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## **Analyzing and examining the Concept, Dimensions and Indicators of Transparency in the Legislature with a Comparative Approach**

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**Samad Hedayati Khalili<sup>1</sup>, Reza Simbar<sup>2\*</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Political Science, South Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

<sup>2\*</sup>Department of Political Science, Guilan University, Guilan, Iran

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### **Abstract**

The legislative body in the Islamic Republic of Iran is the Islamic Council, which carries the important task of legislating and supervising the implementation of law. Important policies of the government are determined by the Islamic Council and governments are obliged to implement them. In this regard, it should be kept in mind that the Islamic Council is an institution emanating from the people, in fact, it is the crystallization of the views and demands of the general society. Therefore, the application of maximum transparency-oriented policies is one of the necessities of every parliament. In this article with the title "Analysis and review of the concept, dimensions and indicators of transparency in the legislature with a comparative approach" and with the aim of identifying and analyzing the main elements of transparency in the legislature by using the experiences and approaches of some successful countries in This context was carried out with a descriptive and analytical method and by using library sources and texts. The results showed that the transparency of the legislative branch emphasizes the right of the people to access the information of this branch and tries to provide functional information of the parliament and representatives. to provide the ground for monitoring the behavior of the representatives and their performance by the people and also to ensure their participation in the legislative affairs. Six elements of transparency in the legislature, including "identity and expense information of representatives", "information on the presence and absence of representatives", "distribution of information, gifts, benefits and lobbying of representatives", "information on employees, programs, orders and meetings of commissions and public forum of the Parliament", "dissemination of information, opinions, budgets and expenses of the legislature", "the presence of a platform for people's participation in the legislative process and in-person access" and "the existence of behavioral principles". Transparency is one of the tools of popular monitoring of

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\*Corresponding Author's Email: [rezasimbar@hotmail.com](mailto:rezasimbar@hotmail.com)

the legislature and influencing the decision-making process in countries, and it can prepare the platform for transformation in the field of legislation and be an opportunity to start structural reforms in different parts of the society.

**Keywords:** Parliamentary transparency, Legislature, Components of transparency, Parliamentary information, Behavioral principles of representative

## Introduction

Transparency is semantically opposite to concealment. In the Persian word-board, it means the physical ability to transmit light, which can be interpreted as being exposed, visible, and clear. Transparency is operational and meaningful in many fields. For example: organizational transparency, financial and accounting transparency, document transparency, information transparency. Transparency is one of the platforms and categories and a key word for better governance and strengthening people's participation. In this connection, it should be considered that governance has an outstanding effect on the field of public policy. Morad refers to policy-making organizations, decision-making centers at the macro level of the country, which are expert and efficient in making macro decisions in order to determine the necessary strategies. Governance in policy-making organizations is more important in terms of the number of stakeholders. Because in good governance, all activists should be involved.

The main elements and actors of the country's governance system have multiple functions and roles, and if their performance is not clear, attracting public participation and the emergence of people's sovereignty will be weakened. The legislature, as the most important democratic institution and the manifestation of the public will that deals with legislation and supervision in the country, is not exempt from this and should expose itself to the

public more than ever and act in order to achieve parliamentary transparency. Transparency is the main indicator of a desirable and democratic parliament, and it is one of the tools of public monitoring of the parliament and solutions for clarifying the decision-making process and resource allocation in different countries. In fact, the presentation of parliamentary information (including functional information of representatives and administrative information of the parliament) while promoting the political-social maturity of the people, also provides the means to strengthen the motivational structure of the public to seek participation in the country's legislative process.

In this article, which aims to achieve specific criteria for the pathological evaluation of the state of transparency in the legislature of the Islamic Republic of Iran, an attempt will be made to answer the question, what is the concept of parliamentary transparency? And what are the dimensions and indicators of transparency in the legislature? Therefore, while explaining parliamentary transparency with a comparative approach, we will deal with the role of transparency in the legislature and related indicators with a comparative approach.

## Parliamentary transparency

### *The concept of parliamentary transparency*

Transparency is semantically opposed to concealment. Dekhoda considers transparency from the root of "Shaf" to mean

"transparency, radiance and blaze" (Dehkhoda, 1999, p.844). In the word-board of Omid, it is also said about this: "The characteristic of everything delicate and thin, from behind which other objects are visible" (Omid, 2002, p.514). Transparency can be implemented and meaningful in many fields. For example: organizational transparency, financial and accounting transparency, document transparency, information transparency. Transparency is one of the platforms and categories and a keyword for better governance and strengthening people's participation. (Zarei, 2001, p.40)

Parliamentary transparency emphasizes the people's right to access parliamentary information and tries to provide the basis for monitoring the behavior of the representatives and their performance by the people by providing functional information of the parliament and parliamentarians, as well as ensuring their participation in legislative affairs. Transparency is one of the tools of popular monitoring of parliament and influencing the decision-making process in countries, and it can prepare the platform for transformation in the field of legislation and be an opportunity to start structural reforms in different parts of society. As one of the basic powers of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Islamic Council plays a fundamental role in the decision-making process of the country, which is stated in all the principles of the sixth chapter of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Bahrami et al., 2020, p.83).

Transparency is considered one of the main foundations for creating accountability in parliaments. Transparency in parliament requires freedom of information, public access to documents and information, and a legal guarantee for this access (Parsojo, 2009, p.15). Inter-parliamentary union considers a democratic parliament that repre-

sents the political and social units of the people, transparent in its performance. May the people and interested groups be able to participate in it, have a reliable performance and be effective in organizing and doing their work.

