

# *A study on the historical development of the transition to the metropolitan municipality system in turkish administrative history*

**Abstract:** This study aims to examine the historical development of municipal administration in Turkish administrative history and the transition process to the metropolitan municipal system from a comprehensive perspective. The study begins with traditional municipal practices based on local service delivery during the classical period of the Ottoman Empire and examines the modern municipal administration that emerged with the Tanzimat Era. The inadequacy of municipal services provided through institutions such as the kadı, waqf (foundation), guild, and neighborhood over time, the strengthening of the centralist state structure, and increasing relations with the West paved the way for the birth of the modern municipal organization. In this context, the Istanbul City Council, established in 1855, is considered the starting point of modern municipalism in Türkiye.

During the Republican Era, the concept of municipal administration was reshaped alongside the preservation of the centralized state structure; the legal and administrative framework of municipalities was defined for many years by the Municipal Law No. 1580 dated 1930. The study examines the areas of responsibility, financial structures, and democratization processes of municipalities from the early years of the Republic; it also touches upon the socialist and social municipalism practices that emerged after the 1960s. In the post-1980 period, it was found that the scope of municipal services expanded and local governments became more effective under the influence of neoliberal policies.

One of the main focal points of the article is the historical development of the transition to the metropolitan municipal system in Türkiye. In this context, the constitutional basis introduced by Article 127 of the 1982 Constitution, the 1984 regulations, Law No. 3030, and Laws Nos. 5216 and 6360 enacted thereafter have been analyzed in terms of the institutional transformation of metropolitan municipal administration.

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As a result, the study reveals that the metropolitan municipal system in Türkiye was shaped as a result of population growth, urbanization dynamics, and the search for service efficiency.

**Keywords:** Municipality, metropolitan municipality, administrative regulation, law.

**Összefoglalás:** Ez a tanulmány a török közigazgatás-történeten belül a városi közigazgatás történelmi fejlődését és a nagyvárosi önkormányzati rendszerre történő átállás folyamatát vizsgálja átfogó perspektívából. A tanulmány az Oszmán Birodalom klasszikus korszakában a helyi szolgáltatások nyújtására épülő hagyományos önkormányzati gyakorlatokkal kezdődik, és a Tanzimat-korszakban kialakult modern városi közigazgatást vizsgálja. Az olyan intézményeken keresztül nyújtott városi szolgáltatások elégtelensége, mint a kadi, a waqf (alapítvány), a céhek és a szomszédság, a centralista államstruktúra megerősödése és a Nyugattal való kapcsolatok erősödése utat nyitott a modern városi szervezet megszületéséhez. Ebben az összefüggésben az 1855-ben létrehozott Isztambuli Városi Tanács tekinthető a modern municipalizmus kiindulópontjának Törökországban.

A köztársasági korszakban az önkormányzati igazgatás koncepciója átalakult a központosított állami struktúra megőrzése mellett; az önkormányzatok jogi és igazgatási keretét hosszú évekre az 1930. évi 1580. számú önkormányzati törvény határozta meg. A tanulmány a köztársaság kezdeti éveitől kezdve vizsgálja az önkormányzatok illetékességi területeit, pénzügyi struktúráit és demokratizálódási folyamatait; kitér az 1960-as évek után kialakult szocialista és szociális municipalizmus gyakorlatára is. Az 1980 utáni időszakban tapasztalható volt az, hogy a neoliberais politikák hatására kibővült az önkormányzati szolgáltatások köre, és a helyi önkormányzatok hatékonyabbá váltak.

A jelen tanulmány egyik fő fókuszpontja a nagyvárosi önkormányzati rendszerre való áttérés történelmi fejlődése Törökországban. Ebben az összefüggésben az 1982-es Alkotmány 127. cikkelye, az 1984. évi szabályozások, így a 3030. számú törvény, valamint az azt követően elfogadott 5216. és 6360. számú törvények által bevezetett alkotmányos alap a nagyvárosi önkormányzati igazgatás intézményi átalakulása szempontjából kerül elemzésre. Ennek eredményeként a tanulmány feltárja, hogy a törökországi nagyvárosi önkormányzati rendszer a népességnövekedés, a urbanizációs dinamika és a szolgáltatás-hatékonyság iránti megfogalmazott igények eredményeként alakult ki.

**Kulcsszavak:** Önkormányzat, nagyvárosi önkormányzat, közigazgatási szabályozás, jog.

## Introduction

Local governments have historically played important roles as the administrative units closest to the social needs of the state. The Mohaç Sanjak during the Ottoman period can be given as an example of these local administrations [1]. In Türkiye, the concept of municipal administration has undergone a continuous process of change and development alongside political, social, and economic transformations. During the classical period of the Ottoman Empire, municipal services were not provided by a single institutional structure as we understand it today, but rather through various institutions such as qadis, foundations, guilds, and neighborhood organizations. Although this structure met the needs of urban life for a long time, it began to fall short in the face of increasing population, commercial relations, and the pressure of urbanization.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Ottoman Empire's shift towards a centralized administrative structure during the Tanzimat Era and its exposure to institutional models in the West accelerated the emergence of modern municipal governance. Established in 1855, the Istanbul Municipal Council is considered the first concrete example of modern municipal governance in Türkiye. This development aimed not only to ensure the more orderly provision of urban services but also to increase the state's capacity for oversight and control at the local level.

During the Republican Era, the concept of municipal administration was restructured within the framework of the principle of strong central government. The Municipal Law No. 1580 dated 1930 formed the legal and administrative basis for municipalities in Türkiye for many years; the duties, powers, and control mechanisms of municipalities were determined by this law. Over time, social and economic changes, especially the rapid urbanization process, necessitated a redefinition of the role of municipalities. In this context, the transition to the metropolitan municipality system in Türkiye constitutes one of the most important turning points in the history of modern municipal administration.

Metropolitan municipalities, which gained constitutional support with the 1982 Constitution, were institutionalized with legal regulations issued after 1984 and transformed into a structure covering provincial boundaries with comprehensive reforms in the 2000s. This study aims to reveal the transformation of local governments by analyzing the historical development of municipal administration in

[1] Falus, O. (2021): "Tax Administration in the Sanjak of Mohacs in the 16<sup>th</sup> century Turkish Rule". In: Oğuz Kağan (Ed.): *Issues in local governance in Balkans*. Sarajevo: Dobra Knjiga, pp. 305–329.

