

# REPORT ON THE MAPPING OF MUNICIPAL DATA STATISTICS

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*(English version without annexes)*

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**Contents**

INTRODUCTION ..... 1

CHAPTER I: MAPPING OF MUNICIPAL STATISTICS ..... 2

    I.1 Municipal Statistics..... 2

    I.2 Civil Statistics ..... 4

    I.3 Data relating to Geographical Features ..... 5

CHAPTER II: SAMPLE DATABASE STUDY ..... 6

CHAPTER III: CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION ..... 8

ANNEX I: MAPPING TABLE..... 9

ANNEX II: RIGHT TO COLLECT DATA ..... 9

ANNEX: THE SCOPE OF LOCAL INFORMATION DATABASE..... 9

ANNEX IV: INDICATORS ON BEPER ..... 9

ANNEX V: SAMPLE DATABASE PREPARED FOR KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF STUDY ..... 9

## INTRODUCTION

This report is prepared within the framework of Turkish – Swedish Partnership for Local Governance Programme –TUSELOG– that is carried out with the cooperation between the Union of Municipalities of Turkey (UMT) and SALAR-SKL. As stated in the job description, this report aims at providing a general perspective on different features of municipalities.

In this respect, the report tries to focus on three subjects.

- Compilation of the statistical data concerning the municipalities themselves (financial statistics, staff, inventory, performance indicators, etc.)
- Compilation of the statistical data concerning the citizens living within the municipal borders and/or province and/or region containing municipalities (education, employment, health, income level, etc.)
- Compilation of the statistics concerning the geographical borders (parallel to the second subject, the province/region containing the municipality) of municipality (economic activities, general level of prices, gross municipal product, investments, etc.)

A “Mapping Table” is prepared through mapping by various criteria (accessibility, frequency of collection, gender distribution, data formats, gender discrimination, quality control, and so on), as explained in the first chapter of the report and stated in the job description. Each data category in this table is evaluated on the basis of their sub-categorical divisions and a general inventory of currently produced municipal data is provided.

In the second chapter, some comparisons are made within the framework of a sample database developed among the municipalities selected by their size and geographical distribution and in the light of certain fundamental indicators that are developed in consideration of these data. The aim here is to show how the decision makers of UMT, in the case of development of such a database, can use that database in policy making with a view to defending municipal rights and interests and to give an idea upon that database on the basis of information.

The final chapter of the report incorporates some suggestions concerning how to diversify the access channels to the data and what kind of cooperation on this matter UMT can be developed with various bodies and institutions, particularly with the Ministry of Interiors and TurkStat.

## CHAPTER I: MAPPING OF MUNICIPAL STATISTICS

There are basically three categories for mapping municipal statistics, which are organized as municipal statistics, civil statistics and statistics concerning the geographical features in this study. Accessibility and other similar criteria regarding these categories and a “Mapping Table” provided in Annex I are also drawn up in this study.

### I.1 Municipal Statistics

The available statistics regarding the municipalities in our country can be divided into two sub-categories, which are financial statistics of municipalities and the statistics including other diverse information about municipalities.

- a. **Financial statistics:** The Ministry of Finance collects the financial statistics of municipalities pursuant to the Law No. 5018 on Public Fiscal Administration and Control. The Ministry’s authority to collect these statistics is based on Article 54 of that Law; a sanction including a fine such as wage cut imposed on the responsible officers unless they submit those statistics. Likewise, under Articles 11 and 14 of the Law No. 4749 on the Regulation of Public Financing and Debt Management, they are required to submit the Undersecretariat of Treasury the data relating, in particular, to the foreign debts and the debts resulting from guarantees and loans given by the Treasury. A fine is imposed on those who do not fulfil this obligation. The details concerning the legal arrangements for this issue are provided in Annex II.

Again, under Article 68 of Municipal Law No. 5393, it is compulsory to send quarterly financial statements of assets and liabilities of municipalities to the Ministry of Finance, SPO and the Undersecretariat of Treasury.

Since the municipal data are based on the accounting data and financial statements in certain formats should be drawn up and submitted to the relevant authorities as required by law, it can be assumed that the quality of collected data is generally reliable. However, it is a fact that there may sometimes be a problem of reliability concerning the processing of these data in the municipality and inputting them into the central information system. Although it is known that Ministry of Finance is trying to standardize the accounting and financial reporting of the data, it is not possible to say that control mechanism of the data quality is up to the mark at this stage. However, the Undersecretariat of Treasury carries out the necessary control of the data concerning the debts.

The aggregated financial statistics of municipalities are quarterly published by the Ministry of Finance, General Directorate of Public Accounts and these statistics contain a report involving the municipalities and handling the consolidated income and expenditure variation and budgetary equilibrium of the entire local government system. These data providing an opinion about the codes (until 2nd and 4th sub-levels) that are detailed according to the Analytical Budget Coding System and the financial situation of the local government system are publicly available in the home page of the Ministry of Finance, General Directorate of Public Accounts website.