In one of its most important documents (Beetham, 2007), the Inter-Parliamentary Union has listed the most important basic values of each parliament, which can be seen in Table 5. As can be seen, transparency is listed as one of the most important values and basic goals for the parliament. A parliament where the behavior of the representatives and legislative processes can be monitored and followed, and the platform for people's participation in these processes is also provided. International studies and experiences clearly show that creating transparency in the legislative elements of any country leads to the growth of quality in legislation and the participation of experts in the policies of the parliament, and also helps to prevent corruption in the parliaments of the world. By creating transparency in behavior, expenses spent, gifts received by representatives, transparency in votes, transparency in lobbying and those who are effective in the decision-making of representatives, transparency and participation of experts in each field to pass relevant and useful laws and in general, transparency in most of the parliament's organs can prevent the creation of laws that hinder the progress of the country (Transparency & Accountability Initiative, 2014, p. 218)

According to the pollster, transparency in the parliament should be manifested in three main areas:

Disclosure of information in all areas where the parliament has a responsibility and duty, such as everything that happens in the meetings, draft plans and bills, the pro-

cess of passing laws, lobbying of the parliament members to the decisions and results that are obtained after the discussion of the representatives in the meetings.;

The availability of all documents for people to easily access parliamentary information; and the legal basis for implementing the right of the people to access parliamentary information. (Parsojo, 2009, p. 15).

In this way, if the parliament makes all its information available to the public, such as conversations, reports, details of negotiation sessions, performance reports, and financial information, it will automatically be accountable for its duties and performance. Also, Parsojo believes that the entire decision-making process in parliaments should be transparent. The decision regarding the approval or rejection of a draft bill or the authority to use the budget for the government or the supervision of the parliament on the executive branch should all be done under the supervision of the public and with the consultation of the people. In addition, there will be a continuous relationship between the people and the parliament when access and opportunities are legally and officially provided for the people to obtain information about everything that happens in the parliament (Parsojo, 2009, p. 19).

Transparency and Accountability Organization has designed a path and obligations for the parliaments of different countries to achieve an open and transparent parliament, so that countries can have an open and transparent parliament by fulfilling these obligations step by step. (Transparency & Accountability Initiative, 2014, p. 219).

These commitments include several sections: primary, intermediate, advanced and innovative. These obligations are mentioned below:

- Primary

Clear definition of laws on parliamentary transparency, correctness, as well as expansion and development of their enforcement capacity;

Empowering citizens to provide input information to legislative processes;

Parliament's proactive activity in disseminating information about its roles, functions and online activity.

- Intermediate

Making information related to the parliament more understandable and accessible to citizens through different methods;

Cooperation with groups outside the parliament to increase citizens' cooperation with the parliament;

Publication of parliamentary information in open formats (reusable for users).

- Advanced

identifying youth and marginalized communities as the target population;

Creating infrastructure and digital capacities to enable citizens' participation with parliament;

Ensuring that parliamentary transparency processes are in line with positive international experiences.

- Innovative

Creation and sharing of open-source parliamentary software;

Activating citizens to participate with the parliament and use technologies such as mobile phones and SMS

In adapting this to the state of transparency of the legislative branch in the Islamic Republic, it should be kept in mind as reflected in the research report on the functional transparency of the Islamic Council in 2021, but since the path of transparency in the Islamic Council is faced with structural and non-structural obstacles. There is a lot going on, just introducing transparency

indicators will not make the realization of this important. Therefore, at the end of the report, suggestions for clarifying this key institution of the country have been presented under the title of policy recommendations. Considering that the realization of all indicators of parliamentary transparency is contemplated a fundamental change in the way of governance of the country, this task should be done in stages and step by step in order to create ideal transparency. Therefore, at the end of the report, in order to determine the first step of clarifying parliamentary information, some indicators with higher priority have been proposed. (Alizadeh, Moradi, 2021).

#### ***Ownership of parliamentary information***

One of the important issues in creating a transparent parliament is to pay attention to who owns the basis of the data and information produced in the parliament. If we consider parliamentary information as belonging to the people, not publishing and presenting it will deprive the people of their right to information and thus deprive them of monitoring their representatives and their participation.

The Parliamentary Transparency Statement (2011) states that: "Information produced in or for Parliament belongs to the people because Parliament is created to represent the interests of the people. However, some parliaments limit citizens' access to this information, which causes public participation in important political discussions. The meaning of providing parliamentary information is the information that the parliament should always provide to the people as a routine and not provide this information only at the request of the people. Also, the information that the parliament provides to

the people should be presented in formats that people are not limited to reuse.

The African Commission on Human Rights (2002) states in the Declaration on the Principles of Freedom of Expression in Africa that government and public institutions do not keep information for themselves and that everyone has the right to access this information based on the law. Also, the Parliamentary Confederation of the American continent, in expressing the criteria of the parliaments of the countries of the American continent (2011), considers information related to legislation as a fundamental right for citizens, and based on this, states that this information should be available to the public.

Therefore, public ownership of parliamentary information indicates that parliaments should actively publish information. Proactive dissemination of information means that public institutions put information on the parliament's website by default before people request it.

With this premise, the parliament is obliged to specify the exceptions to the provision of parliamentary information in detail. These exceptions should be carefully explained in the rules and people should know about them. For example, these exceptions can be one of the following situations:

- with the aim of preventing the publication of private and personal information;
- Protection of information related to national security;
- Preventing the lack of free and unrestricted dialogue in the parliament (Declaration of Parliamentary Openness 2011) (cases where the representatives cannot easily participate and speak in discussions and debates by disclosing their information).



