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CRIMES AND CRIME DISPERSION IN URBAN AREAS IN TURKEY

ABSTRACT. Crime is a phenomenon that arises from the interaction between social, political, economic, physical, psychological circumstances and geographical factors. Since crime occurs in geographical locations, the relationship between crime and location is worth discussing characteristics of a location occur in differents ways. Not only natural geographical factors but also human geographical factors may lead to crime. In this study, the situation, distribution of crimes in the cities which are in the police service zone are dealt with. In addition to crime dispersion in the cities and crimes committed to people and property, crimes committed by month is also studied. In this context, it is seen that since city centres are composed of dense population and urban functions, they feed crime, social control weakens in those areas and they create opportunities for criminals. This causes weakness in society and social capital apart from economic losses in cities. The number of crime incidents, which was 229,513 in 1995, in Turkey, has risen to 785,510 in 2006 with a 3.4 fold increase. 41% of the crimes which were committed in the year of 2006 were against people, 59% were against property.

KEY WORDS: Turkey, Urban Areas, Geography of Crime, City, Crime Dispersion, Crimes Against Property and People.

METHOD

In Turkey, the public security is in the authority of the police in provincial and subprovincial centers; in other areas it is in the authority of the Turkish military police. Turkish Statistical Institute (Turkstat) counts both provincial and subprovincial centers as cities regardless of their population. This means 70.5 per cent of the population of Turkey live in urban areas, which are in the responsibility of the police and 29.5 per cent live in rural areas, which are in the responsibility of the gendarme forces. In this study based on the data obtained from Turkstat, the provincial and subprovincial centers are regarded as cities and only crime incidents committed in these areas which are in the authority of the

police, are in the scope of this study. Crime map of each city displays the results obtained from the analysis of the data available from the police files. Therefore, crime incidents that occurred in the rural parts of each province and subprovince are not included in this study.

INTRODUCTION

Every community sets certain rules in order to live together, in peace and harmony. The workings and functions of these rules change from one community to another. The aim of these rules, which are the products and basis of a community, are to provide public order and preserve it. We may come across these rules at different times as the rules set by a religion, traditions, customs, moral values or modern law. Even though modern law is in the center of modern communities, there is no community where religion or traditions have lost influence completely. Wherever there are rules, there are people who violate rules and who do not have the right way of conduct, which is a normal phenomenon as there is always a conflict between individual and society. All over the world, individuals in different communities with different values try to satisfy their desires but meanwhile they inevitably have conflicts with the rules of the community, which often lead to the phenomenon of crime. Crime, which has been studied for centuries, may also be said to be in the scope of geography, a science which studies relations between people and diverse environments. Therefore, the science of geography studies settings where crime is committed from a cause-effect point of view. While a study of this sort is being done, the principles of geography must be in the mind; therefore, in this study, crime incidents committed in Turkey between 1995 and 2006, as well as the statistical figures, rate of increase and the pattern of distribution have been studied. In addition, crime incidents are classified as those against property and individuals and analyzed respectively. The percentage of crime for every 100,000 persons has been mapped for each province. Provinces with higher crime rate have been analyzed on the basis of the urban and rural population. Besides, the fact that frequency of crime changes from one month to another has been taken into consideration and studied.

CONCEPT OF CRIME

Communities never stop changing and individuals who constitute a community cannot escape from this change. However, a community's speed of change and that of an individual may not be the same. Sometimes, the individual may develop faster than the community, which may lead to certain problems such as crime. Crime, which is related to many factors, has been in human life since the recorded history began. As it is a social phenomenon, crime has been the subject of various branches of sciences. Consequently, each branch of science defines crime in accordance with its charecteristics. According to Dönmezer, crime is acts and behaviours which are regarded by the legislative body as harmful or dangerous for the society (Dönmezer, 1994: 61). The penal code defines crime as acts which are subject to sanctions by law. In other words, crime is acts with negative conclusion. Due to the possibility of a criminal act by a potential perpetrator, sanctions other than punishment, such as prevention of crime, may gain priority (Demirbaş, 2005: 40). It was Jhering who made the most comprehensive definition of crime, "all kinds of acts against social life" (İçli, 2007: 23–35).

According to Emile Durkheim's "structural-functionalist" theory, crime is a normal phenomenon seen in every society. Thus, while defining crime groups and organizations, not individuals, must be taken into consideration. Differences in a community breed crime and whether an act contains crime or not is determined according to the present norms. Crime is essential for functional and social change (Bal, 2004: 5). While defining phenomenon of crime, Durkheim uses the term "Anomie", which expresses disappearance of accepted standards and of values as a consequence of deterioration in the existing norms. Ineffectiveness or lack of social norms attenuate the ties that keep the individual and the society intact. Crime gets widespread as "Anomie" invades parts of a society. Durkheim believes that industrialized societies go through such a process (Bal, 2004: 5).

The common point of all the ideas mentioned above is that crime is a behaviour which deviates from the accepted standards. What is considered as normal is obediance to the existing norms and rules. Disobediance is seen as deviance from the existing norms.

The concept of crime, which is studied by various branches of science, such as criminology, law, sociology, geography, economics, anthropology, city planning, etc., is gaining more and more importance in the fast changing world.

