Foundation on countries to which the US is likely to provide aid or investment. The report offered suggestions on how to improve the Turkish economy. However, Thornburg's expertise in the business sector and the report's appearance of prioritizing economic interests have been criticized. The Barker Report was prepared by the Barker Commission in 1951. The report criticized that recruitment to the civil service was not carried out according to objective needs, that a real reform was needed in the personnel regime, and that a central personnel organization should be established to carry out this reform. These criticisms pointed to important changes that needed to be made in Türkiye's public personnel system. The Martin-Cush Report was also presented in the same year. Prof James Martin and Frank Cush prepared a "Report on the Establishment and Operations of the Ministry of Finance" in collaboration with Turkish academics and high-level bureaucrats (Martin and Cush, 1963, p. 70). This report primarily evaluated the functioning of the organizational structure of the Ministry of Finance and offered suggestions. However, the

report also included suggestions regarding the public personnel regime. It was suggested that a central personnel organization be established for all public institutions and organizations (including municipalities and state-owned enterprises) (Leimgruber, 1963, p. 140-168). Another report, prepared by Swiss Prof Leimgruber, focused primarily on the legal status of public employees and expressed the difficulties caused by the simultaneous employment of civil servants' subject to statutory law and employees working according to private law provisions within the public personnel regime. The importance and necessity of a central organization was also emphasized in this report, and all these reports formed the basis for the State Personnel Department to be established later (Albayrak, 2006, p. 86).

The changes that occurred in the Turkish public personnel administration during this process that started with the Proclamation of the Republic were mentioned. The establishment of 'status law' in the public personnel regime and the innovations brought by this principle were also discussed. The 1950s were a reporting and preparation period in terms of the Turkish public personnel regime and public administration system (Albayrak, 2006, p. 88). In this context, a method based on the determination of problems and the production of suggestions for their solutions within the scope of the research conducted by foreign experts on the Turkish Public Administration was followed (Göçoğlu, Kurt and Öktem, 2019, p. 54). The period starting from the proclamation of the Republic in 1923, until 1960 which is considered as the planned development period is presented in Table 1 in order to create a systematic framework.

Table 1. Periodic restructuring of administration in Türkiye and its characteristics

Period	Regulations	Features
Pre-Planned Period Regulations (1923-1960)	-Hines Report -Neumark Report -Thornburg Report -Barker Report -Establishment of PAITME -Martin-Cush Report -Gruber Report -Maurice Challioux - Lace Report -Report on the Investigation of the Points in Need of Reform in the Turkish Scale and the Determination of the Reforms to be Made in the Current Laws -Gıyas Akdeniz Report -F. Baade Report -Podol Report	-Utilizing Foreign Experts -Development of Administrative Structure (Old Institutions, New Units) -Transfer of Authority -Personnel Regime Regulations -Legal Regulations

Note: This table is translated by the author from Göçoğlu, Kurt, and Öktem (2019, p. 52).

2.1.3. Public Personnel System from 1960 to 2002 Period

The 1950s were an important turning point for the Turkish public personnel regime and public administration system, and were accepted as a period of reports and preparatory work. Many reports prepared during this period emphasized the importance of establishing a central personnel organization. These reports and efforts to solve problems in the personnel regime revealed the need for an institution with a supra-institutional status, which brought discussions on the establishment of the "State Personnel Department" to the agenda. All preliminary work was examined by the National Unity Committee, which came to power on May 27, 1960, and as in the examples of foreign countries, it was deemed necessary for the public personnel regime to be organized by an impartial committee of experts, and the Ministry of Finance prepared a "Draft Law on the Establishment of the State Personnel Department" (Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 1990).

The establishment of the "State Personnel Department" in 1960 arose from the need to find solutions to important problems in the public personnel system. During that period, the fact that the salaries of employees in the public sector were not appropriate for the work they did, that merit was not sufficiently taken into consideration, and that different

institutions made cadre arrangements in line with their own interests created serious problems. This situation increased injustice and inequality in the bureaucracy, leading to a decrease in performance and efficiency. The purpose of establishing the "State Personnel Department" was to ensure equality and merit in the public personnel system, to regulate salaries according to market conditions, and to determine a single cadre policy for all institutions. Thus, it was aimed to provide a more equitable, efficient, and merit-based structure to the public personnel system. In 1960, the "State Personnel Department" (SPD) was established with the approval of the National Unity Committee, which undertook legislative duties. According to Article 1 of the Law on the Establishment of the State Personnel Department (1960) SPD, which is affiliated with the Prime Ministry, consists of a president, a board of five members, a general secretary, and technical branches and offices. The president, board members, and general secretary are appointed by the Council of Ministers.

The duties of the state personnel department are as follows (Güler, 1988, p. 85):

a) To group civil servants and services, thus implementing the principle of equal pay for equivalent work in institutions,

b) To determine the qualification requirements for recruitment and promotion,

c) To determine the techniques to be applied for the rationalization of working methods,

d) To determine the corrections to be made in salaries, wages and other social rights by monitoring developments throughout the country,

e) To review the situation in order to keep the civil servant and employee cadres of institutions at a level appropriate to the requirements of the service,

f) To determine the payment rates to be applied to the salaries of civil servants abroad on permanent duty with their domestic and foreign travel diaries,

g) To collect numerical information on public officials,

h) To make legal regulations on issues falling within its scope of duty,

i) To determine the rights and obligations of public officials, the disciplinary system to be applied,

j) To determine methods and techniques for in-service training,

k) To examine issues related to the rewarding of officials,

l) To carry out other tasks assigned by the Prime Ministry (without increasing its staff and expenses) directly or upon the recommendation of the Department, if necessary.

In this period, a very serious step was taken with the establishment of the State Personnel Department (SPD) regarding the Turkish personnel system. SPD, which was established on 13.12.1960 after the May 27 revolution and started its actual work on 02.05.1961, was the official manifestation of the idea of considering the reform as a whole. The department initially carried out preliminary studies and prepared an inventory of the state personnel, then prepared the proposals that brought together the basic principles of the new regime under the title of "Preliminary Report on the State Personnel Regime" and the principles included in this report were accepted in the meeting of the Council of Ministers on 08.05.1963 and published in the Official Gazette dated 21.05.1963 and numbered 11408. It is seen that these documents formed the basis of the draft Law on State Officials prepared later (Tutum, 1968, p.33; Erkin, 1971 p.41; Akın, 1973, p. 177).

The purpose of the "Preliminary Report on the State Personnel Regime (1962, p. 13)" is expressed as follows: "This report has been prepared upon the orders of Prime Minister İsmet İnönü. Prime Minister, [before the government begins its work on the reform of our personnel system, which will constitute an important phase of the administrative reform that is necessary to be carried out in Türkiye], ordered the examination and analysis of the legislation regarding the current state personnel and the determination of the personnel inventory within a report and in a short time at the end of January. This determination report has been prepared to serve as a source that will both shed light on the reform work to be carried out by the State Personnel Department and to serve to collect information that we hope will be useful in determining the political, legal and financial targets in the government's personnel policy". This report consists of two main sections. The first section summarizes the legislation by addressing the cash and legal status of public personnel, legal guarantees, social problems, educational status, local administrations and economic state enterprises personnel, while the second section presents tables, graphs and explanations that statistically analyse the status of public personnel, addressing issues such as demographic characteristics, salaries and wages, working conditions, satisfaction levels and educational status. This preliminary report aims to establish a basis for future policies and studies by addressing the status of public personnel.

In addition, the preliminary report also addresses the conditions of civil service and the ways to become a civil servant. Entrance into civil services is carried out through various methods such as election, examination, vocational training, compulsory service commitment, appointment to exceptional civil service positions, appointment to specialized positions, contracted foreigners becoming Turkish citizens and recruiting salaried employees

whose cadres have been abolished. Positions such as village headman, neighbourhood mukthar, the Council of State, the Court of Accounts, the Supreme Court, the Constitutional Court, and President and members of the Supreme Council of Judges are filled through elections. Except for those who had received vocational training and those who had completed mandatory service, an exam was administered to others. As is the case with academic career members, some positions are filled through a mixed system that includes both examination, election, appointment and approval formalities. Public institutions use their discretionary powers in personnel recruitment without the obligation to advertise or announce.

Entrance into civil service is generally through examination. However, those who are appointed to institutions and positions related to their professions after receiving vocational training, those who will be appointed to exceptional civil service positions and specialized positions are not required to take an examination. Apart from these exceptions, those who will be appointed to open civil service positions are subject to a competitive examination if there are more applications than vacant positions, otherwise they are subject to a proficiency examination. The report in question emphasizes that, although the examination is the main factor in entering civil service, institutions avoid holding examinations due to the lack of a harmonious and systematic regulation on this issue, and the examinations that are held are far from measuring the general and professional knowledge of the candidates (Devlet Personel Dairesi, 1962, p. 13). Public institutions that have difficulty in implementing the exams express some concerns on this issue and explain the reasons underlying these concerns:

a) The cost of advertisements,

b) The burdensome nature of organizing a widely participated exam for a limited number of civil servants,

c) The possibility of hiring those who take the exam at an institution and passion but are not included in the quota, without having to take a second exam,

d) The availability of solutions to fill vacant positions through transfers,

e) The fact that the branches of education that institutions consider as vocational training are kept very wide,

f) The loss of the attractiveness of civil service (Devlet Personel Dairesi, 1962, p. 53).

The report also draws attention to some important deficiencies regarding the principles of the exam. The exams are not scheduled, and each public institution can hold the exam

whenever it wants and under the conditions it wants (exam location, time, subject, form, announcement, etc.). The exams are not conducted by the personnel units of the institutions, but by units with uncertain authority, and the announcement and appointment procedures are carried out by the unit where the service will be carried out. This situation makes coordination in practice almost impossible.

In 1960, another important institution worth mentioning during this period was the State Planning Organization (SPO). That year, SPO was officially established in order to direct and coordinate the country's development efforts. As a public institution operating under the Prime Ministry, the SPO was tasked with supporting the government in economic, social and cultural policies. The 1961 Constitution also provided constitutional security to the SPO, and its 129th article states that "The establishment and duties of the State Planning Organization, the principles to be observed in the preparation, implementation, application and amendment of the plan, and the measures to prevent changes that would disrupt the integrity of the plan are regulated by a special law." The purpose of establishing the SPO was to ensure sustainable economic growth by using the country's resources more effectively. To this end, the SPO would ensure balance between sectors, prepare and implement development plans, guide investment decisions and monitor economic indicators. The establishment of the SPO was an indication of Türkiye's transition to a planned economic development approach. The State Planning Organization, established in 1960, made significant contributions to the Preliminary Report on Administrative Reform and Reorganization prepared in 1961, in order to lead to a more general study by combining the studies that had been carried out up until that time but could not gain integrity (Ergun, 1991, p. 11). The report's aims were stated as "to serve to reach a realistic view on the nature of administrative reform and reorganization; to provide a concrete idea on which areas an administrative reform to be undertaken in Türkiye could cover and through what mechanism it could be implemented." At the same time, the relevant report pioneered the CGORP Report, which investigated the central government organization in the most comprehensive way (Göçoğlu, Kurt and Öktem 2019, p. 59).

The Central Government Organization Research Project (CGORP) Report, completed in 1963 and submitted to the Prime Ministry, is a product of the collaboration between the Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East (PAITME) and the State Planning Organization. This study, prepared by local experts, is a comprehensive and qualified text addressing Türkiye's development strategies. CGORP (Central Government Organization Research Project) was a comprehensive study aiming to increase the efficiency

of public administration in Türkiye. The main purpose of the project was determined as examining the distribution of duties in the central government, evaluating whether this distribution enables the most efficient provision of civil services, and making proposals and recommendations on this issue. In this regard, PAITME, SPO, SPP (State Personnel Presidency), relevant ministries and experts from universities contributed to the project in collaboration. This multidisciplinary approach enabled the project to address public administration from a broad perspective and make a more comprehensive analysis. However, this study was not sufficiently understood by those concerned. The solution suggestions presented in such a comprehensive study have not found sufficient place in practice. The problems identified in the CGORP report and solution suggestions are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Problems and solution suggestions identified by the CGORP report

Major Problems Included in the Report	Main Solution Recommendations in the Report
Personnel regime issue	Staff wages should be at a reasonable level, social opportunities provided to staff should be improved, a balanced distribution of staff should be ensured and in-service training should be provided.
Bureaucracy	Excessive formality should be avoided, if it avoids formalism, efficiency in administration will be achieved.
Centralization	The concept of centralization should be softened and the system of delegation of authority should be activated.
Bureaucratic structure	The problems in the understanding of bureaucracy should be extinguished.
Auditing	The auditing function must be enabled.
Coordination	Lack of coordination must be eliminated and good connection must be established between the bodies.
Insufficient financial resources	Existing resources should be used more efficiently.

Note: This table is translated by the author from Kaya (2016, p. 175).

The study addresses the fundamental issues facing Turkish public administration. These can be listed as; improving the personnel system, regulating administrative procedures and organizational problems. The issue of organization means that the effectiveness of the central government structure, economic state enterprises should be increased and the relationship between local governments and the central organization should be restructured.

The fundamental reasons for these emerging problems are some deficiencies such as red tape, limited financial resources, organizational structure disorders, centralization and personnel problems (MEHTAP Yönetim Kurulu, 1966). As a result, the desired point could not be reached with the CGORP Report. It was stated that the research could not go beyond a desk study (Yayman, 2008, p. 241).

The preparation of Law No. 657 was one of the most important steps of this period. The draft prepared for this law was created using different sources. The studies conducted by the State Personnel Department (SPD), reports prepared by foreign experts, reports and discussions of the Ministry of Finance, development plans and opinions, requests and suggestions from the public played an important role in the formation of the law. Roger Gregorie, an Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) expert, member of the State Council and one of the important sources of our administrative law, a French personnel expert and a consultant to countries such as Greece and Canada, also participated in this process (Altunok, 2018, p. 53). In this process, the OECD sent one of its experts, Oilbert Williams, to Türkiye in order to clarify the classification principle targeted by the law. The Civil Servants Law Draft, based on the classification system, was prepared based on the preliminary report of the SPD and the government's studies. The draft, which only covered civil servants working in general and annexed budget departments, consisted of 233 main and 19 temporary articles. The draft, which was opened to discussions on January 27, 1964, received opinions from ministries and universities. After ten months of intermittent discussions, the Civil Servants Law No. 657 became law on July 14, 1965. The scope is expressed in Article 1 of the same law (1965) as follows: "This law applies to those who work in primary and permanent positions required by the State civil services, who receive monthly salaries from general or supplementary budgets or from revolving capital institutions affiliated to them or from guarantee funds. Those from the judge and prosecutor class, as well as officers and non-commissioned officers, are not subject to the provisions of this law. University faculty members and assistants are subject to the annexes and amendments of the same law as the University Law, except for the financial provisions. The provisions of their own special laws apply to the personnel of provincial special administrations and municipalities". Also, the purpose of the law is stated in Article 2: "This law regulates the service conditions, qualifications, appointment and training, advancement and promotion, duties, rights, obligations and responsibilities, salaries and allowances and other personnel matters of civil servants".

The fundamental principles are given in Article 3 of the mentioned law, and the modes of employment are given in Article 4. The classification, career and merit principles are explained in Article 3 of the Civil Servants Law as follows:

Classification:

A) The state divides civil service positions and the civil servants working in these positions into classes according to the qualifications required for the positions, their professions and their value to the state.

Career:

B) It provides civil servants with the necessary knowledge for the services they perform and the opportunity to advance to the highest ranks within their classes in accordance with the educational requirements.

Merit:

C) The state provides security to civil servants by basing the entry into civil service positions, advancement and promotion within classes, and termination of duty on the merit system and the application of this system with equal opportunities.

Article 4 mentions three employment methods as civil servant, contract personnel and casual personnel, and it is stated in the law that personnel can not be employed outside these employment methods.

Civil servant:

A) The term "Civil servant" refers to persons who are assigned to perform permanent and essential duties required by the State civil services and receive monthly salaries from general or supplementary budgets or from revolving fund institutions affiliated to them or from guarantee funds.

Contract personnel:

B) The term "Contract personnel" refers to persons employed temporarily and on a contract basis in certain exceptional duties that require special education that can not be performed in the country, based on the authority to be obtained by the institutions with the laws of duty in accordance with the principles in this law.

Casual personnel:

C) The term "Casual personnel" refers to persons employed physically, for a certain and temporary period, on a daily basis in non-essential works of the State civil services.

The same law also specifies the conditions for recruitment to civil service and the procedure for appointment to civil service. According to the law, institutions are required to notify SPD of the number, class and grade of vacant posts to which personnel must be

appointed every six months. SPD is also required to announce the vacant posts to which appointments will be made (the class and grade of the vacant post, the institution and location where the post is located, the number of vacant posts, salaries, general and special conditions, last application date, the authority to which application will be made, and in cases where appointments will be made through competitive examination, also the exam locations and times) at least fifteen days in advance via radio, official gazettes and other means. The law provides for a dual structure regarding the competitive examinations mentioned. Examinations are organized under the supervision and control of the State Personnel Department. However, a classification has been made for personnel to be appointed to "Institutional classes" and those to be appointed to "Inter-Institutional classes". First, it is envisaged that the competitive examinations of personnel to be appointed to the institution will be conducted by the same institution and by examination boards to be established under the supervision of SPD. For the other, it was stated that it should be done by the examination boards to be established by SPD itself.

Law No. 657 could not find an application area for five-six years, it remained somewhat suspended. During this process, amendments were made with the Law No. 1327 "On Amendments to Certain Articles of Law No. 657 on Civil Servants and Addition of Certain Articles to This Law and Salaries and Wages of Public Personnel Outside the Scope of This Law". The main changes brought to Law No. 657 by this law can be shown as follows: a) classification, b) single employment method by combining legal and financial statuses, c) payment of single wage, publicity of wages, and equivalence in wages, d) variable coefficient system, e) horizontal and vertical mobility in personnel employment, f) establishment of civil servant mutual aid institution. If these headings are to be detailed, the first topic will be "classification". Article 3 (A) of Law No. 657 was amended with Law No. 1327 as follows: "The state divides civil service duties and civil servants working in these duties into classes according to the qualifications and professions required by the duties." that is, the phrase "according to the value it carries for the state" has been removed. The criterion in the classification has been accepted as common general professional qualifications instead of common general educational qualifications (Canman, 1995, p. 5). As a result, civil servants have been divided into eight classes with Law No. 1327. These are classified as general administrative services class, technical services class, health services and auxiliary health services class, attorney services class, religious services class, security services class, and auxiliary services class. The determination of grades and degrees

according to educational status for each class and promotion statuses have been specified with Law No. 1327.

Another change is the unification of legal and financial statuses into a single employment. There is a regulation in Law No. 657 on this issue, this law has already reduced the employment types from nine-ten to three and has stated that personnel can not be employed outside of these three employment types. These are defined as civil servants, contract personnel and daily wage personnel. With the regulation introduced by Law No. 1327, the first employment type was preserved and the contract employment type was softened and specified. The term "workers" was used for the third employment type and it was defined as "Individuals who are considered workers according to the Labour Laws, the Trade Union Law No. 274 and the Social Security Laws and who are not subject to the provisions of this law." While Law No. 657 is seen as more ambitious in this regard, Law No. 1327 is not. In fact, in practice, it does not seem possible to unify the legal and financial statuses of all public officials and bring them together under a single roof.

Another issue that needs to be addressed is the issue of single wage payment and wage parity. Although Law No. 1327 took an important step by bringing together different payment methods and sources, the principle of single wage and wage parity could not be realized. In a system where services are not evaluated objectively, pricing choices inevitably remain a matter of discretion. Therefore, this law had to take some measures, realizing that the single wage system would not work, and had to return to the controversial and rejected side payment formula.

One of the other changes brought by the new law is horizontal and vertical mobility in personnel employment. In terms of horizontal mobility, mobility between public institutions, mobility between the public and private sectors, and mobility between classes. The first mobility has been by "temporary assignment". Additional article 2 of Law No. 1327 states the following: a) Temporary assignment is made with the consent of the civil servant and does not exceed two years. b) Temporary assignment is only applied to duties assigned to grades seven and above. Temporary assignment must be related to the civil servant's profession. c) Temporary assignment can be made with the joint decision of the relevant Ministries and the Ministry of Finance upon the approval of the State Personnel Department. The situations, conditions, duration, record and other issues in which temporary assignment can be applied are specified in the statute. When the mobility between the public and private sectors is considered, the health and technical services class comes to the fore. However, this issue does not mean that there will be a mobility transition between the public

and private sectors. Finally, for mobility between classes, the mobility between the eight classes specified in the new law is almost impossible. What is mentioned here is mobility between professions within these classes. This is also very difficult since each profession has its own specific conditions, regulations and rules. For horizontal mobility, it does not seem possible except for the institution of "temporary assignment". As for vertical mobility, the new law states that it is necessary to increase the degree and to advance in rank for this purpose.

With an amendment made to the 1961 Constitution in 1971, the Council of Ministers was given the authority to issue statutory decrees on certain issues, and this authority was put into practice on the Civil Servants Law No. 657 with Law No. 1589 in 1972. This authority arose from the need to eliminate restrictions that aggravated the functioning of the administration and to eliminate disruptions, as Laws No. 657 and 1327 failed to show the expected effect and were inadequate. However, the fact that the authority to issue statutory decrees was granted in a very broad scope and twelve different decrees were issued to regulate the personnel regime within a two-year period also led to constant changes and inconsistencies in the Civil Servants Law. The implementation of the two-year decree and previous amendments caused the Civil Servants Law to almost completely lose its original form within seven years and to be replaced by brand new provisions, showing that regulating the personnel regime with decrees did not yield positive results.

During this period, reports prepared for administrative reform were interrupt and the draft process of Civil Servants Law No. 657, its entry into force and subsequent changes were discussed. If we were to mention the reports for this period again, the "Administrative Reform Advisory Board Report" was prepared in 1971. For this report, the Administrative Reform Advisory Board was established with the decision of the Council of Ministers dated 29.05.1971 and numbered 7/2527 "to determine the general direction and strategy of the reorganization of the state sector" (Berkman, 1981, p. 216). The duties of this board were stated as follows: a) To determine the general direction and strategy of the reorganization of the administration, b) To reveal the form of organization that will carry out the reorganization; c) To determine the areas and priorities of reorganization; d) To evaluate the administrative reform studies carried out up until that time and to link them to the implementation program (Berkman, 1981, p. 216). The Advisory Board evaluated the basic researches carried out in previous periods and the prepared reports. In light of these studies, it has developed comprehensive recommendations on the principles to be applied in the restructuring of public institutions in the fields of central administration, provincial

organization, local administrations, personnel management, financial management, and legislation. The Board is responsible for preparing the report was dissolved in 1971 after completing the report and presenting it to the government, and it is seen that the recommendations it presented were taken into consideration by the SPO (Yayman, 2008, p. 246). The problems addressed in this report and the solutions to these problems are systematically presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Problems identified by the administrative reform advisory board report and solution suggestions

Major Issues in the Report	Major Solution Recommendations in the Report
Problems encountered regarding personnel	The personnel system should be handled in accordance with the era and emphasis should be given to in-service training.
The problem of distribution of public officials	There should be a rational distribution.
Disadvantages of centralized administration	The concept of centralization should be softened, some duties and responsibilities should be left to local levels.
Lack of coordination in the administration	Communication and communication between all units of the administration should be carried out effectively.
Supervision	An effective supervision system should be established and the plans made should be constantly compared.
Legislationism	Unnecessary details disrupt services, therefore legislation should be simplified.

Note: This table is translated by the author from Kaya (2016, p.176).

It is observed that the report does not offer a different perspective than previously prepared reports and repeats similar problems and solution suggestions. The report highlights the summary of previous reports and the fact that administrative regulation studies are carried out by a central institution, which reveals the difference of the Administrative Reform Advisory Board report.

By the 1980s, one of the important events of this period was the September 12 coup. On September 12, 1980, the Turkish armed forces seized power. In fact, the deadlock in politics, the inability to form a government, and economic setbacks had already brought

about this result. After the September 12, 1980 coup, the democratic process was suspended and the management styles of previous governments were criticized. The basis of this criticism was problems such as excessive growth in state cadres, unnecessary bureaucracy, excessive employment, lack of impartiality, and the influence of ideological perspectives on civil services. Taking these criticisms into consideration, the military administration aimed to restructure public personnel policies. After September 12, 1980 coup, the military administration began the process of preparing a new constitution. The Constituent Assembly, which convened for this purpose, began its work on November 1, 1980 and completed the draft of the new constitution on July 7, 1982. Later, the National Security Council (NSC) examined and revised the draft and presented it to the public on October 19, 1982. Thus, the new Constitution was accepted by referendum held on November 7, 1982.

After September 12, 1980 coup, it was thought that radical changes should be made in public personnel policies, but the State Personnel Department, which was the main actor in public personnel policy, could not meet the expectations. The Public Administration Reorganization Commission, which was established in 1982 (Güler, 1988, p. 95), put forward its views. It was stated that "The State Personnel Department has lost its function today. The Ministry of Finance intervened in personnel problems and became a central personnel body itself. The State Personnel Department can not fulfil its duties even to a mediocre level with its current status. Its decisions are only consultative and subject to the approval of the Council of Ministers; it has no executive authority. It has no decision authority. The decision authority, arrangement and appointment method are left to a board that has a say. The role of the President is rather formal. The decision mechanism works slowly. The organization and working style are inadequate. There is no teamwork within the department. Expert resources are inadequate and the possibilities of using experts are limited. There is no institutional expert regulation that regulates the qualifications, recruitment and advancement of those who will perform expert duties." (Kamu Yönetimini Yeniden Düzenleme Komisyonu, 1982, p. 34). In line with these criticisms, the State Personnel Department was reorganized as the State Personnel Presidency with the decree law number 217 dated June 8, 1984.

With this new structure, the duties of the State Personnel Presidency are listed as follows: The Presidency is equipped with the duties of determining the application principles of the duty system, developing the duty system, determining the methods of meeting the duty needs of public institutions, ensuring harmony between duty systems, assisting in the planning and implementation of duty manpower in public institutions, organizing the

principles of in-service training, conducting studies to eliminate the problems that may arise in the duties of public institutions, in the division of duties, in the organizational and legal structure, and assisting the Council of Ministers in determining the duty direction (Güler, 1988, p. 96). As a result of these assigned duties, the task units of the State Personnel Presidency have also been determined. These task units consist of the Cadre and Public Officials Department, Education Department, Legal and Financial Status Department, Organization and Management Development Department, and Personnel Records and Information Processing Department.

After September 12 coup in this period, arrangements were made in the public personnel regime with the reorganization of the State Personnel Presidency too, but as in previous periods, they were made with non-permanent solutions. Attempts to make changes to the public personnel system through statutory decrees, which began in the 1970s, continued after 1980. In the ten-year period between 1980 and 1990, three hundred five statutory decrees were issued, two hundred sixty-one of which were related to the reorganization of public administration. Of these, one hundred eights were related to the structure of institutions, thirty-two were related to administrative procedures, and one hundred twenty-ones were regulations regarding the public personnel system (Aslan 2012; Yıldız, 2017, p. 47). The first was the law numbered 2595 dated 12.12.1982, which made arrangements regarding civil servant salaries, additional indicator figures and types of side payments. An important regulation in this period was the law numbered 2670 dated 02.05.1982, which also made some changes and arrangements in the Civil Servants Law numbered 657. With the law numbered 2670;

a) The duties and responsibilities of civil servants regarding their civil servant status, other than their financial and social rights,

b) Civil servants; the rights to apply, complain and file a lawsuit and some prohibitions imposed on civil servants,

c) The conditions for entering the civil service, the examination system to be applied to those who will be appointed to the civil service for the first time,

d) The training and candidacy period of civil servant candidates who have been accepted for candidacy, the procedures to be carried out during or at the end of the candidacy period,

e) The principles of appointment to the main civil service, the procedures to be carried out in case of failure to start work, the principles of appointment by transfer, the

resignation from civil service or the reappointment of those who are considered to have withdrawn, unpaid leave, disciplinary provisions,

f) New regulations have been introduced regarding the dress code and residence requirements of civil servants (Canman, 1995, p. 21).

The same law attempted to implement a centralized exam system. In this system, first the State Personnel Department (SPD) would centrally announce the vacant positions for appointments by specifying the class, degree, location, qualifications and conditions. The relevant institutions would notify SPD of the candidates who meet the required conditions among the candidates who apply to this announcement. SPD would send exam entrance documents to these candidates. Candidates would participate in the centralized exams to be organized by SPD four times a year. The exam results would be published in the Official Gazette according to their order of success. It was anticipated that the institutions would meet their civil servant needs by making appointments according to the order of success determined according to the published exam results. However, the centralized exam system application was postponed to 1985 and a return to the institutional system was made with the Statutory Decree No. 243 issued in 1984.

Laws numbered 2595 and 2670 enacted for the public personnel regime regulations could not provide sufficient solutions to the problems of the public personnel system. Therefore, permanent and effective solutions are required for the public personnel system. Based on this, the "Empowering Law" numbered 2680 dated 16.06.1982 was enacted, which authorized the Council of Ministers to issue decrees having the force of law regarding the organization, duties and authorities of public institutions and organizations (Çevikbaş, 1995, p. 74). The purpose of the law was to ensure that civil services are carried out in an orderly, rapid, effective, efficient and economical manner, and instead of requesting "Research Reports" for reorganization, a more practical, applicable and definitive path was adopted, such as regulating public administration with decrees to be put into effect immediately (Ar, 1983, p. 71). With this law, the authority to issue statutory decrees for the reorganization of public administration was obtained for a period of eighteen months. After this period expired, Law numbered 2967 enacted on 2 December 1983 granted an additional period of two years. During this period, public institutions and organizations were reorganized with thirty-three decrees and a Council of Ministers Decree.

While regulations were being made for public institutions and organizations, regulations were made for public personnel in 1984. In order to increase the performance of public employees and improve their financial and social rights according to economic

conditions, Law No. 2999 was accepted and this law authorized the government to issue decrees with the force of law and ensured the regulation of the public personnel regime. With the enactment of Law No. 2999, decrees with the force of law No. 199, 241, 243 and 244 were issued to be valid until the end of the 1984 fiscal year. The common subject of these decrees was additional indicator and compensation provisions. In addition to this regulation, Decree Law No. 243 introduced regulations such as the institutional examination system, exceptional civil service, registry regulation, and class change procedure. By the end of the 1984 fiscal year, despite the expiration of the authorization period, the problems for public personnel had not ended, and therefore, with the "Authorization Law on Amendments to Certain Laws on Civil Servants and Other Public Officials" dated 1986 and numbered 3268, the authority to issue statutory decrees was granted again for a period of two years. With this authority, two more decrees were issued. At the same time, the institutional system was reconsidered with the "General Regulation on Compulsory Qualification and Competition Exams for Those to be Appointed to Civil Servants and Duties for the First Time", which entered into force in 1986, and this regulation determined the types of exams, the exams to be conducted by institutions and the civil servant cadres that were not subject to exams. After two unsuccessful attempts of central examination system, it will be necessary to wait until 1999 for the central examination system to be implemented.

In 1988, the authorization law period was extended until 1990, and in this process, four decree laws were issued within the scope of special service compensation, additional indicators, and monthly indicator figures. In 1991, the "Authorization Law on the Regulation of the Duties and Authorities of Public Institutions and Organizations and the Financial and Social Rights of Their Personnel" was issued, and four also decree laws were issued within this scope. This process continued in this way until 1995. As can be seen, during this period, instead of radical and permanent solutions, efforts were made to regulate the personnel regime with decrees, and with these regulations, emphasis was placed on increasing the additional payments (special service compensation, side payments, position compensation, etc.) of civil servants (Çevikbaş, 1995, p. 79).

Towards the end of this period, the State Planning Organization requested a new study from the Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East (PAITME), with the justification of "investigating the extent to which the studies conducted so far were reflected in practice in order to develop Turkish public administration, identifying the deficiencies and bottlenecks of these studies, and determining the new regulations that need to be made" (Ergun, 1991, pp. 12-13). In 1991, PAITME prepared the "Public

Administration Research Project" (PARP) and presented it to the government. The report addressed the current problems in the public personnel system and offered solutions. PARP identified the lack of flexibility in the classification of public personnel, the inadequacy of the promotion system in reflecting merit, the failure of job analysis to meet current needs, the impact of political interventions in on-site employment, imbalances in wages and real decreases, the non-objective registry system, inadequate performance measurement, deficiencies in in-service training and the dysfunctionality of the SPP as fundamental problems. The report offered suggestions such as the central examination system, the current classification system, the flexible rank-cadre system, the duty compensation system, performance-based compensation, effective in-service training programs, employment of contract personnel in positions requiring expertise and the improvement of the social security system as solutions to these problems. The problems identified in the PARP Report and the solutions to these problems are systematically presented in Table 4.

Table 4. (continuation) Problems identified by PARP report and solution suggestions

Major Issues in the Report	Major Solution Recommendations in the Report
Lack of in-service training	In-service training programs should be increased and due importance should be given to this issue, the degree to which the programs achieve their objectives should be monitored and evaluated.
Personnel regime; employment, imbalance in salaries	There should be a centralized examination system, a rational classification system should be established, and rational criteria should dominate performance measurement.
Centralization	The duties of the central administration should be reconsidered, taking into account the changing conditions.
The structure of local governments, especially in terms of financial autonomy	The powers and responsibilities of local government units should be increased, they should be given more initiative, and inspections should be in accordance with the constitution.
Bureaucracy and excessive legislationism	Formalities should be reduced, bureaucratic procedures should be simplified, legislation should be simplified and adapted to current conditions.

