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"SOCIAL CHANGE AND CRIMINALITY
IN ISTANBUL"

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ABSTRACT

Many researchers and urban planners have made studies about security in city. One of the prerequisites for the continuous development of cities is to establish a safe environment. The deficiencies observed in the social equipment, infrastructure and the environmental conditions as well as social, economic, cultural and political structural characteristics of the society are factors that increase or decrease crime and criminality.

In this study, socially and economically non-homogenous districts and the changes in crime in relationship to this factor are determined in the Istanbul metropolis. The distributions of crime in a total of 32 districts between 1994 -1998 are investigated and their location distribution in the metropolitan area is analysed. The aim of this study is; to examine how physical and demographic characteristics of metropolitan areas contribute to crime and how these characteristics affect reactions to crime in chosen areas. Information on physical characteristics includes type of land uses and demographic variables include age, education, average household size and income, percent change of occupancy. The results of the research show that the educational level and age groups have a relation with the crime, and the increase in numbers of crimes committed in settlements within mixed societies is noticeable.

1. Introduction

Sustainable human settlements generate a sense of citizenship and identity. People's need for community and their aspirations for more liveable neighbourhoods and settlements should guide the process of design, management and maintenance of human settlements (UNCHS, 1996, Ch.2)

One of the needs for the continuous development of countries is to establish a safe environment. This necessity generally overshadows the other necessities of people. In many countries, crime prevention and security are regarded with the highest priority. Habitat is currently conducting a study on these issues called "Safer Cities Programme".

Research conducted in many countries about crime and criminality reveal that the issue of migration, rapid increase of population, unhealthy environmental conditions, inflation, deterioration in the income distribution, impoverishment and changes observed in the family structures are all factors increasing social degeneration especially in big cities (Goodchild, 1997) (Allen and others, 1999) (Markandya, Averchenkova, 2000).

Following various studies conducted, it was observed that the number of crimes increase significantly in undefined environments. Small, definable communities provide close support and security to those living there and public services function better. Factors such as people knowing other people in their community, supporting their relatives and acquaintances and helping them against aggressive behaviour are indicated as reasons for the decrease in crimes (Reiss and others,1986) (Pile and others ,1999) (Crowe, 2000).

It is observed that areas close to the city center and commercial recreational areas are areas with high crime ratios. Similarly, pubs, clubs and places where alcohol is consumed intensively and where generally the low-income groups live, increase the crime risk.

Most of the studies conducted on crime and decrease in crimes, study the concept of decreasing crimes through urban planning or urban design (Plessis, C., 1999; Tiesdell, S., Oc, T., 1998). Oscar Newman (1972), the author of the book "Defensible Space" on

preventing crimes by means of urban design, presents design models to overcome crime and also emphasizes the importance of social issues such as family relations, social development and residential management.

Social theorists believe that criminal behaviour is related to and is the result of social conditions (Crowe, 2000). Schuerman and Kobrin (1987) investigated the effects of demographic characteristics constituting the structure of the society for crimes and decrease in crimes.

Council of Europe (2001) points out that *"Persistent unemployment, changes in the family unit, pressures of the consumer society, social exclusion, the often difficult integration of immigrant population groups and inadequacies in urban policy"* are factors for the development of insecure atmospheres.

In Turkey where most of these characteristics cited above exist, the number of investigations carried out about this subject is quite low. Giritlioglu and others (1995) investigate crime and crime ratios in the Istanbul city center while, Ünlü (2001) conducted an investigation in a slum area in Istanbul and Pulat (1995) investigated crime and crime ratios close to residential areas.

In this study, the distribution of crime in a total of 32 districts, between 1994-1998, is investigated and their location distribution in the metropolitan area is investigated. The basic goal of this study is to display the physical and demographical characteristics of the districts and to investigate whether the amount of crimes change according to age groups and the level of education. The study made in 1995 by the same group (Giritlioglu and others, 1995), has been developed and updated to 1998. The old districts of Istanbul and the central area, which receive the most migration, and new districts formed by migration have been investigated and evaluated.

In this study, firstly, relationships with socio-economical, cultural and political conditions of Turkey and Istanbul will be established.

2. Socio-Economic, Cultural and Political Situation and Crime in Turkey and in Istanbul

An unstable structure is observed in Turkey between the years of 1990-2000 both from the economic and from the social point of view. The Gulf crisis (1990), the coalition governments that ruled after the single party governments, the financial crisis of the year 1994, the increasing social frustrations are the significant events of this period. (SPO, 2000) (Yirmibesoglu, 1999).