### ***Formats for presenting parliamentary information***

Parliamentary data and information are part of public data, and the majority of these data are information that is not subject to privacy restrictions, security restrictions and access levels. In order to use this data more and more easily, parliaments provide various formats of parliamentary information to reuse them for the public as well as developers and those who want to use this data and connect them with each other for various analyzes of It will be easier to create the status of parliament and laws, and as a result, supervision will be easier and parliament will be more responsive. In fact, it can be said that parliamentary data and information have become truly transparent when the parliament presents its information in formats that are usable and understandable for the people.

Some parliamentary data presentation formats cannot be deployed and analyzed again in another database; therefore, parliaments should present their data in open formats such as XML, which gives parliamentary data different capabilities.

One of the most important data presentation formats of parliamentary documents is XML format. XML, or Extensible Markup Language, is a type of computer format that is marked up, and this factor makes it both machine-readable and human-readable. This format is mostly used to provide information about a document. This language is independent of the platform for execution, and this factor makes it possible to work with a fixed language on all platforms and move documents with a fixed standard.

This format simplifies the use of parliamentary information for parliamentarians and citizens and improves the comparison and use of parliamentary information across

parliaments and governments. Presenting all parliamentary documents in this format makes it easier to manage and store these documents, and also facilitates people's analysis and use of this information.

Akomantoso is an XML-based structured format used to structure judicial, parliamentary and legal documents. One of the features of this language is the creation of a single language for the exchange of legislative and parliamentary documents between institutions. It also provides the user with the ability to store such documents for a long time, because it always works independent of the platform like the XML language (Moratab, 2018, p.41).

### **Components of transparency in the legislature**

Transparency in the legislature has different indicators, each of which is related to a part of the parliament. The components and indicators of parliamentary transparency will be fully introduced and explained in the transparency evaluation frameworks section. Considering that there are many indicators and components of parliamentary transparency and their statistics are one of the goals of this research, in this part, the most important transparency measures of the legislature are introduced.

It is emphasized again that by searching the documents and experiences of different countries in the field of parliamentary transparency, no dimensions have been mentioned for this field, and the researcher does not intend to discover them in this research, but some of the more important steps that have been taken in this regard will be briefly explained in this section and in the next chapter, we will deal with the pathology and adaptation of this issue with the current situation of the Islamic Council of the Islamic

Republic of Iran in detail and according to the collected components.

### ***Identity and fee information of representatives***

The information of the representatives is one of the most obvious information that every citizen should know about his representative in the parliament. Information such as a list of current representatives, information related to their biographies, party affiliation photos, commission membership, contact information, parliamentary activities, etc.

According to the United Nations Development Program and the Secretariat of the Parliament of the Republic of Indonesia (Parsjoo, 2006), the creation of a personal website by each representative is one of the first things that the parliamentarian should do to clarify his actions in the parliament.

For example, the website of the South African Parliament provides an alphabetical list of MPs with information such as phone

number, email address, party affiliation, committee membership, photo and constituency. In the United States, all congressional representatives receive funding to run their own personal websites, and these websites often provide client services, news releases, links to information about legislation and other legislative activities, and contact information. (Griffith, 2006).

Among the most important information of each representative is the amount of money spent by the representative in the parliament. The amount of expenses and the method of spending by the representative in the parliament is one of the most important indicators of the evaluation of the representative in the parliaments, and in this way, the method of dealing with the public property of the representative can be more carefully considered.

Different countries have presented the expenses of parliamentarians in different ways, which can be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1: Summary of the characteristics of the expenses of representatives in different countries**

Country	Feature summary	Internet address
Brazil	Providing all the costs of each representative, including the costs of consulting for the purchase of plane tickets, telephone, postal service costs, taxi fares, holding conferences by representatives	<a href="http://www.camara.gov.br/cotaparlamentar/">http://www.camara.gov.br/cotaparlamentar/</a>
Canada	Presentation of all the expenses of each representative, including travel expenses, the cost of accommodation during the trip, office and consulting expenses, the cost of ceremonies and conferences held by the representative.	<a href="http://www.parl.gc.ca/Public Disclosure/MemberExpenditures.aspx?Language=e &amp;View=M &amp;MemberId=620ae0b6-6ee81997-839b-4927863289hd">http://www.parl.gc.ca/Public Disclosure/MemberExpenditures.aspx?Language=e &amp;View=M &amp;MemberId=620ae0b6-6ee81997-839b-4927863289hd</a>
Ireland	Presenting the expenses that the Parliament has paid to each of the representatives for representation expenses and trips at the request of the representatives	<a href="http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=33822&amp;CatID=169">http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?DocID=33822&amp;CatID=169</a>
Guatemala	Providing the travel expenses of each representative with full details of the cost of each trip	<a href="http://old.congreso.gob.gt/comisiones-al">http://old.congreso.gob.gt/comisiones-al</a>
Netherlands	Disclosure of expenses incurred for travel and gifts received by each representative	<a href="https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerleden/openbare_registers">https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerleden/openbare_registers</a>
England	Presenting the expenses of each representative including: travel expenses, office expenses, manpower expenses and accommodation expenses, presenting the number of changes in the expenses of each representative during different years.	<a href="http://www.theipsa.org.uk/mpcosts/your-mp/stuart-andrew/">http://www.theipsa.org.uk/mpcosts/your-mp/stuart-andrew/</a>

Regarding the Islamic Council in Iran, in relation to this component, information such as educational records, including seminary and university education: name of field and orientation, city of study and name of university or district, year of beginning and end of education; executive and professional records of the representative: name of the organization or institution, place of service, exact name of the position and title of service, year of beginning and end of service; Records of organizational activities: the name of the organization, party or institution, exact position and responsibility, start and ending year (confidential jobs that have been specified in advance are an exception) can be considered in the contract and the results expected from this passer, including the following:

People's accurate knowledge of their elected representative

Clarification of the quality and scientific level of the academic qualifications of the representatives

Clarify the academic level of the university or educational complex of the teaching place

Clarification of the duration of presence in each of the job positions and the level of responsibility in each job

Making it possible to evaluate a person's performance in previous job positions

Clarification of occupational and academic interventions, such as the multi-occupation of teaching at the university at the same time as other occupations

Identification of conflicts of interest in different job positions

Specifying education while taking on time-consuming responsibilities. (Alizadeh; Moradi, 2021, p.15).