Public Relations	Communication with the public should be increased, and an information unit should be established to ensure their trust and support.
Auditing	The audit function must operate on an effective and strong legal basis, the internal audit path must be made more effective, the results must be monitored and the necessary evaluations must be made meticulously.
Coordination	Necessary coordination between administrative institutions must be ensured, difficulties that hinder coordination must be eliminated, coordination must not be evaluated independently of other principles of management, and managers must be trained in this regard.

Note: This table is translated by the author from Kaya (2016, p. 177).

The PARP report also addressed the problems of public administration and public personnel and provided solutions to them, but these solutions were not very different from previous studies. This situation led to the project being heavily criticized. The main reason for the criticism was that important changes such as globalization, the new right and localization after the 1980s were not taken into consideration sufficiently during the preparation of the project. The rapid developments experienced towards the end of this period have become an important factor to be taken into account when carrying out improvement work in any field. The PARP project ignored the effects of these developments, repeated the problems and suggestions presented in previous texts and failed to exhibit an innovative approach. For this reason, it is evaluated that the project was inadequate in solving existing problems and could not meet expectations.

During this period, the intense power of the central government has been a constant topic of discussion. This situation has led to innovative suggestions put forward in past reports; emphasizing that important goods and services are too sensitive to be left to the market mechanism, it has advocated the establishment of independent regulatory boards with administrative and financial autonomy. The main reason for the emergence of regulatory boards has been the New Public Management (NPM) approach that is dominant worldwide, the regulation and supervision of public and private sector activities, the reduction of state service provision, the elimination of bureaucratic obstacles and the increase in the efficiency of public administration. In this context, the first of these was the Capital Markets Board

(1981), followed by the Radio and Television Supreme Council (1994), the Competition Authority (1994), the Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency (2000), the Information Technologies and Communication Authority (2000), the Energy Market Regulatory Authority (2001), the Sugar Authority (closed) (2001), the Tobacco and Alcohol Market Regulatory Authority (privatized) (2002) and the Public Procurement Authority (2002) were established as Regulatory and Supervisory Institutions (Göçoğlu, Kurt and Öktem, 2019, p. 62).

Turkish public administration reforms in the planned period, although a continuation of past reforms, have shown a significant evolution. Issues emphasized in previous periods such as the establishment of new units, an efficient personnel regime and efficiency in resource use have also been important in the planned period. However, the rational decision-making approach was brought to the forefront during this period and towards the end of the period, Independent Regulatory Boards were established as a product of this approach. These boards aimed to provide civi services more effectively and efficiently with the authority to regulate and supervise certain sectors. New suggestions regarding the administration and service approach also emerged during the planned period. A transition was observed from a reform approach based on numerical data and focused on efficiency and productivity to an approach focused on citizen satisfaction and ethical values. This situation is similar to the "New Public Administration" approach that emerged at the Minnowbrook Conference held in 1968. The values of "social equality" and "justice" that came to the forefront at the conference were also reflected in the planned period reforms. The new right/liberal policies and the New Public Management (NPM) approach, which have been increasing in influence since the 1980s, have accelerated value-oriented searches and contributed to the emergence of the "Governance" approach. Governance has encouraged the participation of the private sector, NGOs and different actors in policy-making processes, and has highlighted principles such as participation, ethics, accountability, responsiveness and transparency. These developments show that Turkish public administration has evolved towards a citizen-centered and ethical value-based approach. The developments mentioned in this period, which is described as the planned period, are briefly summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Periodic restructuring of administration in Türkiye and its characteristics

Period	Regulations	Features
Planned Period Regulations (1960-2002)	-Establishment of SPO[1] -Establishment of SPP[2] -Preliminary Report on Administrative Reform and Reorganization -CGORP[3] Report -Administrative Reform Advisory Board Report -PARP[4] Report -Establishment of Independent Regulatory Institutions	- Determination of Deficiencies in Administrative Structure and Duties -Determination of Causes of Deficiencies -Recommendations Regarding Determinations -Determining the Path to be Followed, Organization and Implementation

Note: Translated by the author from Göçoğlu, Kurt, and Öktem (2019, p. 53).

2.1.4. Public Personnel System from 2002 to the Present

The basis of public administration reforms in Türkiye is the new public management that has influenced public administrations since the 1980s. This approach envisages an anti-bureaucratic structure and prefers a new rationality understanding based on market mechanisms instead of a rationality understanding based on bureaucracy (Eryılmaz, 2008, p. 34). New Public Management (NPM) is a management approach that aims to reduce the role of the state, increase the participation of the private sector, integrate business management techniques into public administration, see citizens as customers of services and create a flexible bureaucracy. This approach aims to increase transparency, accountability and citizen satisfaction by emphasizing ethical values. NPM aims to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of civil services by reducing public expenditures and personnel recruitment, supporting localization, encouraging privatization, utilizing information technologies and strengthening international collaborations. The NPM approach, which includes many administrative and structural changes, expresses the reshaping of the state in all social areas. The new management approach has lightened the burden of the state through privatizations and replaced the classical, hierarchical, rigid public administration with a

[1] State Planning Organization
[2] State Personnel Presidency
[3] Central Government Organization Research Project
[4] Public Administration Research Project

public administration based on a flexible organization model based on the market (Tarhan and Ezici, 2011, p. 16; Tunç, 2015, p. 192).

In the 2002 general elections, the Justice and Development Party (JDP) won the majority of votes and rose to power on its own. With JDP coming to power, the effects of "New Public Management" began to emerge. The public administration restructuring efforts, which constitute an important part of the government's urgent action plan, were implemented under the name of "state reform." This comprehensive reform project aimed to fundamentally change public administration by targeting a world-class management approach within the framework of liberal thought. Within this scope, many changes were made that brought a new perspective to all dimensions of public administration and affected practices, and numerous legal regulations were put into effect to solve problems experienced in areas such as central administration, local administrations and public bureaucracy. These regulations aimed to eliminate the deficiencies in the functional and structural aspects of public administration and introduced new administrative structures, principles, rules and practices. The important ones of these regulations can be listed chronologically as follows:

a) Law No. 4982 on the Right to Information, dated 09.10.2003,

b) Law No. 5018 on Public Financial Management and Control, dated 10.12.2003,

c) Law No. 5176 on the Establishment of the Ethics Board for Public Officials and Amendments to Certain Laws, dated 25.05.2004,

d) Law No. 5227 on the Fundamental Principles and Restructuring of Public Administration, dated 15.07.2004 (did not become law due to veto by the President)

e) Law No. 5216 on Metropolitan Municipalities, dated 23.07.2004,

f) Law No. 5302 on Provincial Special Administrations, dated 04.03.2005,

g) Law No. 5355 on Local Administrative Unions, dated 11.06.2005,

h) Law No. 5393 on Municipalities, dated 13.07.2005,

i) Law No. 5449 on the Establishment, Coordination and Duties of Development Agencies dated 08.02.2006,

j) Law No. 6223 on the Organization, Duties and Authorities of Public Institutions and Organizations and on the Authority of Public Officials in Matters Relating to Ensuring Regular, Effective and Efficient Execution of Civil Services dated 03.05.2011,

k) Law No. 6328 on the Public Audit Institution dated 29.06.2012,

l) Law No. 6085 on the Court of Accounts dated 19.10.2012,

m) Law No. 6360 on the Establishment of Metropolitan Municipalities and Twenty-Seven Districts in Fourteen Provinces and Amendments to Certain Laws and Decree Laws dated 12.11.2012,

n) Law No. 6428 on the Construction, Renovation and Service of Facilities with the Public Private Partnership Model by the Ministry of Health dated 21.02.2013,

o) Presidential Decrees No. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 (2018) (Uysal, 2020, p. 21).

The process that started with JDP coming to power and has continued until today will be analysed. First, the "Public Administration Fundamental Draft Law" prepared in 2003, with the changed name "Law on the Fundamental Principles and Restructuring of Public Administration", was submitted to the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye and accepted, but was vetoed by the President of the period, Ahmet Necdet Sezer. The purpose of the law is stated as "To establish a public administration that is participatory, transparent, accountable and based on human rights and freedoms; to determine the duties, authorities and responsibilities of the central administration and local administrations in order to provide civil services in a fair, rapid, high-quality, effective and efficient manner; to restructure the central administration organization and to regulate the basic principles and fundamentals regarding civil services" (Şencan, 2006, p. 100-101). Although the draft did not enter into force, the understanding it wanted to implement emerged with the implementations that were carried out piece by piece (Şener, 2013, p. 593). In order to analyse this understanding, it is necessary to first list the characteristics of "New Public Management" and then present the justifications of this law.

Table 6. (continuation) Basic features of the new public management approach

Category	Features/Purposes
Organizational structure	Responsibilities are deregulated Hierarchy is reduced Political and managerial roles are separated
Administrative tools	Output oriented Entrepreneurship is encouraged Productivity is the essence
Budget reform	Financial instruments are designed with a private sector approach.
Participation	Citizen participation is encouraged
Customer focus	Seeking legitimacy in service delivery

Quality management	Redesigning service delivery
Marketization Privatization	Reconstructing organizational structure and service delivery with an efficiency-oriented/competitive approach

Note: From Schedler and Proeller (2002, p. 165).

The characteristics of new public management approach are presented in a Table 6. It will coincide with the justifications of the Public Administration Fundamental Draft Law, which is parallel to this. This new management approach and practice, which is based on the Public Administration Fundamental Draft Law (T.C. Başbakanlık Kanunlar ve Kararlar Genel Müdürlüğü, 2003, p. 3);

a) Respects the market and uses market tools to the extent possible,

b) Gives a wide area to civil society organizations under the guarantee of the law,

c) Highlights local and decentralization structures,

d) Concentrates on priority areas within the strategic management approach and is based on performance and quality,

e) Disseminates and uses information technologies in all management processes,

f) Favours brevity and simplicity in legislation,

g) Requires a horizontal organizational structure and delegation of authority,

h) Creates the necessary secure environment and mechanisms for the development of participation,

i) Increases accountability,

j) Believes that everyone has the right to information,

k) Strives to develop and strengthen human resources, which are the beginning of everything.

As can be seen, the principles of the new public management approach are reflected in the Public Administration Fundamental Law Draft. The draft has shown a similar approach for the public personnel regime. The current public personnel regime is also an important element among the main sources of the problems experienced in the administration.

a) Failure to establish and properly operate the merit system,

b) Work and wage system not based on performance,

c) Unfair wage differences not based on efficiency,

d) Excessive and unbalanced personnel structure,

e) Failure to give due importance to in-service training,

f) Excessive and complicated legislative arrangements regarding personnel,

are some of the basic problems experienced in the public personnel regime (T.C. Başbakanlık Kanunlar ve Kararlar Genel Müdürlüğü, 2003, p. 7). When determining the main problem areas of the public personnel regime, it is understood from the terminology used that the main purpose of the Public Administration Basic Law (PABL) is to ensure an efficiency-based operation in this field, to establish a performance-based work and wage regime, to reduce the number of personnel that seems excessive, and to simplify personnel legislation. When we look at the personnel policies developed both in general and institutionally after PABL, it is seen that this understanding has actually been put into practice to a certain extent (Albayrak, 2017, p. 5).

The year 2003 also has an important place in the history of Turkish public administration as the year in which the "Public Financial Management and Control Law" numbered 5018 was enacted. This law symbolized the beginning of a new era in public administration and paved the way for a strategic management and performance-based approach. The purpose of the Law numbered 5018 is stated in its first article as "To regulate the structure and operation of public financial management, preparation and implementation of public budgets, accounting, reporting and financial control of all financial transactions in order to ensure effective, economical and efficient acquisition and use of public resources in line with the policies and objectives included in the development plans and programs, accountability and financial transparency." Public institutions became acquainted with the concept of strategy especially with the enactment of Law numbered 5018 and have had the opportunity to experience the innovations brought by the new public management approach more effectively. Many innovations such as internal control, accountability, strategic management, financial transparency, performance-based budgeting system and multi-year budget application are included within the scope of Law numbered 5018 (Kolçak, 2006, p. 371).

The effects of new public management have begun to be concretely seen in Turkish public administration. Concepts such as transparency, efficiency, clarity, performance measurement, and citizen focus have emerged in the public sector. There are also regulations for the implementation of these concepts. Again, in 2003, the Law No. 4982 on the Right to Information came into force, and its purpose is stated in Article 1 of this law as "to regulate the principles and procedures regarding the exercise of the right to information by individuals in accordance with the principles of equality, impartiality and openness required by democratic and transparent management." With this right, individuals have the

opportunity to request all kinds of data, information and documents in their possession from all public institutions. Following the enactment of Law No. 5018 and Law No. 4982, Law No. 5176 on the "Establishment of the Public Officials Ethics Board and Amendment of Certain Laws" came into force in 2004. Simultaneously with the efforts to restructure public administration, the Public Officials Ethics Board was established under the Prime Ministry in 2004 in order to find a solution to the ethical crisis faced by public officials. The first article of the law regarding the purpose and scope includes concepts such as "transparency, impartiality, honesty, accountability and observing the public interest". The duties of the Board are stated in Article 3 as follows: "The Board is responsible and authorized to determine the ethical conduct principles that public officials must comply with while performing their duties through the regulations it will prepare, to conduct the necessary investigation and research on the grounds that ethical conduct principles have been violated, either ex officio or upon applications to be made, and to report the results to the relevant authorities, to conduct or have conducted studies to establish an ethical culture in the public sector, and to support studies to be conducted in this regard."

In this period when the principles of new public management clearly emerged, reforms have been carried out in terms of local governments. It is seen that the centralist understanding has evolved towards a decentralist understanding. In 2004, the Metropolitan Law No. 5216, in 2005, the Provincial Special Administration Law No. 5302, the Local Administration Unions Law No. 5355 and the Municipality Law No. 5393 came into force. First of all, when the Metropolitan Municipality Law is examined, it was prepared to find a solution to the service demand and cost increase created by the rapidly increasing urban population. The justification of the law emphasizes that metropolitan cities, which are an important market, trade centre in the global economy and an important position in the national economy, are struggling with problems arising from inadequate management. The distribution of the necessary authority and resources among different local governments for a solution covering all metropolitan problems prevented metropolitan governments from effectively intervening in the problems. This situation undermined the efficiency and effectiveness of the management due to the lack of organizational structure, service production capacity and financial resources. The current structure also prevented the benefits of economies of scale due to the lack of planning and coordination. It is seen that the NPM concept was implemented in metropolitan cities in order to reduce costs through scale-up and to combine units producing the same services. Developments in public administration

also made it necessary to restructure metropolitan municipalities and provide them with an effective, transparent, accountable and participatory management structure.

Another law is the Provincial Special Administration Law No. 5302. The general justification of the law draws attention to the trend of erosion of centralized structures and strengthening of local governments on a global scale. Increasing demands for identity and participation in government show that democracy can be achieved through local governments. The law emphasizes that local governments are an indispensable element of representative democracy. In this context, local governments have been granted more autonomy by expanding the duties and authorities of special provincial administrations and reducing the tutelage control over provincial councils. This regulation was designed in accordance with the NPM approach, which aims to make local administration more autonomous, decentralized and participatory.

Another important law, the Local Administrations Union Law No. 5355, stands out as an important reform aiming to increase efficiency, productivity and service provision in local governments. The justification of the law emphasizes that unions providing services to increasing populations and large geographical areas should benefit from the advantages of economies of scale in order to ensure efficiency and productivity in civil services. The fact that the NPM approach is based on efficiency and productivity in management also brings with it basic requirements such as rapid decision-making and finding rapid solutions to problems. In this context, the restructuring experienced in public administration also reveals the need for transformation and change in local governments. The removal of excessive bureaucratic structures, the creation of small units with effective and flexible structures, the questioning of working methods and processes, flexible and horizontal organization as well as the prominence of strategic management support public entrepreneurship and competitiveness and decentralization. Giving more duties and responsibilities to local governments in the provision of civil services necessitates the transformation of the traditional structure in the distribution of authority and resources between the central administration and local administrations.

In this period, the idea, structure and functions of public administration are also undergoing a deep transformation. At the centre of this transformation lies the need to redefine the role of the public and the inadequacy of the representation method. The Municipality Law No. 5393 is a legal regulation that responds to these needs and constitutes one of the important steps in the reform efforts in local governments. The justification of the law emphasizes that the principles of openness, participation, responsibility and

accountability should be implemented for a more democratic public administration. While these principles are accepted as the cornerstones of an effective public administration, the fact that the NPM approach is based on effectiveness and efficiency in administration further increases the importance of this reform. The restructuring efforts in public administration have also revealed the need for transformation and change in local governments, and the organizational structures, duties, authorities, working methods, processes and objectives of these administrations have become the subject of change. Reform efforts in local governments aim to increase efficiency and effectiveness through decentralization, reduce costs, strengthen participation and transparency, ensure autonomy and flexibility, and increase performance and accountability. Increasing the authority of local governments to manage their own resources, encouraging them to make maximum use of the private sector and civil society organizations, and increasing their competitiveness are also important goals of these efforts. These reforms aim to ensure that local governments provide services to citizens in a closer, more effective, and more transparent manner, in line with the basic principles of NPM.

In the Turkish public administration organization, an administrative structure with administrative and financial autonomy and legal personality was adopted with the Law No. 5449 on the Establishment, Coordination and Duties of Development Agencies dated 08.02.2006 (Uysal, 2020, p. 23). A significant change in Türkiye's regional development strategy occurred with the establishment of twenty-six Development Agencies in "Level Two" regions determined according to statistical regional units. These agencies consist of four units: development board, board of directors, general secretariat and investment support office. Rather than acting as direct investors, they aim to support regional development by bringing together public, private sector and civil society organizations under a common roof. This new model represents a significant break in Türkiye's traditional centralized management approach. Although they were established with the initiative of the central government, Development Agencies adopt a more comprehensive and local needs-sensitive approach by giving an important role to actors outside the central government in directing regional development. With their autonomous structures, they are considered an important step towards softening the centralist approach within the administrative system and strengthening local governments. Thus, regional development processes aim to be managed in a more participatory and sustainable manner.

In 2010, a referendum was held to amend the constitution. The twenty-six-article constitutional amendment was discussed and approved by the Grand National Assembly of

Türkiye, then submitted to the public and approved by the public. Many issues related to the judiciary, human rights and the freedom to seek legal remedies, and changes in public administration were regulated. The Ombudsman Institution can be mentioned as an important innovation and it will be established under the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye. With the amendment made to Article 74 of the 1982 Constitution, the side title of the article was changed to "VII. Right to Petition, Information and Application to the Ombudsman". The following sentences were added to this article; "Everyone has the right to information and application to the ombudsman. The Ombudsman Institution, established under the Presidency of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye, examines complaints regarding the functioning of the administration" (Gözler, 2010). The same article also specifies the election procedures for the chief ombudsman, and states that his duties, work, procedures and principles will be regulated by law. Another important change concerns civil servants and public servants. In addition to the article 128, paragraph 2 of the Constitution, which states; "The qualifications, appointments, duties and authorities, rights and obligations, salaries and allowances and other personnel matters of civil servants and other public servants shall be regulated by law.", the following provision was introduced with the amendment made in 2010: "However, collective agreement provisions regarding financial and social rights are reserved." Indeed, in the new regulation, it is foreseen that in the event of a dispute during the collective agreement, the parties may apply to the Public Officials Arbitration Board, and the decisions of the Public Officials Arbitration Board are final and have the nature of a collective agreement provision (Hakyemez, 2010, p. 392).

The omnibus law numbered 6111 enacted in 2011 brought about significant changes in the public personnel system. In addition to repealing the outdated regulations of the civil servants' law, it aims to strengthen the rights of civil servants in various areas. Among the significant changes are the expansion of protective provisions for women and mothers, improvement of civil servants' leaves rights (both within the scope of paid and unpaid leaves), and facilitation of temporary assignment processes between institutions. In addition, new regulations are being introduced for specialists and assistant specialists, and it is planned to establish a new system that will provide rewards based on performance by abolishing the current record system. In addition to these changes; instead of the "positive record" requirement for rank advancement, the "not having received disciplinary punishment" criterion has been introduced. In addition, with the exclusion of certain acts from the scope of disciplinary offenses, civil servants who could not find an appointment opportunity in their institutions have been provided the opportunity to be appointed to vacant positions in

other institutions determined by the State Personnel Presidency. In order to provide flexibility in working hours, the possibility of rearranging daily working hours has been provided, and a centralized examination system has been introduced to provide more transparent and equal opportunities in the recruitment of disabled personnel. Finally, in order to increase personnel efficiency and strengthen information management, all civil servants will be registered in a personnel information system to be established by the institutions.

The new public management approach has also been demonstrated with many changes brought by the omnibus bill. The abolition of the registry system with the omnibus bill is directly related to the performance of public personnel. The following paragraph was added to Article 122 of the Civil Servants Law with Law No. 6111: "Public institutions and organizations may determine evaluation criteria in order to measure the success, efficiency and efforts of their civil servants by taking into account the characteristics of the services they provide, provided that the approval of the State Personnel Presidency is obtained." After the abolition of the registry system, a new evaluation system covering all public employees was not introduced. Instead, institutions were authorized to determine their own evaluation criteria to measure the success, efficiency and dedication of their employees. In this new approach, the term "performance" was not used, and the expression "success evaluation" was preferred. The Public Administration Fundamental Law, which was vetoed by the President in 2003, manifested itself in a fragmented manner. The Public Administration Fundamental Law aimed to increase the efficiency of public personnel. One of the most important steps taken to achieve this goal was the removal of the registration system and the transition to a success evaluation system with the changes in the Civil Servants Law. In the new system, the draft general regulation prepared by the State Personnel Presidency foresees the evaluation of the success of public employees according to the principles of goals, duties and competencies. This includes an evaluation approach based on duties and targets, unlike the previous registration system (which can be considered a type of competency evaluation).

Another important issue that should be mentioned in 2011 is the enactment of Law No. 6223 on the Organization, Duties and Authorities of Public Institutions and Organizations and on Issues Related to Public Officials in Order to Ensure the Regular, Effective and Efficient Execution of Civil Services. This law aimed to save public administration from its cumbersome structure and to urgently put into effect regulations for the regular, rapid and efficient execution of civil services (general justification) (Lamba, 2014, p.145). Certain regulations have been made with the decrees having the force of law issued based on the Authorization Law No. 6223, a brief look at these regulations:

a) Nine Ministries of Service have been established. Some of these were formed as a result of the restructuring and merging of some existing ministries. Some of them were realized by closing some institutions and organizations and gathering them under the roof of a ministry or directly transforming them into a ministry. The name of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs has been changed to the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock. We can list the newly established or reorganized ministries as follows: Ministry of Family and Social Policies, Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology, Ministry of Development, Ministry of Customs and Trade, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, Ministry of European Union Affairs, Ministry of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communication. Thus, the total number of service ministries has reached twenty-one.

b) The State Ministry practice has been terminated and the number of deputy prime ministers has been determined as five. Deputy ministers have been established for each service ministry, including the Ministry of National Defence.

c) The age requirement of thirty for applications to special competitive exams opened for career occupation has been redefined as thirty-five for all career professions.

d) In public institutions and organizations, contracted employees have been provided the opportunity to move to a cadre in accordance with Article 4 of the Civil Servants Law No. 657 and Law No. 4924.

e) Public institutions and organizations have been provided the opportunity to make cadre changes twice a year in accordance with the Decree Law No. 190 on General Cadre and Procedure.

Considering 2012, during this period, significant steps were taken in the field of auditing public administration with a radical reform in local governments. The Public Audit Institution mentioned in the 2010 constitutional amendment was established with Law No. 6328. The purpose of the law, which entered into force in 2012, was stated in Article 1 as "to examine, investigate and make recommendations on all kinds of actions and transactions, attitudes and behaviours of the administration in terms of compliance with law and equity, within the understanding of justice based on human rights, by establishing an independent and effective complaint mechanism in the operation of civil services." Operating within the framework of good governance principles, the Institution has a structure that grants citizens equal and balanced say in their relations with public institutions, prevents corruption originating from the administration, and increases both the effectiveness in the public sphere and the satisfaction of the public base (Zeren, Tekin, and Özdek, 2020, p. 44). The Public

Audit Institution, which also assumes the role of a mediator in resolving disputes between citizens and public institutions, opens a new page in public auditing. The Institution, which plays an important role in making public administration more transparent and accountable with its independent structure, is also an indicator of the transformation and change in public administration.

In 2012, one of the most radical reforms in local governments was the Law No. 6330 on the Establishment of Metropolitan Municipalities and Twenty-Seven Districts in Fourteen Provinces and Amendments to Certain Laws and Legislative Decrees (Uysal, 2020, p. 23). In parallel with the changing understanding of governance under the influence of globalization, the justification of Law No. 6330 emphasizes the importance of effective, transparent, participatory and citizen-oriented local governments. However, the justification also states that small-scale local governments are inadequate in solving increasing industrialization, transportation and environmental problems, and therefore, it is necessary to establish local government units that are stronger, more comprehensive and can provide ideal services. In this context, it was aimed for municipal borders to overlap with provincial borders. With Law No. 6360, fourteen new metropolitan municipalities were established, bringing the total number of metropolitan municipalities to thirty. The jurisdiction of metropolitan municipalities was expanded to provincial borders, the legal entities of village and town municipalities were abolished and converted to neighbourhood status, and integrated with the district municipalities they were affiliated with. This regulation led to the abolition of provincial special administrations in thirty metropolitan cities, while provincial special administrations continued to exist in fifty-one provinces with provincial municipalities. Finally, the Investment Monitoring and Coordination Department was established within the Governorship in the provinces with metropolitan municipalities. As a result of these regulations, the local government structure in Türkiye has been significantly reshaped. The expanded jurisdictions of metropolitan municipalities and the abolition of special provincial administrations have brought about a redistribution of administrative and financial resources, centralization in service provision, and significant changes in the organizational structures of local governments. This administrative restructuring has increased the centralization in service provision by expanding the jurisdiction and responsibility areas of metropolitan municipalities.

In 2013, another important issue worth mentioning in the field of public administration is the services provided through public and private sector cooperation. This service is also provided in the field of health. The New Public Management (NPM) approach

has also introduced public-private sector cooperation by adopting participation in the public sector and private sector management techniques. The aim of this approach is to provide more effective cooperation and permeability between the public and private sectors. In this context, the Law No. 6428 on the Construction, Renovation and Procurement of Facilities with the Public-Private Partnership Model by the Ministry of Health, which entered into force in 2013, aimed to develop the health infrastructure by offering a model where project risks, costs and gains are shared and resources are used jointly. With this law, in accordance with the NPM principles, modern and high-capacity city and regional hospitals and health campuses have begun to be built through public-private sector partnerships. In this period, when the NPM understanding manifests itself in its full sense, albeit piecemeal, it is seen that the statutory structure in the public personnel regime has systematically evolved into a flexible structure. Since the beginning of this period, the number of contract personnel and temporary workers in the personnel system has been continuously increasing. With two separate regulations made in 2011 and 2013, employees with contract personnel status were transferred to civil servant cadres (Albayrak, 2017, p. 14). In 2011, contract workers in institutions included in the general budget were transferred to civil servant cadres with the Decree Law No. 632. First, local government contract workers who were excluded from this regulation and contract personnel working in institutions not included in the scope of the 2011 regulation were transferred to civil servant cadres with the Law No. 6495 in 2013. Since there is no examination requirement for the employment of contract personnel in local governments, thousands of municipal contract employees were transferred to civil servant cadres without examination due to this Law (Sayan, 2016, p. 681). After the entry into force of Law No. 6495, there was a decrease in the number of contracted personnel and an increase in the number of civil servants.

During this period, namely JDP government, a comprehensive reform process was experienced in Turkish public administration and numerous legal regulations were made. The principles of New Public Management (NPM) are clearly included in the justifications of these regulations. The basic principles of NPM have been adopted in a wide range from financial management to local governments, from central government to personnel management. The comprehensive framework created by the Draft Public Administration Basic Law (although not enacted) clearly outlines the goals of this transformation and the principles of NPM. Effectiveness, efficiency and transparency are the common denominators of all these regulations. While accountability, performance management, transparency, strategic planning and a strong financial audit mechanism are emphasized in

financial management, effectiveness, transparency, accountability and participation are emphasized in other public institutions. With the aim of decentralization, it was aimed to provide devolution of resources and authority to local governments and to create less bureaucratic, horizontal, entrepreneurial, competitive, small and flexible public units, and the public personnel system was also subject to comprehensive reforms. However, since the reforms focused on general problem areas such as restructuring the state organization, reducing paperwork, redefining the duties and responsibilities between institutions and hierarchical levels, comprehensive and systematic solutions were not sufficiently included in problem areas such as reorganizing the public personnel regime, recruiting, training and promotion of public personnel (Yılmazöz, 2009, p. 300). Although the reform initiatives aimed to transition from classical personnel management to human resources management, a full implementation could not be achieved. They were limited to the adaptation of private sector practices such as standard staff practices, subcontracting and use of contract personnel, in-service training, occupational health and safety and performance evaluation to the public. During this transition process, it is seen that the full integration of private sector principles into public personnel administration encountered difficulties.

On April 16, 2017, a constitutional referendum was held in Türkiye for a new government system. A party member presidential government system that resembles the presidential type but has its own unique character was accepted with this referendum. The presidential government system based on separation of powers, which has been implemented since July 9, 2018, has caused change and transformation in every field in Türkiye. Although this system is called a government system, it has become just a presidential system at this point. So it will only be called the Presidential system. What this system brings here is that it has evolved into an authoritarian regime where all powers are concentrated in a single hand. A brief explanation of this system, which has caused change in every field in Türkiye, will be given and then its effects on public administration will be analysed.

With the transition to the presidential system in Türkiye, executive power has been concentrated in a single centre in the President. Presidential and parliamentary elections are held simultaneously every five years, the Prime Ministry and the Council of Ministers are abolished and the executive body is managed from a single centre. The Presidential decree has granted regulatory authority in all areas related to the executive branch. Important institutions such as the establishment and removal of ministries, their organizational structure; the functioning of the State Supervisory Board; and the organizational structure of the National Security Council are regulated by the Presidential decree. The President also

regulates his own organizational structure with Presidential Decree No. 1, and the civil servants subject to Law No. 657, the positions in the profession of judge and prosecutor, the teaching staff positions, contract personnel positions and the worker positions with Decree No. 2. The appointment procedures and principles of senior managers and public institutions and organizations are also regulated with Decree No. 3. The appointment of high-level bureaucrats, the appointment of vice presidents and the appointment of ministers are carried out directly by the President. Although the under secretariat positions have been abolished and the authorities and responsibilities have been transferred to the vice ministers, the ministers no longer have political responsibilities. With this system, the President is the only authorized person; the ministers have no authority and are President's technical work team.

The transition to the presidential system in Türkiye has initiated a transformation process that has deeply affected Turkish public administration. Rooted institutions in the field of public administration have been closed, their duties have been shared with various public institutions, and new actors have become part of the Turkish public administration in addition to the institutions that have been abolished, aiming to determine and develop public policies. These are offices and policy boards that work directly under the President (Bayansar and Özer, 2023, p. 403). The policy boards, which are important actors of the Turkish public administration with the presidential system, consist of nine units: Science, Technology and Innovation Policies Board, Economic Policies Board, Education and Training Policies Board, Legal Policies Board, Security and Foreign Policies Board, Culture and Arts Policies Board, Health and Food Policies Board and Local Government Policies Board, and the offices consist of four units: Digital Transformation Office, Finance Office, Human Resources Office and Investment Office (Akman, 2019, p. 48).

With the transition to the presidential system, the existence of almost all actors (Prime Ministry, SPP, PAITME, SPO, GDBFC) that have had an impact on public personnel administration since the foundation of the Republic and have taken part in this field has been terminated (Albayrak, 2022a, p. 104). In particular, the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) has been closed and the central administration of Turkish public personnel administration has disappeared. The authorities and responsibilities of the SPP have been distributed to different public institutions. Processes such as personnel policies, planning, and training, which were carried out under a single roof in the old system, are now the responsibility of different institutions and have a scattered and fragmented structure. The actors to whom the duties of the SPP have been distributed and who are responsible for the processes related to the public personnel system can be stated as follows; Ministry of Labour and Social Security,

Ministry of Treasury and Finance, Presidency of Administrative Affairs[5], Presidency of Strategy and Budget, Presidential Human Resources Office, and Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. The institutions of the new system, which has caused a comprehensive change in the field of public administration, and the duties of the units of these institutions will be analysed.

Firstly, the duties of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security[6], service units and the duties of these units are regulated in the third section of the Presidential Decree No. 1. According to Article 89, the duties of the Ministry's General Directorate of Labour service unit regarding public personnel are as follows (2018):

a) To contribute to the preparation of draft legislation regarding personnel and organization,

b) To carry out the transfer procedures of excess personnel to other public institutions and organizations,

c) To take measures to ensure unity of practice in personnel issues in the implementation of legislation regarding public servant unions, to carry out consultancy, support and coordination services in the studies carried out between the authorized boards representing the public employer and public servant unions and their superior organizations. Considering the assigned duties, the influence of the ministry regarding the public personnel system is quite limited and insufficient.

The Ministry of Treasury and Finance also is regulated in the eighth section of the Presidential Decree No. 1. The ministry was established by merging the Ministry of Finance and the Under secretariat of Treasury, and the General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control (GDBFC) was closed, leaving the cadre regime management open. This gap was noticed and the "General Directorate of Public Financial Management and Transformation" was established within the Ministry of Treasury and Finance in 2019. The following duties were assigned to this general directorate (2018, Article 220/A):

a) To carry out the work and transactions related to the implementation of the legislation on public employment and related expenses and to monitor the implementation,

[5] While the thesis was being prepared, the name of the Presidency of Administrative Affairs was changed to the Secretariat General of the Presidency with the Presidential Decree No. 174 published in the Official Gazette No. 32766 dated 28/12/2024.