Geography of crime studies the distribution of crime nation by nation and the pattern it follows in a community. In addition, it studies the distribution of crime in poor quarters of a city, border areas, garrison towns, harbour cities, etc. There are cultural and language borders besides geographical and political borders. According to Herol, crime of geography is a science which studies in terms of space and time the relations between the characteristics of a certain setting and the crime incidents which happen there (Demirbaş, 2005: 195). According to Schwind, geography of crime is the study of crime in terms of space and time and thus its demographic, economic, social, physical and cultural magnitude (Demirbaş, 2005: 195).

In Turkey, it has been only recently that geographers began to study geography of crime (Karakaş, 2004, 2005; Yılmaz, Günayergün, 2006; Aliağaoğlu, 2007). As it is known, Geography is the science which studies the space which is settled and developed by human beings. Generally, geography studies the phenomenon of crime in terms of the setting of crime, the factors that affect the crime, and the principle of distribution, which is a basic principle of geography.

In this study, the distribution of crime by city is given by classifing most of the urban crime incidents. While doing so, the data from the General Directorate of Security (GDS) have been analyzed. Therefore, urban crime incidents over a period of ten years have been mapped. In the study, only the crime incidents against property and individuals are included. Crimes against the state, terror incidents, financial crimes, organized crime, narcotic crimes, etc. have not been handled. Subtitles of the crime incidents against property and individuals which have been determined by the General Directorate of Security have been given in Table 2.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRIME YEAR BY YEAR

The crime rate has been on the increase recently. According to the data we have studied from 1995 on the rate of crime has increased on a great scale especially during the recent years. When we study in detail the crime incidents which occurred between 1995–2006 no extraordinary change in the figures is seen until 2004–2005. In certain periods, a significant increase can be seen; however, there is no increase or decrease in some other periods. To give an example, in 1996, while the rate of crime rises 27.1 per cent compared to the previous year, in 1997, a significant change can be seen. In the years 1999, 2000, and 2002, no rise is seen; on the contrary, there is a drop compared to the previous years. However, in the period after 2004, there appears a considerable increase. Especially in 2005, the crime rate rises by 38 per cent compared to the previous year. The real increase is, however, in 2006, when the rate of crime rises by 61 per cent compared to the previous year (Table 1).

As shown in Table 1 while the number of crime incidents is 487,761 in 2005, it rises to 785,516 in 2006. In this period, when a real rise in the rate of crime occurs, a rise is seen both in the number of crime incidents committed against property (theft, burgling, damaging property, selling or buying crime tools) and individuals (battery, robbery, blackmailing, etc.) No detailed documents or records on the pre 2000 period are available in the archives of The General Directorate of Security (GDS). The data from this period gives only the total crime rate. However, it is

possible to reach detailed data after 2000. The data available have been categorized as crime committed against property and crime committed against individuals. When the period between 2000 and 2006 is analyzed, it is seen that the number of crime incidents committed against property is higher. For example, in 2000, while the number of crime incidents against individuals is 122,043, the number of crime incidents against property is 137,852, and this gap continues to grow wider in the following years. In 2004, the number of crime committed against property is 195,337, whereas the number of crime against individuals is 158,241. When we come the year 2006, a big rise is seen; the number of crime incidents against property is 463,834, while it is 321,676 for individuals. As the data show, in 2000, the rate of crime against property is 53 and the rate of crime against individuals is 47 per cent. However, in 2006, while the rate of crime against property rises to 59 per cent, it drops to 41 per cent for individuals.

Table 1. Development of crimes in Turkey

Years	Against individuals	Against property	Total	%
1995	–	–	229,513	–
1996	–	–	291,662	27.1
1997	–	–	304,147	4.3
1998	–	–	304,114	–0.1
1999	–	–	280,554	–7.7
2000	122,043	137,852	259,895	–7.4
2001	138,966	160,623	299,589	15.3
2002	140,093	155,735	295,828	–1.3
2003	143,802	178,003	321,805	8.8
2004	158,241	195,337	353,578	9.9
2005	197,996	289,765	487,761	38.0
2006	321,676	463,834	785,510	61.0

Source: General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

When we study the periods between 1995 and 2006 we notice that the rate of crime changes greatly from one province to another. To give an example, in 1995, the cities with the highest number of crime incidents were: Istanbul with 65,012 incidents, Ankara with 32,576, and Izmir with 15,159 incidents. And this remains the same in the years 2000 and 2006. However, there is a change in the number of crime incidents because while Istanbul has 65,012 incidents in 1995, it rises to 67,299 in 2000 and to 192,468 in 2006. As for Ankara, has 32,576 in 1995, 23,059 in 2000, 58,313 in 2006 crime incidents. Table 3 shows the rate of crime in 10 cities among which are the several big cities in Turkey. The number