### **Attendance and absence information of representatives**

One of the most specific information that every citizen should know from his lawyer

in the National House is the information about the presence or absence of his representatives in the parliament sessions. Perhaps the most minimal duty of the parliamentarian is to participate in the meetings of the public forum and relevant commissions to play the role of representative. For this reason, providing this information, in addition to providing sufficient information for general monitoring of the presence and absence of their representatives in the parliament, will also make the representatives more diligent in attending the parliament meetings.

The Supreme Leader has also looked at this issue with particular care:

"Many times, in the past, when TV showed the parliament and I saw empty seats, I was embarrassed and felt ashamed of the people in front of the TV. We told these people to come to the polls and they came and appointed a representative. What is being discussed now? Important article. You look at the parliament and you see that four seats are empty. This is indiscipline and it should not be taken for the parliament. It is very important to appear on time, to appear in the commission, to appear in public and to work" (statements in a meeting with parliament members, June 16<sup>th</sup> 2004)

Also, in another meeting, the supreme leader reiterated the active presence of the representatives in the meetings:

"Another issue that I have mentioned many times to the honorable representatives in the meetings and I will also mention it to you is the issue of timely attendance in the commissions and in the hall of the parliament. The reports that come are not very pleasing in this matter; Sometimes it is said that it is not possible to vote in the commissions because the presence of representatives does not reach the quorum; Every repre-



representative should consider himself obliged to be present in all the hours and minutes he is required to be in the parliament or in the commission" (statements in the meeting with the representatives and employees of

the Islamic Council, March 30<sup>th</sup> 2017).

In Table 2, the experiences of some countries in the transparency of the presence and absence of parliamentarians have been examined.

**Table 2: Examples of the transparency of the presence and absence of parliamentarians of different countries**

Country	Feature summary	Internet address
Brazil	The status of the presence of the representatives in all the meetings of the public forum and various commissions, the speeches of the representatives	<a href="http://www.camara.leg.br/internet/deputado/RelPresencaPlenario.p">http://www.camara.leg.br/internet/deputado/RelPresencaPlenario.p</a>
Chile	Attendance of representatives by date and meeting number, counting the number of justified and unjustified absences of representatives	<a href="http://www.senado.cl/appsenado/index.php?mo=sesionessala&amp;ac=asistenciasenadores&amp;legiid=485&amp;camara=S&amp;egiini=361#">http://www.senado.cl/appsenado/index.php?mo=sesionessala&amp;ac=asistenciasenadores&amp;legiid=485&amp;camara=S&amp;egiini=361#</a>
Georgia	Presenting the list of representatives' attendance and absence separately for each season of the year along with the lateness hours of the representatives to attend the meetings	<a href="http://www.parliament.ge/ge/saparlamientosaqmianoba/komitetebi/saprocdurosakitxta-dawesebiskomiteti148/saqartvelosparlamentiswewrebismierarasapatio-gacdeniliparlamentissxdomebis-raodenoba">http://www.parliament.ge/ge/saparlamientosaqmianoba/komitetebi/saprocdurosakitxta-dawesebiskomiteti148/saqartvelosparlamentiswewrebismierarasapatio-gacdeniliparlamentissxdomebis-raodenoba</a>
Guatemala	Monitoring the presence and absence of the representatives in the parliament meetings along with the selection of the intended date range	<a href="http://stats.congreso.gob.gt/hemiciclo/o/graphs/x_detalle.asp?fech_del">http://stats.congreso.gob.gt/hemiciclo/o/graphs/x_detalle.asp?fech_del</a>
India	Monitoring the presence and absence of parliamentarians by date and number of meetings, providing a list of representatives who left the meeting during the parliament session.	<a href="http://164.100.47.4/Members_attendance/newsessionwise_attendance.aspx">http://164.100.47.4/Members_attendance/newsessionwise_attendance.aspx</a>
Iraq	Presentation of the absentees of each meeting by number and date	<a href="http://ar.parliament.iq/LiveWebsites/Arabic/MembersAttend.aspx">http://ar.parliament.iq/LiveWebsites/Arabic/MembersAttend.aspx</a>
Ireland	Presentation of the list including the date of the meetings that the representative attended in the parliament	<a href="http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?m=&amp;DocID=-1&amp;CatID=173">http://www.oireachtas.ie/viewdoc.asp?m=&amp;DocID=-1&amp;CatID=173</a>
Italy	Presenting the percentage of representatives' attendance in meetings to the total number of meetings organized in the parliament, their voting rate in meetings and the number of non-participations in voting.	<a href="http://www.camera.it/leg17/520?tipo=incrementale&amp;elenco=i_201410_ga">http://www.camera.it/leg17/520?tipo=incrementale&amp;elenco=i_201410_ga</a>
Tunisia	Presenting the attendance of representatives in meetings to the total number of meetings held, separating absences into justified and unjustified	<a href="http://majles.marsad.tn/2014/assemblee/classement">http://majles.marsad.tn/2014/assemblee/classement</a>
Ukraine	Presenting the list of presence and absence of the representative by choosing the desired interval separately for each meeting	<a href="http://wl.cl.rada.gov.ua/pls/rada_gs09/ns_dep?vid=2&amp;kod=27">http://wl.cl.rada.gov.ua/pls/rada_gs09/ns_dep?vid=2&amp;kod=27</a>

***Dissemination of information on gifts, interests and lobbying of representatives***

The position of parliament representative is one of the most important government positions, which is most exposed to receiving bribes and gifts and anything that affects the decisions of the representatives due to the abilities and power given to the holders of this position. For this reason, so that this important position is not abused and the intentions of certain people do not affect the decisions of the representatives by giving gifts or bribes, one of the best ways to control this issue is to require the representatives to disclose the gifts they receive.