[6] At the time of the transition to the new system, the name of the ministry was the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services, and in 2021, by the Presidential Decree, it was transformed into two separate ministries. The Ministry of Family and Social Services and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security were established. The duties and personnel of the SPP were transferred to the General Directorate of Labour service unit of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

b) To carry out the duties assigned to the Ministry by other legislation on public expenditures,

c) To determine the fees to be collected from those who will benefit from the education and recreation facilities, guesthouses, childcare centres, crèches, sports facilities and similar social facilities operated by public institutions and organizations, to make the procedures and principles regarding the use of the income obtained from these places and the regulations related to these.

It has also been seen that a planned and organized system could not be established in the field of public personnel system, the Presidential system, which was accepted by referendum in 2017 and put into practice in 2018, closed deep-rooted institutions and assigned duties to the institutions it tried to create within its own structure, and even the fact that an important institution such as GDBFC (General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control) was closed and an institution was not opened immediately instead, and the general directorate was opened in 2019 when deficiencies were noticed, revealed the unplanned and unscheduled nature of the system.

The second part of the same decree regulates the Presidency of Administrative Affairs. Many duties of the public personnel administration and SPP have been transferred to the Directorate General of Personnel and Principles (DGPP) unit of the Presidency of Administrative Affairs. The duties assigned to DGPP regarding public personnel administration are as follows (2018, Article 8):

a) To examine the appointments of senior public administrators and other appointment and selection procedures to be carried out by the President in terms of the Constitution, laws, presidential decrees and general principles of law and to perform the necessary procedures,

b) To keep the record summaries and biographies of senior executives responsible for the administration and management of the state,

c) To perform procedures related to in-service training of senior executives,

d) To conduct examinations and researches to determine the targets, policies and measures related to the development of public administration, to have them conducted and to carry out the necessary studies in order to evaluate them,

e) To ensure the coordination of legislative studies related to public personnel.

The duties that were initially left open were assigned to the Directorate General of Personnel and Principles with the new regulation made in 2021. The additional clauses added to Article 8 of Decree No. 1 can be listed as follows (2018, Article 8):

a) Within the framework of the basic goals and objectives determined by President; to determine the basic principles and bases of the personnel regimes to which civil servants and other public officials will be subject, to determine, regulate and develop their legal and financial status and application principles, to ensure harmony, balance and coordination between personnel regimes, within the framework of the relevant legislation,

b) To monitor the implementation of the provisions of the legislation regarding civil servants and other public officials, to take measures to ensure unity of application, to direct the application and to eliminate the hesitations that may arise,

c) To carry out the works and processes regarding the determination of the procedures and principles to be applied in the public personnel employment planning and personnel recruitment and placement,

d) To carry out the works and processes stipulated in the Presidential Decree No. 2 on General Staff and Procedure regarding the staff, position, appointment permits and open recruitment permits of public institutions and organizations, to monitor and direct the applications,

e) To carry out the works and processes regarding the staff and positions of public economic enterprises and affiliated partnerships, to monitor and direct the applications,

f) To carry out the works and processes regarding the staff and title standardization, job analyses and job descriptions of public institutions and organizations and to ensure the necessary coordination in these matters,

g) To ensure the necessary coordination of public personnel to conduct studies on their education and training at home and abroad, to monitor, evaluate and supervise the implementation,

h) To carry out the work and transactions regarding the determination of the payment rates to be applied to the salaries of civil servants who are in foreign countries on permanent duty and domestic and foreign travel daily wages within the framework of the relevant legislation.

The examined duties show that the basic functions of the closed State Personnel Presidency (SPP) were transferred to the Directorate General of Personnel and Principles (DGPP). This situation suggests that the central control and coordination in public personnel administration has been transferred to Presidency, albeit to a limited extent.

The newly established Presidential Human Resources Office[7] was established with the Presidential Decree No. 1 to develop the human resources policy in the country. The duties and service units of this institution related to public personnel administration are specified in the same decree. The duties of the human resources office are as follows (2018, Article 527/D):

a) Developing projects for the implementation of career management, performance management and other modern human resource management models in the public sector.

b) Producing the necessary projects and conducting studies to increase merit and competence in public employment.

The duties of the Human Resources and Career Planning Department, which is the service unit of the office, related to public administration can be listed as follows (2018, Article 527/E):

a) Encouraging public institutions and organizations to conduct strategic human resource planning and supporting the studies to be conducted in this field.

b) Ensuring the monitoring and support of career planning processes in the public and private sectors, assisting in their standardization and development, evaluating and guiding the studies of institutions in areas where needed.

c) To support the analysis and development of competencies and criteria for selection, placement, assignment and promotion in public institutions and organizations, to carry out assignments and promotions according to merit-based measurements, to create career plans for public employees including replacement personnel planning, to monitor and evaluate applications.

d) To support the establishment and effective implementation of a performance evaluation and reward system for employees in public institutions and organizations.

e) To encourage and monitor public institutions and organizations to conduct studies on staff efficiency.

The duties of the Measurement and Evaluation Department are as follows (2018, Article 527/E):

a) To conduct studies with relevant institutions to determine special qualifications for managerial cadres and positions in public institutions and organizations.

[7] While that work was ongoing, the Presidential Human Resources Office was abolished by Presidential Decree No. 183 dated March 28, 2025, and the duties undertaken by the office regarding public personnel administration remained uncovered.

b) To prepare evaluation reports for candidates for senior public administrator cadres and positions upon request by President.

Finally, the duties of the Projects and Informatics Technologies Department related to public administration are as follows:

a) To conduct or have conducted analyses on human resources practices in the public and private sectors, to propose projects, to provide coordination between institutions and organizations in this regard and to guide and support institutions and organizations to develop human resources processes.

b) Developing systems for sharing employment advertisements in public institutions and organizations with the public in a more effective and transparent manner, monitoring the activities of existing institutions and organizations in this regard.

c) Conducting analyses and research in the public and private sectors regarding human resources and obtaining the necessary data from relevant institutions and organizations for reporting the obtained information.

d) Conducting the necessary analyses to establish a system where human resources processes can be monitored online in public institutions and organizations, establishing this system and checking the currency of the data in the system of institutions and organizations. As can be seen, the duties of the Human Resources Office have established human resources management similar to the private sector and New Public Management has been approved in terms of public administration.

With the transition to the presidential system, some of the duties of the closed SPO (State Planning Organization) and GDBFC (General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control) were transferred to the Presidency of Strategy and Budget, which was organized with the Presidential Decree No. 13. The newly established Presidency of Strategy and Budget was initially given important duties related to management, reminiscent of the old GDBFC, but these duties were later transferred to DGPP (Directorate General of Personnel and Principles) (Albayrak, 2022a, p. 107). The duty of the General Directorate of Budget, one of the service units of Presidency of Strategy and Budget, regarding public personnel is given as follows in the Presidential Decree No. 13 (2018, Article 8):

a) To collect all kinds of statistical information on matters related to public personnel, to keep personnel records centrally, to provide the necessary technical coordination for data sharing and exchange between institutions.

As can be understood from this duty, the role of the Presidency of Strategy and Budget in public personnel administration has largely been limited to the statistical recording of data on public personnel numbers.

Finally, the institution to be mentioned is the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change[8], which was regulated by Presidential Decree No. 1. The duties, service units and their duties of this ministry are also regulated by the Presidential Decree. The duties related to local administrations regarding public personnel administration are given to the General Directorate of Local Administrations service unit of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change. The duties in Article 100 of the Presidential Decree No. 1 are as follows (2018, Article 100):

a) To perform, follow up, finalize and develop the duties and services given by the legislation regarding the work and transactions of local administrations,

b) To supervise the implementation of local administration investments and services in accordance with development plans and annual programs,

c) To conduct research, collect, evaluate and publish statistical information for the development of local administrations,

d) To plan in-service training of local administration personnel and follow up on its implementation,

e) To determine the organization, vehicle and cadre standards of local administrations.

The period from 2002 to the present has witnessed radical changes and transformations in the Turkish public personnel system. With the "New Public Management" approach and the pressure of globalization, public employment has evolved from the strict rules of the "status law" system to a much more dynamic structure based on the principles of "flexibility" and "adaptation to market conditions". This evolution has deeply affected not only personnel management policies but also the institutional structure, actors, and employment forms of the public personnel system. Our analyses have revealed that certain objectives of the PABL have been implemented piecemeal, but the system has not been fully shaped according to the "New Public Management" principles. Developments such as the regulation of special rights of civil servants through collective bargaining, the transition to performance evaluation, the increase in contracted personnel, and the spread of

[8] With the transition to the new system, while the name of the ministry was "Ministry of Environment and Urbanization", in 2021, again with the Presidential decree, its name became "Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change".

subcontractor are important characteristics of this period. The 2017 Constitutional amendment and the adoption of the Presidential System have initiated a new era in the public personnel system. The President taking over the executive branch, the abolition of the Prime Ministry and the Council of Ministers increased the influence of the central administration, but at the same time, it created new problems in the distribution of responsibilities in the public personnel system, leading to a fragmented structure. The closure of the State Personnel Presidency (SPP), the distribution of its duties to other institutions, and the weakening of the central coordination and control structure of the public personnel administration revealed the critical weaknesses of this system. The public personnel system in Türkiye today is more focused on the principles of "flexible employment" and "performance management", but problems such as the influence of the central administration, political interventions, and the inadequate application of merit principles continue to increase. In particular, the widespread use of contract personnel and subcontractor practices have negatively affected the public personnel system in terms of merit and efficiency. The regulations from 2002 and onwards and their features are presented in Table 7 in order to create a systematic framework.

Table 7. Periodic restructuring of administration in Türkiye and its characteristics

Period	Regulations	Features
Post-2002 Regulations	-2011 Decree Laws -Law No. 5449 -Law No. 6360 -Law on Information -Law No. 5018 on Public Financial Management and Control -Newly Established Institutions and Boards	-Establishment of Ministries for Effective Public Administration, Closure of Some Old Institutions (For Example PAITME) -Efficiency, Effectiveness, Transparency, Justice, Accountability, Participation, Locality in Management -Orientation to Civil Participation in Management -Shifting the Focus from Administrative Structure to Service Quality

Note: Translated by the author from Göçoğlu, Kurt, and Öktem (2019, p. 53).

2.2. General View and Characteristics of Public Personnel Administration

In the previous sections, the historical development of the Turkish public personnel system, how it has evolved from the Ottoman Empire to the present day, and the significant changes experienced in the early years of the Republic were discussed in detail. In this section, the general appearance and basic characteristics of public personnel administration in today's Türkiye will be discussed. The operation of the Turkish public personnel system, its basic principles, and employment models will be analysed to reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the system. This analysis aims to prepare an important basis for the analysis of the central examination and central placement system to be conducted in the following sections of the thesis.

Public personnel can be considered in two ways depending on its scope. In a broad sense, it covers all individuals working in the public sector, regardless of their legal status. According to this definition, everyone who provides civil service, from elected officials to appointed officials, can be considered public personnel. In a narrow sense, public personnel are mentioned in Article 128 of the 1982 Constitution as follows: "The primary and permanent duties required by the civil services that the state, public economic enterprises and other public legal entities are obliged to carry out in accordance with the general administrative principles are carried out by civil servants and other public officials." Based on this definition, the concept of public personnel is presented in Table 8.

Table 8 Classification of public personnel

Public Personnel		
Civil Servants	**Other Public Employees**	**Assistant Public Personnel**
Civil Servant	1.Academic Personnel	1.Contract Personnel
	2.Judges and Prosecutors	2.Workers
	3.Military Personnel	3.Company Personnel

Note: Adapted and translated by the author from Albayrak (2022b, p.318)

Civil service is a secure profession that provides primary and continuous service and promotion opportunities in civil service based on knowledge, skills and abilities. It is subject to the Civil Servants Law No. 657. With this law, civil service is based on merit, career and classification principles. In general, the merit principle regulated that entry to civil service will be through a competitive exam, the classification principle regulated twelve civil service

classes and the career principle and the fifteen-level degree and grade system (İzci and Şerif, 2017, p. 400). Other public servants, just like civil servants, are personnel who are obliged to perform primary and continuous civil services. Unlike civil servants, the status and personal rights of these personnel are regulated by separate special laws (Albayrak, 2022b, p. 318). According to the table, academic personnel, who are generally accepted as other public servants, are subject to the Higher Education Personnel Law No. 2914, judges and prosecutors are subject to the Judges and Prosecutors Law No. 2802, and military personnel are subject to the Turkish Armed Forces Personnel Law No. 926. Auxiliary public personnel include contract personnel, workers and company personnel who perform temporary and non-continuous civil services. Contract personnel can be briefly described as public officials assigned to carry out "temporary" and "exceptional" civil services (Albayrak, 2022b, p. 319). Workers work under employment contracts and are subject to labour laws. Company personnel work within companies that provide services to public institutions and contribute to civil service in line with service contracts.

Brief information on the definitions of public personnel has been provided above. In the next stage, employment methods will be discussed in detail. The employment shapes are regulated in Article 4 of the Civil Servants Law No. 657. They are regulated as 4(A) Civil Servant, 4(B) contracted personnel and 4(D) workers. Temporary personnel in 4(C) were abolished and transferred to contracted personnel. The definition of civil servant in Article A of the same law is as follows: "Those who are assigned to perform primary and permanent civil services carried out by the State and other public legal entities in accordance with general administrative principles, regardless of the current form of establishment, are considered civil servants in the implementation of this Law. Those who are assigned and authorized in general policy determination, research, planning, programming, management and auditing in institutions other than those defined above are also considered civil servants." After a certain training process, appointments are made as A cadre and B cadre through a central exam; this issue will be analysed in detail in Section 3. Therefore, an important issue that needs to be mentioned is the employment of contracted personnel. The contradictions within the amendments and additional articles made to Law No. 657 regarding contract personnel will be discussed.

Contract personnel are defined in Sub-article B of Law No. 657 as "Civil service personnel who are decided to be employed on a contract basis for temporary jobs requiring special professional knowledge and expertise, which are required for the preparation, implementation, operation and functioning of important projects included in the

development plan, annual program and work programs, and which are exclusive to necessary and exceptional cases, in positions created within the framework of the principles and procedures determined by the President, and who are not considered as workers." Significant changes were made to the employment of contract personnel with the regulation made with Law No. 7433 in 2023 in the same article. According to the newly added paragraph, the phrase "...contract personnel may be employed in public administrations without the requirement that the job be temporary, to work in position titles to be determined by the President." was added. However, although it was stated in the first paragraph of this article that personnel with this status will be assigned to temporary jobs requiring special expertise in necessary and exceptional cases, this contradicted the additional paragraph. By removing special provisions regarding certain professional groups and adding the expression “part-time service”, the employment of contract personnel within the scope of Law No. 657 has been expanded to include overseas organizations. In the continuation of the same additional paragraph, it is seen that the scope of the 3+1 contract personnel system has been expanded. “Those among the contract personnel employed within this scope who have completed a three-year working period in the same institution shall be assigned to civil servant cadres with the same title in their current location, if they request within thirty days from the end of this period. ... These personnel can not be assigned to another location for three years, except for life safety and health reasons. Those assigned to civil servant cadres shall serve at least one more year in the same location.” As can be seen, the transition of contracted personnel to cadre has become easier and the way has been paved. Employment under contract status is divided into different groups such as contractual employment under Civil Servants Law 4/B status, contractual personnel working in State Economic Enterprises (SEEs), contractual personnel subject to the Municipality Law No. 5393, contractual personnel employed under Articles 6, 26 and 27 of the Decree Law No. 375, and contractual personnel employed in the Ministry of Health and its affiliated institutions under Law No. 4924, Law No. 5258 and Decree Law No. 663 (Güneyi, 2023, p. 1196). In addition, some institutions, based on the authority in the new laws and decree laws, have determined specific contractual personnel statuses within the framework of their own organizational laws, presidential decrees or organizational laws, independently of the provisions regarding the employment of contractual personnel in the existing legislation. This situation leads to the implementation of different regulations among institutions.

Another type of employment is the workers in Article 4, Clause D of Law No. 657. With the amendment of Law on the Transfer of Employees in Temporary Positions in the

Public Sector to Permanent Worker Cadres or Contract Personnel Status, Employment of Temporary Workers and Amendments to Certain Laws No. 5620 dated 2007, this article was regulated as "..permanent workers employed with indefinite-term employment contracts in permanent worker positions allocated in accordance with the relevant legislation and temporary workers employed with fixed-term employment contracts for less than six months in temporary work positions in seasonal or campaign works or forest firefighting services in accordance with the relevant legislation." (TBMM, 2007). However, although the article states that temporary workers should be employed for a certain period, it was understood in the audit reports of the Court of Accounts that this was not the case. It was revealed that temporary workers working in municipalities were employed on a permanent basis and that this was not limited to municipalities. It was also revealed that some essential and continuous civil servants that should be performed by civil servants were carried out by permanent or temporary worker personnel given the title of "Unit Supervisor" (Güneyi, 2022, p. 456). It is known that in these periods when favouritism was at its peak, temporary worker employment was also used to employ cronies. With the additional article introduced to Law No. 5620 in 2023, it is stated that "... temporary workers employed by administrations, institutions and organizations are transferred to the vacant permanent worker positions in these workplaces, based on the length of service they have spent in the workplaces where they are employed." As can be seen, the transfer of temporary workers to cadre status has become permanent. This situation also reveals that there are contradictions in the law.

Another type of employment that is not specified in the article titled Employment Types of Law No. 657 but is widely used is the employment of subcontracted personnel in civil services. Subcontracting in the public sector, which began with the Statutory Decree No. 318 in 1988 and expanded to include health services with Law No. 4924 in 2003, was further expanded with Law No. 6428, which entered into force in 2013. This law allowed contractor companies in public-private partnership projects (such as city hospitals) to perform medical support services such as physical therapy, laboratory and imaging using their own personnel, in addition to facility construction and maintenance. Law No. 6552, which was enacted in 2014, significantly expanded the practice of subcontracting in public institutions. The changes made by this law were added to Law No. 4734 on Public Procurement, allowing public administrations to outsource support services for auxiliary works in cases of personnel shortage. In areas requiring expertise, such as consultancy services, it was possible to procure services without the requirement of personnel qualification. In addition, it was allowed to outsource even a part of the main work,

considering the business needs of the administration, technological reasons or situations requiring expertise. However, this expanded subcontracting practice was abolished with the Decree Law No. 696, which entered into force in 2017, and new regulations and restrictions were introduced regarding the employment of subcontracted personnel in public institutions.

Court of Accounts audits revealed that the employment of subcontractor personnel through subcontracting in public enterprises has become widespread and has caused various problems. In the reports for the years 2014-2016, it was determined that the service procurement practice initiated in state economic enterprises (SEEs) has spread even to the main fields of activity of the enterprises. This situation led to the division of jobs and assignment of them to subcontractors, contrary to the Labour Law, and to public workers and subcontracted workers working together in the same job, and as a result, lawsuits demanding staff positions were filed against SEEs, and mostly resulted in a decision against SEEs. The Statutory Decree No. 696, which entered into force in 2017, restricted the employment of subcontractor personnel in public institutions and prohibited the procurement of services based on the employment of personnel. Local administrations can provide these services directly to an existing company or a company they will establish privately, without the restrictions in the Public Procurement Law. However, Court of Accounts reports have shown that many municipalities have carried out transactions contrary to this Statutory Decree and that the legislation has not been followed in the transfer of subcontractor personnel to the status of worker in local administration companies. This type of employment, like temporary personnel, facilitates favouritism and the ability of relatives, friends and close circle to find jobs in the public sector through subcontractor companies without being subject to the rules.

With the transition to the presidential system, the brain of the bureaucracy was moved from the Prime Ministry to the Presidency (Polat, 2022, p. 64). With the Presidential Decree No. 1 on the Presidential Organization, in which the presidential organization was organized, the statuses of the personnel to be assigned in the central organization were regulated and defined in Article 13. According to the Presidential Decree No. 1 (2018, Article 13), the following personnel are assigned in the Central Organization: a) Permanent personnel, b) Fixed-term personnel affiliated to the cadre, c) Fixed-term personnel not affiliated to the cadre, d) Part-time personnel, e) Contract personnel. The definitions of these statuses were also made in the same decree. First of all, it is stated that the permanent personnel are "personnel who are transferred or openly appointed to the cadres of the Presidency of Administrative Affairs subject to the Civil Servants Law No. 657 dated 14/7/1965 in

exceptional civil service status" (2018, Article 13/2). The definition for fixed-term personnel affiliated to the cadre is given in the Presidential Decree No. 1 as follows (2018, Article 13/3): "Those who work in public institutions and organizations, in banks and organizations established based on the authority granted by the legislation, and in organizations established by participating in more than half of their capitals may be assigned to the cadres of the Administrative Affairs Department on a fixed-term basis upon the request of the Presidency of Administrative Affairs due to the need for their services and for a period of three years. It is possible for those whose terms have expired to be reassigned with the same procedure. These personnel are considered to be on leave from their own institution or organization and the periods spent in the Presidency of Administrative Affairs are considered to have been spent in the institution or organization they are a member of all kinds of statutory rights remain reserved in their own institution or organization." On the other hand, fixed-term personnel not affiliated to the cadre are personnel whose cadres and all statutory rights and transactions are in their own institution or organization and who carry out their services in the Presidency of Administrative Affairs without being affiliated to a cadre. The following definition was made for part-time personnel in Presidential Decree No. 1 (2018, Article 13/5): "Doctors, engineers, architects and other health personnel and technical personnel may be employed part-time in the Presidency of Administrative Affairs on certain days of the week or at certain hours of the day." Lastly, for the contracted personnel, it is stated that they are employed by the Presidency of Administrative Affairs and the contract is made by the President of Administrative Affairs. In addition to the personnel statuses provided in the first paragraph of Article 13, the Presidency of Administrative Affairs may also form commissions, advisory boards and working groups consisting of experts working in public institutions and organizations to conduct research, examination and work on the subjects it needs. In addition, the Presidency may assign experts from the private sector or freelance workers to these formations. The assigned persons may not disclose the confidential information they obtain within the scope of the work.

Employment types in the Turkish public personnel system have been discussed. In this section, the problems of the system will be revealed by analysing the career professions, exceptional civil servants and upper-level public administrator that are worth mentioning. First, a regulation was made for career professions in Law No. 657. In Türkiye, civil servant classification was first regulated in 1970 with Law No. 1327. This regulation determined the cadres recruited through special competitive examinations in Article 36 of the Civil Servants Law (CSL) and stipulated that the personnel assigned to these cadres would be subject to a

separate degree promotion system. As a result of the changes made to the CSL with the Statutory Decree No. 12, which entered into force in 1974, the definition of the cadres subject to the special competitive examination in question became clear in Article 36/A-11 of the Law. This article was expanded over time to include civil servant positions called "career professions" and has become the basic regulation defining these professions today. Inspector, controller, auditor cadres such as audit staff in public institutions and organizations, civil administration authority service class cadres in the Ministry of Interior, career officer/consul and specialist officer cadres in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are all career profession cadres (Albayrak, 2016, pp. 2-3), and they are listed one by one in Law No. 657. Career specialties, which were staffed in the Prime Ministry and its affiliated institutions until the 2000s, later spread to service ministries and investment organizations, and by 2011, career specialists were staffed in all public institutions and organizations (Albayrak, 2016, pp. 198-205). With the transition to the new system, it is envisaged that expert personnel be employed in the new institutions established. The process for specialist cadres is as follows; written and oral exams conducted by institutions after the central exam, stages such as entrance, in-service training and transition to specialist levels, foreign language, research and proficiency exams have objective criteria. Therefore, it can be called a merit-based employment model for these professions. However, it is also seen that this system is open to criticism. For example, the creation of expert cadres for jobs that can also be performed by regular civil servants and the perception of this as a high-salary position necessitates questioning the effectiveness of the system. Even though the process of entering career professions is almost the same, there are salary differences even among some institutions. For example, an expert working in an institution directly affiliated to the President receives a higher salary than an expert working in other institutions. While the number of expert cadres in the public personnel system in Türkiye has been steadily increasing, an important change in this area is the adoption of flexible working models. The regulations made in the Civil Servants Law with the Decree Law No. 703 dated 2018 have both ensured the spread of expert positions and introduced flexible employment opportunities such as full-time, part-time or project-oriented through administrative service contracts, deputation or exceptional contracts. In this case, this is again a model of favouritism. In some institutions, people who did not have the necessary qualifications and expertise were employed in "part-time expert" positions without requiring an exam. With the subsequent legislative changes, these people were transferred to "administrative expert" positions, again without an exam.

Another status that should be mentioned is exceptional civil servants. Article 59 of Law No. 657 lists exceptional civil servants one by one. Some of these are: Private secretaries, Ministry press and public relations advisors, Deputy Ministers, Governorships, Embassies, Permanent Representatives, Under secretariat for Defence Industries, Membership of the Supreme Board of Religious Affairs, Press Consultancy of the Constitutional Court, Ministry of Foreign Affairs Strategic Research Centre Presidency, National Intelligence Organization civil servants. It is stated that those who will be appointed to these positions must meet the general conditions specified in Article 48 of the Civil Servants Law. Article 61 of the same law (1965) states, "...all provisions of this Law other than appointment, examinations, step advancement and rank promotion shall be applied to those appointed to exceptional civil servants." With the transition to the presidential system, the "under-secretaryship" position was abolished and replaced by the "minister counsel" position. This is stated in the Presidential Decree No. 1 (2018, Article 505) as follows: "Minister Counsel may be employed in ministries, provided that the number does not exceed fifteen." The minister counsel position can also be considered as an exceptional civil servant position. For the minister counsel, which can be described as an exceptional civil servant, it is stated in Article 61/A of Law No. 657 (1965) that "Appointments can be made to the minister counsel positions without being subject to the provisions of this Law regarding appointment, examinations, step advancement and promotion to rank." As can be seen, exceptional civil servant positions are increasing over time and this type is another dimension of favouritism. In fact, one of the most frequently identified findings in the Court of Accounts reports is that open appointments made to the private secretary positions, which is one of the exceptional civil servant positions, are used as a method of entering the civil service without an exam. In the audits conducted by the Court of Accounts, it was determined that the personnel who were openly appointed as private secretary directors in many municipalities were transferred to other civil servant positions shortly after their appointment, and some personnel were transferred to other public institutions (Güneyi, 2022, p. 407).

It can be said that there is a kind of exceptional civil servant status for upper-level public administrators. In short, the issue of upper-level public administrators will also be addressed and discussed. Appointment to senior public administration in Türkiye has traditionally been determined by a promotion system based on career principles and merit; the aim has been to gradually promote experienced and educated civil servants to higher positions. However, with the recent transformations in public administration, this traditional

understanding has been changed, allowing individuals who have not previously served in the public sector to be appointed to senior management positions. This practice, referred to as "elevator promotion" or "parachute jumping", aims to carry talented individuals to higher levels at an early age, but has been criticized for weakening the merit system by causing negativities such as openness to political interventions, staff accumulation at upper levels and the creation of unnecessary positions due to the inadequacy of concrete criteria. Article 68 of the Civil Servants Law (1965) stipulates that in order to be promoted to higher levels, "having spent at least three years within the grade and one year at the 3rd grade of this grade and having acquired the qualifications required for the position to which the cadre is allocated". These conditions make reaching senior management a very long and difficult process for civil servants starting from lower levels. However, in clause B of the same article, it is stated that "Except for the Education and Training Services Class and the Health Services and Auxiliary Health Services Class, appointments can be made from lower levels according to the appointment procedure to the cadres at the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th levels of the classes, without requiring a time record for the promotion of the degree." With the transition to the presidential system, the appointment procedures and principles of senior public administrators have moved considerably away from the principles of career and merit. Because the regulations regarding senior public administrators are asked from the President. Article 104 of the 1982 Constitution also states that "He/she appoints senior public administrators, terminates their duties and regulates the procedures and principles regarding their appointment by presidential decree." and thus falls within the scope of the President's duties and authorities. At the same time, regulations were made with the Presidential Decree No. 3 on the Appointment Procedures of Senior Public Administrators and Public Institutions and Organizations. The Decree has determined three separate statuses for the appointment of public personnel: cadres, positions and duties to be appointed by the President's decree (One numbered Ruler), by the President's approval (Two numbered Ruler) and by the relevant Vice President, Minister or authorized appointing officers (Güneyi, 2023, p. 1211). At the same time, this decree stipulates three basic conditions for appointments to be made by the President's decree or approval: "To meet the conditions of being a civil servant, to be a graduate of at least four years of higher education and to have completed a five-year service period." Although it is stated, a regulation has been made with the additional article 36 of the Decree Law No. 375: "For appointment to cadres, positions and duties of senior public administrators in the central organization of public institutions and organizations and provincial and regional directors in the provincial organization, and to

cadres, positions and duties equivalent to or above these cadres, positions and duties, no other conditions other than the educational status requirement are sought." As can be seen, the appointment of upper-level public administrators is made in line with political interests, far from the principles of merit and career.

While addressing the appearance of the Turkish public personnel system, employment models were mentioned. It was observed that the public personnel system became multi-layered and complex with the transition to the presidential system. There are also problems caused by this situation. A few problems were briefly mentioned while evaluating the employment methods. From this point on, instead of the basic principles that public personnel administration should have, the basic problems encountered in practice will be addressed. Although the public personnel system is normally established on basic principles such as merit, equality, efficiency, accountability and transparency, in practice, instead of the principle of merit, favouritism, violation of the principle of equality, inefficiency, coordination problems between central and local governments and the spread of political interventions are seen. While there are problems based on principles, there are also problems based on personnel management such as the classification and status of public personnel, appointment, training and development, performance evaluation, reward and punishment, and promotion from the very beginning to the end of the system.

It was mentioned that favouritism has replaced the principle of merit while evaluating employment models. So what is merit? Merit is defined in its simplest terms as suitability, deservingness and suitability. In the public personnel system, merit refers to giving the job to the competent person, the worthy person taking office, and the suitability and suitability of a person for the job. Merit is the basis of a country's development; because if competent people come to important positions in the public sector, the country will also develop. Thus, the implementation of merit mostly depends on political will and transparency of implementation. It is an important duty for elected administrators to develop the country by appointing competent people to public positions. However, in a country where party-based presidential system with its own characteristics has been adopted, also it is not very possible for there to be merit-based appointments. Since there is no impartial President, there will of course be party members in civil services, important positions and upper echelons. In this period when favouritism has reached its peak, favouritism can be divided into three parts. These are favorsism, cronyism and nepotism. Favorsism can be used in two different senses. In the first sense, it refers to unfairly granting priority and privilege to a certain person or group, while in the second sense, it refers to personal relationships such as friendship,

neighbourhood or acquaintance taking precedence over merit and objective criteria in hiring, promotion decisions or other personnel decisions. In general, favorsism involves treating employees in a privileged manner based on personal relationships in decisions and transactions regarding employees. Nepotism is the appointment and promotion of people with blood ties to important positions regardless of their skills, talents and level of education. For example, the appointment of the spouse or son/daughter of a minister or a member of parliament to higher-level positions. Finally, cronyism is the appointment of people close to the party in power to important positions in state institutions and organizations. In the party-based presidential system, the fact that the President is also a member of a party means that all public institutions and organizations in the country and the duties in the central organization are given to the people around them who are party members.

With the transition to the party-based presidential system in the Turkish public personnel system, inefficiency, violation of the principle of equality, widespread political interventions, and the problem of coordination between central and local governments have become more evident. The effectiveness and efficiency of the public sector depends on the maximization of the results obtained with the resources used. However, in the public sector, where human capital is the basic input, this ideal may not always be realized. Hiring qualified personnel in line with institutional goals and the requirements of civil services and employing them in the most efficient way is an indispensable condition for efficiency. Unfortunately, human capital is not used fully efficiently in many public institutions and organizations. The methods applied to increase productivity are also not effective enough; performance evaluation systems are not objective and transparent enough; reward and punishment systems are not functional; job security mostly protects inefficiency instead of providing a productive working environment.

In this process also where political interventions occur, the expected benefit from civil services can not be achieved. Political interventions cause appointments and promotions to be made according to political loyalty rather than merit and objective criteria, thus greatly damaging the principle of merit. Explanations of this principle have been provided. Along with the change of governments, the personnel working in public institutions and organizations also change to a great extent, which negatively affects the continuity and stability of the administration, leads to the loss of institutional memory and the destabilization of the administration. The transition to the presidential system has further increased the influence of the central administration and has created new problems in the distribution of responsibilities in the public personnel system. With this system, the President

from the party became the head of the executive, and all powers were concentrated in one hand. The influence of the central administration has been increased, and problems have arisen between local administrations. Since the power at the centre is a party leader, there is a coordination problem due to the existence of different political parties in local administrations and the inability of the government to implement the principle of impartiality. This situation has led to the dysfunction of institutional common sense, inequality between local administrations and the elimination of transparency.