[2] Tekeli, İ. (2010): *The Story of municipalities in the republic*. İstanbul: History Foundation Publications.

[3] Deniz, A.–Akarçay, P.–Karakaş, A. (2017): The development of municipality in the ottoman empire and its efforts towards modernization. *Academic Perspective International peer-reviewed social sciences journal*, (64.), pp. 314-325.

[4] İslamoğlu, A. (2012): *The legal institutionalization of the modern municipality in the ottoman empire*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Istanbul: Dokuz Eylül University–Istanbul University Institute of Social Sciences.

[5] Oktay, T. (2015): “The administration of Istanbul from the Tanzimat Era to the 21<sup>st</sup> century”. Coşkun Yılmaz (Ed.): *The great history of Istanbul from antiquity to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Politics and Administration*, 2. Istanbul: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Cultural Publications, pp. 134–217.

[6] Singer, A. (1996): *Palestinian peasants and ottoman officials, rural administration around sixteenth-century Jerusalem*. Istanbul: History Foundation Domestic Publications.

[7] Uluçay, H.–Alp, Ş. (2020): The qadi in ottoman city administration. *Near East University Faculty of Theology Journal*, 6., (2.), pp. 329–358.

Turkish administrative history and the transition process to the metropolitan municipal system in its legal and administrative dimensions.

## The historical development process of municipal administration before the republican era

It can be said that the concept of municipal administration in the Republic of Türkiye was established in the 1930s with the successive enactment of the Municipalities, Public Health, Municipalities Bank, Construction and Roads, and Expropriation laws. The period between 1923 and 1930 was a kind of preparatory period. This period was not a static waiting period. The republican regime faced significant municipal and urban planning issues in its early years. The republic's municipal vision emerged from the solutions sought to these problems. The laws that emerged in the 1930s and symbolized the republic's municipal vision were enacted during the first term of the Grand National Assembly [2]. Before addressing this issue in detail, it is necessary to focus on how local administration worked in the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire's approach to municipal administration was modern and systematic. Local administrative units and municipal services were carried out in various ways. The end of the traditional approach to municipal administration in the Ottoman Empire coincided with the Tanzimat period. The Western concept of municipal administration, along with the Tanzimat, also determined the form of local government in the Ottoman Empire. For this reason, the Ottoman concept of municipal administration should be considered in two parts [3]. The first of these parts is grouped as the classical period of Ottoman municipal administration and the post-Tanzimat concept of municipal administration.

In the context of the situation explained above, there were individuals and institutions responsible for local administration, i.e., municipal work, in the Ottoman Empire during the Classical period.

However, it is not possible to speak of a single institutionalized municipality in the Ottoman Empire during this period [4].

Instead of a single institution performing all municipal duties, there were various institutions or individuals that took on municipal responsibilities. These institutions primarily included the qadi, foundation, guild, and neighborhood institutions [5]. In this context, it is necessary to first examine the institutions that constituted the municipality in the Ottoman Empire during the Classical Period and then describe the historical process of transition from this classical structure to the modern structure.

During the Classical Period, judges were at the forefront of those who carried out municipal services. Based on Sharia law, qadis ruled according to both decrees and local customs. Qadis carried out municipal work in accordance with this, as well as judicial matters [6]. Essentially, until the Tanzimat period, the city was represented by the qadi and the kethüda in the eyes of the government. The qadi inspected the market and the city through the muhtesib. They ensured public order by making announcements (through the mubassir). In addition, qadis, who were active in the local administration of cities, monitored the inspection of tradesmen, the organization and supervision of prices, the prevention of hoarding and profiteering, the repair of sidewalks, the monitoring of mubassirs (people closely involved with the situation of students in schools and ensuring order), and teachers who mistreated students, ensuring that pack animals and porters were not overloaded, and keeping roads open and safe for travelers [7]. This indicates that municipal services were comprehensively administered in the Ottoman Empire.

According to İslamoğlu, during the Classical Period, the guild system was also responsible for municipal administration in the Ottoman Empire. In this context, guilds established certain standards in craftsmanship based on the principles they defined and adopted. This eliminated unfair competition, provided job opportunities for new apprentices, and alleviated livelihood concerns. Trade guilds were organized in specific trades, taking into account the economic resources and needs of the city they were located in. Guilds collectively carried out their production activities in shops belonging to their own trades. Large bazaars were formed when trades that were closely related to each other came together. There was no right to open a shop wherever one wanted. At the same time, shops belonging to trades that produced goods harmful to health were established at a designated location outside the city [8].

[5] Oktay, T. (2015): "The administration of Istanbul from the Tanzimat Era to the 21<sup>st</sup> century". Coşkun Yılmaz (Ed.): *The great history of Istanbul from antiquity to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Politics and Administration*, 2. Istanbul: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Cultural Publications, pp. 134–217.

[6] Singer, A. (1996): *Palestinian peasants and ottoman officials, rural administration around sixteenth-century Jerusalem*. Istanbul: History Foundation Domestic Publications.

[7] Uluçay, H.–Alp, Ş. (2020): The qadi in ottoman city administration. *Near East University Faculty of Theology Journal*, 6., (2.), pp. 329–358.

[8] İslamoğlu, A. (2017): Guilds in the ottoman state. *Istanbul Law Journal*, (75.), pp. 447–456.

[9] Deniz, A.–Akarçay, P.–Karakas, A. (2017): The development of municipality in the ottoman empire and its efforts towards modernization. *Academic Perspective International Peer-Reviewed Social Sciences Journal* (64.), pp. 314–325.

[10] Yüksel, H. (1998): *The role of waqfs in ottoman social and economic life (1585–1683)*. Sivas: Dilek Printing House.

[11] Işık, H. (2009). The role of foundations as a public service unit in ottoman social life. *Academic Perspective: International Peer-Reviewed Social Sciences E-Journal*, (16.), pp. 1–10.

Thus, thanks to the careful work of the guilds and their activities in accordance with the law, harm to the public was prevented.

According to Deniz and Akarçay, the guild system, one of the institutions that provided municipal services during the Classical Period, served both as a public service and as a civil society organization. Consisting of hierarchical organizations of professional groups, the guild controlled production and consumption in city centers. Guilds ensured management among tradesmen. Guilds, which arose from professional groupings, were responsible for maintaining order and organization in their own workplaces; to fulfill this responsibility, members pooled their resources in a fund organized into sections. Thanks to this income, local tasks such as market maintenance, repair, and cleaning were carried out. Each guild had a designated guild master or guild steward. Those in this profession were selected by the guild master or guild steward parts [9]. These individuals were personally responsible for municipal services.