Disclosure of gifts is one of the most important parts of the code of conduct in many countries. Members of the European Parliament are obliged not to receive any gifts from anyone in the first place. If they are forced to receive a gift, they must declare any gift they receive from any person with any intention.

In the event of a violation of the behavioral principles of the European Parliament, such as failing to not receive a gift, if discovered, punishment such as financial offenses, seizure of service, or even not being allowed to participate in the next election, will be included.

The European Parliament publishes the revelations of delegates every year on its website. The report includes the representative name, the representative's office when receiving the gift, the gift name, the gift, the approximate value of the gift, the date of receiving the gift, the time to the Parliamentary Chairman, and the gift place. In addition, the agent is required to take a photo of his or her gift and upload it to the website.

The interests of the delegates include movable and immovable assets, debts and loans that the representative has obtained

from various institutions. These interests may create conflict of interest in the representation and cause the representative to legislate the materials and personal interests over the national interests, so exposing and creating transparency in these cases is one of the most important principles of transparent parliaments.

The Parliamentary Association of Commonwealth (2006) states that parliamentarians must completely and publicly expose their businesses. Members of parliament are forced to disclose their assets before and after the office.

The report of the Economic Cooperation and development Organization (2011) states that exposing private assets is essential in 85% of the parliaments of the member states and is also required in various countries such as Algeria, Australia, Ghana, Japan, Tanzania and Uruguay, South Africa.

In India, after the parliamentary election candidate is won, it is obliged to announce their own assets, both immovable and immovable, to announce his spouse and children within 90 days after they're sworn in (Centre for Civil Society, 2010, p. 20). The debt of government financial institutions and the central government with their state must also be disclosed. In Canada, parliament has adopted the law of contradictions that not only requires regular disclosure of the delegates' interests, but also requires former representatives to expose his or her interests, spouses and children (1994, Office of the Ethics Counter).

Regarding the publication of lobbying information in parliament in 1972, the German Parliament created specific ethical standards and statutes for the management and transparency of lobbying in the German parliament. Currently, nearly 6500 lobbyists in the German parliament have registered their

names, whose information is detailed on the Internet, and everyone can see the names of the relentators, along with their specialized fields. They receive a special lobbying card after registering and can only meet in a specific area with a certain number of delegates and have to disclose all the information and issues of their meetings with the delegates. Currently, nearly 15000 lobbies have signed up in the European Parliament (Prasojo, 2009, p. 23).

For example, the Chilean Parliament has taken a long path to the creation of lobbying law in parliament. The route began in year 2003 and eventually passed the law in year 2016. Lobbying Law was initially facing problems, such as that it had to be carefully defined who was lobbying. No one wants to be called a lobbyist, so the lobbying activities in their parliament have been one of the most important problems from the beginning.

According to the Chilean parliamentary lobbying law, three main cases are clear:

1. Meetings requested by an expensive lobby or stakeholder to meet with officials and representatives;
2. The trips the delegates make;
3. Gifts that officials or delegates receive because of their position and post.

Lobby in this law is defined in this way: Lobby is a legal activity in which any person, organization, or anybody wants to influence any position or responsibility, whether or not it will receive it. Meetings that have the following characteristics are lobbying sessions:

- Any explanation, change, rejection or cancellation of laws, schemes and drafts of legal or other decisions;
- Preparation, change, confirm or cancel and reject agreements, statements, or decisions that Congress or members of Congress make;

- Create, change or end any contract
- Design, execute or evaluate policies or programs (Vallespín, 2017).

There is no clear picture of the transparency of the Islamic Consultative Assembly on the gifts of interest and lobbying. The gifts of some countries are not included in the Islamic Consultative Assembly and other intelligence authorities, and on the interests and lobbying of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, solely on the records of representatives and information about their presence in the commissions.

#### ***Information of Employees, Planning, Orders and Committees of Committees and Public Courts***

In addition to parliamentarians, the administrative staff of parliament is also subject to corruption and unprofessional behaviors, so information and areas of corruption of parliamentarians must also be ruled out and then publicized.

Some parliaments have tried to take an effective step along this path by restricting parliamentary staff. Just as parliamentarians must trust the legislative staff to provide professional analysis and consultation, citizens must also ensure that the administrative system of the legislature adheres to the public interest in its activities. To this end, citizens must have a reasonable access to information about the staff of parliament and its representatives. This minimum information includes the contact information of senior staff in the various sections of parliament and its offices, the organizational chart of the administrative system of the parliament, the roles, responsibilities and budgets of each department and office. In the European Parliament, people can apply for compensation for mismanagement of parliament (such as delaying their requested infor-

mation from parliament) (Declaration of Parliamentary Openness, 2012).

Regarding the plan and agenda of the parliament, it should be borne in mind that citizens should be aware of the parliament's agenda at the opportunity. The timing and topics discussed in the public courtyard and each of the parliamentary commission are among the things that make people more involved and effective awareness in parliamentary affairs. Announcing the matter and agenda of parliamentary sessions must have a specific time. This time is different in the parliaments of different countries.