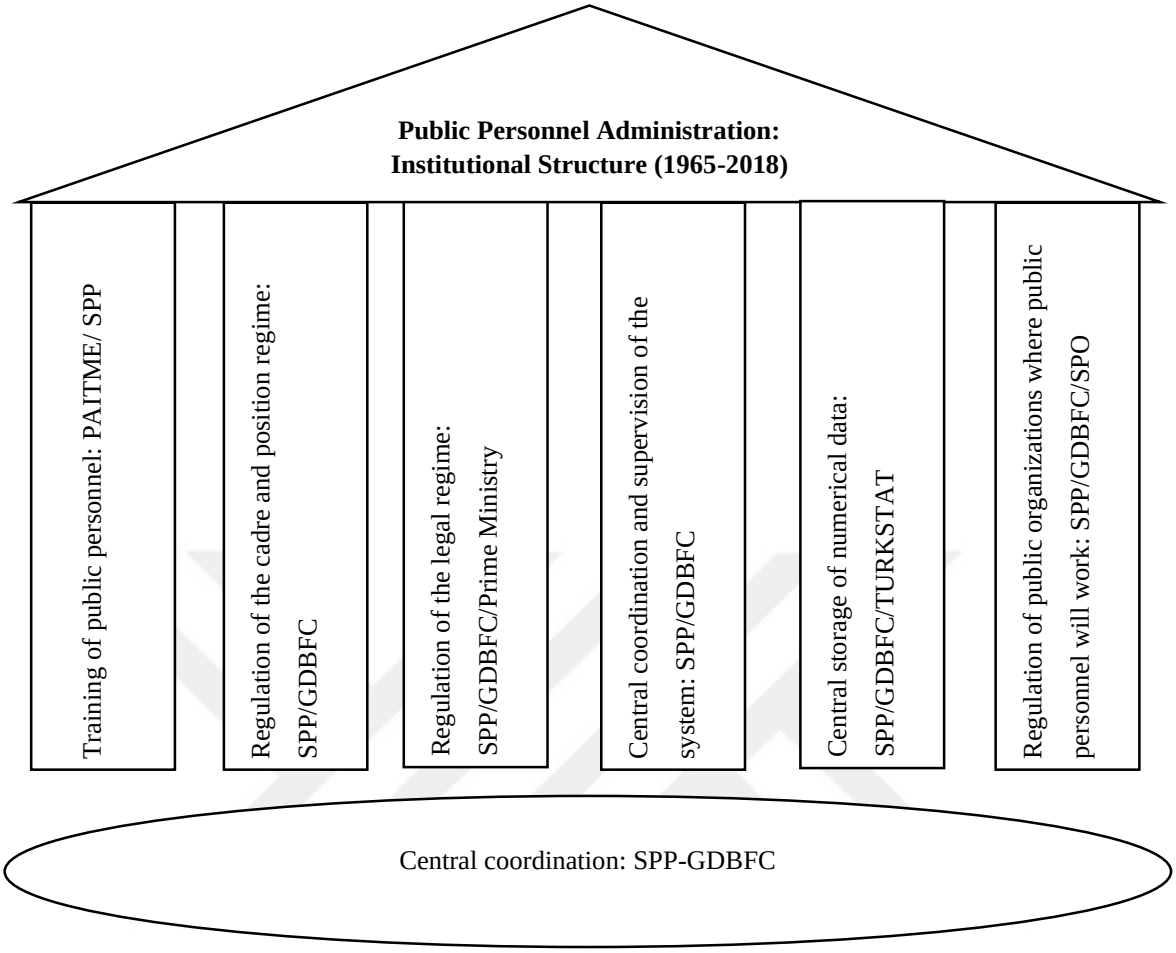
As a result, to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the public personnel system and to ensure its proper functioning; the party-based presidential system, which is the basis of all problems, should be abolished and replaced with a strengthened parliamentary system, a merit-based personnel selection system should be established, performance evaluation systems should be implemented objectively and transparently, coordination between institutions should be increased, the principle of transparency should be effectively implemented, and effective mechanisms should be established to prevent favouritism. In addition, importance should be given to the continuous training of public personnel, relations between central and local governments should be reorganized, and authorities and responsibilities should be determined more clearly. Reducing political interventions and emphasizing merit are also vital for the healthy functioning of the system. In today's Türkiye, it is essential to strengthen political will and institutional capacity to solve these problems.

2.3. Institutional Structure of Public Personnel Administration

The party-based Presidential System, which entered into force in 2018, has significantly affected the institutional structure and functioning of the Turkish public personnel system. In the previous parliamentary system, the coordination and administration of the public personnel system was largely carried out by the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) and the Ministry of Finance (especially the General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control), while in the new system, there is no central coordination and control mechanism. With the closure of the SPP and the Ministry of Finance (General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control), the institutional structure of public personnel administration has undergone a radical change. The duties and authorities of these institutions have been distributed to different public institutions and organizations. An attempt has been made to create a "private sector-like" public personnel system with the effects of new public management. The establishment of the Presidential Human Resources Office was expected to undertake a

central coordination role in the formulation and implementation of public personnel policies, but the practical effectiveness and institutional structure of this office have not yet been fully established. The duties of the closed institutions were distributed to many institutions, and some duties were even left open. Other institutions established with the new system are the General Directorate of Public Financial Management and Transformation of the Ministry of Treasury and Finance, the General Directorate of Labour of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the General Directorate of Budget of the Strategy and Budget Presidency, and the Directorate General of Personnel and Principles of the Presidency of Administrative Affairs. In addition, there is no specific responsible institution left in the public personnel regime. This situation has caused the dysfunction of the institutional common sense, the impossibility of centralized operation and a fragmented structure. In the new system, the public personnel regime focused on the principles of "flexible employment" and "performance management", but it has not been able to achieve this either. Problems such as the influence of the central administration, political interventions and the inadequate application of merit principles have reached a serious level. After briefly touching on the basic actors and functions of public personnel administration before the presidential system, the transformation experienced with the system change will be discussed; the institutions that were closed and opened and the extent to which they complemented each other will be analysed. This section will be analysed by considering the table prepared by Albayrak to explain the institutional structure of public personnel administration. In Table 9, the basic actors and functions of public personnel administration are presented schematically. It aims to form a basis for the topics to be discussed in detail in the following sections of the study.

Table 9. Structure of public personnel administration between 1965 and 2018



Note: Adapted and translated by the author from Albayrak (2020, p.1519).

In Türkiye, civil servants constitute the largest and most important segment of public personnel tasked with carrying out civil services. The Civil Servants Law No. 657, which entered into force as part of the state personnel reform in Türkiye, regulates the legal regime of civil servants. Since the 1960s, the personnel system has been attempted to be managed through bilateral coordination between the SPP and the Ministry of Finance. In this context, the new personnel regime regulations in the 1970s bear the 'Ministry of Finance' stamp (Tutum, 1970). As a result, the personnel reform could not be implemented and the career system could not be established. In the 1980s, the qualifications of the personnel system were determined, the status of civil servants, the principle of regulation by law, the career system and the security of civil servants were emphasized. Similar determinations were made in the 1990s and the deficiencies in the public personnel system were discussed.

In these years, changing the entire personnel administration was not on the agenda. The structure of the status quo was attempted to be eroded only through piecemeal practices.

In the 2000s, a public personnel administration structure that was 'similar to the private sector' and 'formed under market conditions' was began to show itself. The approach that supported this trend was 'new public management (NPM).' Reforms based on the new public management (NPM) approach suggested more 'autonomy', 'structural change' and 'distance from political structure/influences' for public institutions and organizations. Thus, instead of a bureaucracy based on strict hierarchy, a market-oriented public management approach based on the management logic of the private sector emerged.

Albayrak has grouped the actors of the public personnel administration under one roof by determining the years 1965-2018 with the acceptance of the CSL in 1965 and the implementation of the Presidential system in 2018. These actors and their functions will be analysed.

1) Central coordination and management of public personnel administration: SPP (State Personnel Presidency)

2) Management of the cadre regime: GDBFC (General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control)

3) Contribution to the organization and location acquisition process of public bureaucracy: SPO (State Planning Organization)

4) Development of public administration discipline and training of public personnel: PAITME (Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and Middle East) (Albayrak, 2020, p. 1524)

In 1960, the State Personnel Department (SPD) was established under the Prime Ministry with the aim of organizing the personnel regime of institutions in accordance with the economic, financial and social conditions of the country and legal principles; to adjust and maintain this system according to changing conditions. This department consists of a State Personnel Board consisting of a chairman and five members, a Secretary General and technical branches and offices as necessary. The duties of the department are presented in Article 5 of the Law on the establishment of the State Personnel Department (1965) as follows:

a) To establish the principle of equal and equivalent wages for the works of the institutions of the same nature and extent by grouping the civil service and services according to the principles and measures to be determined in advance,

b) To standardize the titles of civil servants, employees and cadres,

c) To determine the general principles regarding the recruitment of personnel to institutions and the specification of the necessary qualification conditions for the promotion of personnel,

d) To prepare the necessary amendments to be made in the salaries and wages and other personal rights by following the economic, social and financial situation of the country,

e) To determine the payment rates to be applied to the salaries of civil servants who are in foreign countries on permanent duty and to the daily wages of domestic and foreign travel,

f) To keep general personnel records and to collect documents and statistical information on matters concerning public personnel.

It is observed that there is a discrepancy between the assigned duties and the establishment organization of State Personnel Department. Although its organization as a board aimed to serve as a "merit protection board", its job description was directly focused on implementation, similar to a classic ministry unit. This incompatibility continued until 1984, and with the Statutory Decree No. 217 on the State Personnel Presidency and its Duties, the name of the SPD was changed to the State Personnel Presidency (SPP), and the organizational structure was transformed from a board to a presidential system. The State Personnel Presidency (SPP) was playing a critical role in many areas, from entering the civil service to advancing in career ladders, and collective agreement processes. Busy with routine work, the SPP could not fully fulfil its primary duty of guiding and shaping public personnel policies under these conditions. In fact, the SPP was closed down in 2018 with the transition to the new system.

Another institution, the State Planning Organization (SPO), was established in 1960 under the Prime Ministry in order to ensure that the country's economic, social and cultural planning services are effective, regular and rapid in an integrated manner, with the aim of using resources efficiently and accelerating development. Indirectly affecting public personnel administration, the SPO played a decisive role its views, especially on issues such as the structuring of public institutions, that is, the establishment of new institutions or the modification of existing structures The important duties in Article 2 of the Law on the Establishment and Duties of the State Planning Organization (1991) can be listed as follows:

a) To provide opinions and proposals to ensure coordination in the activities of ministries and public institutions and organizations concerning economic, social and cultural policies and to act as consultants on these issues,

b) To prepare development plans and annual programs that will realize the targets accepted by the government,

c) To provide opinions and proposals on the improvement of the establishment and operations of relevant institutions and organizations and local administrations in order to successfully implement development plans and annual programs,

d) To monitor, coordinate and evaluate the implementation of development plans and annual programs and to make changes in the development plans and annual programs in accordance with the procedure when necessary.

With the transition to the Presidential system in 2018, important duties of the institution were transferred to the Strategy and Budget Presidency.

Another institution important for public personnel administration is the General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control (GDBFC), one of the service units of the Ministry of Finance, established in 1936 with Law No. 2996. It primarily undertook the task of preparing and supervising the central budget. Then, it managed the personnel system, especially through cadre regulations, in order to maintain budget discipline. At that time, personnel regulations were not completely integrated, but rather were seen as fragmented and an inseparable element of the budget. The fact that the Civil Servants Law drew a general framework and did not go into detail led to gaps that were attempted to be filled through the "unification and equivalence" laws. The personnel system was mainly addressed with an approach focused on "salary" and "cadre". Indeed, the "Law on the Unification and Equality of the Salaries of Civil Servants" No. 1452, which was put into practice in 1929, was also a "cadre law" since it aimed to organize all cadres in a single system. Therefore, the Ministry of Finance (service unit General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control) tried to manage the personnel system by focusing on its control over cadre arrangements. The provisions of Law No. 3656, which entered into force in 1939, regarding the allocation and use of cadres to institutions remained valid until the adoption of the General Cadre Law No. 1322 in 1970. All procedures regarding cadres in public institutions (creation, cancellation, change, use, etc.) were carried out by the Ministry of Finance (service unit General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control) during this period, as in the past (Öner, 2005, p. 583). In 1983, with the entry into force of the Decree Law on General Cadre and Procedure, cadre management was carried out by General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control until the implementation of the Presidential system.

With the transition to the presidential system, the Ministry of Finance was organized as the Ministry of Treasury and Finance, and the service units of the Ministry of Finance

were either closed or re-established in a different way. One of the service units closed in 2018 was General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control, and an institution could not be established immediately in its place. In 2019, the Directorate General of Public Financial Management and Transformation was established within the Ministry of Treasury and Finance.

While the management of the cadre regime is a fundamental element of public personnel administration, success in this area is not limited to this. Continuous training of civil servants, increasing the knowledge in the field of personnel administration and developing the discipline of public administration are equally important. The Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East (PAITME) stands out as an important actor in fulfilling these critical functions. The Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East (PAITME), which has a key position in the development of the Turkish public administration discipline and civil service regime, began its activities in 1952 under the roof of the Faculty of Political Sciences at Ankara University within the framework of a technical support agreement between the Government of the Republic of Türkiye and the United Nations (UN). In 1958, it continued its activities as a separate institution with legal personality with the Law No. 7163 on the Organization of the Public Administration Institute of Türkiye and the Middle East. The general purpose of the Institute is to train personnel in management by working towards the development of public administration in accordance with contemporary ideas and approaches, to assist in the training of academic staff in the field of public administration, and to ensure the development and specialization of public officials in the field of management (Aslan, 2017, p. 5). The main duties of the institute are grouped in the law as; a) training and upbringing, b) research and assistance, c) compilation and publication, d) assistances in training, research and examination. The important tasks included in these grouped tasks are listed in Article 2 of the Law No. 7163 on the Organization of the Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East (1958) as follows:

a) To take measures to increase the knowledge and ensure the development of the Public Administration officials according to modern administrative principles and techniques and to encourage and support such measures,

b) To assist in the training of academic staff for the Public Administration field,

c) To conduct research, surveys and examinations on issues related to the Public Administration,

d) To continuously follow and compile the incidents and precedents, developments, practices and methods of conducting research, examination and publications in the Public Administration field, both in Türkiye and in other countries,

e) To continuously publish the research, examination and compilations through all kinds of books, magazines, bulletins and bibliographies; to supervise the increase and distribution of the institute's publications,

f) To participate in the management and distribution of scholarships to be given from various sources to those who will study and research at the institute.

Such an effective and important institution also was closed in 2018 and its publications, archives, movable and immovable properties were transferred to Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli University.

With the transition to the party-based presidency system, there have been serious changes and transformations in the field of public administration. Rooted institutions have been closed, the duties of these institutions have been distributed and even some duties have been left open, i.e. ignored. A troubled feature of this new system also is that there is no single institution responsible for the administration and coordination of the public personnel system. Before the change, the State Personnel Presidency in terms of the general operation of the personnel regime and the Ministry of Finance (service unit General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control) in terms of cadre arrangements were the institutions providing coordination; gaps have emerged in these areas with the new regulation. Similarly, with the closure of PAITME, a central organizational structure has also disappeared in the training of public personnel. The Presidency, which has the sole say in every field, has also become centralized in public personnel administration. The problems and disruptions brought by this system have also been addressed in the previous sections. When the question of how the new institutional structure of public personnel administration is shaped in this new order where there are no central coordination institutions is sought, various institutions attract attention. Now, these institutions and their duties will be analysed with the institutions corresponding to the old system.

Table 10. (continuation) The equivalent of SPP service unit duties in the new system

The Duties assigned to the General Directorate of Personnel and Principles of the Presidency of Administrative Affairs	The Service Units of the State Personnel Presidency
To carry out the work and procedures stipulated in (the Presidential Decree No. 2) on General Staff and Procedure regarding cadre, position, appointment permits and open recruitment permits of public institutions and organizations, and to monitor and direct the practices.	Department of Cadre and Public Officials
To carry out the work and procedures regarding the determination of the procedures and principles to be applied in the recruitment and placement of public personnel.	Department of Public Personnel Recruitment[9]
To conduct or have conducted studies and research to determine the objectives, policies and measures related to the development of public administration and to carry out the necessary studies to evaluate them.	Department of Organization and Administration Development
To conduct studies on the education and training of public personnel at home and abroad, to monitor, evaluate and supervise the implementation.	Directorate General of Education[10]
To carry out procedures regarding in-service training of senior managers.	Directorate General of Education
To carry out work and transactions related to the personnel, staff and positions of public economic enterprises and their affiliated partnerships, to monitor and direct the practices.	Department of Public Economic Enterprises and Privatization
The Duties assigned to the General Directorate of Labour Service Unit of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security	
To carry out the transfer processes of employment surplus personnel to other public institutions and organizations.	Department of Public Economic Enterprises and Privatization
To take measures to ensure unity of practice in personnel matters in the implementation of legislation regarding public servant unions, to carry out consultancy, support and coordination services in the studies carried out between the authorized boards representing the public officials and the public servant unions and their higher organizations.	Department of Public Officials' Unions

[9] While the public personnel recruitment exams and placement processes were the duty of this service unit, the DGPP, which corresponds to the new system, has not been given the duty of recruitment exams. Although the SPP has been closed, the basis is the SPP's establishment decree according to the "General Regulation on Exams to be Held for Those Who Will Be Appointed to Public Duties for the First Time".
[10] While this institution has a duty to "open training centres and determine training needs in order to train the personnel who will work in the personnel units of public institutions and organizations", there is no central institution in this regard in the new system.

The Duty given to the General Directorate of Budget of the Strategy and Budget Presidency	
To collect all kinds of statistical information on matters related to public personnel, to keep personnel records centrally, and to provide the necessary technical coordination for data sharing and exchange between institutions.	Department of Information Systems and Statistics
The Duty given to The Directorate General of Services for Persons with Disabilities and The Elderly of the Ministry of Family and Social Services	
To carry out the work and transactions related to the employment of disabled people within the scope of Article 53 of the Civil Servants Law No. 657 by ensuring the necessary coordination with the institution where the public personnel information system is located.	Department of Public Personnel Recruitment[11]

Note: The duties and responsibilities of the institutions were compiled from the Presidential decrees and translated by the author.

Table 11. The equivalent of GDBFC duties in the new system

Duties Assigned to the Strategy and Budget Presidency	
To snap to the budget proposals prepared by public administrations and sent to the Presidency and to ensure their compliance with the development plan, targets and objectives determined by the President, medium-term program, medium-term financial plan, strategic plans, performance programs and technical principles, fundamentals and methods underlying budget preparations.[12]	General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control
To determine the technical principles, fundamentals and procedures to be followed by the public administrations within the scope of the central government together with the Ministry of Treasury and Finance during the budget preparation work and to carry out the budget preparation work in coordination.	General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control
To constitute central government budget bill draft by consolidating the budget proposals of public administrations.	General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control
Duties Assigned to the General Directorate of Public Financial Management and Transformation	
To establish basic policies regarding public procurement within the framework of general economic policies and strategies.	General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control
To determine the fees to be collected from those who will benefit from education and recreation facilities, guesthouses, childcare centres, crèches, sports facilities and similar social facilities operated by public institutions and organizations, and to make the procedures and principles regarding the use of the income obtained from these places and the related regulations.	General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control

Note: The duties and responsibilities of the institutions were compiled from the Presidential decrees and translated by the author.

[11] While the procedures related to the employment of disabled people along with the public personnel recruitment exams were carried out by this service unit, the two duties were separated and the employment of disabled people was given to a service unit of a completely different ministry.

[12] The centralization in the new system is seen in every field. In the old system, this task was completely under the control of the General Directorate.

General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control (GDBFC) and State Personnel Presidency, which had important duties in the field of public administration, were closed with the new system. The duties of these institutions were distributed to the service units of various institutions, creating a fragmented understanding. As seen in the first table, the duties of the service units under the roof of the State Personnel Presidency are distributed to the units of different institutions. These institutions are the service units of the Presidency of Administrative Affairs, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Presidency of Strategy and Budget, and the Ministry of Family and Social Services. With the transition to the new system, there is no single central institution in the fields of public administration and public personnel system. Apart from these institutions, the Ministry of Treasury and Finance and the Human Resources Office have also taken their place in the new system. As seen in the second table, the duties of GDBFC were also transferred to the Directorate General of Public Financial Management and Transformation within the Ministry of Treasury and Finance and the Presidency of Strategy and Budget. The newly established Human Resources Office, on the other hand, is seen to be dominant understanding similar to the private sector in the public sector with its duties such as career planning in the public and private sectors, performance evaluation, rewarding of employees in public institutions and organizations, and talent management. With the transition to the new system, the separate structure specific to public employees was terminated and the majority of the duties related to public personnel were given to the Directorate General of Personnel and Principles and the General Directorate of Labour. When the education, training and having expert officers in the field of public personnel were deemed unnecessary, PAITME was closed and no institution was established in its place. The understanding of managing the state like a company has now been established with this system. With the transition to the presidential system, public personnel administration became dispersed, as presented in Figure 1.

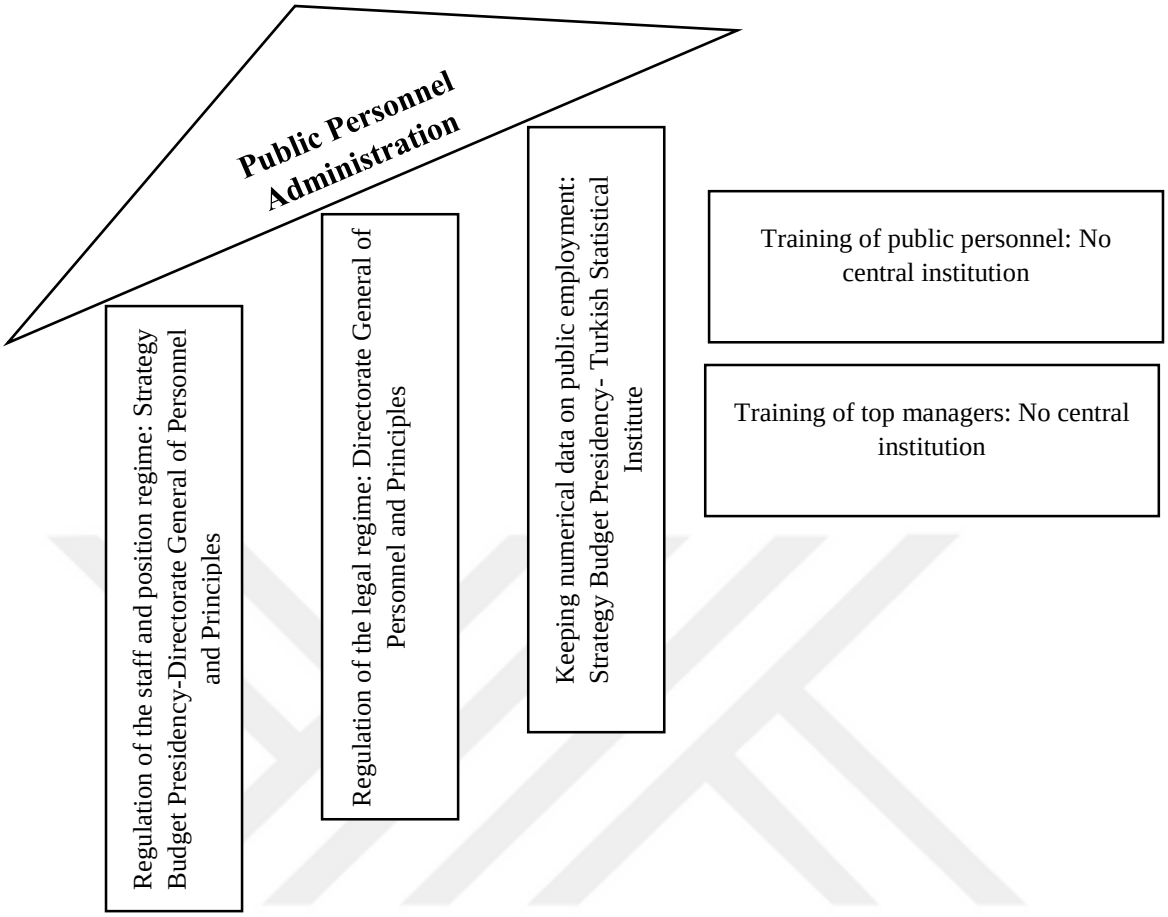


Figure 1. New institutional appearance of public personnel administration

Note: Adapted and translated by the author from Albayrak (2020, p. 1546).

3. EXAMINATION FOR ENTRY TO CIVIL SERVICE

In this second part of the thesis, the examination system that plays an important role in entering the civil service will be evaluated. The relationship between the examination and merit, the method and characteristics of the examinations, the types of examinations, written exam, oral exam and interviews will be analysed. Here, the written, oral examinations and interviews conducted by the institutions, which will be discussed more, are of importance. In addition, the examinations conducted for some public occupational groups and the characteristics of the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE), which is a central examination, will also be discussed in this section.

3.1. Exam for Merit

The concept of merit is defined in a wide range in the literature and, in terms of its dictionary meaning, it expresses meanings such as 'convenience', 'suitability' and 'sufficiency'. The principle of merit, which is frequently used in different disciplines and fields, will be addressed in the context of civil service in this section and will be examined with definitions specific to this field. When the definitions in the literature are examined, merit adopts an understanding that advocates that everyone has equal opportunities according to their abilities (Fettahlıoğlu and Demir, 2015, p. 176). Another definition is that merit aims to employ only the most qualified people with the best performance and to increase their ranks in the institution (Şahin, 2016, p. 233). The principle of merit can be accepted as a principle of employer placement of individuals based on merit, a principle that determines the opportunity conditions to which the principle of placement will be applied and a principle that determines the reward programs for jobs (Daniels, 1978, p. 207-208). According to Political Scientist Mehta, the principle of merit has three elements. These are given as follows (Mehta, 2011, p. 7):

a) First, at one level a meritocracy signals a certain kind of equality. Merit is opposed to non-discrimination. It reflects a society where people are not discriminated against because of certain ascriptive characteristics like class, gender, caste, and race. Meritocracy in this sense entails non-discrimination

b) Second, meritocracy provides a principle of entitlement; it gives us criteria for determining what people should get in a particular context. We often say that the best deserve to get a job. In this sense, meritocracy is a criterion of fairness.

c) Third, meritocracy seems to provide a basis for efficiency. Society will be most productive if the best people get the job.

In terms of the Turkish public personnel system, the principle of merit is generally evaluated from two different perspectives, namely administrative law and public personnel administration (Güneyi, 2022, p. 65). The principle of merit was secured in 1876 by the Ottoman Empire's constitution, the Ottoman Basic Law. After this, the principle of merit continued to exist in all constitutions of the Republic of Türkiye. Article 39 of the Ottoman Basic Law stipulates that "talented and deserving individuals shall be elected to civil service according to the conditions to be determined by law. (Güneyi, 2021, p.1055)" The 92nd article of the 1924 Constitution states that "every Turk who possesses legal and political competence has the right to be employed in civil service according to his/her qualifications and entitlements." It is the first document in the Republic period to adopt merit in entering civil service (Mıhcıoğlu, 1958, p. 109). In Article 58 of the 1961 Constitution and Article 70 of the 1982 Constitution states that (Constitution of The Rebuplic of Turkey, 1982) "Every Turk has the right to enter civil service. No criteria other than the qualifications for the office concerned shall be taken into consideration for recruitment into civil service." With this article, merit is taken as the basis for entry into civil service and it is legally guaranteed that there will be no discrimination.

The principle of merit is defined in Article 3, Clause C of the Civil Servants Law No. 657. The merit system is the system in which the qualifications of civil servants are taken into consideration in the activities of appointment, advancement, training, promotion, suspension and dismissal of civil servants to be assigned in the civil service. In other words, the principle of merit is a principle that must be taken into consideration throughout the entire period of a person's civil service (Karatepe and Kurnaz, 2019, p. 93). Kara expresses this situation as follows; merit is a fundamental civil servant right that should be applied in all kinds of changes and developments in the personnel administration system, starting from the employment of the civil servant (Kara, 2009, p. 378).

The merit system is based on a set of principles that form the basis of ethical values, effectiveness and efficiency in the field of public administration and that necessitate taking into account the knowledge, skills, abilities, experience and ethical values of individuals in appointments to public positions. These are; the equality principle, the competence principle, the career principle, the security principle, the impartiality principle and the competition principle. These principles are important in entering civil service, during the term of office

and while performing their duties. The equality principle, entering civil service is a fundamental right of every Turkish citizen and no one can be subject to discrimination such as race, religion, colour or ethnic origin. The competence principle, the basic criterion in recruiting personnel to civil service, is to have the competence required by the position. In other words, it is essential to recruit individuals who are competent enough to perform the relevant duty in the best way. The career principle; the merit system not only selects the most suitable candidates for civil service, but also aims for talented and qualified personnel to remain in civil service, develop and climb the career ladder. The security principle, on the other hand, aims to meet the service assurance needs of individuals who dedicate their entire working life to this duty since civil service is considered a profession. Therefore, civil servants can not be deprived of their civil service rights unless they commit a serious fault determined by law. The principle of impartiality also requires all individuals and institutions that carry out civil services to act impartially in all kinds of activities and transactions. Similarly, it is unacceptable for civil servants to discriminate among citizens for any reason while performing their duties. Finally, the principle of competition is that open and free competition is the basis for recruiting personnel to the civil service. The functioning of the merit system is directly related to this principle. Therefore, when public institutions need personnel, they make announcements to the public for the relevant positions and provide an opportunity to all candidates who want to apply. Candidates who apply to the announcement are evaluated by participating in proficiency and competitive exams, and the most suitable candidates are included in the civil service.

While the principles of the merit system listed above aim to ensure justice, transparency, and accountability in civil services, the violation of this system reveals favouritism. In fact, the concept of merit emerged as a reaction to favouritism, and these two concepts have become a system. When the literature is examined for the concept of favouritism and subsequently the spoils system, the following definitions emerge. In the Turkish Language Association Dictionary, favouritism is defined as "the act of comparing a certain individual, group, idea or practice with another and deviating from objectivity and taking sides when a choice needs to be made between them (Özkanan and Erdem, 2015, p. 9)." In its dictionary meaning, favouritism is the behaviour of people in positions and positions, those in power, with the opportunities that come from this position and position, to people close to them, either by blood ties, political views or other special reasons, in a way that will provide them with professional or material benefits (Bozkurt, Ergun and Sezen, 1998). It can also be called favouritism, fixer or privilege in daily language (Özkanan and

Erdem, 2014). Favouritism can be defined as showing behaviour in favour of a group or person without considering fairness and equity (Aktan and Acar, 2021, p. 33). In other words, favouritism is the situation where specific criteria such as graduating from the same school, being from the same region, being on the same political party line, come to the fore in public organizations or in the relations between these units and the social environment, and universal criteria that regulate management work are pushed to the background (Oktay, 1983). Based on these definitions, favouritism is divided into types. As can be seen in Figure 2, favouritism is grouped under two headings and they also have types. These headings will be defined below.

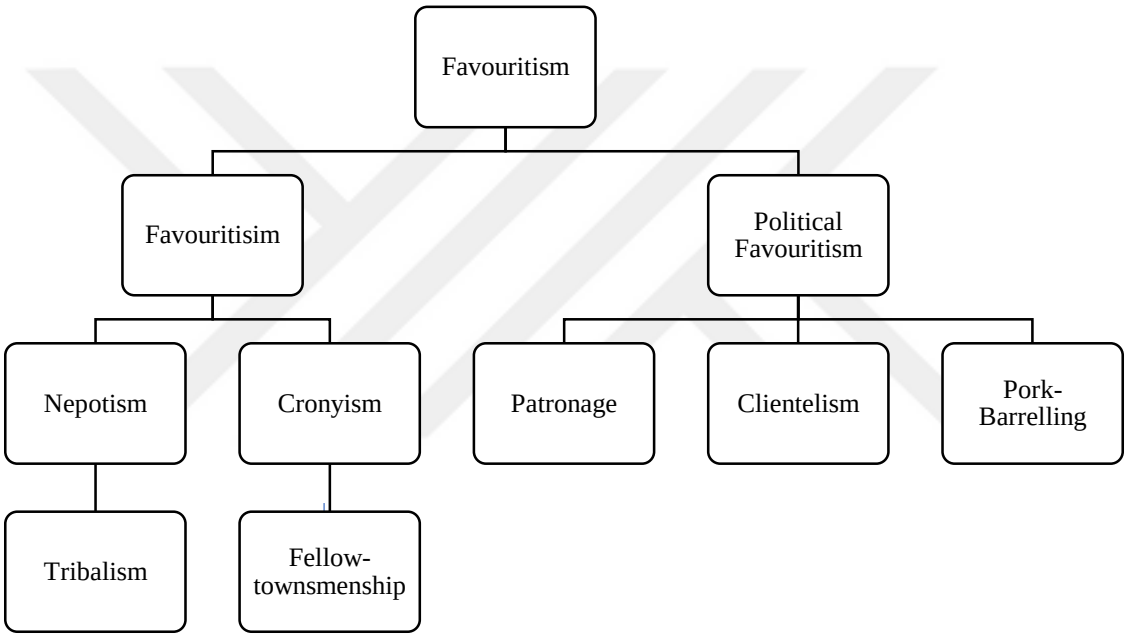


Figure 2. Classification of types of favouritism

Note: Adapted and translated by the author from Özkanan and Erdem (2015 p. 10).

First, the concept of favouritism will be focused on and its subcategories such as nepotism and cronyism will be examined. Then, the phenomenon of political favouritism will be analysed and its subtypes such as patronage, clientelism and pork-barrelling will be evaluated in detail.

Favouritism is the replacement of the principle of "merit (competence)" in appointments to public offices by personal factors such as kinship, fellow-townsmenship, friendship, etc. (Özkanan and Erdem, 2015, p. 10). Its subheading, nepotism, is defined as follows: Employing or appointing a person to a government position based solely on their

kinship with politicians, bureaucrats and other public officials, without taking into account factors such as their skills, abilities, success and level of education, is called nepotism. (Özsemerci, 2003, p. 20). In other words, as can be understood from this definition, nepotism is based on "blood ties." Another type, cronyism, covers a wider circle than nepotism. While kinship is essential in nepotism, acquaintances is essential in cronyism. Cronyism is the positive different treatment, in other words, favouring of some people not because of their skills and superiority, but simply because of their closeness to key figures (Özkanan and Erdem, 2015, p. 11). "Fellow-townsmenship" which is also common in Türkiye today, can be considered a special type of cronyism (Özsemerci, 2013). Fellow-townsmenship can also be defined as people from the same provincial supporting each other. This has also become a kind of favouritism.