According to Yüksel, another institution involved in municipal services in the Ottoman Empire during the Classical period was the foundation. During the Ottoman period, foundations played an extremely important role in social life. In other words, foundations, which were present and active in many areas of social life, were one of the indispensable structures of normal life [10]. Foundations, which were such important structures, performed many of the duties carried out by municipal administrations today and were responsible for the cleanliness and transportation of cities.

In the context of municipal services, the most important role of foundations has been public works and city cleaning services. Within this framework, during the Classical Period of the Ottoman Empire, the construction and repair of roads, bridges, canals, dams, fountains, and sidewalks were carried out by foundations. Today, services such as roads, water, sanitation, street lighting, and the maintenance and landscaping of parks and gardens, which are part of municipal services, fall within the scope of foundations. For example, some philanthropists employed “lantern bearers” through the foundations they established and used foundation income to purchase lanterns and oil to illuminate the streets. Foundations were established for street cleaning. Guard salaries were paid from foundations [11].

These and similar examples demonstrate the extent to which foundations were effective in municipal services.

According to Çadırcı, there was no single institution in Ottoman cities before the Tanzimat that took on the municipal services of today. As explained above, the main tasks that municipalities were responsible for were carried out by government representatives, representatives of trade associations, judges, and city leaders. From the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards, relations with European countries began to develop considerably, and Western merchants began to settle and establish colonies in many large cities, especially our coastal and port cities. Developing commercial relations increased the need for new services, job opportunities, transportation, and communication. Especially in port cities, quarantine and accommodation facilities for merchant ships and providing regular urban transportation became major problems [12]. This process, which led to progress in municipal administration, began with the Tanzimat Era.

Essentially, the state's move towards Western-style organization created a contradiction with the conventional/foundation-based organization of municipal services. The establishment of the Evkaf and İhtisab ministries meant a significant change in the provision of municipal services. The difficulties encountered in replacing the old, dysfunctional system with a new one also gave rise to major problems. The accommodation of large numbers of British, French, and Italian soldiers who came to Istanbul during the Crimean War and the lack of infrastructure for this purpose resulted in the establishment of the City Council in 1854, based on the French model. Municipal services, which were struggling under the outdated and dysfunctional traditional system, were attempted to be resolved through a new structure [13]. For this reason, the Tanzimat Period's efforts in municipal administration hold tremendous significance in Türkiye.

In the context of the information provided above, the Tanzimat Edict, considered a critical political threshold in Ottoman history, was an important step taken to re-centralize the state with new organizational tools. It is clear that every new reform following the Tanzimat Edict was largely aimed at strengthening central authority. During this period, the state sought to be represented throughout the country through new practices initiated in many areas such as law, the tax system, and education, thereby striving to make even the most remote regions of the country accessible and controllable. The municipal institutions introduced by the Tanzimat should also be evaluated from the same perspective [14]).

[12] Çadırcı, M. (1991): *Social and economic structures of anatolian cities during the tanzimat period*. Ankara: Turkish Historical Society Publications.

[13] Uyar, Hakkı (2004): Local governments in Türkiye and the world: a brief history. *Enlightenment* 1923, 8., (51.), pp. 31–38.

[14] Avci, Y. (2016): Comparative analyses on ottoman municipalism during the tanzimat period. *Pamukkale University Journal Of Social Sciences Institute*, ( 24 .), pp. 167–180.

[16] Ünal, F. (2011): Legal and structural transformation of local governments in Turkey from the tanzimat period to the republic. *Dumlupınar University Journal of Social Sciences*, (30.), pp. 241–248.

[15] Ortaylı, İ. (2018): *Ottoman local administrations during the tanzimat period (1840–1880)*. Ankara: Turkish Historical Society Publications.

[16] Ünal, F. (2011): Legal and structural transformation of local governments in Turkey from the tanzimat period to the republic. *Dumlupınar University Journal of Social Sciences*, (30.), pp. 241–248.

Indeed, the Tanzimat reformers established modern municipalities to consolidate, organize, and thus better control urban services, which were previously provided by various institutions and authorities.

According to Ortaylı, local government in Türkiye developed with a serious purpose in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Municipal administration was at the forefront of this, and the birth of modern municipal administration in Türkiye coincided with the Tanzimat Era [15]. In this context, attempts to establish the first municipal administration in the Ottoman Empire as a local administrative unit in the modern sense emerged in the years following the Tanzimat reforms and particularly during the 1854-1856 Crimean War, as a result of increased contact with Western countries. Taking inspiration from French communal administrations, the first attempt to establish a municipal organization was made in Istanbul in 1855.

The decision-making and executive bodies of the established municipality (Şehremaneti) consisted of the mayor and the city council. The City Council, which abolished the Taxation Office, was responsible for ensuring the provision of essential goods for the city, setting and enforcing prices, constructing and repairing roads and sidewalks, cleaning, and controlling tradesmen. The establishment of the first modern municipal administration occurred during the Crimean War under the influence of the Ottoman Empire's allies. This was because, during the period in question, there were over 100,000 foreigners living in Istanbul, and European states wanted these nationals to live in a modern, well-maintained, clean city. Therefore, the City Council was established to perform similar duties to those undertaken by communes in Western countries, which were considered important at the time [16].

One of the most important events in the history of municipal administration in Türkiye is the establishment of the Istanbul City Council. It can be said that there were multiple factors that made the establishment of the City Council necessary. Firstly, the deterioration of the qadi, muhtesip, subaşı, foundation, guild, and neighborhood administrations seriously disrupted public services. By the time the City Council was established, these institutions were barely providing any public services, yet the people demanded that these services be provided. On the other hand, it is known that the segment of the population living in the Beyoğlu-Galata region, who were familiar with Europe and had greater economic and political power at the time, introduced the

concept of “local services/municipality” to the Ottoman Empire and made intense and effective demands in this direction with the support of Europe. In this context, it has been said that the Şehremaneti was the equivalent of the prefecture de la ville institution used in Europe [17]. On the other hand, it has also been said that Ottoman statesmen traveling to Europe confirmed the need for a regular and modern municipal organization.