Table 2. Development of crimes against property and individuals in Turkey

		Kinds of Crime	1995	2000	2004	2005	2006
Crimes Against Property	Theft	Auto	14,840	14,954	24,659	32,051	31,522
		From automobiles		16,170	25,190	39,705	68,855
		From homes		20,451	33,937	53,932	85,964
		From places of work		21,751	29,919	43,733	55,967
		Official institutions		1,376	2,744	3,579	4,307
		From banks	74,880	160	117	158	202
		Animals			1,907	886	1,200
		Snatching		12,012	5,115	7,168	11,819
		Pocket picking			11,689	18,556	27,946
		Other		12,239		35,060	64,166
	Usurp	From individuals		1,094	4,265	6,254	7,778
		From places of work	1,561	190	264	290	428
		From homes		117	254	160	192
		Bill-cheque by force		232	219	274	411
	Other	Fakery	3,615	3,179	5,141	7,528	12,651
		Misuse of Sec. Gen. Direc.		1,496	3,604	5,162	8,529
		Damage to property		3,320	7,037	14,156	38,267
		Informatics crimes		60	317	214	299
		Violation of homes	876	2,010	1,836	2,093	3,156
		Oppos.to gover.orders		1,608	4,439	2,804	3,487
		Buying and selling crime things		206	372	510	1,055
		Fire	572	805	3,875	4,777	8,248
		Crimes out of classification	28,310	11,671	28,437	10,715	27,384
		Total	96,344	125,101	195,337	289,765	463,834
Crimes Against Individuals	Physical Violence	Killing	1,725	3,064	2,693	2,902	3,455
		Injury	17,392	25,678	30,109	36,668	123,011
		Strike	19,587	33,126	36,862	46,612	
		Threatening-insult-swearing	2,448	5,019	7,931	15,409	39,597
		Bad treat.to fam.memb.		3,721	7,083	9,901	17,064
		Prosti. and white slave trade	1,800	1,834	2,035	1,594	1,932
		Carnal abuse	586		709	805	1,026
		Rape	582	1,260	1,150	1,206	1,300
		Defloration with promise of marriage		548	397	318	309
		Obscenity		1,311	1,763	1,802	3,144
		Gambling	4,184	4,918	3,486	1,825	2,329
		Kidnapping-human trafficking.	4,656	4,789	5,005	5,812	7,828
	Crimes Against State	Resistance to police force	3,721	3,275	6,169	7,037	9,622
		Resistance to other civil servants	159		1,355	1,616	1,841
		Bribe-misappropriation-official corruption	113	321	210	197	244
	Other	6136 SKM	17,541	7,646	8,068	10,667	19,137
		Shooting off		4,785	5,271	5,470	6,533
		Commiting suicide-attempted suicide	1,530	2,973	10,961	13,713	20,174
		Crimes out of classification	28,310	30,527	26,984	34,442	63,131
		Total	133,169	134,794	158,241	197,996	321,676
		Crimes Total	229,513	259,895	353,578	487,761	785,510

Source: General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

Table 3. Number of crimes in some of the chosen cities

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Adana	4,594	6,684	4,581	6,567	4,151	6,749	5,271	6,573	6,397	7,032	8,124	29,363
Ankara	32,576	29,848	27,394	25,855	24,879	23,059	28,194	28,377	30,887	28,647	34,707	58,313
Antalya	3,837	5,188	5,260	6,693	7,129	11,036	12,570	13,964	14,667	13,378	28,308	36,244
Bursa	7,392	8,586	10,836	13,390	15,049	12,190	13,502	15,696	16,787	14,988	16,674	30,565
Gaziantep	2,578	2,690	2,576	3,484	5,905	9,641	9,539	9,583	10,532	11,016	8,750	16,745
Mersin	7,244	10,140	9,433	10,512	10,021	8,796	9,479	8,655	11,551	10,996	10,422	28,062
İstanbul	65,012	113,778	120,147	109,869	86,062	67,299	88,836	71,191	82,529	94,509	135,834	192,468
İzmir	15,159	17,238	21,779	17,773	16,939	16,710	17,068	17,112	22,482	21,358	24,414	67,954
Kocaeli	3,067	3,405	3,985	4,470	3,321	3,282	5,023	5,034	4,501	4,345	10,742	19,692
Konya	6,329	6,747	8,027	8,365	9,082	4,863	5,123	6,579	7,577	7,784	7,685	13,390
Toplam	147,788	204,304	214,018	206,978	182,538	163,625	194,605	182,764	207,910	214,053	285,660	492,796
Türkiye	229,513	291,662	304,147	304,114	280,554	259,895	299,589	295,828	321,805	353,578	487,761	785,510
%	64.39	70.05	70.37	68.06	65.06	62.96	64.96	61.78	64.61	60.54	58.57	62.74

Source: General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

of crimes committed in these cities constitutes 64.4 per cent of the total crime in Turkey in 1995. Even though this continues to rise in 1996 and 1997, from 1998 onwards it starts to drop. In 2005, the ratio of crime incidents in big cities to the total in Turkey drops to 58.57 per cent. In 2006, when the rate of crime soars in Turkey, it also rises in these 10 cities. 62.74 per cent of the total crime incidents committed in Turkey were committed in these cities. A big rise especially in Izmir strikes the eye (Table 3).

Urbanization and the problems they come across while they are trying to adjust to a new life, changes in the social structure (increase in the number of families that have broken up, lack of social control, etc.), ineffectiveness of sanctions in practice, the difficulties in the application of the legislation adopted during the EU harmonization process; many more reasons can be cited here. However, that crime rate is higher in these cities compared to others can be explained by the fact that they are densely populated areas. Therefore, if we do an analysis without taking this fact into consideration, with only the mere crime incident numbers in mind, it will not be a correct analysis. The fact that Bursa, Mersin, Konya, Adana, Kayseri, Diyarbakır and Manisa come after İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir with little variations from one period to another explains that the rate of crime rises as the population increases. Therefore, it will be provide us with more accurate data if we evaluate crime committed in urban areas as crime rate for every 100,000 people. Consequently, on the maps drawn on the basis of mere crime incident numbers, it is seen that large cities have the highest number of crime incidents whereas when it comes to rate of crime for every 100,000 people, it is seen that these large cities (İstanbul, İzmir, Ankara, etc.) do not rank among first 10 cities. Therefore, it is possible to suggest that populous areas are not necessarily the places where the most crime incidents occur.