The process by which political parties, after coming to power, provide unfair benefits to the groups of voters who support them by providing them with various privileged treatment is called "political favouritism". Political favouritism is also called "logrolling" or "partisanship" (Özkanan and Erdem, 2015, p. 11). The types of this favouritism are patronage, clientelism, and pork-barrelling. These can be defined as follows. During the political process, it is sometimes common for political parties to dismiss "senior bureaucrats" working in public institutions and organizations after coming to power and to appoint new people to these positions based on factors such as political favouritism, ideology, nepotism-cronyism. This situation is called "patronage" in the literature (Aktan and Acar, 2021, p. 17). Another one is clientelism, which refers to the efforts of political powers to collect political support in return for services or goods provided according to the distribution criteria of resources belonging to the society (Yuvalı, 2018, p. 399). Another definition of clientelism, which is the distribution of existing resources and wealth that will create rent in the public to the circle of friends and political supporters by using tenders, privatizations, etc. instead of increasing the quality of public goods and services (Keefer, 2007, p. 804). Finally, pork-barrelling is also called a type of political corruption. Pork-barrelling is the allocation of budget allocations to the electoral districts in a way that will maximize their votes in order to remain in power again in the next elections, and thus plundering budget resources (Aktan and Acar, 2021, p. 18). Another definition is that pork-barrelling is the process of providing services that is bound by certain rules, and different groups and individuals determine these rules in accordance with their own interests (Çimen, 2004, p. 120). The concept and types of favouritism have been defined and favouritism have now become a system. In this section, discussions on the favouritism system and the negative effects of the favouritism system on

public administration will be discussed and the difficulties in the implementation of the principle of merit in Türkiye will be analysed, and in this context, the extent to which the examination systems, which are accepted as tools of merit, are functional in practice and whether they have gone beyond a formal application will be discussed.

When the literature is examined for the spoils system, there are many definitions. The term spoils system is derived from an 1828 speech by former New York Senator William Learned Marcy (Hatipoğlu, 2019, p. 271). The phrase "To the victor belong the spoils", which US President Jackson used to defend the appointment of his own supporters to civil service, later became an idiom, and the word "spoils" in this idiom was used in the form of the "spoils system", which refers to this form of appointment and the dismissal of previous officials. The spoils system is also called the political plunder system (Şen, 1995). In practice, this system has been the way and method of both political favouritism, the plunder of civil servant positions as spoils of war, political rewards, and the creation of partisan cadres in the entrance and advancement of civil servants; it has constituted the theoretical basis of these (Güran, 1980, p. 85). Public offices are seen as political booty, leading to the appointment of people with political connections rather than qualified people. This deepens partisanship and injustice in civil services.

The spoils system is clearly evident in Türkiye. In fact, historian Prof. Dr. İlber Ortaylı made the following statement on this issue: "There is terrible nepotism, in other words, kinship in the country. Secondly, there is local patriotism. That is the worst. It is beyond fellow-townsmenship. It is not that innocent anymore. This is something that has no place in democracy. There is a university made up of people from a province. People avoid this and do not visit these places. Despite everything, I do not find these trends normal. Our private sector has not been able to go beyond this favouritism in the public sector either. The private sector is still full of narrow-minded megalomaniac people. They can not satisfy the young people they have just hired or even those who have studied abroad. Because they are extremely closed to their projects and directives. I have met a few of them, they are hopeless cases. These need to change." (CnnTurk, 2018). The statement mentioned the existence of types of favouritism, and stated that incompetent recruitments and favouritism are widespread in both the private and public sectors. Although six years have passed since the findings in question, it is observed that the problem of favouritism continues to deepen in Türkiye and the principle of merit is increasingly eroded.

The reflections of the spoils system and unmerited appointments in Türkiye are observed through news reports reflected in the public. These reports clearly reveal the

erosion of the principle of merit, the penetration of favouritism into the public administration system and the negative consequences of this situation. The allegations reflected in the press paint a worrying picture in this regard. For example, a report in Independent Turkish claims that a minister placed his nephew in a master's program illegally (Independent Türkçe, 2019). Similarly, a report published in Gazette Aydın claims that the Ministry of Culture and Tourism made an appointment to the Aydın Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism against the principles of merit (Başkar, 2024). Another claim that has emerged recently is that the appointments of judges are made by the deputy minister of the ruling party (T24 Haber Merkezi, 2025). These reports show that public appointments in Türkiye are moving away from merit and that political favouritism is widespread. The problems had experienced as a result of these appointments have also been reflected in the press. According to Cumhuriyet, incompetent appointments in the public sector disrupt labour peace, and according to Alay Hamzaçebi, the General President of the Büro-İş Union affiliated with Birleşik Kamu-İş, "arbitrary and unlawful appointments in almost all public institutions, especially the Revenue Administration, Social Security Institution, Ministry of Youth and Sports, courthouses, and population directorates, disrupt labour peace, and this situation causes an increase in disciplinary punishments" (Çakır, 2024). According to another news report, the negative consequences of incompetent appointments are listed. These are; some managers do not even have basic knowledge of legislation, they can not even do routine work, and meaningless visits to politically influential people increase (Memurlar.Net, 2024). As a result of these claims, incompetent appointments and the problems they create reveal that the principle of merit is being damaged in public institutions and organizations, municipalities and universities.

The allegations of unmerited appointments and favouritism in public institutions and organizations in Türkiye are actually a manifestation of a systemic problem. Such problems are not limited to public bureaucracy, but also spread to fundamental areas such as education, health, and law. In this context, the European University Association's report documents the international repercussions and effects of incompetent appointments to universities in Türkiye. In this context, the European University Association's (EUA) 2023 Autonomy Report examines the autonomy of higher education systems in four basic dimensions, demonstrating the importance of the problem of incompetence in universities, and offers a more in-depth and international perspective on this issue. These dimensions are determined as administrative autonomy, financial autonomy, personnel autonomy and academic autonomy (Aldemir, 2023). The report analyses the practices in these four areas of autonomy

and the competencies of universities in these areas, and evaluates their effects on the quality and effectiveness of higher education.

Türkiye is a notable exception to other higher education systems in Europe when it comes to university autonomy. Since 2018, with the transition to the presidential system, rectors of both state and foundation universities have been appointed directly by the president, without considering internal selection processes, and according to the report, this practice is unmatched in any other system in Europe (Pruvot, Estarmann and Popkhadze, 2023). This has led to Türkiye receiving the lowest score in Europe in terms of organizational autonomy. In terms of financial autonomy, there are still restrictions on universities' ability to generate income, manage budget surpluses and borrow. In terms of personnel autonomy, there are notable restrictions on the recruitment, appointment and promotion processes of faculty and administrative staff. Finally, in terms of academic autonomy, universities have limited decision-making authority in matters such as student quotas, opening and closing programs, determining the language of instruction and quality assurance mechanisms. The restrictions experienced in these four areas of autonomy undermine the merit-based academic development and institutional independence of universities in Türkiye. Therefore, the loss of autonomy in the decision-making processes of universities brings the importance and implementation of merit in civil service to an even more critical point. Because, in order to ensure merit, objective and transparent criteria must be determined for entry into civil service.

The examination systems, which are an important tool for establishing the principle of merit in the Turkish civil service, were put into practice in 1999. Central examinations aim to evaluate the knowledge, skills, and experience of the individuals to be appointed according to objective criteria. These examinations constitute the first step in determining and appointing individuals with the qualifications required by civil services. Although the central examinations and computerized appointments implemented since 1999 have made significant contributions to the problem of favouritism, it can not be said that this system has fully implemented the principle of merit. Because most of the exams held in areas where favouritism is prevalent are nothing more than a formality (Eryılmaz, 2015, p. 306). Considering the diversity and different requirements of civil services, a central examination is not considered sufficient for some positions, while a central examination may be sufficient for others. Therefore, the examination systems used in the recruitment of public personnel can generally be divided into two as central examinations and institutional examinations. While central examinations evaluate a wide range of candidates, especially through the

Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE), institutional examinations consist of written examinations, oral examinations, and interview processes organized by public institutions according to their specific needs. The positions of public personnel are divided into two main groups as Group A career occupation cadres and Group B cadres. For Group A career occupation cadres (inspector, expert assistant, trainee controller), central exams are of a preselection nature and successful candidates are entitled to participate in institutional exams. For Group B cadres (engineer, civil servant, psychologist, and nurse), the central exam PPSE is used as an important evaluation criterion. Such exams aim to measure the different competencies and skills of the candidates and to contribute to the selection of the most suitable people for civil services.

3.2. Exam Method and Features

The previous section discussed the importance of the principle of merit in entering the civil service and the role of examination systems in implementing this principle. This section will focus on how examination systems, which are considered as tools of the principle of merit, operate, examination methods and their basic features. Since the fair, objective and reliable implementation of examinations is of critical importance in ensuring the principle of merit, the format of examinations, the content of examinations, evaluation processes and their effects on candidates will be examined in detail under this heading. As stated in the previous section, examination systems are generally divided into two main categories: central examinations and institutional examinations. The exams for personnel recruitment to public institutions and organizations are conducted by the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (MSPC). These exams are pre-selection and require candidates to pass certain score thresholds in order to be employed in the public sector. The Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE), the Ministry of National Education Academy Entrance Examination (MNE-AEE), the Ministry of Justice's judicial and administrative judiciary judgeship exams, the district governor candidate exam, and the Court of Accounts assistant auditor exam such as are conducted by MSPC for the first stage of many public personnel recruitment processes.

The examinations conducted by MSPC are of great importance in terms of ensuring the principle of merit in the recruitment of public personnel. These exams aim to select the most suitable and competent individuals for civil service by ensuring that candidates are subject to an objective and standardized evaluation. However, in addition to these exams,

certain public institutions and organizations also organize special written and oral exams according to their own needs. Such institutional exams are used in the recruitment of certain professional groups that are not included in the scope of central placement, and the exam processes are carried out according to the principles determined by the institutions. In addition to the central exam, in-house written exams or direct interview processes are also applied in professions such as teaching, academic staff, assistant judges and prosecutors, and district governor candidates. This situation leads to some criticisms compared to the objective evaluation provided by the central exam and brings with it discussions that the principle of merit is not fully ensured. Therefore, in addition to understanding the scope and content of the exams conducted by MSPC, the institutional exam processes applied in addition to these exams should also be evaluated. In this context, in this section, the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE), which is the basic example of a central exam, will be examined in detail; then, other exams conducted by MSPC will be discussed. In the next section, the exams and processes conducted by institutions after the exams conducted by MSPC will be examined.

With the entry into force of the "General Regulation on Exams for Those to be Appointed to Civil Services for the First Time", the principles, procedures and bases of the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) to be applied in entering civil services have been determined. The scope of the regulation is divided into Group A and Group B cadres in Article 2 (2002) and is specified as follows:

a) Group A Cadres; Cadres and duties related to professions entered by subjecting to a special competitive exam and subjected to a proficiency exam after a certain training program in the Prime Ministry, ministries, their affiliated and related organizations at the level of under secretariat, presidency and independent general directorate and their affiliated partnerships, and inspection boards of provincial special administrations and municipalities,

b) Group B Cadres; It covers the procedures and exams to be carried out for those who will be appointed to the cadres and positions to be assigned to civil services and duties for the first time, except for the professions specified in paragraph (a) above, in general and annexed budget institutions and revolving capital organizations affiliated to them, funds and guarantee funds established by laws, special provincial administrations and municipalities, unions established by special provincial administrations and municipalities and revolving capital organizations affiliated to them and other public institutions and organizations, whose cadres are included in the lists annexed to the Decree Law No. 190.

The exceptional cadres other than these cadres are specified in Article 3 of the General Regulation on Exams for Those to be Appointed to Civil Services for the First Time (2002) as follows:

> "The Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of National Defence, the Council of Judges and Prosecutors and the Under secretariat of the National Intelligence Organization, the Ministry Inspection Boards of the Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs, the Gendarmerie General Command and the Military Justice Inspection Boards, district governor candidates, Ministry of Foreign Affairs candidate career officers, candidate consular and specialized officers, Turks Abroad and Related Communities expert assistants, Communication expert assistants, teachers employed in the Ministry of National Education[13] and those listed in the third paragraph of the amended Article 1 of the Civil Servants Law No. 657[14], and artists of the State symphony orchestras and the State Classical Turkish Music Choir are outside the scope of this Regulation."

There is no requirement for the central exam PPSE for these professions, which are specified as exceptional positions. While institutions conduct their own exams for some of them, direct appointments are made for the others.

The second section of the regulation is devoted to the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE), which forms the basis of central personnel recruitment in Turkish public administration. This section includes articles on the procedures and principles of PPSE, its announcement, guide, and how the exam is implemented. Article 6 of the General Regulation on Exams for Those to be Appointed to Civil Services for the First Time (2002) states the procedures and principles of PPSE as follows:

> "The procedures and principles of PPSE, its content, the place and time it will be held, the announcement of the exam, the subjects and tests to be included in PPSE

[13] There is no requirement for the central exam PPSE for these professions, which are specified as exceptional positions. While institutions conduct their own exams for some of them, direct appointments are made for the others.

[14] Members and alternate members and rapporteurs of the Constitutional Court; those who are in the professions of judgeship and prosecutorship or in positions considered to be in these professions, members of the Council of State and the Court of Accounts, prosecutors and assistants of the Court of Accounts, members and assistants of the teaching staff of universities, Academies of Economic and Commercial Sciences, State Academies of Engineering and Architecture, State Academies of Fine Arts, Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East, members of the Presidential Symphony Orchestra, artists of the General Staff Janissary Band Member Squadron, art officers, expert officers, enforcement expert officers and interns of the State Theatre, State Opera and Ballet, Municipal Operas and theatres, city and municipal conservatories and orchestras; personnel working in the Sportoto Organization; officers, non-commissioned officers, specialist gendarme, expert non-commissioned officers and contracted non-commissioned officers and private soldier, and members of the Law Enforcement Agency.

and their weights, the types of scores and the calculation method, the education level of the applicants, the application of the candidates, the principles regarding the use of the types of scores to be obtained from the exam in placement and inviting the entrance exam, and the notification of PPSE results to the candidates and institutions are determined jointly by the SPP and MSPC. A PPSE Guide and Application Document are prepared by MSPC in accordance with these procedures and principles."

The other articles of the second section are as follows:

"Taking into account the personnel need of public institutions and organizations, the dates of the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) are determined jointly by the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) and the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (MSPC). MSPC announces the exam date, application date and application method by announcing them in the Official Gazette and the three highest circulation newspapers published nationwide on different dates. In order for candidates to be informed before the exam, they can find information on personnel recruitment processes, application conditions, exam content, evaluation methods, vacant positions and position information in the PPSE Guide. Candidates who will apply for the exam must fully state their identity information, level of education and fields, and personal qualifications in the Application Form. MSPC carries out the exam, receipt and evaluation of applications. Exam results are reported to SPP electronically and sent to the candidates' addresses by mail. Exam results can also be announced through other means of communication. PPSE results are valid for two years from the date of announcement. However, if a new exam can not be held, they remain valid until the next exam results are announced."

The third and fourth sections of the General Regulation on Exams for Those to be Appointed to Civil Services for the First Time (2002) regulate the selection of those to be appointed to Group A cadres and the placement of those to be appointed to Group B cadres, respectively. In this context, while the selection of candidates for Group A cadres is carried out by public institutions and organizations within the framework of their own legislation, candidates are appointed to Group B cadres through a central placement system. Group A cadres generally include career professions such as specialist, inspector, and auditor, and the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) serves as a preliminary selection exam for candidates to be appointed to these cadres. Candidates who are successful in the PPSE are evaluated by participating in special exams (written, oral, interview, etc.) organized by the relevant public institutions and organizations. Group B cadres mostly include cadres such as

civil servants, engineers, nurses, and technicians, and candidates to be appointed to these cadres are directly placed through the central placement system according to their PPSE scores and preferences. In the placement process for Group B cadres, candidates' preferences are taken electronically and in line with the qualifications specified in the predetermined Qualification-Code Guide. These different processes are determined according to the different needs of public institutions and the characteristics of the cadres, and aim to implement the principle of merit and select the most suitable personnel for civil service. However, it is also observed that these processes do not always operate in a completely objective and fair manner and can lead to problems such as favouritism.

PPSE, which is a centralized exam system implemented in Türkiye for candidates with undergraduate, associate and secondary education levels to be able to work as civil servants in public institutions and organizations, includes processes that vary according to the candidates' graduation levels and the positions they apply for. The exam is basically divided into two main categories: PPSE A and PPSE B. PPSE B exam is mandatory for all candidates who want to start civil service through central appointment, and participation in this exam varies according to graduation level. PPSE, which can only be attended by undergraduate graduates in odd years, is carried out with the participation of candidates at all undergraduate, associate and secondary education levels in even years. Recruitments to PPSE B positions are made according to the PPSE results obtained in even years, and central appointments are also carried out based on these scores. Candidates who want to be appointed to Group B undergraduate, associate and secondary education positions are evaluated according to the P3, P93 and P94 score types, respectively, and these scores are considered valid for two years from the date the exam results are announced. The appointment of PPSE Group B Undergraduate cadres is made in two ways: "central appointments" and "institutional appointments" (Bkmkitap, 2022). The central appointments are carried out according to the PPSE results conducted by MSPC twice a year in even years, while institutional appointments are made on dates determined by public institutions in line with their own needs and according to the conditions announced by the relevant institutions. In institutional appointments, contract personnel employment is frequently employed in institutions such as the Ministry of Health, Social Security Institution, Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Industry and Technology and Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. PPSE B exam aims to measure the general knowledge level and basic skills of the candidates, and there are a total of sixty questions from Turkish (thirty questions) and Mathematics (thirty questions)

in the General Ability section (GA), and a total of sixty questions from History (twenty-seven questions), Geography (eighteen questions), Citizenship (nine questions) and Current Events (six questions) in the General Culture section (GC). In order to be appointed to Group B professions, candidates must take the GA and GC exams, which consist of a total of one hundred twenty questions.

PPSE Group A is an exam organized for undergraduate graduates or candidates who are in the graduation phase who want to be appointed to career occupational positions. In order to be appointed to these career positions, candidates must first receive a valid score in the PPSE score type determined by the institutions and then pass the written and/or oral exams held by the institutions. Candidates who are successful in these exams organized by the institutions are also assigned to their main positions after going through a qualification process and being deemed sufficient in the in-house exams. All candidates who will be appointed to career occupational positions (except for exceptional cadres) must first take the PPSE. Candidates who participate in the PPSE Group A exam must first take the GA-GC exam, which is a common field, and then the field knowledge exam. PPSE Group A exams are at the undergraduate level and field knowledge exams are organized every year. All candidates who are undergraduate graduates or who can graduate (senior students) can participate in the exam, however, candidates must be in a graduate status when applying to public institutions and organizations. Candidates who are assigned to Group A positions go through a qualification process of at least three years. During this process, candidates learn the functioning of the institution by working in different units of the institution, develop their professional knowledge and skills, and at the end of the qualification process, they are required to prepare a thesis and pass oral or written and oral exams. Candidates who successfully complete the qualification process are promoted from the title of assistant specialist to specialist, and from the title of assistant inspector to inspector. There are a total of fifty score types in PPSE, and forty-seven different score types are used for Group A positions. Field knowledge exams generally aim to measure the candidates' field knowledge levels in more depth and are applied in three sessions in different fields such as public administration, international relations, labour economics and industrial relations, law, economics, public finance, business, accounting and statistics. The scores obtained according to the PPSE results are of a pre-selection nature in the recruitment processes of public institutions and organizations for career professional positions. Afterwards, institutions conduct their own exams.

The positions of Assistant Revenue Specialist (ARS) and Assistant State Revenue Specialist (ASRS), which constitute an important example of public personnel recruitment processes and can be evaluated within the scope of PPSE Group A cadres, attract attention with their exam processes. Therefore, it would be appropriate to separately mention the recruitment process for these cadres. The first stage in ARS and ASRS recruitments is for candidates to obtain a sufficient score in a certain score type from the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE). Candidates who meet the minimum score requirement in the relevant score type gain the right to make a preliminary application, and then, as a result of the evaluation, candidates up to twenty times the number of cadres are entitled to make a final application according to their PPSE score superiority. As a result of the final application, candidates participate in the entrance exam. Entrance exams are regulated in the State Revenue Specialist Regulation and the Revenue Administration Presidency Revenue Specialist Regulation (TBMM, 2012; TBMM, 2009). The entrance exam consists of two stages: written and oral. The regulations regulate that the written exam can also be conducted by the Revenue Administration Presidency. However, the written exam is usually conducted by the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (MSPC). This exam is applied as a multiple-choice test and covers the fields of law, economics, finance, accounting, Atatürk's Principles and Revolution History and foreign language. There are a total of sixty questions in the exam and candidates must score at least seventy points. Candidates who are successful in the written exam are entitled to participate in the oral exam within the quota according to their score ranking. As a result of the oral exam, appointments are made to the specialist assistant positions according to the quota number provided that they score at least seventy points. Some public professional groups, such as these recruitments, are subject to different evaluation processes with other exams conducted by MSPC other than PPSE.

First, the occupational group to be addressed is teaching. A new era has begun for the teaching occupational group, which has somehow integrated with PPSE. On January 16, 2025, the Ministry of National Education Academy Entrance Examination (MNE-AEE) process was put into practice with the "Regulation on the Employment of Contract Teachers of the Ministry of National Education" published in the Official Gazette numbered 32784. According to this regulation, the Ministry of National Education Academy Entrance Examination (MNE-AEE) is an exam that aims to measure the teaching profession competencies, including the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values required by the teaching profession. The guide for the exam, which will be implemented for the first time on July 13, 2025, has been published. According to this guide, in the new system, MNE-AEE is

conducted in two sessions as the Academy Entrance Examination (AEE) and the Teaching Field Knowledge Test (TFKT). There are eighty multiple choice questions in the AEE session and 50 multiple choice questions in the TFKT session. The scope of the AEE is determined as verbal ability, numerical ability, history, geography of Türkiye, Fundamentals of Education and the Turkish National Education System and legislation. TFKT will be conducted in areas such as History, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics. In foreign language fields, a different application is implemented. Within the scope of the Ministry of National Education Academy Entrance Examination (MNE-AEE), no separate exam is conducted for foreign language field positions. Instead, the Foreign Language Examination (FLE) score applied by MSPC will be used to evaluate the competence of candidates in these fields. This application aims to evaluate the field-specific competence of foreign language teachers through a standardized national examination.

Article 9 of the Regulation on the Employment of Contract Teachers of the Ministry of National Education regulates the preparatory education process to be provided within the National Education Academy. The relevant article states (TBMM, 2025), "Candidates to be admitted to preparatory education are determined according to their MNE-AEE score superiority for each field within the quota number determined by fields, not to exceed the number of positions granted appointment permission. In case of equality of MNE-AEE scores, the candidate to be admitted to preparatory education is determined by computer lottery." According to this regulation, teacher candidates are subject to a preliminary appointment process with their MNE-AEE score in order to receive education at the Academy after graduating from higher education. In other words, candidates who graduate from education faculties as university graduates are faced with the obligation to take another exam to receive education at the Academy and compete again in order to be placed in the limited quotas opened for education at the Academy. Subjecting teacher candidates who graduate from education faculties to another exam raises questions about the adequacy of the education received at universities and may prevent a selection process in line with the principle of merit.

Within the scope of the new regulation that entered into force as of 2025, a radical change was made in teacher appointments and the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) was abolished for teachers. Teachers who were directly appointed to a cadre according to the PPSE result have now lost this right. In the system that has been replaced, teacher candidates are transferred to the academy based on the results of the Ministry of National Education Academy Entrance Examination (MNE-AEE). Candidates who are

successful in the MNE-AEE are accepted to the National Education Academy and receive preparatory training there. Teacher candidates who complete the preparatory training are assigned as contract teachers instead of being directly assigned as permanent staff. The provisions regarding preparatory training are included in the third section of the Teaching Profession Law No. 7528. Article 8 of the law states that preparatory training consists of theoretical and practical courses and that this training is provided within the National Education Academy. According to the same article, the duration of preparatory training is determined as four terms. Article 10 states (TBMM, 2024), "At least two written examinations are held for each theoretical course in preparatory education. Those whose grade point average is sixty out of one hundred and above in each course are considered successful." The second paragraph of the same article states (TBMM, 2024), "In order to determine the level of success in reflecting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours acquired in preparatory education to the education and training environment, the teacher candidate is evaluated three times." and "The practical course success score is determined by taking twenty percent of the first evaluation score, thirty percent of the second evaluation score and fifty percent of the third evaluation score. Teacher candidates whose practical course success score is seventy out of one hundred and above are considered successful. Those who fail in practical courses are dismissed from the Academy." After the completion of the preparatory education, the theoretical and practical course success scores of the teacher candidates determine the success score that is the basis for appointment. In this calculation process, sixty percent of the practical course success score and forty percent of the theoretical course success score are taken as basis. The contractual appointment processes of teacher candidates are initiated according to the obtained score.

Following the entry processes into the teaching profession, another group of public personnel employed through special examination processes other than central placement are academic personnel. The recruitment processes of faculty members and academic staff to be assigned in higher education institutions go through different stages within the framework of the relevant legislation and are based on certain qualification criteria. Academic staff recruitment is regulated within the scope of the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Regarding Central Examination and Entrance Examinations to be Applied to Appointments to Teaching Staff Positions Other than Academic Staff. The conditions that academic staff candidates must meet are specified in detail in the second section of the regulation. According to Article 6 of the regulation (TBMM, 2018), in order to apply for teaching staff positions, candidates must receive at least seventy points from the Academic Personnel and

Postgraduate Education Entrance Exam and at least fifty points from the central foreign language exam accepted by the Council of Higher Education or a score equivalent to this score from an exam accepted as equivalent. Article 5 of the regulation regulates the participation conditions for Academic Personnel and Postgraduate Education Entrance Exam, which is applied as a central exam. According to this article (TBMM, 2018), those who are eligible to graduate from an undergraduate program, undergraduate graduates and those who have completed their undergraduate education abroad, provided that they have received an equivalence certificate, can apply to Academic Personnel and Postgraduate Education Entrance Exam. In Academic Personnel and Postgraduate Education Entrance Exam, it is determined as a success criterion that candidates receive at least seventy out of one hundred in the score type appropriate to their field. In addition, the results of this exam are considered valid for five years from the date they are announced. Candidates are entitled to take the entrance exam as a result of the preliminary evaluation according to the scores they receive, up to ten times the number of positions announced by higher education institutions. Entrance exams are administered as an oral exam for departments providing education in a foreign language and as a written exam for other positions. As a result of the evaluation, the final success score is calculated according to the criteria determined for each position type. Candidates with a success score below sixty-five are considered unsuccessful, while those with sufficient scores are appointed according to their success order and a reserve list is created.

Following the academic personnel recruitment processes, another occupational group that is employed through special exam processes other than central placement is the judge and prosecutor candidates. With the new regulation that entered into force in 2023, the acceptance processes of judge and prosecutor candidates were restructured and the Assistant Judge and Prosecutor System was introduced. With this new system, instead of being directly appointed to the profession, candidates go through training and internship processes for a certain period of time and their qualifications are evaluated within the scope of these processes. Article 9/A of the Judges and Prosecutors Law No. 2802 regulates how the written competitive exam and interview processes will be carried out. According to the relevant article, the written competitive exam is implemented by MSPC within the framework of the protocol made with the Ministry of Justice. The exam consists of two main sections: General Culture and General Ability and Field Knowledge. The General Culture and General Ability section includes the subjects of Turkish, mathematics, Turkish culture and civilizations, Atatürk's Principles and Revolution History and basic civics, and has a weight of twenty

percent in the evaluation of the written exam. The field knowledge section is also subject to the distinction between judicial and administrative judicial and has a weight of eighty percent. According to the written exam results, starting from the highest score, one times more than the number of positions specified in the exam announcement are invited to the interview, provided that they receive at least seventy points out of one hundred. As a result of the interview, a success list is created starting from the highest score. The final success ranking is calculated based on seventy percent of the written exam score and thirty percent of the interview score, and appointments are made according to this success list. After these stages are successfully completed, candidates do not start the profession directly; they are subject to the Judge and Prosecutor Assistant Training Process. The judge and prosecutor assistant process consists of three stages: the basic training period, the duty period and the final training period. According to Article 10 of Law No. 2802 (TBMM, 1983), the basic training and final training are provided by the Turkish Justice Academy, and the duty period is completed by actually working in judicial authorities. This process is detailed in Article 7 of the Regulation on Assistant Judges and Prosecutors (TBMM, 2024); it is stated that the basic training is three months, the term of duty is thirty months in total (with two 2-month intermediate trainings during this period) and the final training is three months. With this new regulation, the appointment process for the profession of judge and prosecutor has become longer and has a multi-stage structure, and the transition period for candidates to the profession has been significantly extended.

Apart from central placement, district governor candidates, another group of public personnel employed through special exam processes, also go through an exam and training process like judge and prosecutor professions. The appointment of district governor candidates to this profession depends on their successful completion of the written and oral exam stages. First of all, district governor candidates must meet certain conditions in order to apply for the written exam. These conditions are clearly stated in the "District Governor Candidates Regulation". According to Article 4 of the regulation (TBMM, 2011), in order for district governor candidates to apply, they must "...graduate from the international relations, political science, public administration, economics, business, treasury and finance, sociology, public relations and publicity, psychology departments of faculties that provide at least four years of undergraduate education or from other departments that have at least eighty percent of the courses in the curriculum of any of these departments or from law faculties." In addition, those who have at least a four-year undergraduate education in the social sciences, engineering faculties and history departments of universities and have

postgraduate education in the fields of international relations, political science, public administration, law or economics can also apply. The written competitive exam is conducted by the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (MSPC). The exam consists of two main sections: General Culture and General Ability and Field Knowledge. The General Culture and General Ability section includes questions on Turkish, the socio-economic structure of Türkiye, Atatürk's Principles and Revolution History, Democratization and Human Rights in Türkiye; and the Field Knowledge section includes multiple-choice questions from the courses of Constitutional Law, Administrative Law, Administrative Structure of Türkiye, Local Administrations in Türkiye and Economy. Both sections are scored in a balanced manner in the exam evaluation and candidates must receive at least seventy points out of a hundred to be considered successful. Candidates who receive sufficient points in the written exam are entitled to participate in the oral exam according to their ranking. Candidates who are successful in the oral exam are included in the district governor candidacy process and begin their internship period. According to Article 7 of the District Governor Candidates Regulation (TBMM, 2011), this internship period consists of certain stages: "Provincial Centre Internship (two months), District Governor Companion Internship (three months), Internship with a Civil Service Inspector (two months), Ministry Centre Internship (Language Course) (four months), Overseas Internship (twelve months), Deputy District Governor Internship (nine months), District Governor Course (four months). During this process, candidates learn the duties and authorities of the district governorship on site and take an active role in management, supervision and decision-making processes. Candidates who successfully complete the training process finally take the End of Course Exam and earn the right to be appointed as district governor if they receive at least seventy points from this exam.

The last public profession group to be discussed in this section is the assistant auditor cadre of the Court of Accounts, one of the most established audit institutions in Türkiye. The process of entering the Assistant Auditor position of the Court of Accounts is quite long and multi-stage compared to other public profession groups. Candidates are first subjected to the Elimination Exam conducted by the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (MSPC). The scope and content of the elimination exam are explained in the second section of the Regulation on Assistant Auditors of the Court of Accounts as follows (TBMM, 2017): "The elimination exam consists of questions on field knowledge, general culture and general aptitude and is conducted according to the test procedure. Field knowledge covers questions on economics, finance, law and accounting." In this exam, the candidates' competencies in

different disciplines are measured. The evaluation of the elimination exam is detailed in the same regulation. Accordingly, a weighted score is calculated as follows (TBMM, 2017): Economics, Finance, Law, Accounting 20%; General Aptitude and General Culture 10%. Starting from the highest score, candidates who score seventy and above are ranked in order of success. In case of equality of scores, priority is given to candidates with high scores in economics, finance, law, accounting, general ability and general culture. Candidates who successfully pass the elimination exam are entitled to take the written exam in the classical method, which is also conducted by MSPC. This exam consists of compulsory courses under the titles of law group, finance group, economics group and composition, while one of the two optional areas, accounting and commercial law, must be preferred. The classical exam format measures not only the theoretical knowledge of the candidates, but also their analytical thinking and written expression skills. In the entrance to the Assistant Auditor of the Court of Accounts, after the written exam process is successfully completed, the candidates are invited to an interview. The success score of the candidates who successfully complete the interview is calculated by taking the arithmetic average of each exam score in the process. After these processes are completed, the successful candidates gain the right to start working as Assistant Auditors of the Court of Accounts. Thus, the examination structures of important professional groups within the scope of central examination and institutional examination processes have been discussed in detail. In the next section, in-house written, oral examinations and interviews will be examined.

3.3. Exam Types

The exams applied during the process of entering civil service are divided into two basic groups as central examination and institutional examinations. As discussed in detail in the previous section, the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) within the scope of the central examination measures the general ability, general culture and field knowledge levels of the candidates and constitutes the first stage in entering public institutions. The distinction, characteristics and process of PPSE as Group A and Group B cadres were examined. In addition to this central exam, the exams conducted by MSPC for appointment to certain public professional groups were also examined. After these exams, which are of a pre-selection nature, the written exams conducted by the institutions themselves also represent an important stage. In this context, many professional groups, from teaching to academic staff recruitment, from assistant judges and prosecutors to district governor

candidates and assistant auditors of the Court of Accounts, are subject to institutional exams after the exams conducted by MSPC. In this section, the types of exams applied by public institutions will be discussed in detail. First, the written exams organized by the institutions themselves will be examined, and then the oral exams and interview processes will be discussed.