According to Öner, in the context of the information provided above, after the Crimean War, relations with Europe increased and state departments attempted to model their organization and procedures on those of Western civilized countries. It was deemed necessary to establish a separate department exclusively to deal with municipal affairs in Istanbul. To this end, by a decision of the Meclis-i Âli-i Tanzimat dated 27 Ramadan 1271 (June 13, 1855), the İhtisap Nezareti was abolished and replaced by a new office in Istanbul called the Şehremâneti, and a city council was established under the authority of the person appointed to this office, called the şehremîni [18]. The city council consists of individuals selected from among the people and reputable merchants of Dersaâdet.

After the Istanbul City Council was established (1855), public order was transferred to the Zaptiye Nezareti (Public Order Directorate). With this arrangement, the City Council began to perform the duties of the İhtisap Nezareti (Tax Directorate). It would ensure the easy procurement of items that were essential to the people of Istanbul, oversee pricing, build roads and sidewalks, oversee the city's sanitation, supervise the bazaars and markets, and collect state taxes and fees that had previously been collected by the Ministry of Revenue and transfer them to the treasury [19].

In its early years, the City Council, which did not have its own budget, had its annual accounting books inspected by the Accounting Council within the Ministry of Finance. The financial structure of the City Council was similar to that of the abolished Ministry of Taxation. Taxes collected from merchants under the official name of taxation were collected by the City Council and transferred to the central treasury. A small portion of these revenues remained with the City Council. In addition, there were taxes collected from the public for the use of animals in transportation and for the construction of sidewalks and roads. In this early period, the revenues of the Municipal Administration were only sufficient to cover personnel expenses.

[17] Argunhan, B. (2022): İstanbul city administration (1855–1858). *Kırıkale Law Journal*, 2., (1.), pp. 149–80.

[18] Öner, E. (2008): *The establishment of the Istanbul city administration (municipality) and its 1917 budget*. Ankara: Ministry of finance, strategy development department.

[19] Toprak, Z. (1999): The administration of Istanbul from the Tanzimat Era to the republic: Şehremâneti. *Tom-bak*, (29.), pp. 32–40.

[20] Oktay, T. (2015): "The administration of Istanbul from the Tanzimat Era to the 21<sup>st</sup> century". In: Coşkun Yılmaz (Ed.): *The Great History Of Istanbul From Antiquity To The 21st Century. Politics And Administration (Volume 2)*. Istanbul: Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Cultural Publications, pp. 134–217.

[21] Gençoğlu, M. (2011): Restructuring in ottoman provincial administration according to the 1864 and 1871 provincial regulations. *Çankırı Karatekin University Journal of Social Sciences Institute*, 2., (1.), pp. 29–50.

[22] Sunay, C. (2002): Ottoman legacy in the process of the birth of municipalities. *Kocaeli University Journal Of Social Sciences*, (3.), pp. 113–133.

The institution's financial deficits were covered by the central government treasury. The financial resources of the institution, which was established with high expectations regarding local issues in Istanbul, were not established on the same strong footing [20].

It is very clear In the context of the situation explained above, the 1857 Regulation divided Istanbul into 14 municipal districts. The Sixth District covered the Beyoğlu and Galata areas. This extremely dense district was seen as a model structure. With the 1868 Dersaadet Municipal Decree, other districts were also established and became operational. The 1864 Provincial Regulation, on the other hand, covered the rural areas in the context of municipal affairs. Finally, with the 1877 Municipal Law, the Dersaadet Municipal Law was enacted. As a result, the Istanbul Municipality was divided into a total of 20 districts [19]. The same process was implemented in municipalities in other cities.

During the final period of the Ottoman Empire, two significant legal regulations played a crucial role in the historical development of municipal administration. These are the Provincial Regulations of 1864 and 1871. In this context, the provincial regulations enacted in 1864 and 1871 brought about a fundamental administrative reorganization of the municipal system. Compared to previous temporary measures, these regulations addressed provincial administration and local governance from the ground up, establishing a new and comprehensive provincial structure. In this organization, new administrative units replacing the old ones were defined in detail, the duties and powers of provincial administrators from top to bottom were determined, and new representative institutions were established [21]. Consequently, the 1864 and 1871 regulations marked a turning point in the history of Turkish municipal administration. According to Sunay, the widespread establishment of municipal organizations in cities and towns during the final period of the Ottoman Empire was realized through the Provincial Municipalities Law, which came into effect on October 5, 1877. Article 112 of the Kanun-i Esasi (Fundamental Law) stipulated that municipalities in Istanbul and the provinces would be administered by elected councils; the formation, duties, and method of determining the members of municipalities would be regulated by law. The Provincial Municipalities Law of 1877 remained in force until the adoption of the Municipalities Law No. 1580, which is still in effect today, in 1930. The Provincial Municipalities Law also granted municipalities legal personality [22]. The law explicitly regulates the authority to expropriate for the city's development and imposes certain new duties on municipalities.

## The historical development process of municipal administration in the Republic Era in Türkiye

The beginning of modern municipal administration in Türkiye parallels the processes of modernization and Westernization. It can be said that municipal organization, which was supported by examples from the West, particularly during the Tanzimat Era, was a new experience in Türkiye's history. With the establishment of the Republic, a rapid process of revolution took place. In the state organization, which underwent rapid transformation with various revolutions, it is seen that regulations related to municipalities were not prioritized. One reason for this situation is that the Turkish municipal organization structure is based on the French Model, where central authority is maintained. The newly established Republic, especially in its early years, did not prioritize democratization and local services [23]. The primary priorities in the early years of the Republic were to consolidate the reforms, prevent ethnic and religious uprisings, and strengthen central authority.

The main characteristics of municipalities during the early period of the Republic can be summarized as follows: the improvement of relevant legislation inherited from the Ottoman Empire in line with priority needs; the drafting of a new municipal law; the reconstruction of cities in Western Anatolia that had been devastated during the occupation and whose populations had declined after the population exchange; the filling of the resulting gaps in production and services; the declaration of Ankara as the capital and its development in line with its new status [24]. During this period, there were also various factors that negatively affected municipal regulations. Some of these factors included the existence of a rigid centralist approach in state administration, constraints created by the potential for political opposition in the country to organize and gain strength in municipalities, and the decline in tax values due to the effects of inflation during and after World War I, which led to a decrease in municipal revenues [25].