The Principles of the American Parliament (2011) point out that parliament should give a previous and sufficient announcement to the meetings and orders of the meetings and the general public, stating that the legislative work calendar must be set in such a way that the specific legislation schedule is clear.

Public sessions and various parliamentary committees are among the main pillars of legislation in parliament, the manner of managing, the documentation presented at these meetings, the talks of the delegates at these meetings, and so on. Therefore, the

transparency of the information and documentation and negotiations in these meetings is an important factor in preventing the tilting of the country's policies, and the detailed archives and documentation of these meetings themselves are very important documents to interpret and understand the process of formation.

In addition to written documents, many parliaments must provide public audio and multimedia audio reports of public sessions with the presence of all members. Audio and video reports of parliamentary sessions are common in various countries, so that in the new initiative, part of the parliamentary session film communicates with the same subject matter at the meeting, so does the person who views the parliamentary session film. It can also access the document on that session by clicking on the link in addition to watching the parliamentary session video (Declaration of Parliamentary Openness, 2012).

In Table 3, sample publication of the discussions of the meetings of various parliamentary committees of different countries is expressed.

**Table 3: Sample Publishing Detailed Talks of the World Parliamentary Commission meetings**

Country	Feature summary	Internet address
Netherlands	Presenting a detailed report on the Commission's negotiations by selecting the Commission based on the date and number of the meeting	<a href="https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen">https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/verslagen</a>
Taiwan	Detailed PDF Format Commission Talks and Searching for Subjects at Each Commission	<a href="http://lci.ly.gov.tw/LyLCEW/IcivComm.acti">http://lci.ly.gov.tw/LyLCEW/IcivComm.acti</a>
Ukraine	The detailed submission of public courtyard negotiations and various commissions is also specified by each session on different days, the type and subject of each session.	<a href="http://iportal.rada.gov.ua/meeting/stenogr">http://iportal.rada.gov.ua/meeting/stenogr</a>
Canada	A detailed presentation of the negotiations of each meeting from each commission in various formats including XML	<a href="http://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/ERRE/meeting-44/evidence">http://www.ourcommons.ca/DocumentViewer/en/42-1/ERRE/meeting-44/evidence</a>
Ireland	Detailed by the various commissions of this parliament since year 1936	<a href="http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debate">http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debate</a>

Regarding this component, checking the official website of the Islamic Council shows a more favorable situation than other components and indicators. The information of the representatives (and not all the employees) can be seen briefly, and the program and agenda of the parliament and the proposed plans and bills are also published on the official website of the parliament, and of course, the live broadcast of the meetings through virtual space is also planned on this site. For example: the weekly order of the parliament on Sunday (July 31<sup>st</sup>), Tuesday (August 2<sup>nd</sup>) and Wednesday (August 3<sup>rd</sup>) 2022 is as follows:

The report of the Education, Research and Technology Commission on the plan to provide human resources for education and training The Ministry of Education and the plan to amend the law to add a note to the additional article of the law on determining the employment duties of pre-service teachers and educators of the literacy movement in the Ministry of Education and the plan to add a note to article (17) of the law on determining the employment of pre-service teachers and educators of the literacy movement in The Ministry of Education has been merged).

The second report of the Education, Research and Technology Commission regarding the plan to amend articles of the Law on the Establishment and Administration of Non-Governmental Schools and Educational Centers.

The report of the Commission of Internal Affairs of the country and councils regarding the two-urgent transparency plan of the tripartite powers and executive bodies and other institutions (returned from the Guardian Council 1).

Report of the social commission on an emergency plan on how to appoint people in

sensitive jobs (returned from the Guardian Council 2)

Report of the Construction Commission on the plan to amend Article (100) of the Law of Municipalities (Quoted from the official website of the Islamic Council at the address: [www.parliran.ir](http://www.parliran.ir))

### ***Dissemination of information on votes, budgets and expenses of the legislature***

It can be said that each representative's vote on plans and bills and approval or rejection of qualifications, etc., is the final result and output of all parliament meetings, consultations, studies and activities of a representative. For this reason, knowing the votes of the representatives for the people who have chosen these representatives, allows the people to evaluate the performance of the representative elected by the people. By checking the votes of their representatives, people can understand which representative represents their interests and which representative acts based on national interests.

In this regard, it should be kept in mind that the meetings of the public courtyard of the parliament, as a place where all representatives can express their opinions on plans and bills and other important national issues and influence the changes and amendments of laws, have a very important and effective place. (Moratab, Yavari, 2021, p.51) live broadcasting of public court meetings, detailed publication of public court discussions (which is published based on the sixty-ninth article of the constitution, but with a delay), publication of work calendars, bills, Impeachment, investigation, etc., are among the things that provide monitoring of the performance of the representatives and the parliament as a whole for the people and experts of the society. The detailed publication of the votes of the representatives to the plans is



one of the important factors that have been discussed in various researches (Bahrami et al., 2020, p.85; Almasi et al., 2018) its importance and the experiences of other countries.

Table 4 shows an example of the websites of the parliaments of different countries that publish the votes of the representatives regarding each plan and bill.