Here the main problem is that the public disclosure of the data in question that are reported in an aggregated form is not made available at individual municipality level. Therefore, financial analysis of the municipalities by population and regional distribution is limited for the general user. However, such data are stored in the Ministry of Finance and can be also used by Ministry of Interior by means of a protocol concluded between the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Finance. UMT has also signed a protocol with the Ministry of Finance with a view to obtaining those data but instead of using them regularly, UMT is observed to have procured the data when it is necessary.

The data in the financial statistics regarding tax payers are available by province in the home page of the Revenue Administration website.

None of the financial statistics bears a detail concerning the gender, which is particularly one of the thematic issues most frequently ignored in the Turkish budgetary system.

**b. Other Municipal Statistics: (YEREL BİLGİ, BEPER, YEREL NET)**

In the category of other municipal statistics, there is a variety of sources with regard to data about municipal staff information, municipal inventory (equipment etc.), mayors, managers, municipal councillors. Municipal staff information, the most important one of all these data types, is included in an aggregated form within the “Activity Report” prepared by the Ministry of Interior, General Directorate of Local Governments and this information is published by every municipality in a way that enables a comparison between municipalities as can be seen in “Mapping Table” provided in Annex I. In fact, a database system where such data by municipality (staff, inventory, council decisions, etc.) are stored by the Ministry of Interior exists. This database via which an inquiry can be carried out is called “YEREL BİLGİ” (LOCAL INFO). The information that is stored in this database is given in Annex III. Furthermore, the relatively detailed information obtained from municipalities through

approximately 405 questions is used in the reports that are drawn up by the General Directorate of Local Governments but they are not available to the public. There are other data sources by means of which users can reach other information (names of mayors, councillors, population) regarding e-municipalities. It is possible to access such information in home page of UMT website as well as in home page of YERELNET website managed by TODAIE (Public Administration Institute for Turkey and Middle East) Local Governments Centre. This system which was once open to public use is now closed to public access. YEREL BİLGİ database on which certain work to improve is still carried out is a highly important information source for the data analysis performed by UMT.

Another source of information that can provide the municipalities with remarkably important information is BEPER (Municipality Performance Measurement Programme) which is a searchable database. Put into operation by the General Directorate of Local Governments in the early 2000s with the support of World Bank, BEPER facilitates a comparison between performance indicators identified for various issues and municipalities. The indicators in BEPER are provided in Annex IV. The system, BEPER, was open to public access in 2005 for a while but afterwards it was closed to public use again. Although the reliability of the data input by the municipalities into the system is seriously questionable, the revitalization and re-commissioning of BEPER means that UMT will have access to a highly important source of statistics with respect to policy making. In this respect, another subject that needs to be pronounced is the harmonization of YEREL BİLGİ and BEPER with one another, thus enabling consistency of the information put into both systems. Such harmonization (integration) of two systems could not yet be achieved.

As a consequence, the municipal statistics concerning both finance and other information are available but there is a need to establish a common strategy in particular cooperation with Ministry of Interior in order that UMT can use such data.

## **I.2 Civil Statistics**

The statistics provided in this category are many and varied. As seen in the table given in Annex I, a very detailed data set regarding population, employment, education, health, poverty, etc. exists, the main source of which is the Turkish Statistical Institute (TurkStat). Like any other institute authorized to collect data, TurkStat collects data in accordance with its law of establishment and has the power of sanction (like imposing penalty) with regard to the data collected. As a well-established entity of the Republic, TurkStat attempts to comply with international standards while collecting data as possible as it can. Accordingly, TurkStat data may be said to have “objective reliability” in terms of

international standards of data collection and statistics. Nevertheless there occur public debates about the “subjective reliability” of the TurkStat data because of political influences. Despite the existence of more frequent gender-based data in TurkStat, such data should be further disseminated.

What should be said in general about the data is that they do not exist by municipality; rather, they are disaggregated by regional divisions of NUTS-I and NUTS-II or sometimes NUTS-III, or by province for some data. Considering that data collection by every municipality for statistics will be costly and assuming that the general situation of a municipality will not make much difference for the city/region of that municipality, we reckon that using the data belonging to the city or the region instead of those regarding municipality in the analyses that are to be carried out will not create any considerable harm.

As we are to state in the conclusion chapter, one way of reaching the municipal data is to contact the provincial organizations of the central administration (provincial or district Directorate of National Education, community health centres, etc) so that similar data within the municipal borders can be supplied. Therefore, UMT can guide the municipalities in connection with certain standardized applications it develops in order to carry out analyses and evaluations relating to municipal services and in the light of both data collection and the collected data.

### **I.3 Data relating to Geographical Features**

The statistics in this category are helpful in analyzing the evaluation of economic activities and in particular socioeconomic activities within the geography of municipalities. These statistics include data such as price movements, GDP statistics, income per capita, added value, environment, number of afforestation companies, investment incentive certificates, vehicle statistics, financial sector and statistics that deal with geographical socioeconomic levels such as Human Development Indices. The source of such data is also TurkStat. The data are not municipal but they are regional and compiled on the basis of NUTS-I, II, III regions. What has been said in the second category is also valid for the present category. The point to which we draw attention here is that the Human Development Indices that contain useful data concerning particularly region and gender belong to previous periods (data going back to 2000) and such data are based on reports that were published by UNDP and SPO in 2004 and 2005 and are not updated.