Turkey has a population of 62 865 574 where the ratio of the 0-14 age group is 32.8%, and an annual population increase rate of 15.8%0 (SIS, 1997).

Income share of the lower 20% income group has decreased from 5.24% in 1987 to 4.86% in 1994 and the share of the higher 20% income group has increased from 49.9% to 54.9%.

The GNP per person of $2841 in 1995 has increased to $3248 in 1998 but has then decreased to $ 2913 along with the shrinking of the economy. The macroeconomic instability observed as high inflation and the rapid increase of public debt during the period of 1996-1999 has led to the fact that growth has lagged behind when compared with other rising market economies and has also caused it to have an unstable course.

The unequal structure observed in the distribution of income makes it difficult for the effects of economic growth to be observed in decreasing poverty. Social security and social services systems are insufficient in protecting the poor sectors.

The ratio of the population under the risk of poverty is 24% according to the "basic needs" approach which considers food and other consumption needs as a whole. 95% of the population considered to be in absolute poverty consists of people whose education levels are elementary school level or lower (SPO (State Planning Organization), 2000).

Istanbul lives a multi polar growth process with rapid population increase and the migration of approximately 300,000 persons annually. The young population is more dominant in the city and an economic structure is observed where approximately 3 out of every 4 persons work for a wage, polarization according to classes has increased and income is distributed in an unequal manner (SPO, 2000), (Sönmez, 1994).

When the economic activity of the Istanbul population is analysed in comparison with the years of census, it can be observed that the percentage of people working for a wage has increased while the ratio of self employed people has decreased (Table 1).

Table 1: Economic Activity and Employment Status in Istanbul (1980–1985–1990)

Census Years	Employer	%	Employee	%	Self employed	%	Unpaid Family Worker	%	Total
1980	68731	4.5	110587	70.8	305193	19.7	76541	4.9	1563939
1985	70152	3.8	1371718	73.2	346985	18.5	84512	4.5	1873597
1990	127345	5	1886241	74.3	400885	15.7	124765	5	2539963

Source: SIS State Institute of Statistics, 1985, 1990, General Population Census

The education level of the population in Istanbul has a structure that is above the average of Turkey. Despite this, the implementation of dual education (morning-afternoon use of a classroom), crowded classes in the cities and the implementation of joined classes (1st, 2nd and 3rd classes-4th and 5th classes together) in rural areas affect the quality of education in an adverse manner. The increase of compulsory basic education from 5 years to 8 years in 1997 is a positive development.

According to the 1990 data on house ownership in Istanbul, those who do not own a house are 36.6% while those owning a house are 63.4%. Illegal residences (squatter areas) are not included in this ratio and the ratio of house ownership varies between 63% and 83% in various studies carried out in these areas (Bolen and others, 1996b), (Ergun, 1996) (SIS, 1990) (Yirmibesoglu, 1997).

Social and structural changes, along with negative political and economical changes, bring along the problem of the emergence of unhealthy structures and problems in education, health, transportation and employment and we come across these as factors that increase crime rates and crime tendencies.

There are 24,000 policemen in the Security organizations and approximately 1 policeman corresponds to 375 persons in Istanbul. Despite this low ratio of policeman to person, the crime ratio has decreased to 1 out of 79 persons while this ratio is about 1 out of 5-46 persons in other metropolises of the world.

The reasons for the increase in crime and criminality in Turkey and the main starting points can be summarized as follows by GDS (General Directorate of Security): (Crime and criminality GDS, 2000):

- Migration due to socio-economic reasons to the metropolis cities in the west (from the eastern and south eastern cities).
- Rapid urbanization and rapidly increasing squatter areas,
- Inadequacy of urbanization and residential policies,
- Low educational and cultural levels of the population,
- Decrease of control of families and society on individuals,
- Differentiation in the income levels,
- Insufficiency of the level of cultural activities,
- Insufficiency of sports and recreational activities and opportunities,

There have been 69,077 convicted persons in Turkey between the years of 1994-1998 according to a research conducted by SIS (State Institute of Statistics). When the ratio of the distribution of crimes in Istanbul has been compared to the whole of Turkey, it has been observed that the ratio had been 8% in 1994 and has increased to 15% in 1998. The crime ratio for women in Istanbul was 3%.