**Table 4: An example of revealing the opinions of parliamentarians in different countries of the world**

Country	Internet address
Finland	<a href="http://www.ft.dk/samling/20161/afstem/161.htm">www.ft.dk/samling/20161/afstem/161.htm</a>
Canada	<a href="https://openparliament.ca/votes/42-1/183">https://openparliament.ca/votes/42-1/183</a>
Georgia	<a href="http://votes.parliament.ge/en/laws/2700">http://votes.parliament.ge/en/laws/2700</a>
Tunisia	<a href="http://majles.marsad.tn/2014/vote/585bfc0ccf44121f3e63af8">http://majles.marsad.tn/2014/vote/585bfc0ccf44121f3e63af8</a>
Czech Republic	<a href="https://www.psp.cz/sqw/hlasy.sqw?g=58302&amp;l=cz">https://www.psp.cz/sqw/hlasy.sqw?g=58302&amp;l=cz</a>
United States	<a href="https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes/115-2017/s31">https://www.govtrack.us/congress/votes/115-2017/s31</a>
Ireland	<a href="http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/Debates%20WebPack.nsf">http://oireachtasdebates.oireachtas.ie/Debates%20Authoring/Debates WebPack.nsf</a>

In Table 5, the level of people's access to the Parliament and the level of transparency

of the votes of the representatives in the European Parliament are examined.

**Table 5: The level of public access and the level of transparency in the European Parliament (Jedrzejska, 2012)**

Types of meetings	Description	Can people have access to how their representative in parliament voted?
Open session	Since the final vote for any plan and bill in the legislative process of the parliaments is "voting based on names", there is a high degree of transparency regarding the voting method of the representatives and their parties. Voting to review amendments to important documents is also voted in the same way.	In "voting based on names", the results of the votes together with the names of the voters are posted on the Internet one day after the voting. A large number of researchers also evaluate the voting behavior of representatives and political groups of the European Parliament. Live broadcasting of open floor and commission meetings in the European Parliament is expanding rapidly. By broadcasting the meetings live, people can not only learn about the representatives' statements, they can also learn about the voting of their representatives even when "voting by show of hands" is done. Referral groups can also participate in parliament meetings and closely monitor the activities of the parliament.
Commissions	All the meetings of the commissions of the European Parliaments are accessible to the public without any exception. Although the meetings of the heads of the commissions are held in secret. Also, commissions can request that their meetings be held in secret	
Political groups	Meetings are usually held privately	

In order to perform their duties, the legislatures of the countries, like other government institutions, need financing from the public resources of the country. This credit is used for current expenses, including the salaries and benefits of parliamentarians and employees, office expenses, bonuses, expenses for domestic and foreign trips and missions, construction expenses such as the construction of libraries and museums, etc.

Article 23 of the Parliamentary Transparency Statement (2012) states that the Parliament is responsible for providing the people with comprehensive and understandable information about the budgets allocated to the Parliament, as well as the current and projected expenses. Also, on this basis, the parliament has the duty to provide the information of its tenders and contracts to the public in a comprehensible manner.

By providing detailed information on their expenses and financial affairs, the

parliaments of the countries of the world are trying to facilitate public monitoring of the spending process of sovereign property. Citizens, as those who pay taxes, have the right to access public expenditure information and use these funds.

Despite the fact that the budget of the parliament is part of the national budget, the budget of this institution and the information related to its implementation should be made available to the public. The Parliament of Argentina and India, both legislatures are required to publish budgets, expenses and details of administrative posts and awarding of contracts. By creating a transparency portal in Brazil since 2010, online information about the use of government expenses for all government institutions is available to the public. In Table 6, an example of the transparency of parliamentary expenses of different countries can be seen.

**Table 6: is an example of the transparency of parliament expenses in different countries of the world**

Country	Feature summary	Internet address
Ecuador	Clarification of the annual budget, additional expenses of representatives, number of salaries of representatives, monthly bonuses of representatives, expenses of parliament contracts with contractors, etc.	<a href="http://www.asambleanacional.gob.ec/contenidos/contenidos">http://www.asambleanacional.gob.ec/contenidos/contenidos</a>
Italy	Clarification of all the expenses of the parliament and the amount of saving of the parliament in its expenses	<a href="http://www.senato.it/4354">http://www.senato.it/4354</a>
Argentina	Clarifying the rights of representatives, the cost of contracts and purchasing equipment for the parliament, the cost of foreign trips, etc.	<a href="http://www4.hcdn.gob.ar/gestion/ej">http://www4.hcdn.gob.ar/gestion/ej</a>
Georgia	Analyzing the expenses of the parliament along with presenting reports regarding the possible risks in the expenses of the parliament and the amount of budget allocated to the parliament.	<a href="http://pbo.parliament.ge/component/k2/itemlist/category/100">http://pbo.parliament.ge/component/k2/itemlist/category/100</a>
Brazil	The costs of hiring employees and personnel, the costs of parliament repairs, the costs considered for parliamentary groups and commissions, the costs of foreign trips of parliamentarians, etc. All these expenses are available for both Brazilian parliaments	<a href="http://www2.camara.leg.br/transparencia/gestao-na-camara-dosdeputados/contas-da-camara/relatoriode-gestao/pasta-administrativa/ano-de2015/relatorio-">http://www2.camara.leg.br/transparencia/gestao-na-camara-dosdeputados/contas-da-camara/relatoriode-gestao/pasta-administrativa/ano-de2015/relatorio-</a>

***The existence of a platform for people's participation in the legislative process and in-person access***

Citizens' participation in governance starts from the ballot box, but this participation should not be limited to the ballot box. Therefore, for the effective participation of citizens in the parliament, policies and platforms must be created in the parliament to encourage and support the participation of people and experts in the legislative process. With the emergence of new technologies and the ever-increasing variety of information that is in the hands of the people, parliaments should provide platforms for public participation to create the opportunity to intervene and comment on legal processes.

Creating petition writing mechanisms is now one of the simplest and most common mechanisms for people's participation in legal processes. By using this mechanism, people can collect up to a certain number of signatures, for example, 100,000 signatures regarding their concern in various issues, and upon reaching the quorum, the issue of people's concern is automatically placed on the agenda of the parliaments.

