Talking Points

General Introduction: Messages

- Any Personal Comments:
- Thanks to our partners in Turkey for their support in preparing for this workshop: Treasury, Ministry of Development, Ministry of Urbanization and Environment, and Iller Bank
- Thanks to our co-organizers: TEPAV
- Thanks to our colleagues from the World Bank’s Urbanization Knowledge Platform: Abha Joshi-Ghani (Sector Manager, Urban Anchor); Professor Ed Glaeser (World Bank Fellow), Korean Institute for Human Settlements

Turkey’s Demographic Transformation

- Over the past five decades, Turkey has dramatically transformed itself from a rural agrarian economy into a globally competitive industrial economy.
- This economic transformation could not have happened without urbanization
- What is remarkable about Turkey’s urbanization is not only the size but the pace
- In 1950, Turkey’s urban population comprised only 25% of the country’s total population. Today, 70% of Turkey’s population resides in urban areas.
- For three decades peaking in the 1980s, Turkey sustained an exceptional urban growth rate averaging 4%. Much of this urbanization occurred in the Marmara region and Turkey’s western coastal areas.
- Today, national urbanization growth has tapered off but Turkey still remains one of the fastest urbanizing country in the region.
- Moreover, Turkey’s urbanization today has shifted to secondary cities – what some call the “Anatolian Tigers” – bringing new challenges and opportunities to these cities.

With rapid urbanization come critical challenges
• Turkey has the highest increase in GHG emissions from 1990 to 2010 in the buildings and solid waste management sector (UNFCC) of any country in ECA and Europe more generally.
• In 2009, 72% of the residents of Istanbul considered that good housing is hard to find (EUROSTAT). In Ankara it was 56%.
• While urban water and sewage network connections are relatively good at 98% and 86% respectively, less than 50% of supplied network water is subject to treatment.
• Turkey experiences significant congestion costs arising from rapid urbanization and rising motorization rates (rising from 15 vehicles per 1,000 people in 1980 to 190 vehicles per 1,000 people in 2010), despite having the highest automobile fuel prices in the world.
• The 2012 Doing Business Report ranks Turkey 155 of 183 countries in terms of ease of obtaining housing permits: Land and housing markets are unable to generate affordable housing, resulting in informal settlements in precarious and risk-prone areas.

A paradigm shift in thinking about urbanization

• When considered in isolation, urbanization can and has been viewed in many countries as a problem – too many people, insufficient housing, congested streets. In the past, policy makers in some countries have tried – usually in vain – to stop migration to cities, rather than taking proactive measures to prepare for it.
• But global thinking is changing – there is a growing recognition that urbanization can bring enormous economic benefits to a country, and the challenges created by urbanization can be addressed through a focus on long-term sustainability.
• Professor Glaeser, who joins us today, has helped to create this global paradigm shift in the approach to urbanization – stressing the important contribution of urbanization to developing thick production and consumption markets that can drive a city – and national – economy.
• Turkey has already made steps along this path, with the development of its National Urban Development Strategy (KENTGES) last year. KENTGES
provides a vision for Turkish cities to become safe, livable, dynamic engines of growth based on sound economic, social and environmental policies:

- Other countries also provide interesting experience and lessons. Korea, for example, has accomplished rapid urbanization and economic growth in record-breaking speed. In 1920, less than 5% of Koreans lived in urban areas; by 2005, 95% were urban residents. Per capita income rose from $100 in 1964 to over $20,000 in 2010.

- This transformation could only have been achieved through the Korean Government’s concerted efforts at strategic planning linked to key policies and aligned with investments, all of which embrace the notion of promoting long-term sustainability.

- The World Bank is a strong supporter of global dialogue and knowledge sharing on sustainable urban development through its recently established Global Urbanization Knowledge Platform. Recognizing the importance of and interest in this topic in Turkey, the Urban Knowledge Platform has provided us with the opportunity to come together today to debate these important topics with leading global thinkers such as Professor Glaeser and representatives from Korea. I would like to thank Abha Joshi-Ghani, the Bank’s Urban Sector Manager for her support to bring the event to fruition.

What do we want to achieve today?

- In the development of the World Bank’s new Country Partnership Strategy with the Government of Turkey that will define our collaboration with Turkey for the upcoming four years, we have agreed to establish a partnership on Sustainable Cities.

- We see this important partnership as being a two-way interaction – Turkey has expressed interest in accessing relevant global knowledge – such as the experience of Korea that we will hear about today – as it moves forward in addressing urbanization challenges and establishing a path towards improved livability and sustainability.

- At the same time, many other countries look to Turkey to understand your experiences. We hope that our cooperation with you will provide opportunities for your rich experience to also be shared with other countries.
The workshop today represents the first major event under our new Sustainable Cities Partnership. Leading up to this event, we have carried out some pilot activities, for example with Iller Bank and the City of Gaziantep.

But today we hope to move forward with our partnership in a substantive way. We are therefore pleased to be joined by Turkish policy makers, academics and other interested citizens to discuss and debate Turkey’s urbanization challenges and strategic directions.

The objectives of this workshop are three-fold:
- First, we would like to listen and learn about Turkey’s urbanization experience and your corresponding strategic approaches
- Second, we hope to share international knowledge and experience that may be relevant to Turkey policy makers, and
- Third, in the afternoon session we hope to discuss specific topics of interest where we can support your policy analysis work toward effective implementation of KENTGES and to agree a program of action for our partnership