REGISTRY AND CADASTRE UNDER ONE ROOF

Turkish Cadastral Organisation

Most countries have a land recording system consisting of cadastre and land registration, the former in the hands of surveyors, the latter notaries and lawyers. In many countries this subdivision has resulted in two organisations dealing with the same matter, leading to problems of co-ordination and reducing effectiveness. Cross-control may eliminate errors but also creates the danger of inconsistencies; information might be stored redundantly, while two authorities, each charging their own fees, continue to function disjointedly. In describing the Turkish Cadastral Organisation the authors show the benefits of â€˜one organisational roofâ€™.<P>

The situation in developing countries and in the majority of transitional central eastern European countries is very different from that in developed countries where cadastre and land registry function well and there is security of tenure. This thanks to modern technology, although organisational structure may differ significantly from one country to another. Yet, although the need is great, some countries have still to begin establishing a modern, effective, legal and institutional framework, while in others the land administration sector has to be re-established and restructured to become fully operational and modernised.

Land and History
The 67.8 million people of Turkey live on 780,000 square kilometres of land, of which 40,000 is urban. Ninety-one per cent of the area is cadastred and the rest will be so by mid-2008. Registration of transactions is compulsory. An ID links parcels, the basic units, to the land-registry books that catalogue area, type and owner, and rights and liabilities such as servitude and mortgage. The Turkish cadastral organisation was established on 21st May 1847 under the title ‘Secretariat of Defterhane-i Amire’, mainly for tax-collecting purposes. Registration of rights became prevalent after the acclamation of the Republic in 1923, which resulted in 1924 in the ‘The General Directorate of Land Registry’ (GDLR) to which a Cadastre was annexed in April 1925. In 1926 a Civil Code was enacted proclaiming that a land-registry system should be built based on an official, surveyed plan. For this purpose the ‘General Directorate of Land Registry and Cadastre’ (GDLRC) was constituted in 1936, its main duty being to run land registries and cadastre. Its service departments were Juridical Works, Technical Works, Land Registration Works, Cadastral Works, Photogrammetric and Geodetic Works, Archive of Land Registry, and Foreign Works. Crucial tasks in this respect are policy development and creating new units to maintain, monitor, supervise and protect them. The GDLRC also provides renovation facilities for old cadastral sheets, develops the national geodetic reference system, defines standards for employee knowledge and skills, and controls mapping affairs for the general national archive. Operational tasks are carried out countrywide by twenty-two District Directorates Land Registry and Cadastre (DDLRC) offices.

Organisational Structure
The three organisational levels, national, district and local, are depicted in Figure 2. The District Directorates aim at making cadastral services fast, economical and effective. They also co-ordinate and supervise the local directorates. Other tasks that fall to them are district-level organisation of casastral foundation and renovation works, archiving documents, preparing statistics, meeting resources and supervising the quality of the work by personnel. Local land registry and cadastre directorate offices are separate but usually located nearby or in the same buildings, guaranteeing tight co-ordination and thus consistency in records. There is a land-registry office, 1,004 in total, in each city and county, and if necessary one in other settlements too. Officials prepare contracts, carry out registration, keep all documents and registry books and submit these on request. There are 325 Directorates of Cadastre with about 5,400 employees, of whom six hundred are survey engineers and 2,800 technicians. In counties without a directorate sub-offices are created, to date totalling 133. The directorates maintain the cadastre for the whole country, archive documents, renovate old cadastral sheets, and control and approve applications such as land readjustment and subdivision that need registration on cadastral maps. They also build up and maintain the geodetic reference system, preserve tools, equipment and finance, and organise and manage any sub-offices.

Cost Recovery
Close relations between land registry and cadastre avoids inconsistency, duplication or other problems. This is a very important feature, absent in many other countries. While land registration generally brings profit, the cadastre consumes money, especially at the start, and their residing under different ministries could burden the cadastre financially. Since all land-registry and cadastre work is sustained under ‘one organisational roof’ in Turkey, overall cost recovery is possible. This avoids lack of money. It has been internationally agreed in principle that separate maps and registers should be abolished and this is exactly what is implied by integration of cadastre and legal registry. The great advantage of the common digital platform in Turkey is that it enforces seamless integration.

Concluding Remarks
New needs and continually changing technology and institutional environments force land-administration institutions and infrastructure to evolve and so enforce good governance.

Further Reading
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