When the rate of literacy of the convicted persons in Istanbul is analysed between 1994-1998, it has been observed that the crime and criminality ratio of the totally illiterate persons and of the university graduates were both very low and close to each other. The highest ratio has been observed among the primary schools graduates. It has been noted that this section is not only the numerical majority of the convicted persons but also is the section of the society that feels and lives the cultural transformation shock at the highest level. Behavioural problems and unbalanced behaviours are observed due to insufficient time in the period of traditional-global change.

Similar results are observed when the distribution is analysed according to age groups. The low ratio observed in the lower age group results from the fact that the new social values and the traditional cultural values are not perceived at the same time and from

the consequence that the new values have been widely adopted in a short period of time. The lower ratio in the older age group can be accepted as the indicator of the fact that the behaviour patterns shaped by traditional values have a more static value. The high ratio of crime and criminality observed in the 20-40 age group reveals that the transformation conditions have intensified in this age group and that the ratio of crime and criminality has increased due to the gaps in this change (Table 2).

Table 2: The Distribution of the Convicted Persons in Istanbul According to the Type of Crime, Education Level and Age Groups (1994-1998)

Type of Crime	1994 (%)	1998 (%)
Personal Crimes (Kidnapping girls or women, Rape, Adultery Murder, Violence)	15	12
Property Crimes	61	64
Other	24	24
The Education Level		
Illiterate	4	2
Literate	2	2
Elementary School	68	63
Junior High School	11.5	14.5
High School or similar	11	14
Faculty – College	3.5	4.5
Age Groups		
0-15	0.1	0.01
16-18	2	1.5
19-21	9	6
22-29	32.8	32
30-39	31.8	33.5
40-49	16.7	20.5
50-59	6	5.2
60-64	1	0.73
65 or more	0.6	0.56

Source: SIS (State Statistical Institute), 2000   Modified by Ergun &Yirmibesoglu

Similar results have been obtained from questionnaires conducted on 26151 persons taken in to custody nationwide in 1997 by the GDS (2002).

3. Empirical Analysis

The ratios of crime and its location distributions are investigated and their links with the physical and demographic characteristics of districts are investigated in the research,

which has been conducted in 32 district municipalities in Istanbul between the years 1994-1998.

For this purpose, the data of crimes committed in Istanbul during this period were taken from the Directorate of Public Order of Istanbul Police Forces; however terrorism related crimes were not included.

The distribution of population by districts, in Istanbul, according to the censuses conducted in 1985-1990-1997, the total crime in districts between 1994 - 1998 and densities and crime in 1997 are shown below (Table 3):

Table 3: The Distributions of the Population, Densities and Crime in Istanbul

Districts	Population			Density (Person/km²)	Total Crime	
	1985	1990	1997	1997	1994 -1998	1997
Bakırköy	1238342	1328276	222336	6352	292	55
Beşiktaş	204911	192210	202783	18435	291	66
Beyoğlu	245999	229000	231826	25758	538	126
Eminönü	93383	83444	65246	13049	470	78
Kadıköy	577863	648282	699379	21193	843	230
Şişli	526526	250478	257049	8568	513	95
Üsküdar	490185	395623	472124	13489	578	120
Gaziosmanpaşa	289841	354186	649648	3986	769	209
Kartal	572546	506477	362175	1548	506	107
Beykoz	136063	142075	193067	488	202	26
Eyüp	377187	200045	254028	1050	389	105
Fatih	497459	462464	432590	43259	797	184
Sarıyer	147503	160075	229600	1573	409	97
Zeytinburnu	147849	165679	228786	20799	457	120
Adalar*	14785	19413	16171	1617	16	1
Çatalca*	--	--	73227	49	63	3
Silivri*	--	--	98873	127	5	12
Şile*	--	--	27385	37	25	0
Bayrampaşa**	188376	212570	240427	30053	344	83
Kağıthane**	120996	269042	317238	19827	542	123
Pendik**	182205	289380	339759	1707	556	106
Ümraniye**	118995	242091	498952	3326	363	59
Küçükçekmece**	336640	469431	460388	3029	736	216
Büyükçekmece**	--	--	287569	1350	95	34
B.Evler***	--	--	442877		491	78
Esenler***	--	--	344428		388	140
Maltepe***	--	--	335539	6453	400	77
Tuzla***	--	--	93975	1093	146	34
Avcılar***	--	--	214621	5962	248	73
Bağcılar***	--	--	487896	24395	707	190
Güngören***	--	--	273915		287	43
Sultanbeyli***	--	--	144932		108	30
Total				9198809	12574	2920

Source: SIS, (Census of Population 1997), IPD Istanbul Police Department, (2000)   Modified by Ergun &Yirmibesoglu

(*) Suburb districts   (**) Districts have been formed in 1987   (***) Districts have been formed in 1992

Data from 1997, when a census was held, were taken as a basis in order to be able to conduct a more detailed analysis and the data collected were distributed according to

districts. Age and education groups considered to be related with crimes in all districts were analysed and a level was determined for the average of Istanbul.

