



INNOVATIONS FOR
SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES



Stroller audit with deputy mayor. Photo by Cihan Ozdamar

Bridging a Divide in Istanbul

By the mid-2010s, Istanbul, the biggest city in Turkey, had developed a reputation as a bustling concrete jungle notoriously unfriendly to the 1.2 million children aged four years and younger who lived there. As part of a decade-long construction boom, multistory skyscrapers increasingly replaced green spaces and parks throughout the city. But such insufficient consideration for the developmental needs of young children was not confined to the design of public and urban spaces: in many Istanbul homes, parents worked hard to put food on the table and had little time to consider how to give their young children the best possible start in life. In February 2016, a coalition of policy research organizations and private enterprises launched an ambitious effort to persuade officials in Istanbul's 39 districts to begin taking the needs of low-income families with young children seriously. The group drew on help from a network of prominent Turkish universities and partnered with four district municipalities that agreed to join a program called Istanbul95. The group created a digital-mapping tool to help locate vulnerable children, conducted regular home visits to support hundreds of families, and designed new prototypes for child-friendly public spaces. This effort to embed principles of early childhood development into the work of Turkish local governments passed a milestone when, in 2019, the major metropolitan area governments of Istanbul and İzmir also agreed to join, a key step toward reaching many more children. This case study and the rest of [this series](#) offer lessons for cities that want to build back better.

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Improving Presidential Transitions

A few years ago, ISS profiled how a number of countries were trying to improve presidential handovers in order to ensure continuity in basic services and adequate preparation for emergencies. With many eyes now focused

on the United States, here is a glimpse of several other experiences, including **Ghana, Chile, Mexico**, and **Indonesia**.

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