When the rate of crime for every 100,000 people is analyzed, clear variations can be seen on the tables and maps that show the distribution of crime in urban areas. For example, the data from 1995, show that Kırşehir with 2,244 crime incidents and Kastamonu with 2,090 incidents rank at the top by a rational evaluation. Bolu with 1,526 incidents, Muğla with 1,152, Bartın with 1,046, Ankara with 1,028, Karaman with 1,008, Niğde with 998, Kocaeli with 975, Malatya with 916 and Aydın with 914 incidents follow these. As it is seen, big cities such as İstanbul and İzmir are not in the first 10 according to a rational evaluation. We see Konya at the bottom of the list with 71 crime incidents in this period. Kayseri, with 90 incidents and Şırnak with 115 incidents follow Konya, so the first three cities with the lowest rate of crime incidents are Konya, Kayseri and Şırnak. Then come Hakkari with 148 crime incidents, Mardin with 152, Çankırı with 170, Ağrı with 182, Van with 187, Şanlıurfa with 194 and Bitlis with 207 crime incidents (Fig. 1).

According to the data from 2000, when we analyze the rate of crime incidents for every 100,000 people city by city, we see that the place of two cities remain the same but the places of others display significant changes. For example, Kırşehir with 2,226 incidents rank first, Kastamonu with 2,183 incidents ranks second and Muğla with 1,189 comes third. Antalya rises to the fourth place with 1,179 crime incidents and Zonguldak with 1,062 incidents, Gaziantep with 955, Niğde with 927, Nevşehir with 898, Mersin with 880, Bartın with 860, and Uşak with 783 incidents follow Antalya. As this shows, Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir are not among the first ten cities by the crime rate in 2000. In this period, a striking rise appears in Gaziantep whereas there is a significant drop in Ankara (Fig. 2).

According to the data in 2000, on a rational basis, the city with the lowest crime rate was Tunceli with 86 crime incidents. Konya with 102 incidents and Kayseri with 110 follow Tunceli, so Konya and Kayseri keep their rankings in 2000. Erzincan with 160 incidents, Tekirdağ with 196 incidents, Kahramanmaraş with 214 incidents, Hakkari with 219, Karaman with 225, Şırnak with 267, Ordu with 278, Adıyaman with 286, Siirt with 290 incidents follow (Fig. 2).

When we analyze the distribution of the crime rate on a rational basis city by city, the distribution (the toning) on the thematic map is seen to have changed significantly.
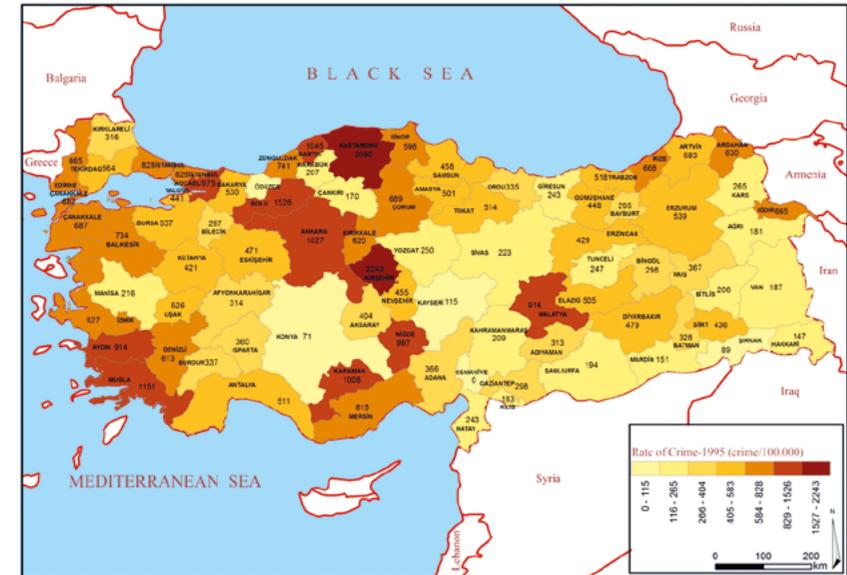

Fig. 1. Rate of crime per 100,000 citizens by provinces (1995)