Similarly, the use of lands in all districts and settlement characteristics were determined and their relation with crime rate in the district was analysed.

Districts were grouped according to the date they became municipalities, the data of land usage was taken from the Istanbul Master Plan (Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, 1995), the settlement of the districts was taken from their brief historical account and the characteristics of settlement was revealed from the date of the Metropolitan Municipality (Table 4):

The average values in the table were accepted in the manner given below:

▪Characteristics of Residence: The areas where 21% of the residences were squatter areas were defined as "formal+ squatter" and those with the number of squatter areas above this value were defined as "highly squatter", while those under this value were defined as "highly formal" and districts that did not incorporate a squatter area were defined as "formal".

▪Education Above Primary School: The ratio of those with education level above the primary school level in Istanbul (%51).

▪Age Less than 25 Years Old: The ratio of those among the population of Istanbul with age 25 and under (% 41).

▪Crime: The average of crimes committed in districts of Istanbul in 1997 (85)

The data gathered were grouped, indicated on a map and the conditions that fit or do not fit with the assumptions were determined (Map 1).

It was observed that in 24 districts in Istanbul, out of the 32, the crime ratio was high where the ratio of the young age group was high and the level of education was low, and the crime rate was low where the ratio of the young age group was low and the level of education was high.

Hence it can be concluded that there is a relationship between crime in Istanbul and the level of education and age in parallel to the findings of the studies conducted before.

The districts of Eminönü, Beyoglu, Fatih, Kadıköy, Üsküdar, Beşiktaş, Şişli, Eyüp, Bakırköy, Beykoz, Sarıyer, Adalar, Sile, Catalca ve Silivri included in Table 4 are the oldest districts of Istanbul. The rest are all settlement areas that have recently become districts due to the population that has migrated from rural areas to Istanbul.

The districts of Eminönü and Beyoglu, are districts that are located in the Central commercial district of Istanbul where both business and residential areas exist and they are districts that are used as a stepping stone by the persons who have migrated from rural areas to Istanbul.

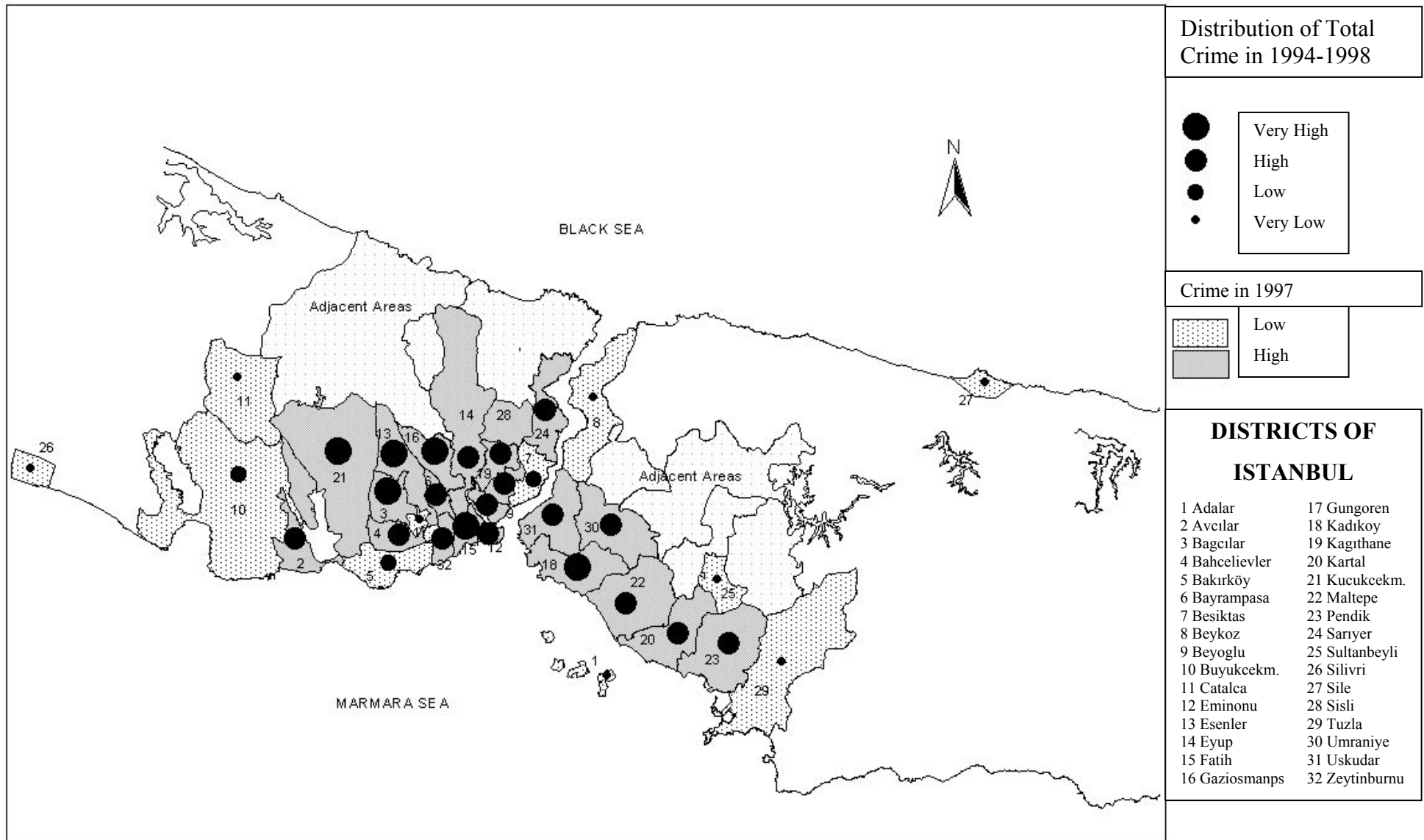## Table 4: Demographical - Physical Characteristics and Crime in Istanbul