Another way of people's participation in the parliament is to participate in the drafting of laws. Many parliaments put the plans presented by the representatives to the parliament on their interactive systems for a certain period of time so that the people and all the experts can use this opportunity and comment on the deletion and addition of legal articles and by stating the neglected aspects in the representative's opinion.

For example, the Brazilian Parliament has provided a platform for people's participation in the representatives' plans by creating the eDemocracia website and the WikiLegis system. In this system, users can add or subtract the materials of the plan pro-

posed to the parliament or modify the materials of the plan. Finally, all the opinions collected will be presented to the representatives in the form of a report before considering the plan in the commission.

The non-governmental organization "Transparency for Iran" for the first time in the country in June and July 2016 by holding a challenge competition together with the parliament, "comprehensive urban management plans" and "control of the entry of foreign goods" among the plans submitted to the Islamic Council for opinion. and provided collective wisdom to the public and experts, people, and professors by participating in this competition were able to express their opinions and ideas regarding the proposed plan before it was announced to the parliament.

One of the most important principles of parliamentary transparency is the ability of citizens and media to closely observe all parliamentary sessions and votes. The physical access of citizens and media to the parliament, besides being one of the ways to provide information about the parliamentary sessions, also increases the ability of people and other people groups to understand the processes and functioning of the parliament.

According to the Parliamentary Association of the Commonwealth of Nations (2006), "the legislature should be accessible to the public and the media, except for security cases and closed meetings". In some countries, hearings are also held publicly and with the presence of people.

The prediction of people's participation in legislation, as stated in the previous lines, has not been taken into account in the Islamic Council and the Islamic Republic of Iran's legislature, and in the next chapter we will deal with its dimensions and issues in detail, but on the website of the Islamic Council, in

the monitoring section People have made references to this importance and it has been said that since the functioning of social, economic and political systems relies on the role of humans, the occurrence of corruption and violation is an integral part of such systems and it can be acknowledged that there are almost no public or private organizations or companies. To be immune from violations and corruption in any way. Therefore, it is an undeniable necessity to design appropriate and efficient mechanisms in order to prevent the occurrence of corruption and violations in the first place and to detect corruption in the second place. One of the most efficient of these mechanisms is based on involving people in monitoring and expanding the monitoring network through people, which is also called "people's monitoring".

#### ***Existence of behavioral principles***

The behavioral principles of representatives are defined as: "Creating general principles for appropriate behavior in the public institution" (Stapenhurst & Pelizzo 2004, p.6).

The behavioral principles of the representatives were created to develop clear rules for ambiguous areas where it is not clear what kind of behavior is good and what kind of behavior is not good. These principles try to improve the behavior of representatives in the direction of public interests by creating various restrictions and recommendations.

The main goal of establishing the principles of representatives' behavior is to restore people's trust in the legislative body. Behavioral principles are moral principles and rules of behavior that are created to guide representatives when they do not know exactly what behavior they should show in order not to harm the dignity and status of the people's representation.

The concern of creating strict rules of conduct for the representatives in the European Parliament was created from the scandal of the 1990s in the British Parliament when one of the representatives was accused of bribery. For this reason, the European Parliament moved towards creating strict principles of behavior for representatives and establishing harsh punishments, so that the President of the European Parliament announced in 2011 that our policy in dealing with such crimes is "zero tolerance" policy.

These policies led to the creation of special programs for declaring the property and assets and any interests of the representatives, dealing with conflict of interests, acceptance and non-acceptance of gifts and lobbying in the parliament.

In short, the characteristics and requirements of the European Parliament's principles of conduct are as follows:

- Representatives should only act in the public interest and their activity should be based on trust, honesty, transparency, accountability and continuous effort, and their behavior should not harm the reputation of the European Parliament;

The requirement to register and disclose financial interests of representatives;

- Requirement to disclose attendance at meetings held by third parties and the costs of commuting, travel, meals, etc. to be prepared by third parties;

- Disclosure of gifts received while holding the responsibility of representation;

- Penalties and punishments for each of the representatives who violate the rules of conduct principles (Hulten & Bentinck, 2011)

Of course, preventing corruption and misbehavior of representatives cannot be achieved only by establishing behavioral principles. The media, political parties and

people are effective in creating demands and monitoring to prevent such behaviors.

### Conclusion

The topic of this article was focused on examining the dimensions and indicators of transparency in the legislature. In this regard, it should be kept in mind that the transparency of the legislative branch emphasizes the right of the people to access the information of this branch and it tries to provide the basis for monitoring the behavior of the representatives and their performance by the people by providing information about the performance of the parliament and the representatives. Ensure their participation in legislative matters.

For this purpose, it was necessary to examine the main formats of presenting parliamentary information, and the XML and Akomantoso formats were introduced in this regard, and the organizations overseeing the parliament were discussed. In the following, the main components of transparency in the legislature were analyzed and identified by using the experiences and approaches of some successful countries in this field.

The mentioned six components include "identity and cost information of the representatives", "information on the presence and absence of the representatives", "distribution of information, gifts, benefits and lobbying of the representatives", "information on employees, program, order and meetings of the commissions and the public forum of the parliament", "Dissemination of information, votes, budget and expenses of the legislature", "the existence of a platform for people's participation in the legislative process and in-person access" and "the existence of behavioral principles". In general, it should be kept in mind that transparency is one of the tools of public monitoring of the

legislature and influencing the decision-making process in countries, and it can prepare the platform for transformation in the field of legislation and be an opportunity to start structural reforms in different parts of the society. Therefore, it is necessary to pay attention to this important issue and first of all, it is necessary to carry out a comprehensive and complete pathology of the state of transparency in the legislative branch of the Islamic Republic of Iran by using the identified factors, and then relying on the results implemented the necessary structural and executive reforms in this field.

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