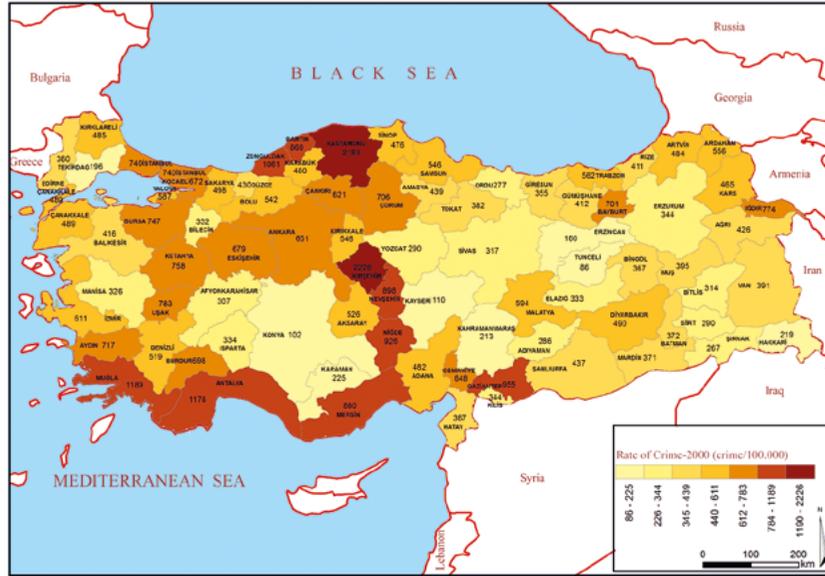*Source:* General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

Fig. 2. Rate of crime per 100,000 citizens according to provinces (2000)

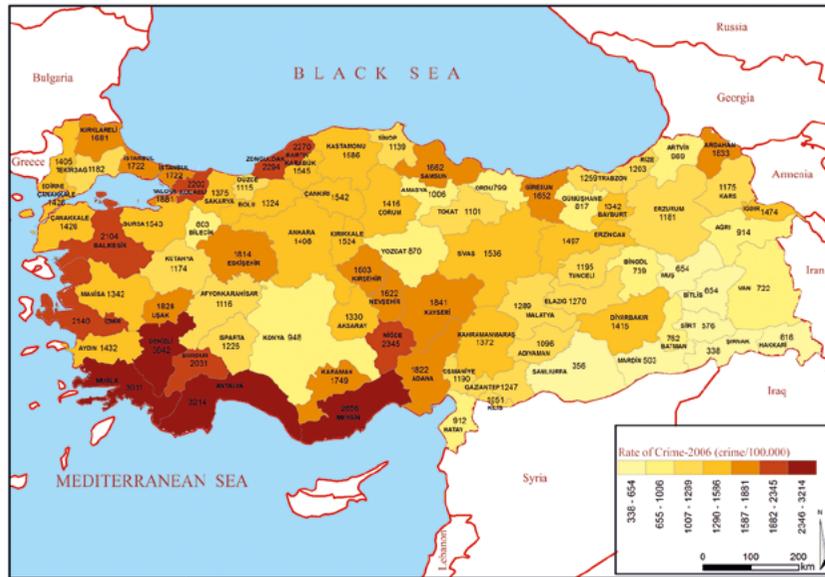*Source:* General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

Fig. 3. Rate of crime per 100,000 citizens by provinces (2006)

Source: General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

As seen on the map, the darkest toned areas which were in the Central Anatolia and the Blacksea Region previously have passed on to the southern coast, the Mediterranean region. Consequently, Antalya has the highest rate of crime with 3,214 crime incidents on a rational basis. Denizli with 3,042 incidents, Muğla with 3,012 and Mersin with 2,657 incidents follow Antalya. Then come Niğde with 2,345, Zonguldak with 2,294, Bartın with 2,271, Kocaeli with 2,202, İzmir with 2,140 and Balıkesir with 2,014 incidents (Fig. 3). The statistics of 2006 is important in that a significant rise is seen both in Izmir and Manisa. It is clear that on a rational basis, the number of crimes has risen in Southern and Southwestern regions in Turkey in 2006. In 2006, when we analyze the cities with the lowest crime rate on a rational basis, we see that the ranking of the cities changed significantly compared to the previous years. From the east to the west, Konya and Kayseri included, a striking rise in the crime rate can be seen. Naturally, as the number of crime incidents increased, the rate of crime on a rational basis increased too. For example, in Konya, the number of crime incidents rose to 948 in 2006 while it was only 71 in 1995, which is nearly a 15-fold rise.

In this period, the cities with the lowest number of crime incidents on a rational basis are Şırnak with 338 incidents, Şanlıurfa with 356, Mardin with 504, Siirt with 577, Hakkari with 616, Bitlis and Muş with 654, Van with 723, Ordu with 800, Bilecik with 803, Gümüşhane with 818, and Yozgat with 870 incidents (Fig. 3).

In 1995, 2000 and 2006 urban crime is seen to be high in certain cities. Muğla, Bartın and Niğde are some of these. According to the data in these years, even though the ranking of the cities with the highest crime rate changes, these cities keep their places in the first ten (Table 4). Muğla is among the first four in 1995, 2000 and 2006. Muğla, with its relatively large subprovinces, is a developing tourism city. The fact that Muğla is exposed to heavy emigration contributed to the high rate of crime in the city. However, this can not be the only factor because some other cities which have been exposed to similar emigration as Muğla has do not have crime rates as high as in Muğla. The reasons peculiar to Muğla and such Aydın, Nevşehir, İzmir cities must be analyzed. The high rate of crime may result from many factors such as alcohol consumption, the level of education, the traditional structure, the tendency to inform the security forces in case of a crime incident, etc. Therefore, to generalize about he reasons for the high rate of crime, without doing a detailed analysis, will not reflect correct figures and results.

According to the analyzed data belonging to the years 1995, 2000 and 2006, it is seen that urban crime rate is steadily low in certain cities. For example, Şırnak and Hakkari are among the first ten cities in 1995, 2000 and 2006. Other cities are in and out of the list from one period to another (Table 4).