| Districts | Characteristics of Settlement | | Characteristics of Population | | Crime |
	Land use	Residence	Ratio of education above primary school	Ratio of age under 25 years old	1997
Bakırköy	Residential and Commercial	Formal	Very high	Low	Low
Beşiktaş	Residential and Commercial	Highly formal+ squatter	Very high	Low	Low
Beyoğlu	Residential and Commercial	Highly formal+ squatter	Low	High	High
Eminönü	Residential and Commercial	Formal	Low	High	High
Kadıköy	Residential and Commercial	Formal	Very high	Very low	Very high
Şişli	Residential and Commercial	Formal+ squatter	Average	Average	Average
Üsküdar	Residential and Commercial	Formal	Low	High	High
Gaziosmanpaşa	Residential and Industrial	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	High	Very high
Kartal	Residential and Industrial	Highly formal+ squatter	High	Low	High
Beykoz	Residential	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	High	Very low
Eyüp	Residential and Industrial	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	High	High
Fatih	Residential and Commercial	Formal	Low	High	Very high
Sarıyer	Residential	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	High	High
Zeytinburnu	Residential and Industrial	Formal+ highly squatter	Very low	High	High
Adalar*	Residential	Highly formal+ squatter	High	Very low	Very low
Çatalca*	Residential	Formal	Very high	Very low	Very low
Silivri*	Residential	Formal	Very high	Very low	Very low
Şile*	Residential	Formal	Very high	Very low	Very low
Bayrampaşa**	Residential	Formal+ squatter	Very low	High	High
Kağıthane**	Residential and Industrial	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	High	High
Pendik**	Residential and Industrial	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	Very high	High
Ümraniye**	Residential and Industrial	Formal+ highly squatter	Average	Average	Average
Küçükçekmece**	Residential and Industrial	Highly formal+ squatter	Low	Very high	Very high
Büyükçekmece**	Residential	Formal	Very high	Very low	Low
B.Evler***	Residential	Formal+ squatter	Low	High	High
Esenler***	Residential	Formal+ squatter	Very low	Very high	Very high
Maltepe***	Residential and Industrial	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	High	High
Tuzla***	Residential and Industrial	Formal	Low	High	Very low
Avcılar***	Residential	Formal	Low	High	High
Bağcılar***	Residential and Industrial	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	Very high	Very high
Güngören***	Residential	Formal+ highly squatter	Low	High	Very low
Sultanbeyli***	Residential	Squatter	Very low	Very high	Very low
Average		0,21 squatter	0,51	0,41	85

Own analysis
(*) Suburb districts   (**) Districts have been formed in 1987   (***) Districts have been formed in 1992