3.3.1. Written Exams

In the recruitment of personnel to public institutions and organizations, institutions conduct their own exams to measure candidates' professional knowledge levels and competencies in relevant fields. In addition to the exams conducted by MSPC and PPSE which are examples of central exam, there are also written exams specially organized by institutions for certain public professional groups. These exams are conducted to measure field knowledge and professional competencies appropriate to the needs of the institution. In this context, written exam processes differ for each public professional group and are shaped according to the legislation and requirements of the relevant institution.

A multi-stage exam process is applied in the recruitment of personnel for career professions in public institutions and organizations. The first stage in this process, the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) results, serve as a preliminary selection for candidates who will participate in the entrance exams. Candidates who are successful in PPSE are invited to the entrance exams in accordance with the quota determined by the relevant institution. According to the legislation, this number is limited to a maximum of twenty times the number of vacant positions and quotas approved by the institution. In this context, in recruitments up to twenty times the quota, the entrance exam is generally applied in the form of a written exam.

Written exams used in public personnel recruitment are applied in various formats to measure different talents and skills of candidates. These formats can be open-ended, multiple choice, composition and translation. In open-ended questions, candidates are expected to give detailed answers in the classical way on predetermined topics, while in composition exams, candidates are asked to express their knowledge, opinions and synthesis skills on a specific topic in writing. Although such exams provide significant contributions in terms of developing candidates' written expression skills, depth of thought and knowledge synthesis skills, they are criticized due to the difficulty of achieving objectivity in the evaluation processes. Because it is difficult to ensure equality in terms of grades in the answers given

by candidates in the classical way and the subjective comments and personal preferences of the evaluators can affect the results. This situation makes it difficult to act fairly and fully apply the principle of merit in classical format exams.

Some public institutions and organizations may also apply for translation exams in order to evaluate candidates' foreign language proficiency in a written exam format. In these exams, translation from English to Turkish or from Turkish to English is usually requested, and thus both the candidates' level of language knowledge and their ability to understand and interpret the text in the target language are measured. Translation exams play an important role in the recruitment of specialized personnel, especially in areas such as international relations, foreign trade, and tourism. Multiple choice exams are also administered by institutions, objectivity can be achieved better in multiple choice questions, which are test formats, because subjective evaluations are not possible since there is only one correct answer to the prepared test format questions. However, multiple choice tests also have some disadvantages; in particular, preparing test questions that can fully measure the candidates' real knowledge levels and competencies is a very difficult and specialized process. Therefore, it is of great importance that the exams to be conducted with this technique are prepared by competent experts in the field and in accordance with the exam principles (Türkan, 2000, p. 28).

The entrance exams for recruitment to PPSE Group A cadres are conducted by public institutions and organizations according to their own legislation. The entrance exam in question is conducted in the form of written and oral exams or only oral exams. In this regard, the written exam alone is not sufficient. In fact, the conditions specified for the Employment of Experts in Additional Article 41 of the Civil Servants Law No. 657 are stated as follows: "Assistant experts are recruited through a special competitive exam for the profession. The assistant expert entrance exam consists of written and oral exams or only oral exams according to the results of the central exam." According to this article, institutions determine the entrance exam according to their own legislations and decide which exam method or combination they will use. According to this regulation, written exams conducted by institutions also serve as a kind of pre-selection. Candidates who successfully complete the written exam are entitled to participate in the next stage, the oral exam. However, at this stage, it is not enough to get a high score in the written exam alone; a certain level of success must also be achieved in the oral exam. This threshold score is usually determined as seventy, and the average of the scores obtained from both exams is taken as basis for the candidates to be included in the final success ranking. Many public institutions implement

processes in which written exams are conducted on topics determined according to the needs of the institutions and successful candidates are invited to the oral exam. However, there are also exam processes that are conducted outside the central exam process and are directly under the authority of the institutions.

Academic staff recruitment is carried out through entrance exams conducted by higher education institutions in addition to central exams, and these processes are shaped within the framework of a certain order and regulation. These recruitments are carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Regarding Central Examination and Entrance Examinations to be Applied in Appointments to Academic Staff Positions Other than Faculty Members (TBMM, 2018). Academic staff candidates first take the Academic Personnel and Postgraduate Education Entrance Examination and also have a FLE (Foreign Language Examination) score for language proficiency. Universities subject applicants to entrance exams in order to measure their level of knowledge in relevant fields. These entrance exams are regulated in Article 11 of the specified regulation. In recruitments to be made to lecturer positions, if the position belongs to a program providing education in a foreign language or if it is announced for the purpose of teaching compulsory foreign language courses, the entrance exam is administered only in the form of an oral exam (TBMM, 2018). For programs providing education in a foreign language, the exam is again administered orally; However, in accordance with the decision of the university senate, candidates who receive sixty or more points in the oral exam may also be subject to an additional written exam. In this case, the candidates' entrance exam score is calculated by taking the arithmetic average of the written and oral exam results. For all other teaching and research assistant positions, the entrance exam is conducted as a written exam aimed at measuring the candidates' knowledge levels in the relevant field. These exams are conducted to ensure the evaluation of academic competencies and theoretical knowledge, and in line with the results, successful candidates are assigned to the position within the framework of the announced quotas. Thus, the written and oral exam processes applied in the recruitment of academic staff are directly conducted by the relevant higher education institutions.

3.3.2. Oral Exams

In the process of entering the civil service, in addition to the written exam, an oral exam can also be applied for the purpose of evaluating the candidates, and in some cases,

the recruitment can be carried out only with an oral exam. An oral exam is a type of exam in which the examiner and the examinee come face to face and answer various questions, either by asking sudden questions to one person or by having more than one person in the room and having one person think while the other takes the exam (Tortop, 1994, p. 54). The oral exam is also conducted to measure professional knowledge, just like the written exam. In addition, the candidate's verbal expression ability is also measured in the oral exam in addition to professional knowledge (Şahin, 2023). Oral exams, which are seen as complementary to the written exam in the entry to career professions, and only oral exams are increasingly finding a wider area of application and are also carried out in different professional groups. In addition to career professions such as expert assistant, inspector assistant and intern controller, oral exams are also used for contracted personnel recruitment. It is seen that these exams are also applied to professional groups such as contracted teacher, contracted court clerk, office staff, judge, prosecutor, district governor and state artist. This situation reveals that oral examinations require a specific arrangement for the dynamics of each profession and that the principle of merit must be effectively applied in public procurement. There are already regulations such as examination, appointment procedures and principles, promotion, duties and responsibilities, and conditions in the Civil Servants Law No. 657, which covers civil servants in general. In other respects, institutions regulate the exams to be carried out and the appointment procedures with the regulations they issue. Based on this, fifteen regulatory acts issued for different professional groups will be discussed. These can be stated as follows; (1) Regulation on Exams and Assignments for Those to be Appointed to Local Administrations for the First Time (TBMM, 2019), (2) Regulation on Human Rights and Equality Expertise (TBMM, 2017), (3) Law on Judges and Prosecutors (TBMM, 1983), (4) Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Regarding the Central Examination and Entrance Examinations to be Applied to Appointments to Academic Staff Positions Other Than Academic Staff (TBMM, 2018), (5) Regulation on Exams for Artist Officers, Practitioner Expert Officers and Expert Officers Working on a Contractual Basis in the General Directorate of State Opera and Ballet (TBMM, 2009), (6) Regulation on Exams, Assignments and Transfers of Civil Servants of the Ministry of Justice (TBMM, 2003), (7) Regulation on Exams of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (TBMM, 2018), (8) Regulation on Professional Personnel of the Public Procurement Agency (TBMM, 2010), (9) Regulation on Exams of the Presidency of Religious Affairs (TBMM, 2011), (10) Regulation on Public Auditor Expertise (TBMM, 2013), (11) Regulation on the Ministry of Culture and Tourism Trainee Controller Entrance and Controller Proficiency Exams and

Appointment, Training and Working Procedures and Principles (TBMM, 2006), (12) Regulation on Exams to be Held for Those Who Will Start Their First Duty in the Administrative Organization of the Presidency of the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye (TBMM, 2013), (13) Regulation on Exam and Appointment of Contracted Machinists to be Employed in the General Directorate of the Republic of Türkiye State Railways Transportation Joint Stock Company (TBMM, 2020), (14) Regulation on Revenue Administration Presidency Revenue Expertise (TBMM, 2009) (Bike, 2023, pp. 161-162) (15) Regulation on the Employment of Contract Teachers[15] (TBMM, 2016).

When the mentioned legislations are examined, the problems and solution suggestions in the evaluation processes of oral exams will be examined in general; issues such as the impartiality of the exam boards, what the evaluation criteria are, the lack of audio and video recording systems and the success threshold will be discussed. The members of the exam boards are important for the impartial and reliable conduct of oral exams. In this context, while there should not be any relationship between the candidate and the board member or members that could undermine impartiality, situations such as affinity relations in particular should not be included in the examination board, as they may cast doubt on the objectivity of the examination processes. In ten of the examined legislations, having a certain degree of affinity ties is regulated as an obstacle to the board member's participation in the examinations (Bilke, 2023, p. 162). In some legislations, there are not even regulations regarding the impartiality of the examination board members. During the oral exam, the board members come face to face with the candidate and the candidates are evaluated in many ways, both in terms of professional knowledge and personal characteristics. As a reflection of this situation in the legislation, the personal characteristics of the candidate are also included among the issues to be evaluated in the oral exams. These characteristics are generally expressed as; self-confidence and persuasiveness, understanding and summarizing a subject, expressiveness and reasoning power, representation ability, suitability of behaviours and reactions to the profession, openness to scientific and technological developments (Bilke, 2023, p. 163).

In order for an evaluation based on merit in oral exams, the number of points the candidate received from the specified criteria, which criteria he/she met and which criteria he/she did not meet, should be recorded or a report should be kept on this matter. However, there is no provision in the specified legislations regarding the recording of the oral exam.

[15] This regulation will be applied to the employment of contract teachers until 01.09.2025.

In fact, some regulations include provisions prohibiting the practice of recording. In addition, some legislations contain provisions regarding recording the oral exam in the minutes. For example, the criteria for the oral exam and the score equivalents of these criteria are clearly stated in Article 14 of the Ministry of Justice Civil Servant Exam, Appointment and Transfer Regulation. The 6th paragraph of the same article states the following (TBMM, 2003, s. Article 14): "After the completion of the oral exam, the evaluation results made by the examination board or justice commission members are shown in the Annex 3-B Consolidation Report." Another one is the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Regarding Central Examination and Entrance Examinations to be Applied to Appointments to Academic Staff Positions Other Than Faculty Members, Article 11 states (TBMM, 2018, Article 11), "The exam jury ensures that the written and oral exams are objective, measurable and auditable. The member designated as the rapporteur records the questions and answers of the written and oral exams." Although there is no provision in the legislation regarding the audio and video recording of the oral exam, and even prohibitions are introduced, there are provisions in some legislations requiring the keeping of minutes for the oral exam.

Another important issue that draws attention in the evaluation of oral exam processes is the minimum score threshold determined for candidates to be considered successful. When the relevant legislations are examined, it is seen that this score limit varies, and is determined as sixty in some regulations and seventy in others. In most cases, a minimum score of seventy is required to successfully pass the exam. In some regulations, the success score threshold is stated as sixty. Article 16 of the Regulation on Examination and Appointment for Those to be Appointed to Local Administrations for the First Time states (TBMM, 2019, Article 16), "In order to be considered successful in the exam, the arithmetic average of the scores given by the examination board chair and members out of one hundred must be at least sixty." Article 11 of the Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Regarding Central Examination and Entrance Examinations to be Applied to Appointments to Academic Staff Positions Other than Academic Members states (TBMM, 2018, Article 11), "Those whose oral exam result is below sixty points are considered unsuccessful and can not proceed to the final evaluation stage." and the final evaluation score is regulated as a minimum of sixty-five. In the Regulation on the Employment of Contract Teachers (TBMM, 2016, Article 12), it is stated as "Those who score sixty and above in the oral exam are considered successful and have the right to make a choice to be appointed as a contract teacher." These differences reveal the uncertainty of the evaluation standards in the oral exam processes. In addition, different methods are followed in the regulations in calculating the final success score. In

some regulations, the arithmetic average of the written and oral exams is taken, while in some, only the oral exam score is taken into account, and in some, the score is calculated using certain percentages of the exams. This diversity makes it difficult to carry out an objective oral exam evaluation based on merit in practice. As a result, many candidates suffer from low scores in the oral exam despite receiving high scores in the central exams and written exams conducted by the institution. For these reasons, oral examination processes need to be conducted in a fairer, transparent and effective manner and a merit-based approach needs to be adopted.

A final issue that needs to be mentioned is the necessity of addressing the regulations of the Civil Servants Law No. 657, which generally covers civil servants, regarding the employment of specialist. While this regulation reveals that oral exams are an important assessment tool in entering the civil service, it also reveals problems in the field of implementation. In addition to central exams, written and oral exams or only oral exams are foreseen for recruitment to assistant expert positions in ministries and public institutions specified in Additional Article 41. These exams are referred to as occupation-specific competitive exams in the law article. The same paragraph continues as follows (TBMM, 1965): "In order to determine the entrance exam for assistant specialist positions according to the branches of education, the number of candidates to be called according to the score types to be sought as a result of the elimination exam, the base scores and the success degrees obtained in the exam are determined and announced with the entrance exam announcement." While the number of candidates to be called for the entrance exam can not exceed twenty times the number of positions to be appointed (four times if only an oral exam is held), the candidates determined starting from the highest score, not less than seventy points in the written exam, are called for the oral exam. The text of the article clearly states that the oral exam should evaluate many characteristics of the candidates such as (a) their knowledge level on the exam topics, (b) their ability to comprehend and summarize a subject, their ability to express themselves and their reasoning power, (c) their merit, ability to represent, the suitability of their behaviour and reactions to the profession, (d) their self-confidence, ability to persuade, and their credibility, (e) their general talent and general culture, (f) their openness to scientific and technological developments (TBMM, 1965). It is stated that the features will be evaluated over fifty points for paragraph (a) and 10 points each for the others and will be recorded in the minutes. However, the statement “Other than this, no recording system will be used for the oral exam” (TBMM, 1965) in the continuation of the same article and the requirement to receive at least seventy points to be considered successful in the oral

exam create serious question marks regarding the transparency of the exams and merit-based evaluation. Although the article on the employment of specialist in the Civil Servants Law numbered 657 emphasizes the importance of oral exams, it does not completely eliminate the problems, uncertainties and potential for violation of the principle of merit in the field of practice. This situation once again reveals that the evaluation criteria for oral exams in public personnel recruitment processes should be determined in a fair, transparent and merit-based manner.

3.3.3. Interview

Interview is defined as a mutual conversation aimed at a specific purpose (Özgün and Ersan, 1967, p. 11). The word interview, which comes from Arabic, means meeting, unification or interview, and is derived from the word "lika", which means seeing, coming together and meeting (Devellioğlu, 2017, p. 840). Interviews have the potential to reveal not only objective information about candidates, but also more abstract and personal characteristics such as their behaviours, opinions and values. Therefore, interviews, which are an important stage also in the recruitment process of public personnel, are a method used to evaluate not only the knowledge of candidates but also their personal characteristics, communication skills and suitability for the institution. This evaluation process is usually carried out by a board, and the board in question is called the "interview board". The interview board consists of at least three people and consists of department and ministry experts (Tortop, 1994, p. 55). Each institution selects the personnel it will employ according to its own needs. However, the fact that the interview board consists of senior managers can cause political connections and favouritism. This makes it difficult for interview processes to be objective and based on merit.

It is known that interviews are a stressful process for candidates. In this context, considering the importance of first impressions in interviews, it is possible to talk about the existence of a dress code for candidates. It is observed that male candidates generally prefer plain, dark-coloured suits and single-coloured shirts, while female candidates attend the interview with plain, dark-coloured suits or two-piece suit, natural hair and make-up. There are also certain rules that candidates must follow during the interview. When it is their turn, the candidate knocks on the door and enters and acts in accordance with the directions of the interview board members. When the candidate is asked to introduce themselves, they are expected to provide brief and concise information. The interview process, which begins in

this way, continues without a predetermined time limit. The fact that there is no minimum or maximum limit for the time that candidates will be interviewed expands the scope of the discretion granted to the interview boards. In some cases, short-term interviews can produce positive results for the candidates, while in other cases, the length of the interview period can allow the candidate to express himself/herself better and be successful (Eminoğlu, 2019, p. 114). However, this uncertainty in interview durations has also led to various criticisms in the public. While some candidates' interviews are completed in half an hour or forty minutes, other candidates' interviews can be completed in as little as five or ten minutes. This situation has led to various claims in the public that candidates whose interviews are short are being favoured.

It is often observed that there is no clear distinction between the concepts of "oral exam" and "interview" in the legislation and these two terms are used interchangeably. In fact, it is quite rare to come across the term "interview" in legal texts, and the phrase "oral exam" and the provisions related to this exam are mostly included. However, the term "interview" is directly used in some special regulations such as the District Governor Candidacy Regulation (TBMM, 2011), the Judges and Prosecutors Law (TBMM, 1983), the Police Vocational Training Centres Entry Regulation (TBMM, 2015), the Police Academy Presidency Police Chiefs Training Centre Entry and Education-Training Regulation (TBMM, 2024).

The Judges and Prosecutors Law contains detailed provisions on the method of conducting interviews, distribution of points and evaluation criteria. According to Article 9/A of the Law, the interview board is formed to consist of seven members and the identities of the board members are clearly stated. Interviews are a personnel selection method that aims to evaluate various qualities of the candidates such as; (a) reasoning power, (b) ability to comprehend, summarize and express a subject, (c) general and physical appearance, suitability of behaviour and reactions to the profession, merit, (d) talent and culture, (e) openness to contemporary scientific and technological developments (TBMM, 1983). The Interview Board evaluates each of these qualities separately out of twenty points and records the candidates' grades in a report. In order to be considered successful, the arithmetic average of the grades given by the board members must be at least seventy out of one hundred full points. After the interviews are completed, candidates are ranked from highest to lowest according to their scores, creating an "Interview Success List". In determining the final accomplishment ranking, seventy percent of the candidates' written exam score and thirty

percent of the interview score are added together to create a ranking, starting with the candidate with the highest score (TBMM, 1983). This method places a certain weight on the written exam, while also considering the impact of the interview on the candidates' overall success.

Other important legislation that directly refers to the concept of interview and regulates the provisions related to this process are the Police Vocational Training Centres Entry Regulation and the Police Academy Presidency Police Chiefs Training Centre Entry and Education-Training Regulation. First, the Police Vocational Training Centres Entry Regulation includes provisions regarding the formation of the interview exam committee. The interview exam committee consists of five personnel, one of whom is a faculty member and the other is a psychologist or a graduate of the guidance and psychological counselling department, assigned by the Minister of Interior. One of the members of the committee is appointed as the chairman by the Minister of Interior. In case of need, more than one interview exam committee can be established using the same procedure (TBMM, 2015). Article 15 of the regulation includes the following provisions regarding the interview process (TBMM, 2015): Candidates who are successful in the physical competency exam are interviewed by the interview exam committee at the announced place and time. During the interview process, the candidates are evaluated by a psychologist or a member who graduated from the guidance and psychological counselling department according to criteria such as psychological adequacy, emotional instability, extroversion, compatibility, responsibility, openness and the candidate's desire for the police profession, and this evaluation is shared with the interview committee. In the continuation of the article, unlike other regulations, "Candidates are asked to draw a card with questions prepared by the Question Preparation Committee and deemed appropriate by the Question Control Committee." (TBMM, 2015) and are asked to present the subject to the interview exam committee, while the members of the committee can also ask questions about the subject. In the evaluation, five separate criteria are taken into consideration: a) Level of knowledge on the subject, b) Understanding what is asked of them, c) Self-confidence, ç) Ability to express themselves and d) Ability to use body language, and the evaluation is made out of a total of one hundred full points, with each criterion being twenty points (TBMM, 2015). In order to be considered successful in the interview exam, the candidate must receive at least seventy points out of one hundred. As a result of these evaluations, the interview exam committee decides whether the candidate is successful or unsuccessful and records it on the evaluation decision form. The final success list is created by calculating the PPSE, physical

qualification exam and interview exam scores with certain percentages. In this calculation, the interview is weighted as 50%. There are similar provisions regarding the interview in the Police Academy Presidency Police Chiefs Training Centre Entrance and Education-Training Regulation.

Although the distinction between the concept of interview and oral exam is gradually diminishing, there are regulations that directly refer to the term interview. When the current regulations regarding interviews are examined, it is striking that there is no provision regarding interview durations. Interview durations, which vary from candidate to candidate, cause criticism that they may lead to a subjective evaluation. At the same time, the lack of a definitive determination regarding the questions to be asked in interviews is another subject of criticism. Because there are various claims in the public opinion that personal questions such as political views and religious beliefs are asked to candidates. At this point, the practice of preparing questions in advance and having the candidates select them by lot, which is included in the Police Vocational Training Centers Entry Regulation and the Police Academy Presidency Police Chiefs Training Center Entry and Education-Training Regulation, can partially reduce the mentioned criticisms. However, even in this regulation, the fact that the interview exam has a high weight of 50% significantly reduces the effect of other exams. Another frequently criticized issue in the regulations is that the interview process is not recorded in any way. It is deemed sufficient to prepare a report and give a score as a result of the questions directed to the candidate, and the lack of an audio and video recording system eliminates the possibility of candidates making any claims against unfair results that may arise in the future. As a result of all these, the current regulations for interview processes need to be reconsidered, a time limit for interviews, questions need to be prepared and acted upon, percentages need to be kept at a certain level and the process needs to be recorded. In this way, a sense of trust is created in the public and criticism is eliminated. Interview processes also become more transparent, controllable and objective.

4. ENTRANCE TO CIVIL SERVICE AND EXAM PROCESS IN TÜRKİYE

4.1. Entering the Civil Service

In this section, the process of entering the civil service in Türkiye, central examination and central placement facts will be discussed. For this, the central examination Civil Servants Examination (CSE) was put into practice by taking the year 1999 as reference, and later it was changed to the Intra-Institutional Central Elimination Exam and Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) and took its final form. The central examination system and central placement practices will be analysed by dividing the period before 1999 and after 1999. The central examination system started in this period this is way have chosen to divide the period in two parts. How the processes of entering the civil service in Türkiye work, what stages they consist of, the problems encountered in these processes and solution suggestions will be discussed.

4.1.1. Pre-1999 Period

The year 1999, together with the implementation of centralized examination and centralized placement systems, constitutes an important turning point in the processes of entering civil service in Türkiye. In this section, the period before 1999, which is accepted as the reference year, will be discussed with its unique dynamics in the processes of entering civil service as a period when centralized examinations and centralized placement systems were not yet implemented. In this context, first of all, under the title of Pre-Republican Period, the concept and practices of civil service in the pre-Republican period, namely the Ottoman State, will be examined. Then, under the title of Proclamation of the Republic and Post-Republican Period, the transformations experienced in public administration with the proclamation of the Republic and the innovations introduced to the public personnel system will be discussed. Under this title, the establishment, functioning and transformation of the State Personnel Department, which is the Central Personnel Organization, and the developments experienced during the transition to the centralized system from 1980 and the effects of these developments on the processes of entering civil service will be analysed. With these analyses, it is aimed to comprehensively reveal the basic characteristics of the pre-1999 period's civil service entry system and its effects on the following periods.

4.1.1.1. Pre-Republican Period

In Ottoman Empire, appointments to public offices were initially based on the principle of loyalty to the sultan, but especially until the decline, merit was also accepted as an important criterion. Factors such as religion, language or ethnicity were not decisive in entering civil service; the aim was to prepare talented individuals for important duties by educating them in public schools. However, as the empire entered periods of stagnation and decline from the 17th century onwards, the administrative structure and organization of the state began to weaken. Over time, internal fragilities such as the authority of people without a sense of responsibility and competence, the deterioration of the timar system and the weakening of the central authority also led to serious disruptions in the public personnel system.

This crisis situation that the state faced brought need for reform in the administrative structure to the agenda. Especially with the Tanzimat Period, more objective criteria began to be sought for entering civil service; general conditions such as citizenship, age, morality, educational status (proving knowledge by diploma or exam) and criminal record were determined (Albayrak, 2006). These conditions are largely similar to the conditions for entering civil service today. Although various regulations such as the Reform Edict and the Constitutional Monarchy periods that followed the Tanzimat Edict attempted to bring a certain discipline to public personnel administration, these efforts did not yet represent a period in which a centralized and merit-based system was fully implemented.

4.1.1.2. Proclamation of the Republic and the Post-Republican Period

The single-party period that began with the declaration of the Republic of Türkiye on October 29, 1923, lasted until July 21, 1946, and this period witnessed the restructuring of the public personnel system inherited from the Ottoman Empire in line with the ideals and needs of the new state. While civil servants were divided into four different classes during the Ottoman period: Mülkiye, İlmiye, Seyfiye and Kalemiye (Benlikol, 1972, p. 50), the aim of the Republic was to establish a more egalitarian and merit-based system. This period is the years when the legal infrastructure of the Public Personnel Regime of the Republic of Türkiye was prepared. In this context, first of all, some articles regarding civil servants and civil servants in the 1924 Constitution, and then the Civil Servant Law No. 788, strengthened the place and position of the civil servant (Kayar, 2008, p. 9). When it is examined at the

articles of the 1924 Constitution regarding civil servants, the following articles are listed under the title of Civil Servant:

> "Article 92.- It is the right of every Turk who has political rights to become a civil servant, according to his/her competence and entitlement.
>
> Article 93.- The qualifications, rights, duties, salaries and allowances, appointments and dismissals, promotions and advancements of all civil servants are specified by special law.
>
> Article 94.- Obeying the orders of superiors in unlawful acts does not relieve a civil servant from responsibility."

As can be seen, as a result of these regulations, the scope and limits of the right to become a civil servant were drawn, and it was ensured that all regulations regarding civil servants could be made by law. Based on this, Memurin Law No. 788 came into force in 1926. The following regulations were made regarding civil servants in this law:

> "In Law No. 788, the definition of civil servant was made, it was stated that the law would be applied to all civil servants except military personnel, conditions for becoming a civil servant and employee, the rights and responsibilities of candidate civil servants and their impartiality, registry, selection, appointment, promotion, appreciation, penal transfer, work aid fund, retirement, leave and report were regulated. In this period, general conditions for entering civil service were specified, women were first accepted as civil servants, it was mandatory for those accepted as civil servants to go through a candidacy period, monthly grades that those accepted as civil servants could enter according to their educational status were determined, seniority was taken as a basis in promotions, various disciplinary penalties and the situations that necessitated the imposition of these penalties were specified, practice of dismissal from the administration was abolished, it was ensured that the prosecution of civil servants for their actions and behaviours while on duty was secured by binding them to special provisions" (Kayar, 2008 pp. 9-10).

"Although it can be said that Memurin Law No. 788 has created a civil servant status that is legally secure and economically attractive, it is observed that this law is content with listing only the general conditions and minimum required qualifications of being a civil servant, and leaves recruitment largely to the discretion of the institutions." (Şaylan, 2000, p. 107). In the section of the law in question that regulates the conditions for becoming a civil servant and employee, although secondary school graduation is required for civil servants, a competition principle is foreseen in cases where there is more than one secondary

school graduate candidate or no secondary school graduate candidate. However, this provision was not put into practice until 1939. The temporary Article 2 of Law No. 788 granted public institutions the authority to enact special laws for their own personnel and to make additional arrangements in these laws. Based on this authority, institutions later determined different conditions for entering the civil service with the laws they put into effect.

The Civil Servants Law did not introduce any regulation regarding the salary system, it merely stated that this issue would be regulated by enacting special laws. Accordingly, the first law enacted was the Salary Law No. 1108 dated July 2, 1927 (Şaylan, 2000, p. 107). Following this law, a degree system was established for civil servants with the Law No. 1452 on the Unification and Equivalence of Civil Servants' Salaries dated 1929, in which civil servant positions were divided into 20 degrees and different salaries were determined for each degree. In 1939, Law No. 3656 on the Unification and Equivalence of Civil Servants' Salaries came into effect. With this law, the law of 1929 was repealed, the coefficient system was abolished and monthly degrees were reduced from twenty to fifteen (Eroğlu, 2016, p. 184). Law No. 3656 did not only regulate the salary regime of civil servants. This law also included an examination requirement.

With the enactment of Law No. 3656 in 1939, the exam requirement for entering civil service was legally secured. Article 17 of this law states that "Except for those who have received vocational education and are affiliated with departments and duties related to their professions and those who are assigned to the duties specified in Articles 6 and 13 of this law, those who will initially be recruited to the civil service must take and pass the competitive exam and, if there is no more than one applicant, the competency exam." (TBMM, 1939). The relevant regulation introduced the obligation to take "competition" (competition) or "competency" (qualification) exams for those who will be appointed to civil service for the first time. In other words, if the number of applicants exceeds the number of vacant positions, a competitive exam must be held, and if the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions, a competency exam must be held. All of these exams were conducted by the institutions themselves, not by a central examination committee. On the other hand, the application of exams for entering the civil service was carried out within a very limited framework. In other words, there were many exceptions to the exam principle. For example, individuals who received vocational training were started on duty without an exam requirement when they were looking for a job in this field. In addition, those who completed their education by receiving scholarships from state institutions were employed

without an exam in order to fulfil their obligations of service to the state. Finally, the application of exams was not valid for civil service positions defined as exceptional cadres and positions requiring expertise. Exceptional positions were specified as follows: General Inspectorate, Presidency Office Officers, Private Secretary Directorates, Interpreters, Embassies, Governors, Legal Counsellors, those who received vocational training and were assigned to positions related to their professions (medicine, pharmacy, etc.), Civil service positions that required special professional knowledge and expertise (Albayrak, 2006, pp. 108-109). The fact that the scope of exceptional positions is kept quite wide has constituted an obstacle to the effective implementation of the exam system.

The period from the early years of the Republic to 1965 was a period when the Civil Servants Law No. 788 was effective, legal security was prioritized for civil servants, and a status accepted in society was considered important. However, the public personnel system in this period could not compete with the private sector in terms of wages, had a structure that prioritized diplomas for entry into service and seniority for promotion, and had muddle along structure where exceptional cadres were increased. The personnel system was limited to salary and cadre regulations, a holistic approach could not be adopted, and the practice of requesting reports from foreign experts began in this period. Between 1949 and 1959, foreign experts prepared a series of reports containing a series of findings and suggestions aimed at finding solutions to problems such as the clumsiness experienced in the bureaucracy, the excess number of civil servants, inefficiency in services, and inadequacy of civil servants (Diler, 2018, pp. 27-28). Reports such as Neumark, Barker, Martin, and Cush are of great importance in terms of identifying these problems and suggesting solutions. Because the reform efforts made in the personnel regime in the following periods were shaped in line with the guidance of these reports and bore their traces. These reports provided a basis for institutional and legislative studies aimed at regulating the personnel system in the 1960s. In particular, the necessity of a central personnel organization expressed in these reports was a driving force for the establishment of a new public personnel system. In the post-1960 period, as a concrete result of these reform efforts, the State Personnel Department was established and the Civil Servants Law No. 657, which was accepted as the founding law of the Turkish personnel system, came into force.

4.1.1.2.1. Establishment of the Central Personnel Organization (State Personnel Department)

In Türkiye, efforts to centralize public personnel administration were made with the concrete results of reform efforts in the 1960s with solution suggestions from expert reports. During this period, the disorganization experienced in public administration, the failure to ensure unity of practice among different institutions, and inadequacies in cadre planning brought to light the need for a centralized personnel authority. Within this scope, the State Personnel Department (SPD) was established under the Prime Ministry with Law No. 160 in 1960. The SPD was established with the aim of rationalizing the public personnel system, developing norm cadre practices, and strengthening the merit principles in entering the civil service. The duties of the SPD, specified in Article 5 of the founding Law No. 160 (TBMM, 1960), also confirm this. When it is examined at this article, it can be summarized as follows; to ensure standardization in cadre titles, to ensure a salary/wage balance among public employees, to coordinate the functioning of the civil servant disciplinary regime, and to determine the general principles that will ensure the implementation of the merit principle in the recruitment and promotion of public personnel. These tasks, also referred to as public personnel reform, have not been realized by SPD in practice. As an important work of SPD, it was effective in the preparation of the Civil Servants Law No. 657.

The Civil Servants Law No. 657 entered into force in 1965 and introduced a wide range of regulations from entering the civil service to the rights, duties and responsibilities of civil servants. Articles 46-53 of the law particularly detailed the recruitment processes; as a central structure, the State Personnel Department (SPD) was given important duties. Within this framework, it was envisaged that public institutions would notify the SPD of the vacant positions they needed at certain intervals, that these positions would be announced by the SPD, and that competitive exams would be conducted under the supervision and control of the SPD. In addition, it was decided that the exams for personnel to be recruited into inter-institutional classes would be conducted within the SPD, and that the exams for personnel to be recruited into institutional classes would be conducted by the relevant institutions. During this period, an attempt was made to implement a kind of central examination, but it was not successful. In the 1970s, changes were made to the law with Law No. 1370 and Legislative Decree No. 2; the obligation for central announcements was abolished, exam types were redefined and the exam authority was largely transferred to the institutions. This change led to a move away from the centralized structure and the damage

to the merit principle. With the increasing favouritism practice in the following period, the attempt to switch to a centralized examination system in the 1980s also failed. It would be necessary to wait until 1999 for a successful transition to the centralized system.

4.1.1.2.2. Transitional Period from 1980 to Central System

Following the military intervention in 1980, the necessity of radical reforms in public personnel policies was widely accepted. During this period, serious criticisms were voiced that the State Personnel Department, the main institution that directed public personnel administration, could not meet expectations with its current structure, had lost its function and lacked executive authority. These criticisms included points such as the slowness of the institution's decision-making mechanisms, insufficient expert resources and its inability to assume an effective regulatory role. In response to these problems, the State Personnel Department was restructured as the State Personnel Presidency with the Decree Law No. 217 dated 1984.