Table 4. Provinces with the highest and lowest crime rates (crime/100,000)

A	B	A	C	A	D
The highest crime rates					
A	B	A	C	A	D
Kırşehir	2,244	Kırşehir	2,226	Antalya	3,214
Kastamonu	2,090	Kastamonu	2,183	Denizli	3,042
Bolu	1,526	Muğla	1,189	Muğla	3,012
Muğla	1,152	Antalya	1,179	Mersin	2,657
Bartın	1,046	Zonguldak	1,062	Niğde	2,345
Ankara	1,028	Gaziantep	955	Zonguldak	2,294
Karaman	1,008	Niğde	927	Bartın	2,271
Niğde	998	Nevşehir	898	Kocaeli	2,202
Kocaeli	975	Mersin	880	İzmir	2,140
Malatya	916	Bartın	860	Balıkesir	2,104
The lowest crime rates					
A	B	A	C	A	D
Konya	71	Tunceli	86	Şırnak	338
Şırnak	90	Konya	102	Şanlıurfa	356
Kayseri	115	Kayseri	110	Mardin	504
Hakkari	148	Erzincan	160	Siirt	577
Mardin	152	Tekirdağ	196	Hakkari	616
Çankırı	171	K.Maraş	214	Muş	654
Ağrı	182	Hakkari	219	Bitlis	654
Kilis	183	Karaman	225	Van	723
Van	187	Şırnak	267	Bingöl	740
Şanlıurfa	194	Ordu	278	Batman	763

Explanation: A – Provinces; B – Crime/100,000 (1995); C – Crime/100,000 (2000); D – Crime/100,000 (2006)

Source: General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

As it is seen, the rate of urban crime changes from one province to another when a detailed analysis is done, differences between the subprovinces of the same province, sometimes even differences from a quarter to another in the same town may strike the eye. It will be seen after a detailed and multidimensional study that there may be cultural, social, demographic, economic, psychological, and spatial causes behind this.

Crimes committed against property in Turkey

Under the title of crimes committed against property, various sorts of crime, from theft to damaging the property, are meant. In every period in Turkey, it is beyond dispute that crime against property has been higher than the crime against individuals. It is clear that the rate of crime against property has increased over the years. In 1995, while the figure was 96,344, it rose to 124,101 in 2000. In 2005, the figure was 289,765, then it rose to 463,834 in 2006, which is a 62.5 per cent increase (Table 1). Of the crime committed against property in 2004, 69.2 is theft, 2.6 is robbery, 13.6 is other crime and 14.6 is unclassified crime but in 2006 theft rose to 75.9, robbery dropped to 1.9, other crime was 16.3 per cent and unclassified crime was 5.9 per cent. Over the two years, there was a significant rise in theft.

When we study the distribution of the crime against property city by city, a concentration in big cities strikes the eye in terms of sheer number of crimes. For example, Istanbul, with 144,605 incidents, has the highest number of crime incidents against property. Izmir, with 48,804 incidents and Ankara with 38,834 incidents follow Istanbul. While Antalya, with 22,498, ranks fourth, Adana with 20,042 incidents ranks fifth. Bursa with 16,901 incidents, and Mersin with 14,489 incidents follow. The cities with the lowest number of crime against property are Gümüşhane with 121, Ardahan with 144, Bayburt with148, Tunceli with 188, Hakkari with 273 and Kilis with 296 crime incidents.

Previously, we saw that there were significant differences between the evaluations made on a rational basis and the one made on the basis of sheer number of crime incidents. Therefore, big cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir were not on the list of the first ten cities. However, when it comes to the crime committed against property, we see that these cities are on the list of first ten cities according to an evaluation based on a rational basis.

According to the data in 2006 by crime rate for every 100,000 people, Antalya ranks first, with 1995 crime incidents, Denizli with 1,843 incidents ranks second, Izmir with 1,537 incidents ranks third and Kocaeli ranks fourth with 1,419 incidents. Mersin with 1,391, Istanbul with 1,294, Muğla with 1,149, and Muğla, Adana, and Diyarbakır with close figures follow (Fig. 4).

As seen in Fig. 4 cities with the highest rate of crime committed against property are the ones located on the Mediterranean coast. These are the cities with a fast growing industrialization and urbanization. Then come the industrialized cities located in the Marmara region: Istanbul, Kocaeli, Bursa, etc. Likewise, in the central anatolia Ankara, Eskişehir and Kayseri are important industrial and governmental centers. The cities with the lowest rate of crime incident against property are Şanlıurfa with 128, Şırnak with 156, Mardin with 181, Gümüşhane with 199, Hakkari with 201, Bitlis with 225, Muş with 255, Bingöl with 263, and Bilecik with 265 crime incidents (Fig. 4). It is obvious that the cities in the southeastern Anatolia have the lowest rate of crime incidents against property.
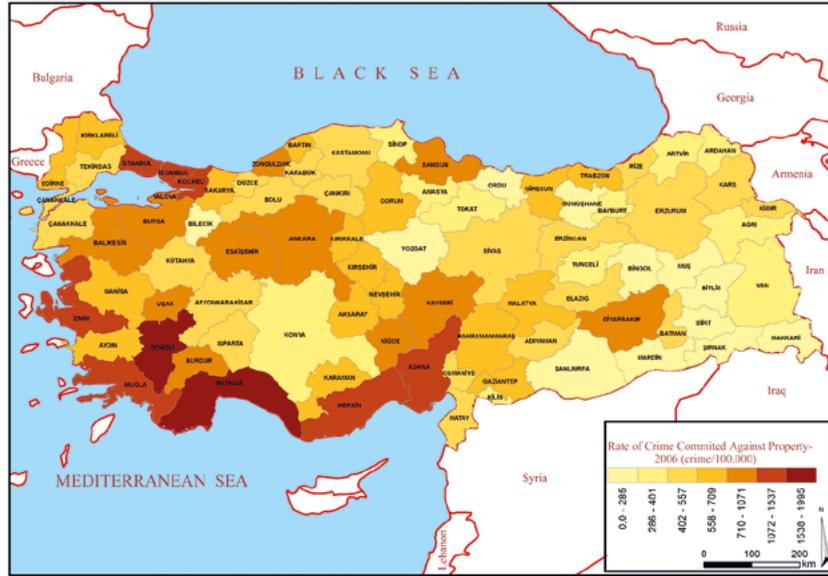
Fig. 4. Rate of crime per 100,000 citizens (against property – 2006)