## CHAPTER II: SAMPLE DATABASE STUDY

In consideration of our explanations above, a simple “sample database” has been created for the use of the databases that UMT may consider drawing up.

This database is produced in order that key indicators that are composed as a result of grouping the data included in the extensive data set provided in Annex I can be associated with the data sources. These indicators are designed in a way that facilitates comparisons between 8 selected Metropolitan Municipalities.

The databases in question and the key indicators that are calculated on the basis of those databases are given in Annex V in Excel format.

The database involves two main titles named “General Indicators” and “Municipal Indicators” in the sample database study. There are 41 indicators produced under these titles.

Under the title of **General Indicators**, in accordance with the source of the obtained data, the municipal data or the data in the province or NUTS-I, NUTS-II or NUTS-III regions of that municipality are used. General indicators consist of population, economy, poverty, income distribution, health, education, crime statistics and other categories. General indicators are produced in a way that allows comparison between municipalities about the abovementioned issues and an analysis by UMT on the issues within the remits of the municipalities and/or on the areas that could be beneficial for the municipalities to discuss in the agenda even if they do not fall within their remits. For instance, these indicators will expand the scope of UMT’s “lobbying” activities in such respects as drawing attention to the differences between municipalities and regions in terms of economic development, violence against women, poverty, crime statistics<sup>1</sup>, etc. and seeking solutions before the central administration for the subjects the deficiency of which is felt and they have the features that may strengthen the opinions UMT defends and provide information that gives a holistic view.

**Municipal Indicators** are created in a way that contains key indicators regarding, initially municipal financial indicators, and various service areas. This database that involves indicators such as expenditures per capita by municipalities, the ratio of the collected own-revenue to the total revenue, the number of taxpayers, investment expenditures per capita may serve as a model in order to draw attention to the various differences between municipalities (horizontal inequalities and vertical inequalities in the sense of dependency on the centre) and to provide the necessary informational infrastructure for attempts to produce new indicators of revenue sharing accordingly.

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<sup>1</sup> It is known that Turkish National Police has a more detailed database concerning the crime statistics.

Although the data by TurkStat are used particularly in the service areas of municipalities within the municipal indicators, it is believed that enabling the access to the databases created by YEREL BİLGİ and BEPER to obtain data concerning this area would be a more rational solution as we stated in the first chapter. The supply or production of data (such as service cost per user) that may allow grouping of municipalities by their size and the comparison of service costs within the municipalities of similar size and the results of the provided services is only possible through making these databases effectively operational<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> To see how these kinds of data can be used, the report by Filip Vikström from TUSELOG “*A descriptive study of indicators and statistics used to enable comparisons and improved services in municipalities and county councils*” can be read.

## CHAPTER III: CONCLUSION AND EVALUATION

The main objective of this study is to carry out a study of data inventory that UMT may use in performing its own studies and, in accordance with that inventory, to compose a sample database and key indicators that could be helpful to UMT and give an idea about how to use these data, as stated in the job description.

Within this framework, firstly, an inventory of data has been composed. Afterwards, the study of a sample database consisting of 41 key indicators that are selected from those data for 8 Metropolitan Municipalities and categorized as “General Indicators” and “Municipal Service Indicators” has been performed.

To say immediately, many public institutions in this area, particularly TurkStat, produce data that can be used by UMT at a certain quality. However, it is necessary to express that the more detailed service data of local governments in our country are not produced at the desired quality and content because of the increase in the roles and responsibilities of the local governments in the production of public service and a considerable lack of information in this area exists. As a result of some of the studies that have been initiated before in this field, databases such as BEPER, YERELBİLGİ, YEREL NET have been produced, however bringing these databases up to a level where comparisons between municipalities can be made through harmonizing these data and ensuring their reliability as well as their coherence is not yet possible.

In this respect, we consider that following suggestions can be taken into account.

1. First of all, UMT can meet Ministry of Interior to discuss the recent situation of the BEPER and YEREL BİLGİ databases and how it may contribute to their opening to public use and can establish a work team, if necessary.
2. The need to obtain the statistics in the inventory by municipalities that are provided by TurkStat can be revised and the more detailed production can be requested from TurkStat in return for the cost of these data.
3. In any event, in order to regularly transfer the data that we give in Annex I and need to be included in the data inventory to the UMT, protocols on data exchange can be signed with particularly TurkStat, the Ministry of Interior (including Turkish National Police), the Ministry of Finance and other institutions producing such data.
4. In order to increase its own institutional capacity, UMT can initiate monitoring and evaluation studies within the framework presented in this study.

**ANNEX I: MAPPING TABLE**

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