

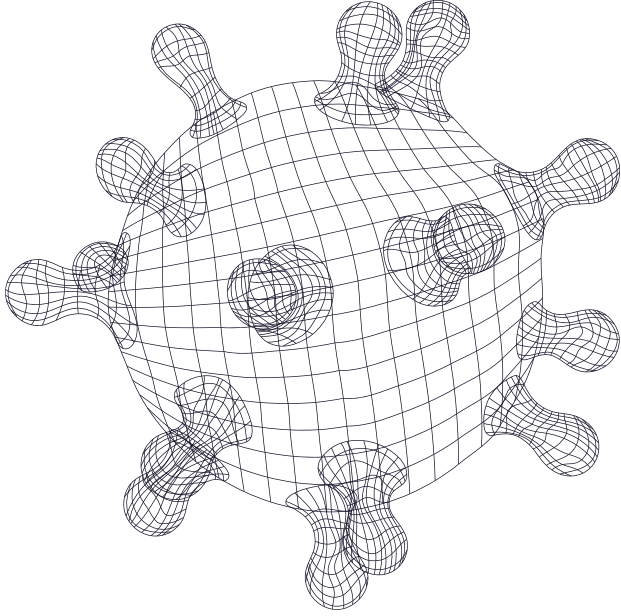


THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND STATE TERRITORIAL REPRESENTATIVES IN TURKEY

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INTRODUCTION



The coronavirus (Covid-19) epidemic is carefully monitored in Turkey. Crisis management was carried out against the pandemic within the Presidential Government System, which had come into effect in Turkey in 2018. The decisions for measures were taken by the executive power represented by the President of the Republic of Turkey in the central administration. In this process, while the Ministry of Health was overseeing the preparation of health infrastructure, monitoring of the cases, suggestion of measures to be taken; the Ministry of Interior came to the fore in regard to making public announcements and implementing the measures in the context of protecting public order. In the process managed by the President, the Ministry of Treasury and Finance took roles in the announcement of economic support packages, while the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Security in the provision of social assistance, and the Ministry of Education in ensuring the continuation of education remotely in an e-environment. Other ministries also supported the pandemic combat process in relation to their respective areas of responsibility. Legislative power fulfilled its responsibilities in the enactment of laws related to the pandemic, as so the judiciary in matters such as the postponement of non-urgent trials.

INTRODUCTION

Administration of territory in Turkey is based on a provincial (territorial) administration system. This system represents the strong side of public administration against the pandemic. In this context, the measures taken by the central government were implemented and monitored throughout the country under the coordination of provincial authorities.

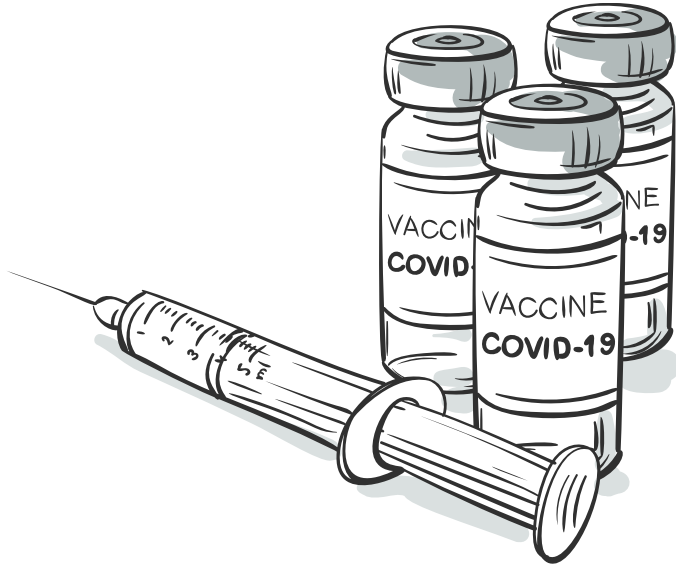
In the provincial administration system, governors and district governors act as the representatives of the central government in 81 provinces and 922 districts and are responsible for the crisis management of disasters and emergency situations. Provincial and district governors serve as the head of the provincial and district administration. State territorial representatives undertake the functions of implementing, coordinating and supervising measures in the fight against widespread epidemics.



EFFECTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN FOUR COUNTRIES IN EUROPE (Source:Worldometers, 2021)

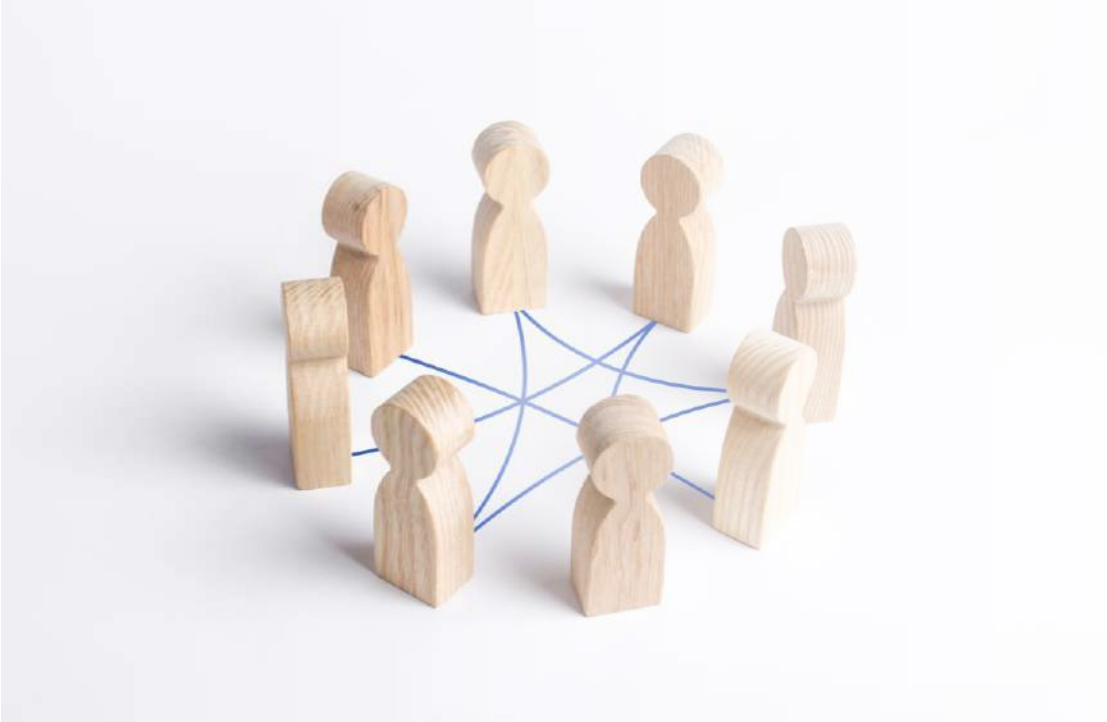
Country	Population	Total Cases	Total Deaths	Total Recovered
Turkey	85,474,133	7,210,916	64,467	6,664,242
France	65,454,360	7,023,315	116,789	6,788,282
İtaly	60,350,463	4,679,667	130,998	4,455,320
Germany	84,119,346	4,255,529	94,289	4,018,500

EFFECTS OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC



The effects of Covid-19 seen in four countries in Europe are given in Table. In terms of population, Turkey and Germany are over 80,000,000. Italy and France are over 60,000,000. However, in terms of the total number of cases, Turkey and France are around 7 million, while Germany and Italy are around 4 million. In terms of population, the number of cases in Germany is considerably less than in Turkey. The number of cases in France is considerably higher than in Italy. It is seen that the lowest number of deaths among the four countries is in Turkey. It is noteworthy that Turkey comes after France in terms of the number of recovered patients. In terms of its main lines, it can be stated that Turkey gave a good test against the Covid-19 pandemic.

COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION



With the transition to Presidential Government System in Turkey in 2018, executive power was vested in Presidential mandate. Thus, the ministries, policy-making boards and other institutions created were envisaged to work effectively under the coordination of the President.

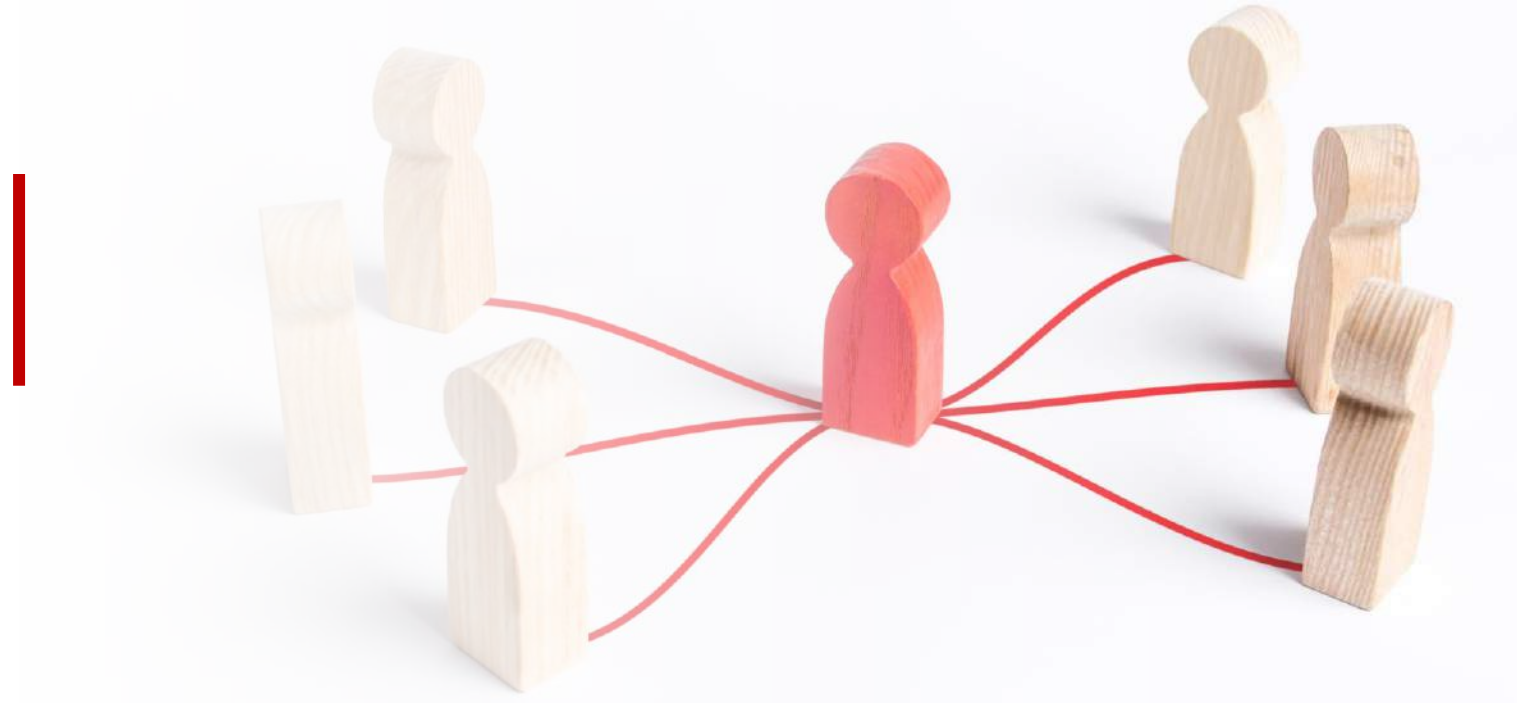
In fighting against the pandemic, measures were rapidly put in place in line with the recommendations of the Ministry of Health, the related Scientific Advisory Board and the instructions of the President. The implementation of measures related to public order and security was generally conducted by the Ministry of Interior. Thus, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior were the main actors in the process of fighting against the pandemic. In addition, other ministries supported the process in matters related to their field of duty.