The fundamental law concerning municipalities during the Republican era is the Municipalities Law No. 1580 dated 1930. This law remained in force for 54 years as the sole law concerning municipalities. Article 1 of this Law defines a municipality as “a legal entity responsible for organizing and settling the local and civil needs of the town and its residents.” The provision of local public services during the Republican era was based on Article 1 of the relevant law.

[23] Ökde, F. (2023): The ottoman influence on municipal structure in the founding years of the republic. *Academic Sensitivities*, 10., (Republic Special Issue), pp. 511–536.

[24] Oktay, T. (2020): Development of metropolitan municipality administration in Türkiye in the period 1855–2020. *Strategic Public Management Journal*, 6., (12.), pp. 1–41.

[25] Oktay, T. (2023): “The development of municipalities in Türkiye during the period 1920–1960”. Erbay Arıkboğa (Ed.): *Local governments and urbanization in the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the republic*, Istanbul: Marmara Municipalities Union Publication, pp. 90–111.

[26] Arslaner, H.–Yavan, S. (2016): Differences in local public service delivery introduced by law No. 6360. *Anadolu University Journal Of Social Sciences*, 16., (Special Issue), pp. 277–290.

[27] Şinik, B.–Yılmaz Uçar, A.–Dik, E. (2016): The municipal law drafts of 1924 and 1926: founding steps of the republican understanding of municipalities. *Contemporary Local Governments*, 25., (2.), pp. 1–27.

Article 15 of the Municipalities Law No. 1580 lists the duties of municipalities in 77 items. When general duties are grouped, municipalities are assigned urban planning and public works, agriculture and livestock, health and social services, security, culture and education, and various other duties in the provision of local public services. The fundamental characteristics of this law include treating all municipalities except those of Ankara and Istanbul as equal, keeping municipalities under central government control, and granting municipalities broad authority to provide public services [26].

Prior to the Municipalities Law No. 1580, there were municipal draft laws dated 1924 and 1926 within the scope of municipal work. In this context, the drafts bear great similarities to the Municipal Law No. 1580, which established municipal administration in Türkiye; it can be easily said that the spirit of the Municipal Law of 1930 is also present in the drafts of 1924 and 1926. The appointment of municipal mayors and the preservation of central control over municipal bodies reflect this centralist spirit.

In other words, Law No. 1580 “grants local governments broad authority under the strict and strong supervision of the central government, [to local administrations] broad authority and also imposing civil and social duties on municipalities - which even our municipalities would not be able to perform for a long time -,” are not products of 1930; they were already present in the 1920s. Considering all these characteristics, it can be concluded that the Republic's approach to municipal administration continued along the same lines throughout the post-Republic period, but its implementation had to wait for the Regime's appropriate political and social circumstances [27].

The 1940s are extremely important in the history of municipal administration in Türkiye, as this period marked the beginning of the democratization of municipalities. In this context, when Türkiye entered a multi-party political era, the Turkish Municipal Administration Association was established on July 17, 1945, with close ties to the government, to create a movement by ensuring unity and solidarity among municipalities. The association sought to have mayors elected by the people and approved by administrative authorities.

According to Kaya, municipal council elections were completed in approximately one week on dates announced in advance, in accordance with Law No. 1580, but with Law No. 4748, enacted in 1946, the aforementioned procedure was changed so that elections could be completed in one day.

Furthermore, Law No. 5669, enacted on July 7, 1950, completely amended the provisions of Law No. 1580 relating to elections. Similarly, Articles 149 and 153 of Law No. 1580 treated the Special Administration and the municipality as a single entity in Istanbul, meaning that the Governor of Istanbul was also the Mayor. To resolve this issue, a new law enacted on April 10, 1954, separated municipalities from provinces [28].

According to Kılavuz and Yüksel, the most important development in Turkish municipal history in the 1960s [29] was the emergence of the concept of social municipalism. Social municipalism in Türkiye was fundamentally shaped by the rapid and uncontrolled urbanization that resulted from the economic growth and industrialization policies implemented in the 1960s, which brought local governments to the forefront. The rural-to-urban migration that occurred during this period also brought serious problems related to urban social life to the fore. These increasingly deepening problems led to local governments taking on more effective roles [30]. On the other hand, the relatively liberal environment that emerged after the 1961 Constitution [31] and the subsequent social, economic, and political changes that affected the entire world in the 1970s played a role in shaping the “New Municipalism Approach” in Türkiye, in other words, the principles of social municipalism.

The development of social municipalism in Türkiye began in the 1970s [26]. During this decade, municipalities implemented new municipal practices by increasing participation through associations, cooperatives, companies, and neighborhood representation, and by involving civil society, trade unions, and professional associations in governance.

Since the mid-1980s, local governments, particularly municipalities, have sought to address social issues and urban poverty by implementing temporary solutions. They have attempted to tackle this significant problem through in-kind and cash assistance for the urban poor. These practices gained momentum in the 1990s. Some municipalities saw an increase in their revenues compared to previous periods. Consequently, they placed greater emphasis on social service-centered policies to meet the needs of a population whose educational level was rising and whose demand for urban and social services was growing and diversifying, on the one hand, and of urban masses who had migrated to the city and were becoming increasingly impoverished, on the other [32].

[26] Arslaner, H.–Yavan, S. (2016): Differences in local public service delivery introduced by law No. 6360. *Anadolu University Journal Of Social Sciences*, 16., (Special Issue), pp. 277–290.

[28] Kaya, O. (1997): Local Governments In The Republican Era. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Istanbul University, Atatürk Principles And History Of The Revolution.

[29] Tunç, B.–Yıldırım, S.–Falus, O.–Tuğrul Kara, Ö.–Czukur, K. (2023): Developments in industry in Türkiye in the democrat party Era (1950–1960) and its contribution to the private sector as the economic basis for the civil progression. *Civil Szemle*, 20., (7.), pp. 107–122.

[30] Kılavuz, F.–Yüksel, C. (2017): Social municipalism within the framework of local government finance: the case of Fatsa and Ovacık. *Society And Democracy*, 11., (23.), pp. 121–138.

[31] Köse, R.–Falus, O.–Czukur, K. (2023): From the 1961 constitution to the present day social services in Türkiye. *Civil Szemle*, 20., (7.), pp. 95–106.

