

Of the 6,600 school systems in metropolitan areas, however, 26 percent enroll fewer than 300 pupils and 14 percent are nonoperating. Thus, many small and inefficient school districts remain in metropolitan areas.

The significance of these trends is that local government in metropolitan areas is unbelievably complex and becoming more so. The typical metropolitan resident is a citizen of several overlapping governments which adopt and enforce laws, regulate activities, and provide services. Lines of responsibility for the public business are unclear, and coordination is difficult.

TAX RESOURCES AND GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

The concentration of wealth in metropolitan areas has already been noted, but it does not necessarily imply a situation of affluence for local governments within these areas. A basic question concerns the extent to which the economic resources of metropolitan areas are available to local units of government. A further question concerns differences in tax resources within metropolitan areas: Does the fine-grained division of metropolitan areas into many social and economic groupings and many small units of government result in a pattern of rich governments and impoverished governments side by side?

In the aggregate, governments in metropolitan areas appear relatively well to do in terms of the revenues they obtain, but the extent of variation within metropolitan areas is difficult to determine. Studies of metropolitan finance have rarely been based on comprehensive surveys of metropolitan areas and, until the 1957 Census of Governments, comparative analyses were not possible. In addition to the unavailability of data, the complex network of fiscal interrelationships of Federal, State, and local governments, the interrelationships among local governments themselves, and the nature of governmental reviews make analysis extremely hazardous.

EMPLOYMENT

Employment is a useful measure of the resources allocated to various local government functions. The Census of Governments reports this information for governments within and outside metropolitan areas but unfortunately does not provide a central city-suburban breakdown.

In relation to population, local governments within metropolitan areas hire more employees than local governments elsewhere for numerous functions, including police and fire protection, sewerage and other sanitation, parks, libraries, and various other public services. Nevertheless, there are some important offsetting tendencies, especially in local government employment for education. In October 1962, local government employment for education averaged only 119.5 persons per 10,000 population within SMSA's, as compared with 137.2 persons per 10,000 population outside such areas. A similar tendency holds true for highways (11.3 persons per 10,000 population in SMSA's, but 19.4 per 10,000 elsewhere), and for such functions as natural resources, financial administration, and general control. As a net result of these divergent tendencies, average local government employment for all functions was only slightly higher