MOTORIZED TEAMS (NGO'S)



COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

To manage the risks Covid-19 poses to public health, to reduce social mobility and encourage social isolation, several measures taken and put into practice by ministries, governorships, public institutions and organisations. However, the central level coordination by the Presidency and the governors and district governors in the provinces was of strategic importance in the effective execution of these measures.



COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS

Circulars and instructions published by the central administration are put into practice under the leadership of the governors in the province within the scope of the nation's fight against the pandemic. In this regard, the provincial general sanitary board, the provincial administrative board and the provincial pandemic coordination board, which are under the chairmanship of the governor, take decisions within the framework of the central government and implement them at the provincial level.

In this context, the “public support organisation” was established in provinces and kept operational in order to meet the needs and demands of those age groups (0-20 years old and those over the age of 65 or who have chronic illness) for which curfews were applied, as well as controlling of the curfews by law enforcement forces are planned and implemented by the governorships in the province. The control of travel bans and the issuance of travel permit documents are coordinated by the governorships. Travels, working and living conditions of seasonal agricultural workers are kept under surveillance of the governorships.

FILIATION ACTIVITY



COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS

Health care institutions and front-line health care professionals in the provinces are working under the supervision and control of the governor. Governors are also involved in the provision of solutions for problems faced by health care personnel.

District governors also performed similar tasks in their districts to the services provided by the governors in the fight against the coronavirus.

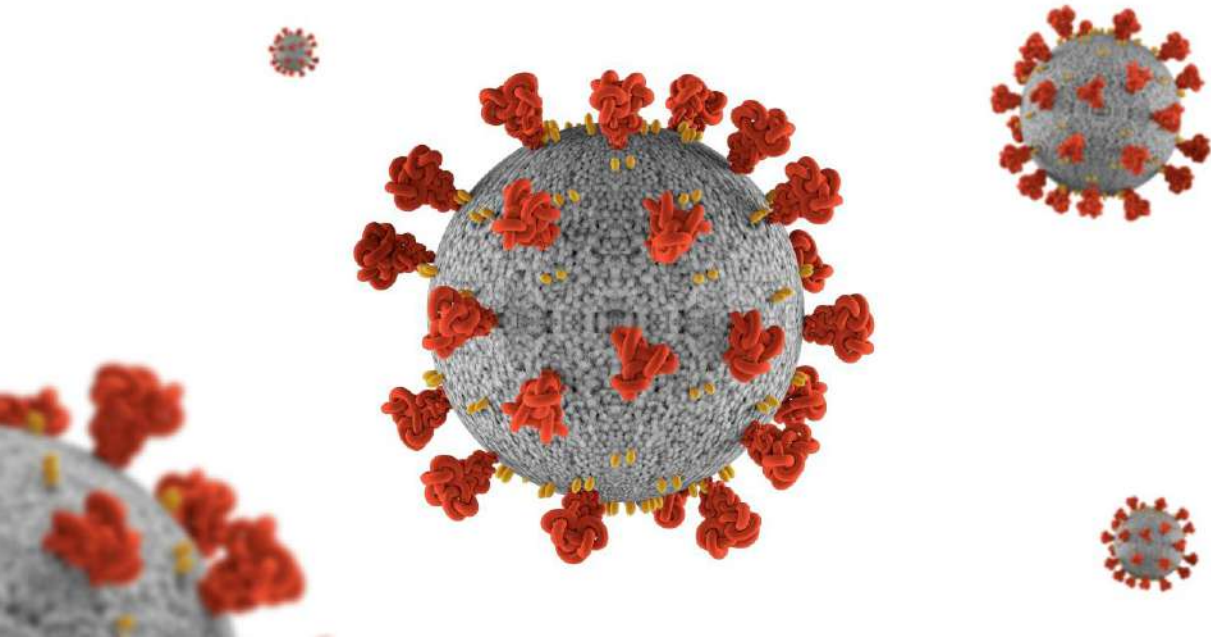
Taking and implementing decisions regarding the implementation of circulars and instructions from the central government and governorship, such as the practices in the province, are undertaken under the duties and responsibilities of the district governors. In this regard, the authorised district sanitary board and district administrative boards meet under the chairmanship of the district governor.