[32] İpek, S.–Çiplak, B. (2016): Social municipalism and social budget practices in Türkiye: The case of Çanakkale municipality. *Journal Of Management Sciences*, 14., (27.), pp. 201–215.

[33] Beki, A. (2021): *Social Municipalism Practices in Turkey*. Istanbul: Üsküdar University Publications.

[34] Kaymal, C. (2017): Metropolitan municipality reform in terms of local autonomy and local democracy. *Ulakbilge*, 5., (13.), pp. 1137–1159.

In summary, the historical development of municipal administration can be outlined as follows: The period from 1855 to 1930 marks the beginning of municipal administration in the Western sense (Phase I). The period between 1930 and 1950 is the second phase and a period of serious work on municipal administration. The period between 1950 and 1980 is a lost period for municipal administration. The period after 1980 is a period of development for municipal administration. In this period, which could also be called the New Liberal Period, local governments were given significant opportunities [33]. Especially since 2004, a new era has begun in municipal administration. With the Municipalities Law No. 5393, the direction of municipal administration has changed again, and a significant restructuring has taken place.

### The Historical Development of the Transition to the Metropolitan Municipality System

The main starting point for the metropolitan municipality experiment in Türkiye was the provision added to Article 127 of the 1982 Constitution concerning local administration, which stated that “special forms of administration may be established for large settlements” [34]. This provision does not require that special forms of administration be established in the provincial capital or in a single province; it also allows for multiple large settlements within a province to be subject to special forms of administration. The government exercised its authority to establish a special form of administration for large urban centers in 1984 with Decree Law No. 195, which established a special form of administration called the metropolitan municipality that could be established in provincial centers.

The Decree Law No. 195, which regulates the establishment and administration of metropolitan municipalities in Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir, was issued just two days before the local elections on March 25, 1984. According to Article 4 of this Decree Law, metropolitan municipalities are established under the name of the metropolitan city, and district municipalities bearing the names of the districts included in the metropolitan city are also established in those districts.

According to the Law amending Law No. 2972 of January 1984 on local elections in metropolitan municipalities, if there is more than one district within the boundaries of a provincial capital municipality, a metropolitan municipal council is established in the provincial capital and district municipal councils are established in the districts. Law No. 3030 of July 1984 amended Decree Law No. 195 of March 1984, reorganizing metropolitan municipality administration, and the relevant Regulation came into force in December 1984 [35].

According to Oktay, the metropolitan municipality system introduced in 1984, while benefiting from 20 years of accumulated experience, was designed as two separate tiers with legal personality rather than a municipal union model, as a result of the broad flexibility provided by the constitution. The lower tier consisted of district municipalities within the boundaries of the metropolitan municipality, while the upper tier consisted of the metropolitan municipality itself. The two-tier structure applied in Istanbul between 1858 and 1912 was thus reintroduced. The law defined metropolitan municipalities as cities with more than one district within their municipal boundaries, and district municipalities as districts within the boundaries of metropolitan municipalities. The boundaries of metropolitan municipalities were accepted as the municipal boundaries of the city from which they took their name. District municipalities were included within the boundaries of the metropolitan municipality. Although the law introduced a metropolitan management model, it did not foresee any expansion of boundaries. It was a model that included the continuation of provincial special administrations as a result of the metropolitan municipality being responsible for a limited part of the province [25].

As explained above, in the local elections held on March 25, 1984, metropolitan municipality elections were held for the first time in Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir, and there was significant interest in these elections in the aforementioned cities.

In these elections, votes were cast not only for metropolitan mayors but also for district municipal councils and district mayors [36]. Subsequently, other provinces besides these three also gained metropolitan municipality status. Following these developments, cities that had become “major population centers” were granted metropolitan status through various laws or decrees with the force of law.

[25] Oktay, T. (2023): “The development of municipalities in Türkiye during the period 1920–1960”. Erbay Arıkboğa (Ed.): *Local governments and urbanization in the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the republic*, Istanbul: Marmara Municipalities Union Publication, pp. 90–111.

[35] Özgür, H.–Savaş Yavuzçehre, P. (2016): Türkiye's metropolitan municipality system: 1982–2015. *Çankırı Karatekin University Journal Of Social Sciences Institute*, 7., (1.), pp. 903–926.

[36] Yeter, E. (1991): Opinions on the metropolitan municipality system in Turkey. *Public Administration Journal*, 24., (3.), pp. 155–188.

[37] Tekin, Ö. F. (2018): Metropolitan administration in Turkey and the changes brought about by law No. 6360: The Konya Example. *Dumlupınar University Journal Of Social Sciences*, (55.), pp. 84–105.

[38] Peker, A. E. (2023): A Spatial Analysis Of The Determinants Of Crop Production Value In The Agricultural Sector In Turkey. *International Academic Journal*, 6., (3.), pp. 354–368.

Meanwhile, between 1984, when three major cities gained metropolitan status under Law No. 3030, and 2004, when Law No. 5216 was enacted, 16 provincial municipalities were converted into metropolitan municipalities through legal regulations. The 16 metropolitan municipalities continued until the first local elections held under Law No. 6360, enacted in 2012. In the 2014 local elections, 14 provinces were added, bringing the number of metropolitan municipalities to 30 [37]. This situation is explained in more detail below.

The year 1986 is extremely important in terms of metropolitan municipal administration in Türkiye, as five more provinces were incorporated into the metropolitan municipal administration system between that year and 1988. In this context, the five metropolitan municipalities established between 1986 and 1988 were, in order, Adana (1986), Bursa (1987), Gaziantep (1988), Konya (1988), and Kayseri (1988) [35]. Thus, by 1988, there had been a significant increase in the number of metropolitan municipalities in Türkiye. This clearly represents an important turning point in the history of Turkish municipal administration.

In the context of the information provided above, Adana was granted metropolitan status in 1986 under Law No. 3306, Bursa in 1987 under Law No. 3391, Gaziantep under Law No. 3398, Konya under Law No. 3399, and Kayseri in 1988 under Law No. 3508. Adana, Bursa, and Konya had three metropolitan districts, while Gaziantep and Kayseri had two. The high rate of population growth and urbanization in Türkiye has resulted in significant increases in city populations. Therefore, the main reason for including the aforementioned five cities within the scope of metropolitan municipalities was the population growth in these areas [38].

According to Peker and Şanlı Güleğül, the high rate of population growth and urbanization in Türkiye has resulted in significant increases in urban populations.

