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Regional Development Agencies in Turkey

Baris Alan

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Abstract

This research examines to what extent (Neoliberal institutional structure of) the regional development agencies were successful in decreasing the regional development disparities between the regions of Turkey.

Neoliberal agenda to solve the Welfare-state crisis

- ❖ Privatization of public initiatives
- ❖ Deregulation of the laws organizing the market
- ❖ Decentralization of decision making to regional organizations, the private sector and civil society



The Figure 1: Founders of Neoliberalism

The New Public Management Model

- ❖ Regional-level projects instead of national-level plans
- ❖ Bottom-up initiatives instead of top-down policies
- ❖ Cooperation between the public sector, private sector and civil society
- ❖ Horizontal organizational structures instead of vertical structures
- ❖ Regional Development Agencies to organize the development experience of the region

The Characteristics of the Pre-RDAs Development Notion

- ❖ The inheritance of uneven development from the Ottoman Empire
- ❖ 1923 - 1950 Statist Policies : Rhetoric of even development
- ❖ 1950 - 1960 Liberal Period: No long term planning
- ❖ 1960 – Today: Planned Economy + State Planning Organization + Emphasis on Rapid Industrialization
- ❖ Top-down + Hierarchical
- ❖ National development goal + Minimal regional contribution
- ❖ Low level of success in decreasing the regional disparities in development



The Figure 2: Hierarchical Structures

The Reform of Regional Development Agencies in Turkey in 2002

- ❖ To develop the cooperation between the public sector, private sector and civil society
- ❖ To make the use of resources in an effective and efficient way
- ❖ To further regional development in coordination with national policies by mobilizing the regional potentials
- ❖ **Eventually to decrease the uneven development among the regions and within the regions**

The Performance of RDAs

- ❖ The Research on Socio-Economic Development of Provinces and Regions (2003 – 2011)
- ❖ The Variables : Demographic, Employment, Education, Health, Infrastructure, Production Industry Construction, Agriculture, Tourism, Financial Variables

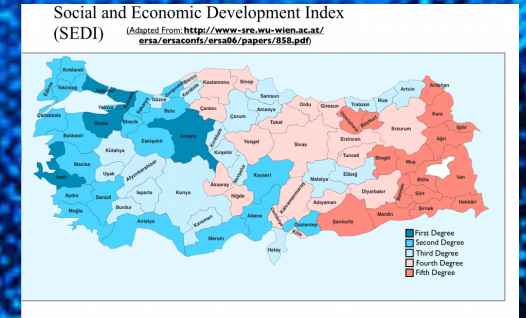
Ranking	SEGE - 2003	SEGE - 2011
1	Istanbul	Istanbul
2	Ankara	Ankara
3	Izmir	Izmir
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24	Mardin	Mardin
25	Ağrı	Kars (Ağrı)
26	Van	Van

Reasons for Failure (Turkey)

- ❖ Highly Centralized Bureaucracy
 - Limited autonomous principles
 - Minimum regional inputs
 - State Planning Org as upper body
 - Top-down mentality continues
- ❖ The terrorism in Eastern and Southeastern Turkey
- ❖ State selectivity problem
 - State invests in certain super-stars: Istanbul, Izmir, Antalya etc.

Reasons for Failure (Theory)

- ❖ One single development path for all countries
 - Each country has specific characteristics
- ❖ Further intensification of unevenness with sub-national units
 - Hakkari vs Munich instead
- ❖ Principle of Capital Flies: To cheap labor + To the market places + To resources



The Figure 3 Development Map of Turkey

Solutions to Uneven Development

- ❖ Favoring regional actors vs national-international actors
- ❖ Principle of "autonomous" agencies
- ❖ More voice to civil society

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