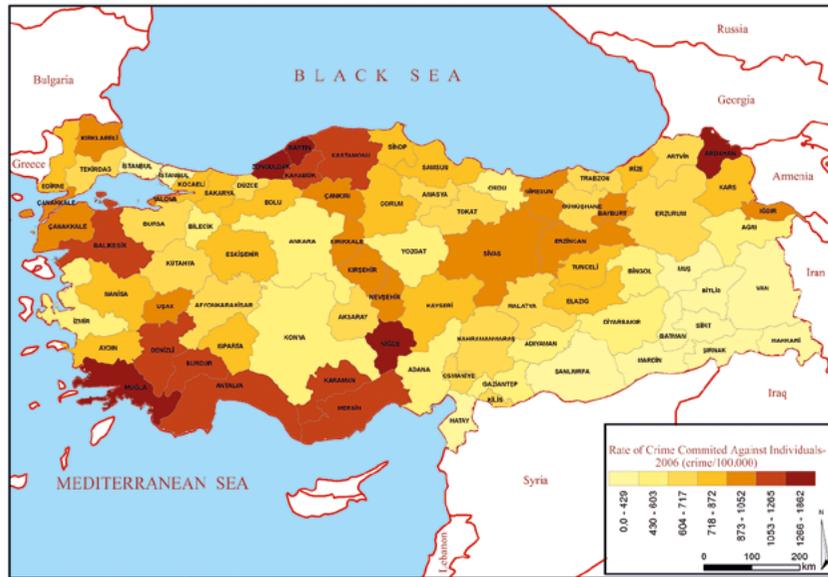*Source:* General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

Fig. 5. Rate of crime per 100,000 citizens (against individuals – 2006)

Source: General Directorate of Security (GDS), Ankara

Crime committed against individuals

Under the title crime committed against individuls, murder, injury, battery, robbery, rape, gambling, bribery, embezzlement, etc. can be cited. As it has been mentioned before in this study, the rate of crime against individuals is lower than the crime rate against property. When an analysis is done by the year, it is seen that the number of crime incidents committed against individuals were 133,169 in 1995 and it rose to 134,794 in 2000, and then it again rose to 197,996 in 2005. However, 2006 must be paid attention because the figure rose to 321,676, which is a considerable increase (Table 1).

In 2004, assault and battery accounts for 62.7 per cent of the crime incidents against individuals, crime against the state has a share of 4.9 per cent, other crime has a percentage of 15.3, unclassified crime accounts for 17.1 per cent. In 2006, assault and battery accounts for 62.5, crime against the state accounts for 3.6, other crime drops to 14.3 and unclassified crime rises to 19.6 per cent.

When we study the distribution of crime committed against individuals, İstanbul has the highest number of crime incidents. In 2006, 47,863 crime incidents were recorded by the Istanbul police. Ankara with 19,879, and Izmir with 19,150 incidents follow Istanbul. Antalya ranks fourth, Bursa with 13,664 incidents ranks fifth, Mersin with 13,373 ranks sixth and Adana comes after Mersin. Bursa, which ranks seventh in the crime against property, drops to the fifth place in crime against individuals. Bayburt with 355 incidents, Gümüşhane with 376 incidents, Tunceli with 462 incidents, Şırnak with 468 incidents and Siirt with 506 incidents have the lowest number of crime incidents against individuals.

There are significant differences between the map displaying the sheer number of crime incidents against individuals and the map displaying the crime rate for every 100,000 people. As in the evaluation of total number of crime incidents and of the number of crime incidents against property, the dark toned areas have changed on the map showing the number of crime incidents against individuals per 100,000 people. The Mediterranean and the Blacksea coast rank at the top. In crime incidents against individuals on a rational basis, Muğla with 1,863 incidents, ranks first. Bartın follows with 1,562 incidents. Then come Zonguldak with 1,524, Ardahan with 1,432, Niğde with 1,403 crime incidents (Fig. 5). These figures have a close resemblance with the general figures in Turkey.