Along with population growth, seven more metropolitan municipalities were established by 1993. These municipalities are Antalya, Diyarbakır, Eskişehir, Erzurum, Mersin, Kocaeli, and Samsun. Among these seven metropolitan municipalities, Mersin shows a strong diffusion effect from the center to the periphery, while Erzurum shows a weak diffusion effect from the center to the periphery [38]. It is very clear that the other seven metropolitan municipalities have not sufficiently expanded into the agricultural sector in recent years.

In 1993, artificial districts were also established to overcome the district problem that arose after the establishment of metropolitan municipalities, in the context of the information provided above regarding cities that became metropolitan municipalities. Subsequently, a Decree Law was issued, abandoning the procedure for estab-

lishing metropolitan municipalities based on district municipalities and by law, for economic reasons. As mentioned above, in 1993, the cities of Mersin, Diyarbakır, Eskişehir, Antalya, Samsun, İzmit, and Erzurum were made metropolitan municipalities, and the rule requiring at least two districts within the boundaries of the central municipality was abandoned. Instead, a structure called the “lower level” was created. Thus, lower-level municipalities were established in these newly established metropolitan municipalities [34]. It is understood that this is also an important regulation in the context of local governments in Turkish administrative history.

Another development in 1993 regarding the evolution of metropolitan municipal administration in Türkiye was the postponement of the establishment of district municipalities until 2008, with the creation of first-tier municipalities in metropolitan areas established by Decree Law No. 504 instead of district municipalities. Within this scope, until the relevant articles of Law No. 5747, which established new districts and converted lower-level municipalities into districts, came into force, the number of lower-level municipalities was three in Antalya, Diyarbakır, Mersin, and İzmit, and two in Eskişehir, Erzurum, and Samsun. In 2000, with Decree Law No. 593, both district and first-tier (town) municipalities existed simultaneously in the Adapazarı Metropolitan Municipality established in the center of Sakarya province [35].

In the context of the above explanation, the Decree Law No. 504 dated 02.09.1993 on the Establishment of Metropolitan Municipalities in Seven Provinces provided a legal basis for a new local administration unit called “lower-level municipality” and facilitated the establishment of metropolitan municipalities. Henceforth, it would no longer be necessary for a municipality to have multiple districts within its boundaries in order to establish a metropolitan municipality; lower-tier municipalities would be sufficient [39].

In brief, Law No. 3030, enacted to enable local governments in metropolitan areas to provide more effective services, has been distorted and misused through various practices. One of the significant reforms in the history of the formation of metropolitan cities in Türkiye has been the establishment of metropolitan districts. As is well known, Law No. 5747 on the Establishment of Districts Within the Boundaries of Metropolitan Municipalities and Amendments to Certain Laws was adopted in 2008. With this law, the legal entities of first-tier municipalities located within metropolitan areas were abolished or converted into districts, following a process of consolidation.

[34] Kaymal, C. (2017): Metropolitan municipality reform in terms of local autonomy and local democracy. *Ulakbilge*, 5., (13.), pp. 1137–1159.

[35] Özgür, H.–Savaş Yavuzçehre, P. (2016): Türkiye’s metropolitan municipality system: 1982–2015. *Çankırı Karatekin University Journal Of Social Sciences Institute*, 7., (1.), pp. 903–926.

[39] Polatoğlu, A. (2015): Reflections on the metropolitan municipality model and its implementation in Türkiye. *Ydu Journal Of Social Sciences*, 8., (1.), pp. 43–62.

[37] Tekin, Ö. F. (2018): Metropolitan administration in Turkey and the changes brought about by law No. 6360: The Konya Example. *Dumlupınar University Journal Of Social Sciences*, (55.), pp. 84–105.

[40] Eryiğit, B. H. (2018): An examination of metropolitan municipality legislation in Turkey based on theories regarding the management of metropolitan areas. *Tesam Academy Journal*, pp. 51–76.

With this law, not only metropolitan areas but also first-tier municipalities throughout the country were converted into district municipalities or incorporated into district municipalities through a merger method. Again, in addition to the district municipalities that were closed due to scale, some town municipalities lost their legal personality and became neighborhoods, while others became villages [40]. In terms of metropolitan areas, the purpose of this regulation was to ensure not only the integrity and harmony of the metropolitan area, but also that of the metropolitan municipality system.

In 2012, a highly significant regulation was implemented in Türkiye regarding metropolitan municipal administration. Within the scope of this regulation, Law No. 6360, enacted in 2012, introduced new criteria for metropolitan municipal boundaries. With the new regulation, the population threshold for metropolitan municipalities was lowered to 750,000. Through this law, the areas of responsibility of metropolitan municipalities were expanded to include the entire provincial administrative boundaries, bringing all affiliated districts under the jurisdiction of metropolitan municipalities [37].

Essentially, prior to Law No. 6360, the Metropolitan Municipality Law in Türkiye expanded municipal boundaries while simultaneously making the conditions for establishing a metropolitan municipality more demanding. Article 3 of the law stipulates that at least three districts or first-tier municipalities must exist in a province for a metropolitan municipality to be established. Under the previous regulation, Law No. 3030, it was sufficient for there to be “more than one district” within the boundaries of the provincial municipality. According to Article 4 of Law No. 5216, provincial municipalities with a total population of more than 750,000, based on the latest census, within municipal boundaries and within a maximum distance of 10,000 meters from these boundaries, were planned to be converted into metropolitan municipalities.

According to Oktay, the legislature has opted for metropolitan municipal structures with higher population levels and density. Based solely on the district requirement, the population-based criterion was a much more concrete standard. Considering the populations of provincial centers in Türkiye at that time, the 750,000 population threshold represented a balanced level that was neither excessively high nor low. With the expansion of metropolitan municipi-

pality boundaries, all district and town municipalities in Istanbul and Kocaeli were included in the scope, while in other metropolitan provinces, district and town municipalities within the expanded boundaries were included. The main goal of the boundary expansion was to bring developed or potentially developing areas around metropolitan cities under the management and supervision of metropolitan municipalities, to prevent problems that had arisen or were likely to arise in these areas, particularly in terms of zoning and licensing, due to the institutional capacity deficiencies of small-scale municipalities, and to achieve comprehensive and planned urban development [41].

