AN OVERVIEW OF THE GCC COUNTRIES’ PARLIAMENTS

Although the GCC countries remain hereditary monarchies, it is interesting to look at how their parliaments operate, examining some key similarities and differences that exist among them, as well as highlighting important milestones.

**COMPOSITION**

- Oman and Bahrain are the only two bicameral GCC parliaments; the rest are unicameral.
- 50% of UAE’s FNC members are elected by the electoral college. FNC is the only GCC parliament that cannot propose new laws.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Assembly</th>
<th>National Assembly</th>
<th>Council of Oman</th>
<th>Federal National Council</th>
<th>Consultative Council</th>
<th>Consultative Council</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>elected members</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appointed members</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those are Cabinet Ministers (ex-officio members).

- Kuwait’s National Assembly seats more elected than appointed members and has more power than its GCC counterparts.
- Qatar and Saudi Arabia are the only two countries with all-appointed parliaments.

**POLITICAL PARTIES**

Political parties are in general prohibited across the GCC and candidates thus run in the elections as independents. However, in Bahrain and Kuwait they can form political societies and run under their banner.

**WOMEN IN THE PARLIAMENT**

- Oman was the first country to allow women run and vote in parliamentary elections.
- Qatar was the last GCC country to appoint women in its parliament in 2017.
- Saudi Arabia was the first to introduce women quota in the parliament. It was set at min. 20% and KSA thus has the largest number of women members (30) among the GCC parliaments.

**FIRST AND LAST**

**1ST FEMALE SPEAKER**

The UAE elected the first woman Speaker of the House in the GCC in 2015, the second one was elected in Bahrain in 2018.

**PROPOTION**

The UAE was the 2nd to introduce quota for women and the first to set it at 50%, becoming the first GCC parliament with equal gender representation and simultaneously also the largest proportion of women.

Kuwait currently has the lowest proportion of women in the Parliament.

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