With this new structure, the State Personnel Presidency was assigned more central and comprehensive duties in public personnel administration. The institution was equipped with strategic authorities such as determining and developing the application principles of duty systems, defining the methods of meeting the personnel needs of public institutions, supporting manpower planning and regulating the principles of in-service training. These duties are an indication of a search for standardization and professionalization in public personnel recruitment and administration. However, the arrangements made in the public personnel system after 1980, as in previous periods, were mainly carried out through decree-law, also under the influence of the conditions of the period. This situation caused the reforms in question to be temporary solutions for periodic and urgent needs rather than a permanent and holistic system transformation. Because these fragmented and insufficiently comprehensive arrangements reinforced the necessity of establishing a more transparent, standard and centralized structure in public personnel recruitment, and constituted one of the main driving forces of the transition to the central examination system implemented in 1999.

4.1.2. Post-1999 Period

The year 1999 was a year when the transition to a centralized examination system in the recruitment process of public personnel in Türkiye became concrete in an institutional sense. In this context, the first official step of the centralized examination application was taken with an article added to the "General Regulation on Compulsory Qualification and Competition Exams for Those Who Will Be Appointed as Civil Servants to Civil Services and Duties for the First Time". With the amendment, it was stipulated that the written exams to be taken by candidates who want to be employed as civil servants in public institutions and organizations will be held centrally and throughout the country, not more than twice a year. The task of implementing these exams was carried out by the Measurement Selection and Placement Centre (MSPC) under the coordination of the State Personnel Presidency (Albayrak, 2006, p. 127). In the initially introduced system, it was envisaged that candidates who were successful in the centralized written exam would participate in the oral exams to be held by the relevant institutions. Before the institutional oral exam was implemented, a new regulation was made in a short time and the authority of the institutions to hold oral exams was abolished. Thus, a central placement system was adopted in which direct placement was made based on the centralized written exam.

The first exam implemented within the scope of the centralized exam system, the 1999 Civil Servants Examination (CSE), was held in a single session on October 17, 1999. The exam was organized in four different categories according to the candidates' graduation levels: Level A, for undergraduate and graduate graduates; Level B, for associate degree graduates; Level C, for secondary education (high school and equivalent school) graduates; and Level D, for primary school graduates. The exam at each level was consisted of two tests, General Ability and General Culture, and was lasted a total of 180 minutes (3 hours). Candidates could only take the exam appropriate to their own level of education; they were not entitled to take the exam at different levels. The CSE score obtained at the end of the exam was only valid for candidates who were considered successful, i.e., those who received at least 70 points, and these scores remained valid for two years after the exam date.

CSE results had a wide institutional scope in public personnel recruitment. Within this scope; Public administrations with general and annexed budgets, special provincial administrations, municipalities, their affiliated unions, revolving fund organizations and some special status institutions have taken the results of this exam as basis in the recruitment of personnel with civil servant status. In addition, State Economic Enterprises (SEEs) have

also used the results of this exam in the recruitment of personnel other than workers. In this process, public institutions have reported the number of vacant positions, title, class and grade, and the conditions sought in candidates to the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) in order to employ personnel according to the results of the central exam. The SPP has announced this position information nationwide, and among the candidates who have been successful in the exam and who have met the specified conditions, those have applied by indicating their preference for the institution and title they want to be assigned to. The placement procedures have been carried out by SPP again, taking into account preferences and success rankings, and the results have been notified to both the candidates and the relevant institutions (Albayrak, 2006, pp. 128-129). Thus, CSE has become an important step towards creating a standard exam system in the recruitment of public personnel.

Following the transition to the central examination and central placement system, Civil Service Examination (CSE), a central written examination, was held for the first time on October 17, 1999, to be used as a basis for appointments to civil servant cadres. In addition, an additional examination was held on December 12, 1999 for candidates who were victims of the August 17, 1999 Marmara Earthquake. The placement process of candidates who were successful in these examinations was carried out centrally. Table 12 presents numerical data regarding the 1999 CSE.

Table 12. Numerical data regarding candidates who were successful in the Civil Servants Exam

Level of Education	Number of Candidates Passing the Examination
Primary Education	59.871
High Schools and Their Equivalents	264.151
Associate Degree	34.153
Undergraduate Degree	34.364
Total	**392.539**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the data of the State Personnel Presidency.

As indicated in Table 12, a total of 392,539 candidates were deemed successful by obtaining 70 points and above in the central examination held at levels A, B, C and D of CSE. These candidates are entitled to choose the vacant positions determined by SPP. According to the 1999 CSE results, placement processes were carried out by SPP five times

and the numerical appearances of these placement processes are presented in Table 13, Table 14, Table 15, Table 16 and Table 17.

Table 13. Numerical view of the 1st placement process dated 22/06/2000

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Quota	Number of Placed Candidates	Vacant Quota
Primary Education	52.833	2.075	2.057	18
High Schools and Their Equivalents	221.214	9.938	9.782	156
Associate Degree	28.998	3.626	3.624	2
Undergraduate Degree	19.044	4.144	3.569	575
Total	**322.089**	**19.783**	**19.032**	**751**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department placement data.

Table 14. Numerical view of the 2nd placement process dated 23/10/2000

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Quota	Number of Placed Candidates	Vacant Quota
Primary Education	15.290	2.865	2.805	60
High Schools and Their Equivalents	52.194	1.600	1.553	47
Associate Degree	953	450	446	4
Undergraduate Degree	18	50	8	42
Total	**68.455**	**4.965**	**4.812**	**153**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department placement data.

Table 15. Numerical view of the 3rd placement process dated 28/11/2000

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Quota	Number of Placed Candidates	Vacant Quota
Primary Education	41.610	4.536	4.517	19
High Schools and Their Equivalents	187.282	24.336	22.371	1.965
Associate Degree	22.917	5.507	4.088	1.419
Undergraduate Degree	11.569	5.467	2.432	3.035
Total	**263.378**	**39.846**	**33.408**	**6.438**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department placement data

Table 16. Numerical view of the 4th placement process dated 02/03/2001

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Quota	Number of Placed Candidates	Vacant Quota
Primary Education	28.665	883	881	2
High Schools and Their Equivalents	124.493	6.449	5.357	1.092
Associate Degree	12.563	3.172	1.837	1.335
Undergraduate Degree	5.671	4.171	899	3.272
Total	**171.392**	**14.675**	**8.974**	**5.701**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department placement data

Table 17. (continuation) Numerical view of the 5th placement process dated 12/02/2002

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Quota	Number of Placed Candidates	Vacant Quota
Primary Education	0	0	0	0
High Schools and Their Equivalents	17.948	7.019	5.551	1.468
Associate Degree	4.188	1.194	411	783
Undergraduate Degree	3.126	1.396	546	850

Total	**25.262**	**9.609**	**6.508**	**3.101**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department placement data

Five central appointments were made by SPP on different dates after the Civil Servants Examination of 1999. The numerical appearance of the total number of appointments and their quotas is presented in Table 18.

Table 18. Overview of total placement data performed by SPP

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Quota	Number of Placed Candidates	Vacant Quota
Primary Education	138.398	10.359	10.260	99
High Schools and Their Equivalents	603.131	49.342	44.614	4.728
Associate Degree	69.619	13.949	10.406	3.543
Undergraduate Degree	39.428	15.228	7.454	7.774
Total	**850.576**	**88.878**	**72.734**	**16.144**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department placement data.

As a result of five separate placement processes, a total of 72.734 candidates have gained the right to be appointed to civil servant or contract personnel positions. While the number of candidates applying for all placements was 850.576, the number of candidates who were successful in the 1999 Civil Servants Exam was recorded as 392.539. The reason why the number of applications exceeds the number of successful candidates is that a candidate can apply for more than one placement. Of the total of 88.878 positions announced, 16.144 remained vacant. Placement procedures are carried out based on the statements of the candidates, and the persons placed apply to the institutions where the appointments will be made and submit the necessary documents. As a result of the evaluations, the appointments of candidates who are determined not to meet the necessary conditions are not made and the relevant positions remain vacant. For this reason, some quotas could not be filled.

With the transition to the central examination and central placement system, following the Civil Servants Examination (CSE) implemented for the first time in 1999, central placement was carried out by the State Personnel Presidency three times in 2000 and once in 2001 and 2002. While CSE was applicable to other civil servants and contract staff

(now called B cadre), each government agency conducted its own special competitive examinations for entry into career occupations (now called A cadre). However, with a regulation issued in 2001, this scattered structure was abandoned and separate elimination exams conducted by institutions were brought together under a single system and a central examination system called the “Central Elimination Examination for Institutions” was established. Thus, as of 2001, two different examination systems were implemented by implementing the Central Elimination Examination for Institutions for career professions and Civil Servants Examination for other civil servant positions.

In 2002, the dual exam structure came to an end with the entry into force of the "General Regulation on Exams to be Held for Those to be Appointed to Public Duties for the First Time". In 2002, these two exams were combined under the name of the "Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE)". With the issued regulation, the principles regarding the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) were determined and the second article of the regulation included the regulations regarding the appointments to be made to the cadres of Group A (career professions) and Group B (other public servants). PPSE was first implemented in 2002; the use of the Central Selection Examination for Institutions score held in 2001 was also allowed for Group A cadre appointments. For Group B cadres, the score of the Civil Servants Examination held in 1999 was also considered valid. With the regulation, -as mentioned before- it was decided that the central placement process for Group B cadres would be carried out according to the PPSE score (in even years) conducted every two years, starting from May 3, 2002.

The "General Regulation on Exams to be Held for Those to be Appointed to Public Duties for the First Time", which entered into force in 2002, introduced important regulations regarding the central placement process. The placement procedures and principles for appointments to be made to Group B cadres were determined in detail in the fourth section of the regulation. Article 19 states that personnel planning is carried out by public institutions and organizations to the extent required by their services. According to Article 20, "Public institutions and organizations that will make open appointments to Group B cadres shall apply to the Council of Higher Education, and other institutions shall apply to the State Personnel Presidency, for the determination of cadre conditions after obtaining the necessary permissions." The Council of Higher Education examines the applications from higher education institutions in terms of criteria such as title, number, class and degree, and forwards its opinions to the SPP via magnetic media. In order for cadres to be included in the placement process, the relevant information must be fully reported to SPP at least four

months before the exam date. SPP examines the submitted cadre information according to the Qualification-Code Guide and reports the results to MSPC three months before the exam. MSPC, on the other hand, provides final agreement with the relevant institutions when necessary (TBMM, 2002). The specified Qualification-Code Guide is published during the preference period and candidates who have the characteristics corresponding to the codes make preferences according to these characteristics.

Article 22 of the same regulation states how preferences are received as follows: "After the announcement of PPSE results, MSPC prepares the Preference Guide and Preference Form and presents them to the candidates. Information regarding Group B vacant cadres for which open appointment permission has been obtained is announced by MSPC on behalf of SPP. Candidates indicate the cadres they want to be appointed to by writing them on the Preference Form with the relevant cadre codes and submit their preferences to MSPC using the method specified in the Guide. During this process, candidates are not asked to submit any documents regarding the cadre conditions" (TBMM, 2002). Article 23 states that placement in Group B cadres is made by taking into account the candidates' PPSE score, preferences, number of cadres and conditions. If there is more than one PPSE score that is still valid, the highest score is taken into account. In the event of equal scores, it is stated that priority is determined based on graduation date, age and exam result announcement date, respectively. The continuation of the same article states that "In placement, candidates' statements written and coded in the Application Document and Preference Form are taken into account. Placement results are reported to relevant public institutions and organizations, candidates and SPP" (TBMM, 2002). As a result, candidates placed in an institution by MSPC with PPSE scores must apply to the institution on time with the requested documents. The institution examines the documents of these candidates and their compliance with the required conditions through a five-person commission. This commission proposes the appointment of candidates who meet the qualifications. Candidates placed by MSPC are directly appointed to the announced positions, while candidates who do not meet the required conditions or who do not submit their documents incompletely/on time are not appointed. The same regulation also mentions the additional placement process. Additional placement can be requested by obtaining an open appointment permit for vacant positions that are not filled in the general placement in public institutions and organizations or for which an urgent need arises later. However, candidates who have previously been placed in a position in the general placement can not apply for this additional placement.

PPSE and the central placement process, which were developed to implement the principles of merit and equality in public personnel recruitment, are one of the basic tools that aim to ensure objectivity in public administration. The scope of this system, the principles of application and the duties and responsibilities of the public institutions involved in the process are of great importance in terms of understanding the holistic operation of the system. In this context, Table 19 summarizes basic information on Group B cadres within the scope of PPSE; Table 20 includes the public actors involved in the central placement process and their functions.

Table 19. Basic information about Group B cadres under PPSE and central placement system

Topic	**Explanation**
Examination Name	Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE)
First Year of Implementation	2002 (previously Civil Servants Exam - 1999; Central Elimination Exam for Institutions - 2001)
Group B Cadre Definition	Positions other than career professions; civil servant, data preparation and control operator, computer operator, court clerk, nurse, technician, etc.
Examination Application Period	In even years (2020, 2022, 2024, etc.)
Score Validity Period	2 years
Who can apply for the examination?	Candidates who have graduated from secondary school, associate degree and undergraduate degree, have the qualifications required for the relevant position and meet the exam application requirements.
Placement Method	Central placement; PPSE scores and preferences of candidates are taken into account.
Placement Periods	usually PPSE/1 (summer term), PPSE/2 (winter term)
Appointment Process	Placement is made by MSPC, appointment process is carried out by the relevant institution

Note: It was prepared by the author.

Table 20. PPSE and public actors in the central placement process

Institution	Duty / Responsibility
MSPC (Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre)	Prepares, administers, evaluates PPSE and conducts central placement procedures.
State Personnel Presidency (until 2018)[16]	To carry out operations related to state personnel administration and planning. To carry out and prepare operations related to personnel cadres, cadre accumulation plans and applications. It was closed in 2018. (There is no single institution left responsible.)
General Directorate of Personnel and Principles	As a unit affiliated to the General Secretariat of the Presidency, it carries out the work and procedures related to the cadre and positions.
Strategy and Budget Presidency	To collect all kinds of statistical data regarding public personnel and to keep personnel records centrally.
General Directorate of Public Financial Management and Transformation	To carry out and monitor the implementation of public employment and related financial provisions.
Relevant Ministries and Public Institutions	It reports personnel needs, collects the necessary documents from the placed candidates and carries out the appointment procedures according to the PPSE score.

Note: It was prepared by the author.

The duties and responsibilities of the main public actors regarding the PPSE system and the central placement process are summarized in Table 20. In line with this system, the process of providing personnel to the public through PPSE is not limited to the exam application alone; a holistic employment mechanism is operated with the stages of selection, placement and appointment after the exam. The data to be presented in this process reflects the results of the central placement, especially for Group B cadres; it shows how factors such as the exam being held in even years, candidates from all levels of education (undergraduate, associate degree, secondary education) being able to participate and the scores being valid for two years affect the number of applications and the general functioning of the system.

[16] With the transition to the presidential system in 2018, the State Personnel Presidency was closed and some of the duties and powers of this institution were distributed to various ministries and administrative units. However, this distribution damaged the institutional integrity in the field of personnel administration and caused problems such as lack of coordination, ambiguities in job descriptions and some tasks remaining open. There is no institutional structure left to direct public personnel administration in a central and holistic manner.

Table 21. Number of candidates taking the PPSE in even years (2004-2010)

Years	Secondary Education	Associate Degree	Undergraduate Degree	Total
2004	1.092.479	246.434	392.846	**1.731.759**
2006	1.379.211	283.554	456.804	**2.119.569**
2008	1.483.767	373.922	550.690	**2.408.379**
2010	1.812.103	606.663	835.320	**3.254.086**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department data (T.C. Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 2018)

Table 22. Number of candidates taking the PPSE held in odd years (2005-2011)

Years	Number of Candidates
2005	243.738
2007	299.734
2009	408.749
2011	412.984

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department data (T.C. Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 2018)

When Table 21 and Table 22 are examined, it is clearly seen that the number of participants in the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) held in even years is significantly higher than in odd years. This quantitative difference is directly related to the basic dynamics of the public personnel recruitment system in Türkiye and the central placement processes. PPSE held in even years covers the exams in which all graduates of undergraduate, associate and secondary education levels can obtain a valid score in order to apply for central placements in public institutions and organizations.[17] The PPSE scores required for appointment to Group B cadres (P3 for undergraduate graduates, P93 for associate degree graduates and P94 for secondary school graduates) are obtained from these

[17] With PPSE, primary school graduates and graduates at this level could be appointed to the announced positions until the central placement period of April 2004. However, in the process starting with the central placements in September 2004, public personnel recruitment at the primary school graduate level was removed from the central system. From this date on, central recruitment within the scope of PPSE is not carried out for those at this level of education.

exams in even years. The intense interest of a wide range of candidates from different educational levels who aim to enter civil service and come from different educational levels in the exams in even years due to central placement opportunities constitutes the main reason for this increase in participation numbers. Therefore, the differences in the number of candidates in even and odd years provide important inferences about the functioning of the central placement system and the dynamics of competition in public personnel recruitment.

When the PPSE candidate participation numbers in even years are taken into consideration, the importance of these exams for central placement processes becomes clearer. In this context, the number of cadres/positions to be appointed through central placement is also presented in detail by year in Table 23. These data provide critical information for assessing public personnel recruitment policies and the capacity of the central system.

Table 23. Number of positions/cadre announced for central placement (2002-2012)

Years	Number of Positions/Cadre
2002	8.483
2003	7.805
2004	8.721
2005	12.105
2006	21.411
2007	23.494
2008	18.817
2009	16.503
2010	20.476
2011	25.299
2012	24.810

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department data (T.C. Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 2018, p. 36).

Table 23 shows the change in the total number of cadres/positions announced for appointment to the civil service through central placement between 2002 and 2012. The table shows a gradual increase in the number of cadres in the first years (2002-2005), reaching peak levels of 21.411 and 23.494, especially in 2006 and 2007. The increase in this period is explained by the 2007 general election. The number of cadres announced before and during the general election (2006-2007) shows that politicians attempted to "create an

artificial vote base" in order to gain a bonus before the elections and win the elections (Sayan, 2016, p. 682). Similarly, it is observed that the number of cadres announced before and during the 2011 general election (2010 and 2011) showed a significant increase with 20.476 and 25.299, and even that 2011 reached one of the highest appointment numbers of the period. The increases in cadres during these periods indicate that governments use such recruitments as an election ammunition during the pre-election and election periods. This situation reveals that the central placement system, in addition to being a rational employment mechanism based on the principle of merit, has also become a tool for periodic political showdowns. Because, the "cadre gospel" and increased recruitments during election periods can be interpreted as a reflection of an approach that prioritizes short-term political gains rather than the requirements of civil service. In this context, when evaluating the potential effects of political cycles and election periods on public employment policies, practices such as transferring those employed as contract personnel to civil servant cadres with the Decree-Law published in 2011 and the law enacted in 2013 should also be taken into account. These practices, rather than being coincidental, stand out as political choices put into effect before or during election periods.

The general appearance of the number of cadres and positions announced between 2002-2012 has been analysed in detail. These announced cadres provide an important indicator of the personnel needs of public institutions and periodic employment policies. However, in order to reveal the full functioning of the system and the entrance table to the civil service, it is of great importance to examine the numerical data of the central placements made for these announced cadres. However, in order to reveal full operation of the system and the real picture of access to civil services, it is of great importance to examine the numerical data of the actual central placements for these announced cadres.

While there are significant difficulties in accessing central placement statistics, the differences in the data published by MSPC are striking. The central placement numerical data for the period between 2002-2007 could not be directly accessed, and the information for these years was generally limited to scattered announcements and the lowest and highest score ranges. This situation makes a comprehensive quantitative analysis of the earlier periods in question difficult. On the other hand, central placement statistics published by MSPC starting from the last placement data of 2008 provide access to more comprehensive and systematic data such as the number of applicants, the number of placed candidates, the number of positions and the number of vacant positions. Therefore, first, the numerical data of the central placements made especially for Group B cadres for the period starting from

2008 and ending in 2012 will be examined and analysed in detail. Firstly, numerical data regarding PPSE 2008/4 central placement results will be presented in Table 24. Then, two separate central placement numerical data for 2009 will be presented and analysed in Table 25 and Table 26, and two separate central placement numerical data for 2010 will be presented and analysed in Table 27 and Table 28.

Table 24. Numerical data about PPSE 2008/4 placement results

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	589.263	4.109	4.084	25
Associate Degree	189.058	3.145	3.139	6
Undergraduate Degree	127.404	7.300	6.854	446
Total	**905.725**	**14.554**	**14.077**	**477**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the MSPC data (ÖSYM, 2008).

Table 25. Numerical data about PPSE 2009/3 placement results

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	349.773	1.037	1.035	2
Associate Degree	143.447	2.613	2.602	11
Undergraduate Degree	130.297	6.594	6.398	196
Total	**623.517**	**10.244**	**10.035**	**209**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the MSPC data (ÖSYM, 2009).

Table 26. Numerical data about PPSE 2009/6 placement results

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	197.547	1.953	1.951	2
Associate Degree	93.460	1.588	1.552	36
Undergraduate Degree	79.452	2.718	2.411	307
Total	**370.459**	**6.259**	**5.914**	**345**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the MSPC data (ÖSYM, 2009).

Table 27. Numerical data about PPSE 2010/1 placement results

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	183.950	1.722	1.710	12
Associate Degree	93.051	3.212	2.926	286
Undergraduate Degree	116.733	8.982	8.280	702
Total	**393.734**	**13.916**	**12.916**	**1.000**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the MSPC data (ÖSYM, 2010).

Table 28. Numerical data about PPSE 2010/2 placement results[18]

Level of Education	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	529	0
Associate Degree	1697	1
Undergraduate Degree	4333	111
Total	**6559**	**112**

[18] Since the numerical data is not presented in detail on MSPC's website, the scattered data was transferred to Excel and prepared by author.

Note: It was prepared by collecting and translating the dispersed data in MSPC (ÖSYM, 2010).

The PPSE central placement results from 2008 to the end of 2010 are presented with numerical data in Table 24, Table 25, Table 26, Table 27 and Table 28. The placement dynamics during this period reveal the level of competition in entrance to the civil service processes and the differences in appointments between different levels of education. According to the data from the analysed period, it is observed that the number of applicants at the secondary education level is significantly higher compared to other education levels. In the second central placement period in 2008, 905.725 candidates applied for 14.554 announced positions, indicating a striking intensity of applications. The main reason for this high number of applications can be explained by the fact that candidates were able to directly use the scores they received from PPSE held that year in the preference processes. While the total number of announced positions decreased to 16.503 in 2009, the increase in the number of applicants to 993.976 increased the competition per position. The increase in the number of announced positions to 20.476 in 2010 indicates an increase in public employment policies; this increase was thought to be related to the elections to be held in 2011. A total of 19.475 candidates were placed in the announced positions during this placement period.

In the previous analysis, central placement data for the period 2008-2010 were examined in detail and the dynamics of these years in public personnel recruitment were revealed. In this section, in order to provide a more holistic picture of the trends in public personnel recruitment processes, the PPSE central placement numerical data for the years 2011 and 2012 will be discussed. Central placement statistics for the years in question will be presented in Table 29 for PPSE 2011/1, Table 30 for PPSE 2011/2, Table 31 for PPSE 2012/1 and Table 32 for PPSE 2012/2 placement results.

Table 29. Numerical data about PPSE 2011/1 placement results[19]

Level of Education	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	1.770	0
Associate Degree	3.872	58
Undergraduate Degree	11.449	134
Total	**17.091**	**192**

[19] Since the numerical data is not presented in detail on MSPC's website, the scattered data was transferred to Excel and prepared by author.

Note: It was prepared by collecting and translating the dispersed data in MSPC (ÖSYM, 2011).

Table 30. Numerical data about PPSE 2011/2 placement results

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	298.140	1.544	1.544	0
Associate Degree	169.859	2.851	2.471	380
Undergraduate Degree	153.104	3.813	3.648	165
Total	**621.103**	**8.208**	**7.663**	**545**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the MSPC data (ÖSYM, 2011).

Table 31. Numerical data about PPSE 2012/1 placement results

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	279.448	2.874	2.865	9
Associate Degree	172.379	4.776	4.650	126
Undergraduate Degree	154.157	9.832	9.432	400
Total	**605.984**	**17.482**	**16.947**	**526**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the MSPC data (ÖSYM, 2012).

Table 32. Numerical data about PPSE 2012/2 placement results

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	785.660	641	640	1
Associate Degree	358.697	2.928	2.928	0
Undergraduate Degree	261.825	3.759	3.742	17
Total	**1.406.182**	**7.328**	**7.310**	**18**

Note: It was prepared by translating from the MSPC data (ÖSYM, 2012).

According to the central placement results for 2011 and 2012, it is observed that the number of positions announced in 2011 reached 25.299 and the vast majority of the positions were filled. A similar dynamic continued in 2012, with the total number of positions announced being recorded as 24.810, and the vast majority of positions were filled. When compared according to education levels, it is seen that secondary education graduate candidates are higher than candidates with other education levels and the total number of candidates has now exceeded 1 million.

The numerical data of the cadres/positions announced from 2002 to 2012 were presented, and the numerical data of the central placements made for these announcements were analysed in detail within the scope of the available information. In order to concretize the change in the announced numerical data over the years, the total number of announced cadres and positions for the period 2002-2012 is presented in Figure 3.

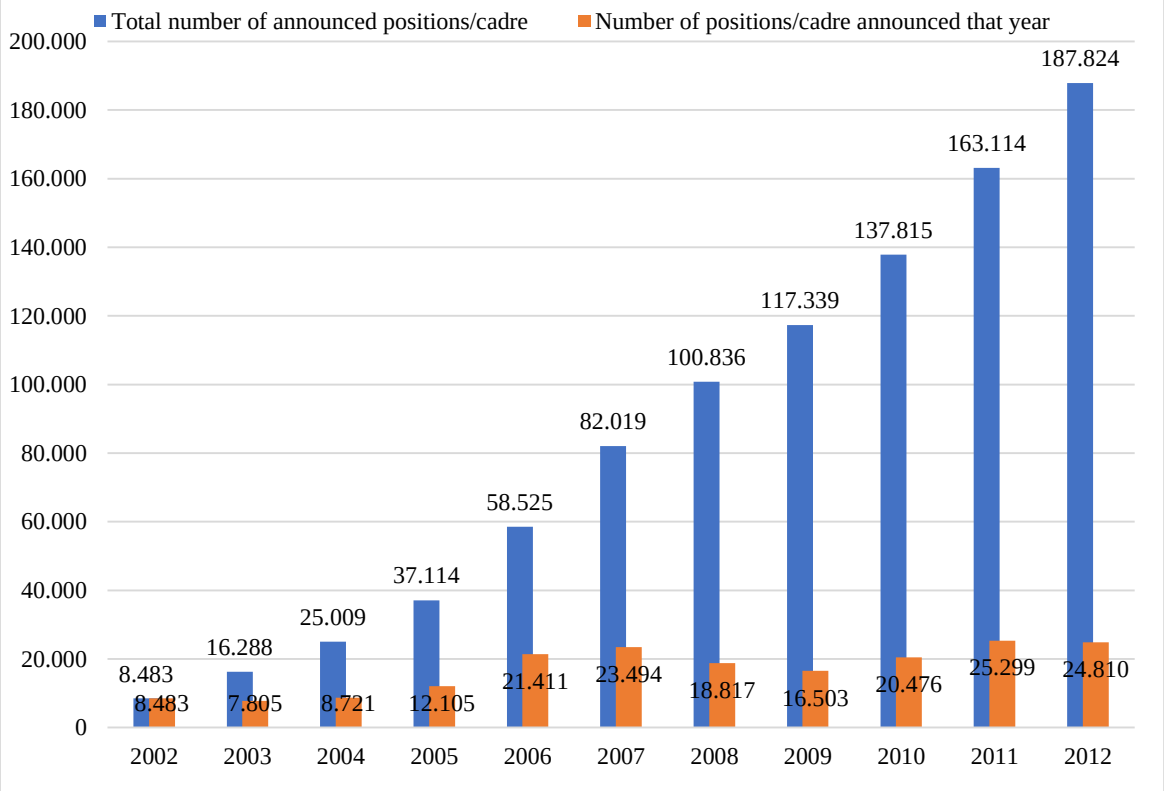


Figure 3. Change in the number of cadre/position announced in central placements over the years (2002-2012)[20]

[20] The announced cadre/position numbers presented in this chart were created by adding each year's announcement to the total of previous years (cumulatively).

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department data (T.C. Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 2018 p. 36).

Following this comprehensive assessment, the number of announced cadres/positions from 2013 to 2024 and the central placement data for these announcements will be presented and analysed. In this context, first of all, the total number of announced cadres and positions from 2013 to 2024 will be presented in Table 33.

Table 33. Number of positions/cadre announced for central placement[21]

Years	Number of Positions/Cadre
2013	30.261
2014	19.799
2015	15.372
2016	15.033
2017	4.739
2018	3.201
2019	2.746
2020	4.259
2021	2.707
2022	4.723
2023	5.560
2024	3.431

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department data (T.C. Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 2018, p. 36).

When the total number of announced cadres and positions for the period 2013-2024 is examined, significant and fluctuating changes are observed in public personnel recruitment policies. While there were quite a high number of cadre announcements in 2013, which was the beginning of the period, with 30.261, there was a significant downward trend in these numbers in the following years. In 2017, the number of cadres decreased to 4.739, and in 2019, to a very low level of 2.746. The basis of this fluctuation are political calendars such as the 2014 and 2019 local elections and the 2018 and 2023 general/presidential elections; the cautious approach and dismissals in public personnel recruitment, especially after the coup attempt in 2016; the administrative transformation that started with the

[21] The part from 2013 to 2017 was obtained from the data of the State Personnel Presidency. The period between 2018 and 2024 was obtained by compiling the scattered statistics on the MSPC website by the author.

transition to the Presidential System in 2017; and macroeconomic and administrative factors such as austerity measures in 2024. As a result of these developments, it is seen that the post-2016 postings, where fluctuations in the number of recruitment continue, are far from the postings of the previous period.

After the general framework of the announced cadre and position numbers is drawn, detailed analysis of the actual central placement data for these advertisements is of great importance. However, in order to present the data in a more systematic and comparative manner, the central placement results from 2013 to 2024 will be grouped and examined in four-year periods. In this context, first the central placement results for the period 2013-2016 will be presented in Table 34, then the period 2017-2020 in Table 35 and finally the period 2021-2024 in Table 36. The tables for each period will cover the number of applications, placements and vacant cadres according to education levels.

Table 34. Central placement numerical data for the period 2013-2016

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	3.047.237	10.861	10.849	12
Associate Degree	1.937.770	20.418	20.392	26
Undergraduate Degree	1.565.885	41.856	41.632	224
Total	**6.550.892**	**73.135**	**72.873**	**262**

Note: The central placement data for each year was compiled and translated by the author from the MSPC official website.

Table 35. Central placement numerical data for the period 2017-2020

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	436.668	1.184	1.184	0
Associate Degree	562.011	4.898	4.898	0
Undergraduate Degree	728.941	8.803	8.792	11
Total	**1.727.620**	**14.885**	**14.874**	**11**

Note: The central placement data for each year was compiled and translated by the author from the MSPC official website.

Table 36. Central placement numerical data for the period 2021-2024

Level of Education	Number of Applications	Number of Cadre	Number of Placed Candidates	Number of Vacant Cadre
Secondary Education	242.813	917	917	0
Associate Degree	490.045	5.639	5.638	1
Undergraduate Degree	619.164	10.574	10.521	53
Total	**1.352.022**	**17.130**	**17.076**	**54**

Note: The central placement data for each year was compiled and translated by the author from the MSPC official website.

According to the data presented, it is observed that there was a great interest in central placements in the first four-year period (2013-2016). A total of 73.135 positions were announced during this period, and the fact that more than 6 million candidates made their choices clearly reveals the intense demand and high competition for public positions. With 72.873 candidates being placed in response to the announced positions, the placement rate was quite high and the vast majority of positions (99.64%) were filled. In terms of education levels, it is seen that the highest number of candidates making choices during this period were among secondary education graduates, while the highest share in terms of the number of positions announced belonged to undergraduate degree. This situation shows that entry into the civil service is much more difficult and competitive for secondary education graduates, and that there are more diverse positions at the undergraduate level.

Compared to the previous period, there has been a sharp change in central placement dynamics in the 2017-2020 four-year period. During this period, the number of candidates who made a preference decreased dramatically by almost 80% compared to the previous period, falling to 1.727.620. In parallel, the total number of announced positions decreased by approximately 75% to 14.885. Despite this significant decrease in the number of positions, the fact that the vast majority of the announced positions have been filled shows that the system maintains its effectiveness in terms of occupancy rates. This decline could be thought to be due to the dismissal of public personnel and the cautious approach to public employment after the coup attempt in 2016, the structural transformations in public

administration with the referendum on the constitutional amendment held in 2017 and the transition to the Presidential System in 2018. These developments have caused a serious decrease in the number of recruitments made through central placement.

When the last four-year period, 2021-2024, is examined, it is seen that a total of 1.352.022 candidates made a preference in central placements and the total number of announced positions is 17.130. In this period, the number of candidates making preferences decreased slightly compared to the previous period. However, there was a partial increase in the number of announced positions compared to the 2017-2020 period. In the last two periods (2017-2020 and 2021-2024), the fact that the highest preference and highest number of positions were announced for undergraduate graduates suggests that the importance given to undergraduate specialization in public employment policies has increased and/or the need for personnel at this level has become more dominant. This situation draws a different picture from the intense application and competition focus of secondary school graduates in the previous period. This change can be interpreted as the evolution of the civil service's need for qualified personnel and the tendency towards candidates who are specialized in certain fields.