In 2011, many provinces in Türkiye were granted metropolitan municipality status. Under the new regulations, 14 municipalities with a population of 750,000 became metropolitan municipalities. In this context, Law No. 6360 applies to the 14 newly established metropolitan municipalities, such as Istanbul and Kocaeli, as well as the 14 existing metropolitan municipalities (Adana, Ankara, Antalya, Bursa, Diyarbakır, Eskişehir, Erzurum, Gaziantep, İzmir, Kayseri, Konya, Mersin, Sakarya, and Samsun). This means that in 28 more provinces, the service authority of local administrations has been extended to the remotest corners of the provinces, and municipal services have been extended to the remotest corners of the provinces [42]. This situation has been an important step forward in terms of the expenditure dimension of fiscal decentralization in Türkiye.

In the 14 provinces that have become metropolitan municipalities, 25 new districts have been established within the scope of metropolitan municipalities and changes in affiliations have been made, increasing the total number of metropolitan district municipalities from 143 to 519. In particular, the regulation provides for the establishment of transfer, liquidation, and distribution commissions for municipalities and villages that have been closed and converted into neighborhoods. Furthermore, provincial special administrations have been abolished in thirty metropolitan municipalities, and Investment Monitoring and Coordination Presidencies (YİKOB) affiliated with the governor's offices have been established in these provinces to replace the abolished provincial special administrations [34].

After the establishment of metropolitan cities, it was envisaged that provincial special administrations within the boundaries of 29 metropolitan municipalities would be abolished, and their powers and responsibilities would

[34] Kaymal, C. (2017): Metropolitan municipality reform in terms of local autonomy and local democracy. *Ulakbilge*, 5., (13.), pp. 1137–1159.

[41] Oktay, T. (2016): Understanding and interpreting the metropolitan municipality reform based on law No. 6360. *Journal of the Faculty of Political Science*, 1., (1.), pp. 71–131.

[42] Temel, R.–Karagöz, B. (2018): Evaluation of law No. 6360 from the perspective of local government economics. *Karadeniz Technical University Social Sciences Institute Social Sciences Journal*, 8., (15.), pp. 117–132.

[43] Atmaca, Y.–Yarar, Y. (2025): Administrative change in van metropolitan municipality after law No. 6360. *Beykoz Academy Journal*, 13., (2.), pp. 334–359.

[44] Doğan, A. (2018): A general review on the history of mersin harbour and mersin city. *Journal Of Current Researches On Social Sciences*, 8., (1.), pp. 117–150.

[45] Saydam, A. (2020): *Change in the villages which turned into a neighborhood with the metropolitan municipality law No 6360: An evaluation on the ceyhan district*. (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Harran University Institute Of Social Sciences.

[46] Narin, R. (2014): *From Ada To Pazar, Sakarya*. Sakarya: Sakarya Chamber Of Commerce And Industry Publications.

be transferred to metropolitan municipalities. In addition, 1,592 municipalities and 16,082 villages were converted to neighborhood status. As a result of this transformation, approximately 36% of provincial special administrations, 53% of municipalities, and 47% of villages were abolished [43]. These structural changes were implemented to increase the institutional capacity of local governments and to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery.

After metropolitan cities were established, new regulations were also made regarding the names of the provincial centers of some metropolitan cities. As is well known, provincial capitals are generally known by the names of the provinces, but there are exceptions to this. In three of the metropolitan cities, the names of the center and the province were different until recently. This situation could also cause confusion in the use of the metropolitan city name. To eliminate this confusion, certain adjustments were made in Mersin, Kocaeli, and Sakarya.

In the context of the information provided above, on June 28, 2002, the name of İçel was changed to Mersin by a regulation in Law No. 4764 [44]. Similarly, the city of İzmit was the provincial capital of Kocaeli. With Law No. 5747 on the establishment of new metropolitan districts, the name of the metropolitan municipality was changed to Kocaeli Metropolitan Municipality [45]. The name İzmit was given to one of the metropolitan municipalities (Saraybahçe). Finally, under Law No. 5747, the name of Adapazarı was changed to Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality [46]. With the establishment of the Sakarya Metropolitan Municipality in the provincial center, the Adapazarı Municipality was also established.

## Conclusion

This study examines the historical development of municipal governance in Turkish administrative history and the transition to the metropolitan municipal system from the Ottoman Empire to the present day, offering a comprehensive perspective. The analysis clearly demonstrates that municipal governance in Turkey is not a static structure but rather a dynamic process that is constantly reshaped alongside political, social, and economic transformations.

During the classical period of the Ottoman Empire, municipal services were carried out through numerous institutions such as the kadı (judicial office), vakıf (endowment), guilds, and neighborhood organizations; however, this fragmented and traditional structure proved inadequate in the face of increasing urbanization, population movements, and commercial relations. With the Tanzimat Era, steps were taken to centralize municipal services in line with the goals of modernization and centralization. The establishment of the Istanbul City Council in 1855 marked a turning point in this process. Thus, the institutional foundations of modern municipal administration in Turkey were laid.

During the Republican Era, the concept of municipal administration was restructured within the framework of a strong centralist state structure. The Municipal Law No. 1580 of 1930 established the duties, powers, and responsibilities of municipalities for many years, bringing stability to the local government system. However, rapid urbanization, migration, and social transformations, particularly since the 1960s, have necessitated that municipalities move beyond being institutions that merely provide infrastructure services and shift toward social and community-oriented municipal practices. In the post-1980 period, under the influence of neoliberal policies, local governments experienced a process of expanding their service areas and attempting to increase their financial and administrative capacities.

One of the main focal points of the study, the metropolitan municipality system, emerged as a natural consequence of urbanization and population growth in Turkey. Metropolitan municipalities, which gained constitutional support with Article 127 of the 1982 Constitution, became institutionalized with the legal regulations issued after 1984; they underwent a fundamental transformation in terms of scope and authority with Laws No. 3030, 5216, and especially 6360. The expansion of metropolitan municipality boundaries to provincial boundaries has provided significant advantages in terms of comprehensive planning and economies of scale in service delivery.

In conclusion, the metropolitan municipal system in Turkey is not merely an administrative restructuring; it also reflects the transformation of the state's approach to urbanization, public service delivery, and local governance. This system offers significant opportunities in terms of service efficiency and resource utilization. In this respect, metropolitan municipal governance should be regarded as one of the most comprehensive and effective local governance reforms in Turkish administrative history.