

Centre of Land Management and Land Tenure

# Decentralization in Urban Planning: The Case of Istanbul - Turkey

Master's Thesis

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid urbanization puts pressure on the delivery of basic services, financial resources and the environment. At the same time, globalization urges cities to be more competitive and integrated in the world system. The ancient structure of the Turkish urban planning system can no longer respond to the requirements in urban areas. A better urban planning system and better plan structures are urgently needed. Decentralization can improve urban planning. The study aims to reveal the problems caused by centralized Turkish planning structure and to investigate the existence of decentralization principles in the planning process to achieve a more successful urban development in Turkey.

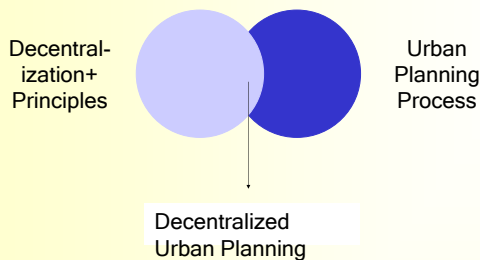
## ISTANBUL, TURKEY



Study Area

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Decentralized urban planning has been identified where decentralization overlaps with the planning process.



## METHODOLOGY

- Generally qualitative research methods
- Clarifying the answers of the inquiries with quantified research methods

14 municipalities (11 district municipalities and 2 town municipalities and the Istanbul Greater Municipality) from 32 district municipalities are involved in the case study representing approximately 25% of the total population and 7.6% of the total land of Istanbul.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Highly centralized structure.
- Integration and interaction problems among central government municipalities and people.
- Lack of co-operation and co-ordination among institutions in the planning process.
- Problematic relationship between the district and municipalities and greater municipality (hierarchical control) in the planning process.
- Lack of definition of planning hierarchy (lack of upper scale).
- No indication development plan alternatives in the laws and the regulations.
- Partial approaches cause many confusion and make the plan weaker at the urban scale.
- No legally enforcement of public contribution.
- Financial dependency of the local governments to central government.
- No entrepreneurs or insufficient encouragement of public - private partnership to generate financial resources.

## CONCLUSION

- Local problems should be solved at local level within the local authority.
- In this context, relevant acts on urban planning in Turkey make municipalities unable to do primary duties like local governance.
- Impossible to think about decentralized Turkish urban planning while the authority is in the hands of the central government.
- Policy makers are working on new development law in Turkey.
- Decentralized urban planning is not the aim but it is the tool to use.
- Providing decentralization principles can cause the formation of good governance.