Distribution of Total
Crime in 1994-1998

● Very High

● High

● Low

● Very Low

Crime in 1997

Low

High

DISTRICTS OF

ISTANBUL

1 Adalar	17 Gungoren
2 Avcılar	18 Kadıkoy
3 Bagcılar	19 Kagıthane
4 Bahcelievler	20 Kartal
5 Bakırköy	21 Kucukcekm.
6 Bayrampasa	22 Maltepe
7 Besiktas	23 Pendik
8 Beykoz	24 Sarıyer
9 Beyoglu	25 Sultanbeyli
10 Buyukcekm.	26 Silivri
11 Catalca	27 Sile
12 Eminonu	28 Sisli
13 Esenler	29 Tuzla
14 Eyup	30 Umraniye
15 Fatih	31 Uskudar
16 Gaziosmanps	32 Zeytinburnu

BLACK SEA

Adjacent Areas

Adjacent Areas

MARMARA SEA

Map 1: Distribution of Total Crime in 1994-1998 and Crime in 1997 in Istanbul

When new settlements are taken into account, it is observed that they have all increased their population by migration, the number of migrants is quite high and that they are mostly squatter areas.

One of the most important characteristics of these areas is the fact that they do not possess sufficient infrastructure or social facilities despite the fact that the majority of their population is young. These districts are also located far from the city center.

When the 32 districts of Istanbul are studied according to their date of establishment, it was observed that although the characteristics of the older district were better, crime ratios were higher. In districts that were small settlement areas or villages before, which became a municipality and a district with the population increase caused by migrations, the crime ratio is lower even though the district characteristics are not as favourable. In 6 settlements that became a district in 1987 the district characteristics are also not as favourable but the crime ratio is low in some and high in others.

As a general assessment, it is observed that crime ratio is higher in older districts, where the traditional population of Istanbul used to live, and where social texture has became mixed due to migrations. Where as, the ratio of crime remains low in settlements constituted only by those that migrated from rural areas to the cities. Although settlement and population characteristics seem unfavourable, in settlements where those having migrated generally from the same city and relatives living in the same community, the effect of social restraint in decreasing crime rates is clearly seen. The mixed population composition in old districts, however, eliminates this social restraint. The number of crimes in the transition period of districts is an indicator of this phenomenon.

5. Conclusion

Deficiencies observed in social facilities, infrastructure and environmental conditions as well as social, economic, cultural, political characteristics of the society are factors that increase or decrease crime and criminality among persons after migrations of population in Turkey just as in other parts of the world.

The fact that the traditional local values cannot cope with the effectiveness and change of the internationally shared values within the framework of globalisation and the timing of changes not coinciding with the society leads to distortions in the thinking and behavioural patterns and models and this is a major reason and cause of crime and the ratio of criminality.

Problems such as cultural and social lack of harmony are also observed as well as insufficient housing, unemployment and the inadequacy of infrastructures resulting from rapid migrations from rural areas to the cities in developing countries. As a result of this lack of harmony, the young population is also unable to find means of expressing themselves and recreation due to the lack of social facilities and seek various ways to escape during the process of integration to the city. Thus, while some become introverted some others join illegal organizations and become prone to committing crimes.

Istanbul still has a low crime ratio when compared with the other metropolises of the world despite high ratio of population increase due to migration, the difference between the expectations of the migrants and what they really face and the low number of policemen per person due to the facts that the population is still attached to its traditions and customs and that face to face communication has not yet ended.

Crime ratios were low in this study despite the dilapidation of the environment of the people who have migrated to cities and despite their low living standards, due mainly to the continued adherence to customs and traditions in rural life, and social ties still being tight and the strong tradition of helping other people in one's community. However, how long this will last is not clear. The study also reveals that as settlements get older, crimes increase.

Therefore, measures need to be taken, in a city such as Istanbul going through a rapid urbanization process, to facilitate the transition of the young generation to the urban culture. The quantity and quality of the services to be provided to the younger population should be increased due to the fact that the young population especially is larger while equal opportunity should be maintained for all levels of the society. Cultural, artistic and recreational activities that will help the development of the personality, the mind and physical abilities of the young people should be encouraged. Different alternatives addressing all sections of the society for spare time activities should be sought and developed.

The income distribution of the society should become more equal; city and urbanization policies should be implemented effectively; education and health standards should be improved; deficiencies in the infrastructure and social facilities in the settlement areas should be solved and most importantly, cultural and recreational activities should be increased and wider spread in order to further reduce crime ratios or to prevent its rise.

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