Following the detailed analysis of the above central placement data, the cumulative change in the total number of announced cadres and positions over the years from 2013 to 2024 will be presented in Figure 4 in order to show the long-term course of public employment and the cumulative increase in cadres.

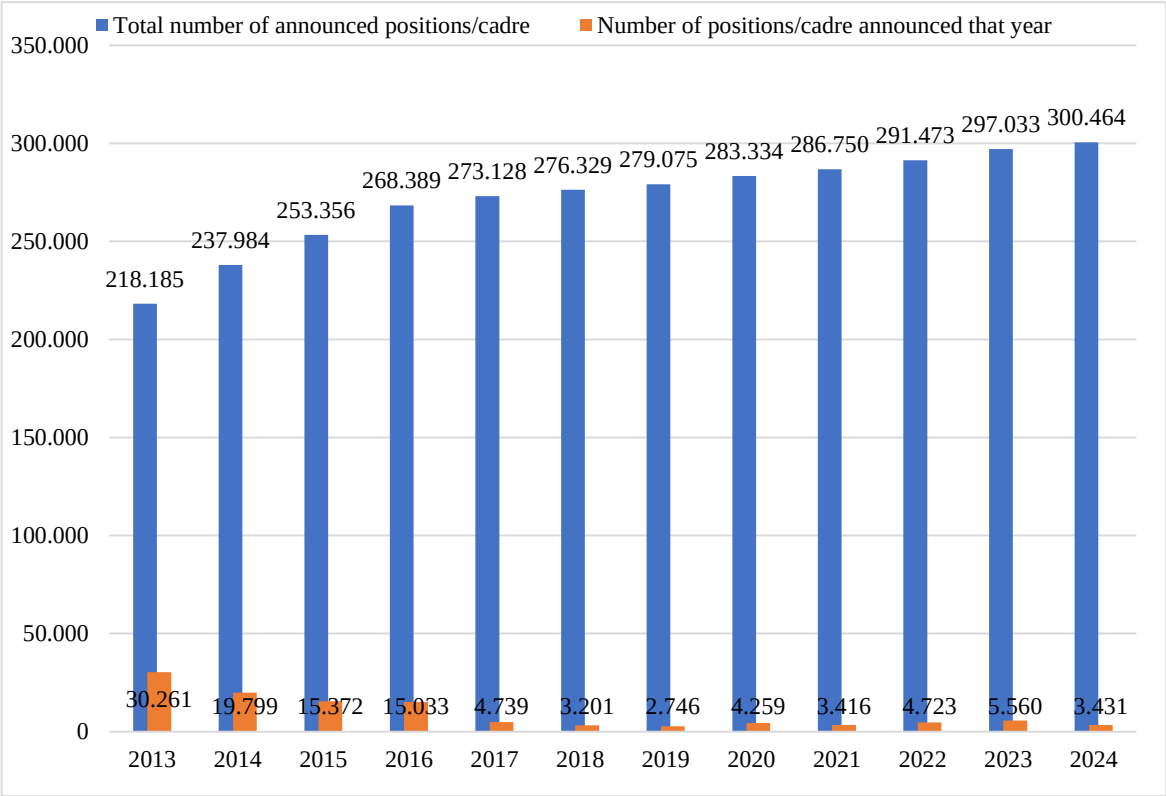


Figure 4. Cumulative number of positions/cadres advertised in central placements (2013-2024)[22]

Note: The section until 2017 was translated from the State Personnel Presidency data (T.C. Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 2018, p. 36), and the section from 2018 to 2024 was translated by compiling the data for the years on the MSPC website.

When the cumulative change in the number of announced cadres and positions for the period 2013-2024 presented in Figure 4 is examined over the years, important inferences are obtained regarding the long-term course of public employment capacity. While a rapid increase is observed in 2013 and 2014, the initial years of the graph, this situation is consistent with the high cadre announcements of the period (30.261 and 19.799). However, a significant slowdown and almost horizontal course is noticeable in the graph starting from 2017. This situation reveals the effects of factors such as the cautious policies adopted in public employment after the coup attempt in 2016, the administrative structure changes that came with the transition to the Presidential System, and economic austerity measures. Although there have been partial fluctuations in annual cadre announcements in the period after 2020 (2020-2024), these increases are far from creating a significant acceleration. This

[22] This graph is created by adding the cumulative numbers of announced positions/cadres for each year. Specifically, the 2013 data point was started by adding the 2013 data to the total number of positions/cadres of 2012, as previously presented in Figure 3.

situation shows that, compared to previous high years, the recruitment of new personnel in the civil service continues at a very limited level and the increase in the general public employment capacity has slowed down significantly.

To comprehensively analyse the periodic fluctuations in public personnel recruitment policies and the overall capacity development of the central placement system, this section examines the number of announced cadres/positions by year through detailed line graph representations. In this context, Figure 5 shows the number of positions announced through central placement each year between 2002 and 2024, while Figure 6 presents the total (cumulative) number of positions announced for the same period using a line graph.

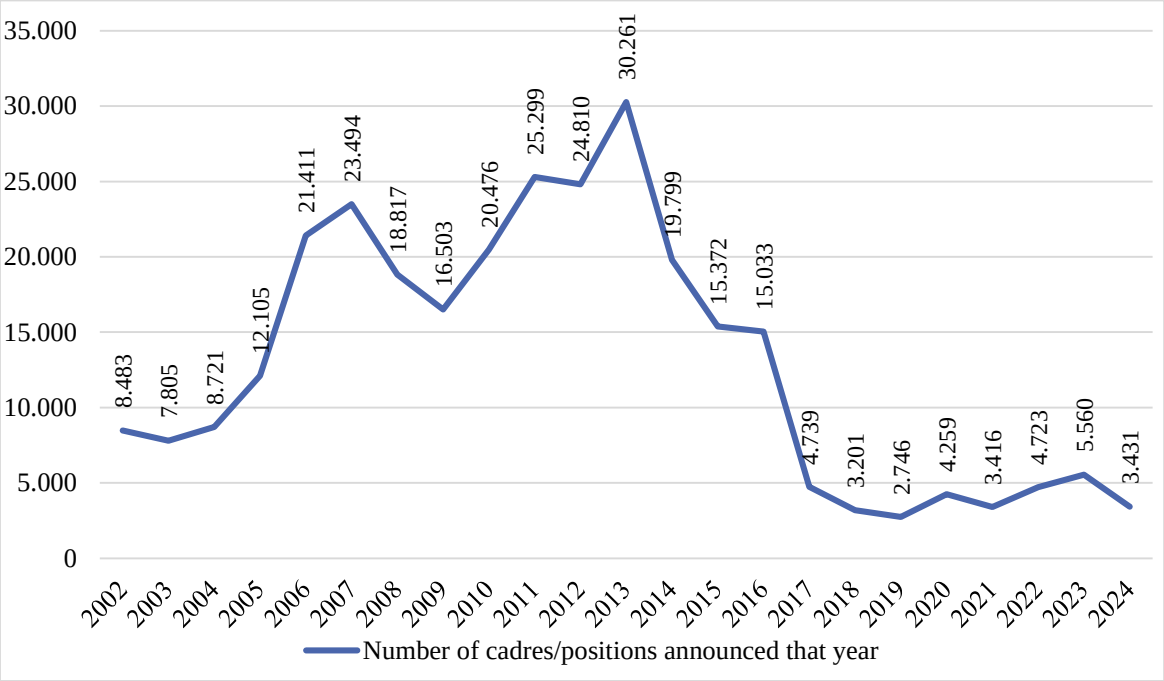


Figure 5. Number of cadres/positions announced annually in central placement between 2002 and 2024[23]

Note: It was prepared by translating from the State Personnel Department data (T.C. Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 2018, p. 36).

Figure 5 shows significant fluctuations in the number of positions/cadres announced each year in central placements. These fluctuations are linked to macro factors such as the country's current political decisions, economic crises, reform processes, and shifts in public personnel policy priorities. For example, while high numbers of positions were announced

[23] The part from 2013 to 2017 was obtained from the data of the State Personnel Presidency. The period between 2018 and 2024 was obtained by compiling the scattered statistics on the MSPC website by the author.

in some years, significant declines were observed in others. This suggests that public recruitment is shaped by periodical needs and external factors rather than consistent planning.

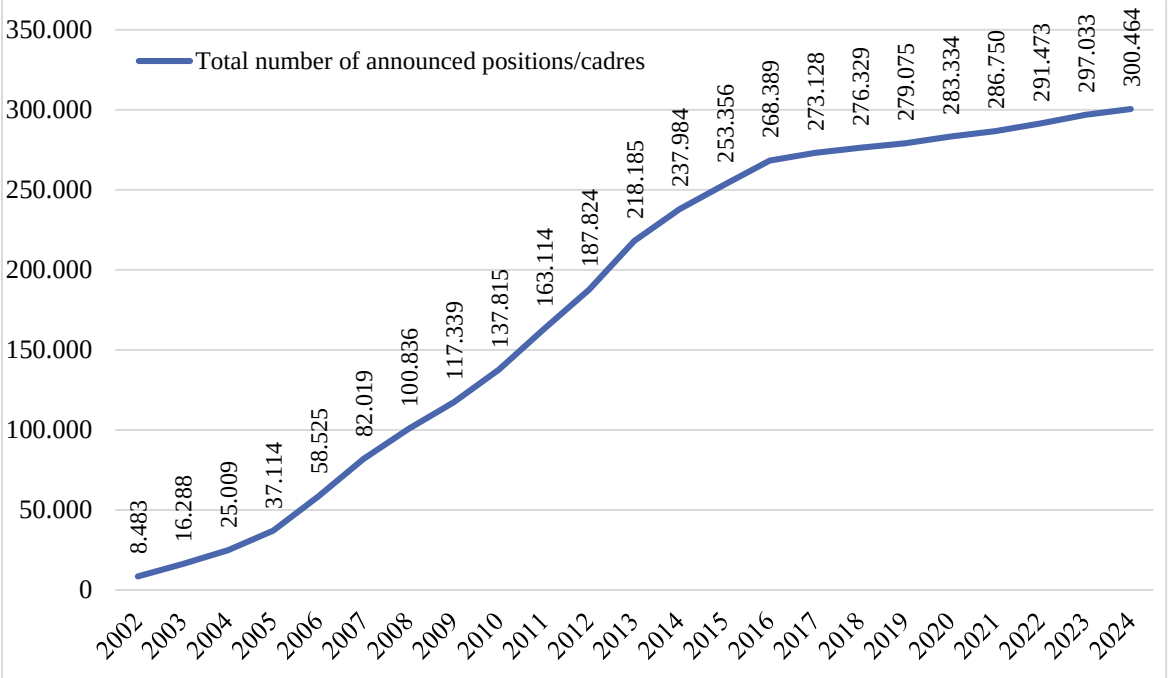


Figure 6. Trend in the total number of cadres/positions announced in central placement between 2002 and 2024

Note: The section until 2017 was translated from the State Personnel Presidency data (T.C. Devlet Personel Başkanlığı, 2018, p. 36), and the section from 2018 to 2024 was translated by compiling the data for the years on the MSPC website by the author.

To comprehensively analyse the capacity development of the central placement system over time and the periodic fluctuations in public personnel recruitment policies, Figure 6 presents the cumulative total number of cadres/positions announced from 2002 to 2024 as a line graph. This graph shows the cumulative total of positions announced each year, accumulating into the following year, demonstrating the system's overall growth trajectory. As clearly evident in Figure 6, a consistent upward trend is observed in the cumulative number of cadres/positions announced throughout the period under study. This steady increase (especially between 2002 and 2016) reflects the central placement system's capacity to recruit personnel for the civil service and its overall contribution to public employment. While a significant growth trend was observed from 2002 to 2016, it is noteworthy that there was a more horizontal increase between 2017 and 2024.

To assess general trends in public personnel recruitment policies and the role of the central placement system in public employment from a broader perspective, a detailed analysis was conducted of the change in public sector employment figures in Türkiye and the share of personnel recruited through central placement within this employment. In this context, Figure 7 presents a line chart of total public sector employment figures between 2007 and 2024, followed by Figure 8, which shows the change in the percentage share of the central placement system in total public employment. These two graphs provide important data for understanding the scope of the central placement system's role in recruiting public personnel and its evolution over time.

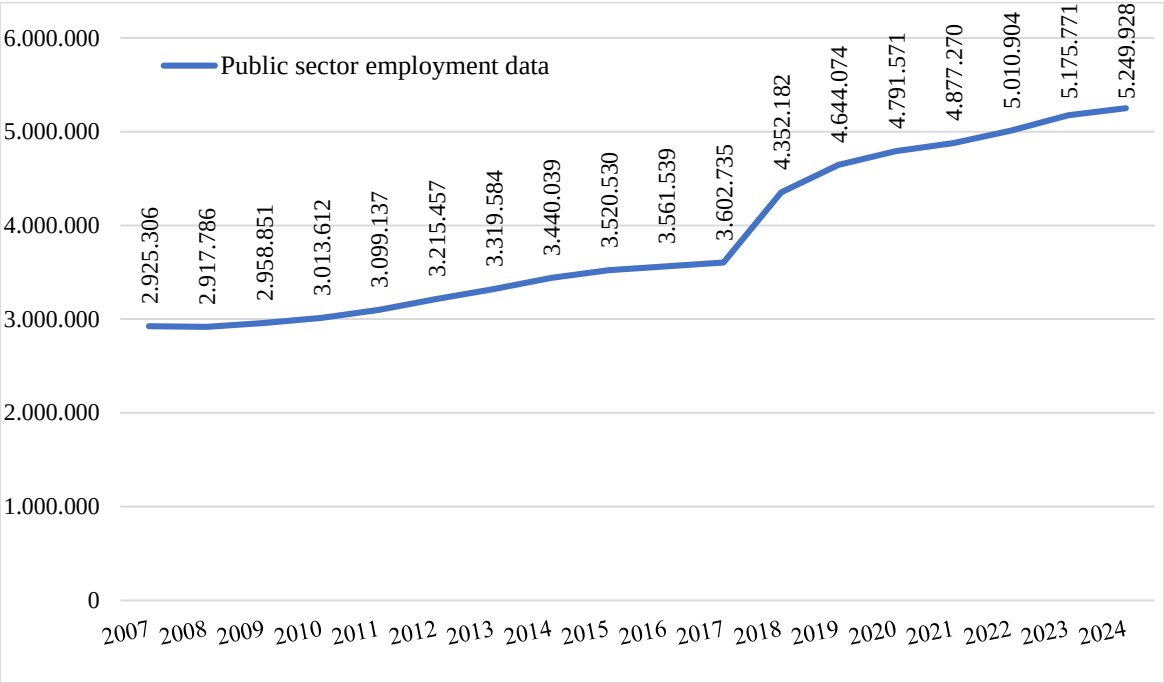


Figure 7. Numerical data on public sector employment between 2007 and 2024

Note: Annual data from 2007 to 2024 were compiled by the author (T.C. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Strateji ve Bütçe Başkanlığı, nd).

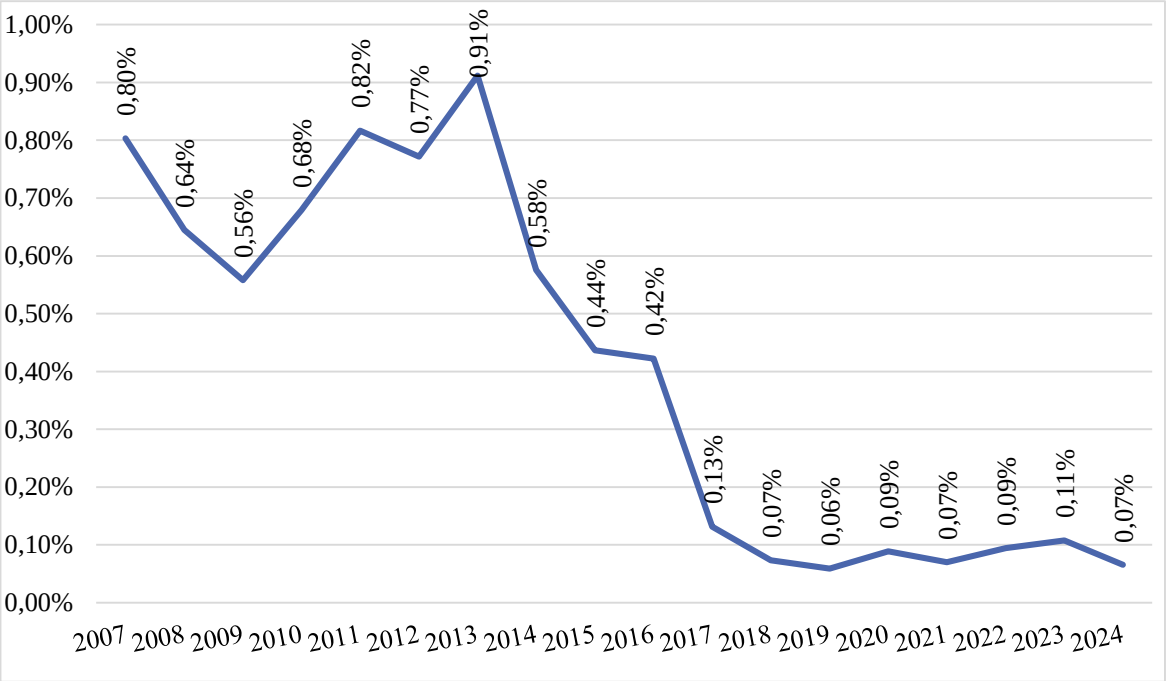


Figure 8. Share of centralized placement in public sector employment (2007-2024)

Note: Calculated by the author using the Republic of Turkey Strategy and Budget Presidency Public Employment Data and MSPC Annual Central Placement Numerical data.

Figure 7 details the annual development of total public sector employment in Türkiye between 2007 and 2024. It's important to note that these public sector employment figures include permanent staff, contract personnel, workers, and other personnel statuses. Furthermore, until 2018, employment types classified as "temporary personnel" were also included in these figures; however, this status was abolished after 2018. As the graph clearly demonstrates, a general upward trend is observed in public sector employment throughout the period under review. A particularly notable increase was experienced during the transition from 2017 to 2018, significantly expanding the total number of public sector personnel employed, with an increase of approximately eight hundred thousand.

Within this overall public employment landscape, the role and impact of the central placement system are examined more closely in Figure 8. Figure 8 illustrates the dramatic change in the percentage share of personnel recruited through the central placement system in total public sector employment. According to the data in the graph, the central placement share of public employment has exhibited a sharp decline since its peak of approximately 0.91% in 2013. This decline has become particularly pronounced since 2017, with this share falling below 0.15% and falling to as low as 0.06% in some years.

A joint analysis of Figures 7 and 8 clearly reveals that, even as overall employment growth continues in the public sector, the share of recruitment made through the central placement system has gradually decreased over the years. This is a significant empirical finding that methods other than centralized examinations and placements (exceptional appointments, internal examinations, contract recruitment, etc.) are gaining ground in public sector recruitment. Therefore, this shift provides concrete evidence of how the principles of merit and objectivity, the main argument of this thesis, can be weakened by the narrowing scope of the centralized system.

In this section, the central examination and central placement system, which was implemented in order to ensure the principles of merit and transparency in public personnel recruitment in Türkiye, has been examined in detail. The study examines the development of the central examination and central placement system, which started with the Civil Servants Examination (CSE) that came into force in 1999 and evolved into the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) over time, and the numerical data in these processes. In this context, the initial central placement data for 1999 was presented and the initial analysis of the system was made; then, the announced cadre/position numbers and actual placement data in the PPSE central placement processes from 2002 to 2024 were presented with detailed numerical data. The comprehensive evaluations clearly revealed that public personnel recruitment policies have undergone significant changes over the years and that these changes are directly related to the political, administrative and economic developments that the country has gone through.

After these comprehensive analyses, it is important to examine content of PPSE and exceptions of central system. Therefore, in the next section, under the title "PPSE and Exceptions of Central System" public personnel recruitment methods and special regulations other than central placement will be discussed.

4.1.2.1. PPSE and Exceptions of the Central System

The year 1999 was an important turning point in Türkiye with the introduction of a centralized examination and central placement system for entering civil service. This date stood out as a concrete reflection of the implementation of the principles of merit and transparency in public personnel administration. As the first step of this reform, a centralized examination application called the Civil Servants Examination (CSE) was initiated in 1999. This exam was structured according to four different education levels in order to cover a

wide range of candidates: primary school, secondary school, associate degree and undergraduate degree. The exams prepared for each education level consisted of general aptitude and general culture tests. Candidates were given a total of 3 hours to complete these tests. This exam was applied for appointments to positions other than career professions such as civil servant, driver, computer operator and engineer, which are referred to as Group B positions today.

While CSE was applied to appointments to positions other than career professions (group B positions), the situation was different in career professions. The recruitment of personnel for the positions defined today as Group A positions (such as experts, inspectors, auditors) varied according to the legislation of each institution. However, this scattered structure underwent significant changes in order to ensure uniformity and the principle of merit in public personnel recruitment processes. As a concrete step of this transformation, the Central Elimination Exam for Institutions was put into practice in 2001, thus linking career professions to a centralized examination system. The Central Elimination Exam for Institutions, which was implemented for the first and last time in July 2001, was recorded as a central preliminary examination for entering career professions.

With a regulation that came into effect in 2002, another important reform was carried out in the public personnel recruitment system. With this regulation, the previous dual examination structure (Civil Servants Examination - CSE and Central Elimination Exam for Institutions) was terminated and a single central examination system was introduced under the name of Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) to cover all public recruitments. In the new system, the cadres and positions to be appointed were divided into two main groups: "Group A Cadres" and "Group B Cadres. Group A cadres refer to positions that are called career professions and require specific professional knowledge or competence. These positions include titles such as expert, inspector, auditor, and are generally appointed based on the scores obtained from PPSE general aptitude and general culture exams and field knowledge tests, as well as interviews/exams conducted by the institutions themselves. Group B cadres are positions that are included in the general administrative services class, technical services class, and health services class and require general competence rather than a specific professional specialization. Appointments to these cadres, which include titles such as officer, driver, computer operator, technician, engineer, are made by MSPC through central placement, based on scores from PPSE.

The Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) plays a central role in entering civil service in Türkiye for both (A) and (B) group cadres. For candidates wishing to be

appointed to (A) group cadres, PPSE is a pre-selection tool that determines the eligibility to participate in the entrance exams to be organized by the institutions within the framework of their own special legislation. On the contrary, for appointments to be made to (B) group cadres, the score obtained from PPSE is an important criterion in the central placement process. All application processes for these exams are managed through guides published by the Measurement, Selection and Placement Centre (MSPC). While these guides are published separately for secondary education, associate degree, undergraduate and teaching[24] levels in even years, they are published only for PPSE A group in odd years. These guides provide a wide range of information on personnel recruitment processes, candidacy conditions, detailed rules for general and field exams and evaluation principles. The guide published in odd years for group A cadre explains field knowledge tests, score weights and forty-seven score types. The percentage equivalents of these score types are also available in the guide. In the guides published for Group B cadres in even years, the scope of the tests for secondary education and associate degrees, their percentage weights and two score types for each are explained. In the undergraduate guide, also explains field knowledge tests, score weights, and fifty score types.

In addition to the centralized exam and placement systems for Group A and Group B cadres, there are also positions subject to different appointment procedures in the Turkish public personnel legislation. Although these positions are located outside the central system, they also differ within themselves. Within this distinction, career professions such as district governorship, judgeship and prosecutorship stand out first. For candidates to be appointed to these positions, entrance exams organized specifically for these professions by MSPC (for example, the Judicial Judge and Prosecutor Assistant Exam, District Governor Candidate Exam) are taken as basis. Candidates who are successful in the written exam conducted by MSPC then proceed to the written exam and interview stage organized by the relevant institutions (such as the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior). However, the interview stage in entering these professions constitutes one of the most controversial and critical aspects of the system. Because, the elimination of a large number of candidates who have achieved very high scores in the written exam during the interview stage is a source of concern frequently voiced by the public and academic circles. This situation raises serious questions about the objectivity and fairness of the interviews. It is obvious that interview

[24] With a new regulation, the PPSE requirement for teachers was removed. Instead, the Ministry of National Education Academy Entrance Examination requirement was introduced. The first examination will be implemented for teacher candidates on July 13, 2025.

processes are influenced by political or personal references rather than the merits and competencies of the candidates. In other words, it is now known to everyone that despite the success achieved in the written exam, the final appointment is made through "favouritism".

On the other hand, there are also positions called "exceptional civil servants" in the public personnel regime, which can be entered without an exam requirement. High-level executive positions such as governorship, ambassadorship, undersecretariat, and private secretary positions can be included in this category. Appointments to such positions are made within the framework of special provisions specified in the Civil Servants Law (CSL), taking into account the discretionary power of the political will and special qualifications. The fact that recruitment to these positions is done directly or with the approval of the President questions the existence of the merit principle in the public. Because, the fact that people who will take part in the highest-level decision-making and executive mechanisms of the civil service can be appointed without going through any objective test or competitive evaluation process shows that favoritism and political loyalty have taken precedence over professional competence. We can list these exceptional civil servant positions and institutions and titles outside the central system as follows:

a) Presidency and the Grand National Assembly of Türkiye civil servants
b) Undersecretariat for Defence Industries
c) Ministry of National Defence and Turkish Armed Forces and Coast Guard Command
d) Presidencies of the Ministry of European Union Affairs
e) Memberships of the Supreme Board of Religious Affairs
f) National Intelligence Organization
g) Secretariat General of the National Security Council
h) Deputy Presidencies and Department Heads of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority
i) Governorships, Embassies, Permanent Representatives
j) Members of the Constitutional Court
k) Judge and prosecutor professions
l) Council of State, Court of Accounts professional members etc.

The exceptional civil servants discussed in this section provide an important dimension that shows that the centralized, objective and competitive system in public personnel recruitment is gradually being eroded. These special recruitment methods, which are implemented on the grounds of the unique qualities of certain positions, open the door to direct appointments without examination, thus seriously questioning the principles of merit and equality of opportunity in civil service. Despite the legitimacy of these exceptional

positions on a legal basis, the fact that their scope tends to expand in practice and that they are left to the absolute discretion of political will has the potential to prevent transparency and accountability in public personnel administration.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This comprehensive study aim is deeply analysing the process of entering the civil service in Türkiye and the phenomenon of central examination-central placement. The historical process starting from the Ottoman period and extending from the public personnel administration and personnel recruitment methods in the early years of the Republic to the Memurin Law, foreign expert reports, the Civil Servants Law, initial exams such as the Civil Servants Examination (CSE) and the Central Elimination Exam for Institutions to the emergence and evolution of the Public Personnel Selection Examination (PPSE) has been examined comprehensively. As a result of the analyses, the following basic conclusions have been reached:

1. It has been observed that the central placement system in public personnel recruitment emerged with the aim of establishing the principles of merit and objectivity throughout the historical process, but that deviations from this goal have occurred over time.

2.With the transition to the Presidential System, the closure of the State Personnel Presidency (SPP), an important coordination and policy-making centre in public personnel administration, resulted in the distribution of its duties to different institutions (or in some cases, leaving it unattended) and significantly eliminated coordination in the system.

3. Again, during the transition to the Presidential System, it was observed that with the closure of the Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East (PAITME), which had a deep-rooted mission in the development of the public administration discipline, a serious gap was created in the important task areas of public personnel training and academic and practical development of the public administration discipline.

4. The institutional transformations experienced with the transition to the Presidential System have created a fragmented structure in public personnel administration. During this process, it was determined that human resources planning in the public sector evolved into an approach similar to the private sector; this situation significantly weakened the central coordination by eliminating the common sense principle of the system.

5. It was observed that with the Presidential System, the single-handed decision-making mechanism caused radical and sudden changes in public administration, that these changes were implemented with the decisions of a single will without planning and without a common exchange of ideas, and thus became like a puzzle in the administrative structure.

6. During the thesis preparation process, changes such as the closure of the Presidency Human Resources Office and the distribution of its duties, the replacement of the Presidency of Administrative Affairs with the General Secretariat, confirm that the system has become a puzzle.

7. Quantitative data, including significant fluctuations in the number of central placement positions and actual appointments between 1999 and 2024, clearly demonstrate that public personnel recruitment policies are strongly influenced by periodic political, economic, and administrative conditions.

8. One of the most important empirical findings of the study is that, despite an overall increase in total public sector employment between 2007 and 2024, the percentage share of personnel recruited through the central placement system within this total employment has exhibited a significant and sustained decline. This suggests that methods other than centralized examinations (exceptional appointments, institution-specific exams, contract personnel, etc.) are gaining ground in public personnel recruitment.

9. In recruitment to the civil service, exceptional civil service appointments (without examinations), which continue to exist outside the central examination system and whose scope has expanded over time, have also seriously damaged the principles of merit and fairness in civil service.

10. In recruitment to PPSE Group A cadres, it has been observed that institutions conduct their own written and oral exams and interviews in addition to the PPSE score, and that the allegations of favoritism and nepotism intensify in these additional exams, and that the principle of merit has been seriously damaged.

11. As a general evaluation, the central examination and placement system in Türkiye, despite aiming for merit and objectivity, exhibits a complex, constantly changing and fragmented appearance due to the effects of external factors, exceptional appointments and career occupation appointments, and the dynamics in the numerical data presented in the fourth part of the thesis. This situation directly affects the effectiveness of the central system, the standardization in entering the civil service, and the principle of merit.

In light of the findings, recommendations for policy makers and future research to improve public personnel administration and strengthen the merit principle in Türkiye are as follows:

a) Recommendations for Policy Makers:

1. Predictability and Strategic Approach in Cadre Planning: Instead of cadre policies that change according to periodical and short-term needs and political preference, a more

stable approach based on long-term and strategic civil service planning should be adopted in public personnel recruitment.

2. Reconsidering and Strengthening the Role of the Central Placement System: The goal should be to increase the share of central placements in total public sector employment, in line with the principles of merit and objectivity. The transparency and merit-based nature of other recruitment methods (exceptional appointments, institution-specific exams, and contract personnel recruitment) should be continuously monitored. Making central placement the primary gateway to the public sector, and even strengthening it, will reinforce merit and objectivity in public service entry.

3. Elimination of Fragmented Structure and Reestablishment of Central Coordination: The aim should be to eliminate the fragmented structure that emerged with the transition to the Presidential System and became apparent with the closure of the State Personnel Presidency (SPP). A strong, central coordination and control mechanism should be established in the field of public personnel administration that will cover all recruitment, placement and appointment processes. These duties should be transferred to SPP and reorganized and opened.

4. The Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East (PAITME), which has a deep-rooted mission and aims to train public personnel and develop the academic discipline of public administration, should also be reopened.

5. Narrowing the Scope of Exceptional Appointments and Transparency: The scope of exceptional civil servant appointments that are determined to seriously undermine the principles of merit and fairness should be narrowed, and objective and transparent criteria should be determined for these appointments even in cases of necessity. All exceptional recruitments and their justifications should be openly announced to the public, and accountability principles should be strengthened.

6. Objectivity and Supervision of Oral Exam and Interview Processes: In order to prevent allegations of favouritism arising in interviews and to strengthen the principle of merit, oral exam and interview processes should be standardized, the formation of committees should be made transparent, and objective evaluation methods (such as objective questions, structured interview, clarity of scoring criteria) and supervision mechanisms (audio/video recording, independent observers) should be introduced.

7. Restoring Trust in the Civil Service: The full implementation of the principles of merit, transparency and objectivity in public personnel recruitment processes is of vital

importance in terms of increasing the quality of civil service, as well as strengthening public trust and bringing the most competent people into the civil service.

b) Recommendations for Future Researches:

1. Impact Analysis of the New Public Personnel Administration Structure: It can be investigated how the functions of institutions such as the State Personnel Presidency (SPP) and the Public Administration Institute for Türkiye and the Middle East (PAITME), which were closed with the transition to the Presidential System, are currently distributed or which duties are completely abolished. In addition, issues such as what happened to the public administration duties of the closed Human Resources Office and what changes occurred when the Presidency of Administrative Affairs became the General Secretariat, and the long-term effects of all these institutional transformations on public administration can be examined with detailed case studies or comparative analyses.

2. Detailed Analysis of Central Placement Data and Relationship with Policies: The causal relationship between the significant fluctuations in the central placement cadre numbers between 2002-2024, which are presented in the third section of the thesis, and the periodic political, economic and administrative conditions and decision-making processes can be examined with more advanced econometric or statistical analyses. In addition, based on the total announced cadre/position numbers compiled by the author after 2017 and their placement data according to their education levels, the strategic changes in the distribution of titles and education levels and areas of expertise for each year can be presented in detail. This comprehensive analysis will provide an understanding not only of the changes in total numbers but also of the qualitative distribution of public personnel recruitments.

3. Integration of Digitalization and New Technologies into Examination Processes: Experimental or pilot studies can be conducted on the potential role of digitalization and new technologies such as artificial intelligence (e.g. objective assessment tools, platforms that increase process transparency) in public personnel recruitment processes and their applicability in Turkish conditions. This will evaluate innovative approaches to increase the objectivity and efficiency of examination systems.

As a result, this study has analysed the process of entering the civil service in Türkiye and the phenomenon of centralized examination-central placement with a multidimensional approach with its historical depth, institutional transformations and empirical data. The findings have once again revealed that the principles of merit and objectivity form the basis of effectiveness in public administration and legitimacy in the eyes of the public. However,

the single-handed decision-making mechanism that came with the Presidential System, the fragmented structure that the system has created, external factors and political discretion have made planning and central coordination impossible. This study provides a solid foundation and an important starting point for both policy makers and future research for the construction of a more objective, consistent and predictable structure that focuses on merit in public personnel administration.

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