In crime incidents committed against individuals per 100,000 people, the cities with the lowest rate of crime incidents are Şırnak, Şanlıurfa, Siirt, Batman, Mardin, Van, Muş, Hatay, Hakkari and Istanbul. Among the cities with the highest number of crime incidents against individuals, we cannot see big industrialized cities. On the contrary, those cities with a higher rural population appear on the upper section of the list.

The comparison of urban population rate
with urban crime rate

When we study the rate of urbanization in cities with the highest crime rate in order to see whether or not there is a relation between urbanization and crime rate, it is seen that in 1990, except for Ankara, Kocaeli and Malatya, Kırşehir, Kastamonu, Bolu, Muğla, Bartın, Karaman, and Niğde have higher rural populations compared to their urban populations. In 2000, Kırşehir, Antalya, Gaziantep, Mersin, which are among the first ten cities with the highest rate of crime incidents, have higher urban populations compared to their rural populations. Kastamonu, Muğla, Zongulda, Niğde, Nevşehir, and Bartın have higher rural populations. In 2007, while urban population is higher in Antalya, Denizli, Mersin, Kocaeli, Izmir, and Balıkesir, rural population is higher in Muğla, Niğde, Zonguldak and Bartın. As it is known, Turkey is in a fast urbanization process. As it has been mentioned above, the rural-urban population ratios of the cities in the first ten cities differs compared to the previous census figures. To give an example, while Kırşehir has a higher rural population in 1990, in 2000 we see that the urban population is higher. Kırşehir is worth paying attention in that it has the highest number of urban crimes for every 100,000 people both in 1990 and 2000. In 1990, cities with a higher rural population outnumber the others with a higher urban population. Whereas in 2006, cities with a higher urban population outnumber the ones with a higher rural population.

When we look at the rural-urban population ratios of the cities with the lowest crime incidents, it is seen that in almost every census, cities with a higher urban population outnumber those with a higher rural population. According to the data in 2007, except for Muş, all the other cities have a higher urban population. It is clear that both in the cities with the highest crime rate and the cities with the lowest crime rate, the urban population is higher compared to the rural population. Therefore, it is not possible to establish a relation between urbanization rate and crime rate.

CONCLUSION

The number of crime incidents change year by year in Turkey. Between 1995 and 2006, increases and decreases are seen in different periods; however, from 2002, the number of crime incidents have been rising steadily. Especially, in 2006, a big rise is seen, a 61.0 per cent rise compared to the previous year. According to the data in 1995, 2000 and 2006, the cities with the highest number of crime incidents are also the ones with the highest populations.

In Turkey, as the population rises, the rate of crime rises, too. However, the most crowded cities are not always the ones with the highest number of crime incidents. In certain large cities, the rational crime is lower compared to most cities. These cities do not even appear among the first ten cities with the highest crime rate.

In almost every period, crime incidents against property have been higher compared to crime incidents against individuals. Cities with the highest rate of crime against property are Antalya, Denizli, Izmir, Kocaeli, Mersin, Istanbul, Muğla, Adana and Diyarbakır. Some of these cities, most of which are located on the coast of Mediterranean and in the Marmara said to have dense populations. Generally, the rate of rural population is higher. They, except for Muğla, cannot be said to be exposed to heavy emigration, and to have much industry. Among these provinces, Muğla with its tourismwise developed subprovinces, Zonguldak with its coal mines and iron-steel manufacturing, Niğde, whose rate of urbanization steadily rises, and Bartın, which was granted the status of province a short time ago, can be said to have only one characteristic in common, which is the fact that they have higher rural populations. However, it is worth mentioning that these provinces have had the highest rate of crime for over 10 years. The provinces with the lowest rate of crime against individuals are mostly in the Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia. These are Bayburt, Gümüşhane, Tunceli, Şırnak, Siirt, Şanlıurfa, Mardin, Van, Hatay and Hakkari.

As mentioned above, it would not be correct to generalize on the concept of crime. The factors which affect crime rate in province differ in another. However, the followings are several generalizations on this subject:
– even though large cities have the highest number of crime incidents, when an evaluation is done on the basis of "crime rate for every 100,000 people" these cities rank lower;
– although there are some exceptions to this, the sheer number of crime incidents and the rate of crime for every 100,000 people tend to rise as one goes towards the west and the coastal areas, which more or less shows the spots which are exposed to emigration;
– while the incidence of crime against property is higher in industrialized provinces, in the crime incidents against individuals, small provinces seem to have higher rates;
– the provinces with the lowest crime rate are located in the eastern and southeastern Anatolia;
– in order to generalize on the regional distribution of crime, much more detailed studies must be carried out because even the habit of calling and informing the police in case of a crime incident may affect the number of recorded crime incidents. In some traditional, conservative communities people tend to cover crime incidents rather than to inform the police;

– low level of education, and even alcohol consumption may boost number of crime incidents. Likewise, degenerated socio-economic balances in an environment as a result of heavy emigration, can contribute to crime rate. More specific examples can be given;

– in spite of all the crime figures mentioned above, Turkey cannot be said to be a country of intense crime. According to the studies on crime: England, The Netherlands, Denmark, Ireland and Estonia are the countries with the highest crime rate in Europe. Therefore, Turkey both among the developed and developing countries is one of the safest.

To conclude, in order to obtain correct results and figures, cultural, demographic, social and economic parameters for each single province and subprovince must be taken into consideration. The correct data obtained and thus the correct analysis will help to take the right steps in the prevention of crime, which will be effective in lowering crime rate.

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