FOOD PACKAGE DISTRIBUTION



COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS



Governors in provinces and districts executes the fight against the pandemic as the only public servants providing cooperation and coordination with the central administrative organisation in the province and district (for example, provincial and district health directorates work under the governor and district governor), local administrations, non-governmental organisations and the private sector. Provincial governors also delegate certain duties and responsibilities in this matter to the elected village and neighbourhood mukhtars.

Quarantine measures are applied in the districts across Turkey, in which the numbers of cases are high. If the provincial and district sanitation boards are deemed necessary, a decision of quarantine conditions can be taken covering the district centres or districts, considering the numbers of cases and those in their contact.

BREAD DISTRIBUTION AT THE CLOSED WEEKENDS



COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS

Coordination for meeting the basic needs of people living in quarantined areas is also undertaken by the provincial governors. Passengers coming from abroad were also subject to quarantine measures.

Call centres and hotline numbers were allocated to pandemic related matters in order to effectively meet the basic needs, demands and requests of the people living in quarantined places and the age groups under restriction where the curfews were imposed.

In addition, planning and control of travels in accordance with social distancing and hygiene rules were also under the responsibility of governors and district governors.



COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS



Social aid to be provided in the scope of measures for fighting against the pandemic were provided to eligible citizens by the Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations established in provinces and districts, in which mayors are also members, and chaired by the provincial governors.

During the pandemic, a total state mobilization was carried out in the provinces and districts under the coordination of the provincial governors. Provincial organisations of the central administration managed and guided the activities in cooperation with the local administrations (municipalities, special provincial administrations and villages), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector with the support of the public.

PANDEMIC CONTROL TEAMS



COORDINATION AND COOPERATION IN PROVINCES AND DISTRICTS

- During the Covid-19 pandemic process, a total of 281 circulars and instructions were sent to 81 provincial governorships and related institutions by the Ministry of Interior until October 2021.
- From May 30, 2020 until August 15, 2021, 97,676 people were isolated and hosted in dormitories and hostels.
- Regarding the pandemic measures, 85,317,239 inspection activities were carried out across the country from August 22, 2020 until October 01, 2021. At the same time, 53,291,123 inspection activities were carried out for the persons subjected to isolation.
- In the process of travel restrictions, travel permits were issued to 9,325,021 people.



CONCLUSION

- From the moment of the first case of Covid-19 was seen in Turkey, pandemic related measures were taken by both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Interior, in accordance with the recommendations of Ministry of Health and Scientific Advisory Board and the instructions of President.
- Many precautionary decisions were taken and implemented by the Ministry of Interior in order to manage the risk of the epidemic and conditions of contamination in terms of public health and public order, to ensure social isolation, to maintain social distance and to control the speed of its spread. Implementation, coordination and supervision of the measures taken by the central administration, is carried out by the boards under the chairmanship of the province and district governors.
- In Turkey, province governors and district governors are considered to be the most powerful elements of the administrative system, especially in terms of managing crises, disasters and emergencies. During the global coronavirus pandemic, the decisions taken by the central administration were effectively implemented through the provincial governors with the board decisions taken at the provincial and district levels. In this scope, it was observed that provincial governors were fully committed to fulfilling their safeguard functions in these extraordinary situations.
- Likewise, health care professionals in health care institutions, gendarmerie, police, coast guard personnel in law enforcement forces, affiliated institutions such as The Disaster and Emergency Management Agency, The Coordination Centre for Security and Emergency Situations and 112 (State emergency hotline) personnel working in the emergency call centres and all the personnel working in the provincial level of the central administration in emergency management performed their duties under the coordination and management of the provincial governors. NGOs were also instrumental in supporting the work conducted to manage the pandemic.



THANK YOU