

Foreign Experience in The Implementation of Parliamentary Control Over Government Activities

Nauruzbaeva Gulayim Sarsenbaevna

Senior teacher of Department of Civil and Business Law, Faculty of Law, Karakalpak State University, Uzbekistan

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Abstract: This article examines foreign experience in the implementation of parliamentary control over government activities. To begin with, it outlines the theoretical foundations of oversight as a key element of checks and balances and democratic accountability. Furthermore, it analyzes the main instruments of parliamentary control, including parliamentary questions, committee investigations, and budgetary supervision. In addition, the study provides a comparative analysis of practices in the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Switzerland. As a result, it reveals that parliamentary systems rely primarily on political responsibility, whereas presidential systems emphasize legal and institutional mechanisms. In conclusion, the article argues that the effectiveness of parliamentary oversight depends not only on formal structures but also on political context, party dynamics, and democratic culture.

Keywords: Parliamentary control, parliamentary oversight, government accountability, separation of powers, legislative supervision, executive power, comparative politics, democratic governance.

Introduction: Parliamentary control over the activities of the Government constitutes one of the central pillars of democratic governance. In other words, without effective oversight mechanisms, the executive branch may operate without sufficient accountability, which can ultimately undermine the rule of law. Therefore, modern political systems have developed a wide range of institutional tools that allow parliaments to monitor, evaluate, and influence government actions.

At the same time, it is important to note that the forms and effectiveness of parliamentary control differ significantly across countries. On the one hand, these differences are обусловлены constitutional structures; on the other hand, they reflect political traditions and administrative cultures. Consequently, a comparative analysis of foreign experience allows us to identify both universal principles and system-specific features of parliamentary oversight [4].

First of all, parliamentary control is based on the principle of separation of powers, according to which legislative, executive, and judicial authorities must function independently while simultaneously restraining one another. In this regard, parliamentary

oversight serves as a mechanism of institutional balance. Moreover, it is closely connected with the concept of democratic legitimacy. Since Parliament represents the will of the people, its supervisory function ensures that government actions correspond to public interests. Thus, oversight is not merely a technical procedure, but rather a fundamental democratic requirement. In addition, many scholars emphasize the principle of efficiency and economy in governance, according to which control mechanisms should not only detect violations but also improve administrative performance. Therefore, parliamentary control performs both corrective and preventive functions.

From a functional perspective, parliamentary control is implemented through a number of well-established instruments. Firstly, parliamentary questions—both oral and written—represent one of the most flexible and widely used tools. Through these questions, members of parliament can request information, demand explanations, and publicly challenge government decisions. As a result, this mechanism promotes transparency and political accountability. Secondly, interpellations and debates allow for a more

in-depth discussion of government policies. In particular, interpellations require formal responses from ministers, which are subsequently debated in parliament. Consequently, this process enhances political responsibility. Thirdly, parliamentary committees play a crucial role in oversight. On the one hand, standing committees continuously monitor specific sectors such as finance, defense, or education. On the other hand, temporary investigative committees are established to examine particular issues or crises. Thus, committees provide both routine and ad hoc supervision. Furthermore, budgetary control constitutes a key instrument of financial oversight. Since governments depend on parliamentary approval of budgets, legislatures can influence policy priorities and monitor public spending. Finally, votes of confidence and no confidence represent the strongest form of political control. If a government loses parliamentary support, it must resign. Therefore, this mechanism ensures direct political accountability of the executive.

To begin with, the United Kingdom offers a classic example of parliamentary control within a system of fused powers. In this system, the executive is formed from the parliamentary majority, which facilitates continuous interaction between the two branches. In particular, Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) serve as a highly visible and dynamic form of oversight. During these sessions, members of Parliament directly question the Prime Minister. As a result, government actions are subjected to immediate public scrutiny. Moreover, select committees conduct detailed investigations into governmental policies and administrative practices. These committees can summon witnesses, request documents, and publish reports. Consequently, they contribute significantly to transparency. However, it should also be noted that the effectiveness of oversight may be limited by strong party discipline. In other words, when the governing party holds a stable majority, parliamentary control may become less confrontational [1, 191-208].

In contrast, the United States operates under a presidential system characterized by a strict separation of powers. Therefore, congressional oversight is more formalized and often more adversarial. First and foremost, congressional hearings and investigations serve as the primary tools of control. Committees can question officials, examine evidence, and investigate executive actions. In addition, Congress possesses subpoena powers, which allow it to compel testimony and document production. As a result, oversight becomes legally enforceable rather than merely political. Furthermore, budgetary authority provides Congress with significant leverage over the executive.

By approving or rejecting funding, it can influence policy implementation. Finally, the impeachment mechanism represents an extreme form of control. Although rarely used, it allows for the removal of high-ranking officials in cases of serious misconduct. Thus, unlike parliamentary systems, oversight in the United States is primarily institutional and legal in nature [2].

Similarly, Germany demonstrates a highly structured approach to parliamentary control. The Bundestag exercises oversight through legally defined procedures and institutional mechanisms. To begin with, members of parliament have the right to submit formal questions and requests for information, which the government is obliged to answer. Consequently, transparency is ensured through legal obligations. Moreover, parliamentary inquiry committees are established to investigate specific issues. These committees possess extensive powers, including the ability to collect evidence and question witnesses. In addition, budgetary supervision plays a central role. The Bundestag not only approves the budget but also monitors its execution. Nevertheless, despite these formal mechanisms, some limitations exist. In particular, the increasing complexity of governance and the growing role of the executive may reduce the practical effectiveness of parliamentary oversight [5].

Finally, Switzerland presents a unique model based on consensus and cooperation. Unlike more adversarial systems, parliamentary control here is characterized by a collaborative approach. For instance, Parliamentary Investigation Committees are used to examine significant political events. These committees have strong investigative powers and can operate independently. At the same time, the Swiss political system emphasizes dialogue and compromise. Therefore, oversight is less confrontational and more oriented toward collective decision-making. However, this consensual approach, while promoting stability, may limit the intensity of scrutiny [3].

Based on the analysis above, several important conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, the type of political system plays a decisive role. While parliamentary systems rely on political responsibility, presidential systems emphasize legal and institutional control. Secondly, the effectiveness of oversight depends on political conditions, such as party systems, media freedom, and civil society participation. In this respect, even well-designed mechanisms may function poorly in unfavorable political environments. Thirdly, despite institutional differences, all systems pursue a common goal—namely, ensuring accountability and preventing the abuse of power.

Nevertheless, parliamentary control faces several

challenges. On the one hand, executive dominance can weaken oversight, especially in systems with strong governing majorities. On the other hand, information asymmetry often limits the ability of parliaments to effectively scrutinize government actions. Moreover, politicization of oversight mechanisms may reduce their objectivity. For example, investigations may be used for political competition rather than genuine accountability. Finally, the non-binding nature of recommendations issued by parliamentary committees often limits their practical impact.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, foreign experience clearly demonstrates that parliamentary control over government activities is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon. On the one hand, it depends on constitutional structures; on the other hand, it is shaped by political culture and institutional practice. Therefore, while no single model can be considered universally ideal, the most effective systems combine strong legal mechanisms, active political engagement, and a culture of accountability. Ultimately, strengthening parliamentary oversight requires not only institutional reforms but also the development of democratic values, including transparency, responsibility, and public participation. Only under such conditions can parliamentary control fulfill its essential role in ensuring good governance.

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