ABSTRACT

Increasing differences of development between the regions in Turkey cause some problems such as urbanization without planning, migration and uneducated people. In recent years, Turkey has given up the regional development plans which aimed to decrease the problems and provide equilibrium. However, Turkey entered into a new system which is called Regional Development Agency. Each regional economy is seen the part of the overall economy. The administrators of the regional agencies should desire to have a strong regional and national economy and the welfare of the society and intensively work in creating policies to overcome the economic and cultural imbalances between the regions of the country. In this mean, The Regional Development Agencies identify sectoral, regional and overall development problems, chooses a range of opportunities for their solution and promotes projects which can maximize the solution to the problems.

In this paper, The Regional Development Agencies are studied as a development model both in the world and Turkey. In the first part, the importance of development agencies, in the second part some examples from the world are examined. In the last part, BEBKA Development Agency has been studied as an example in Turkey.

Key words: Development, Development Agency, Region
INTRODUCTION

The concept of regional development was first used in the literature on economics during the Second World War. In the pre-war period, however, there were developments signaling the emergence of the concept, especially following the “Great Depression” of 1929 (Güner, 2007: 1). Some countries experienced rapid growth and industrialization in the post-war period, whereas others lagged behind. As a result, countries came to be classified as developed and underdeveloped.

Underdeveloped countries, which comprise three fourths of the world’s population, face the important problem of development. Despite the many efforts to tackle this problem in the last fifty years, huge welfare differences exist between these countries and industrialized countries, the populations of these countries still suffer from poor nutrition and poor access to health and education services, and unemployment and poverty are rampant (Şenses, 2004: 1). All of these problems are connected to a lack of development in these regions.

Like in many other issues, discussions on development are increasingly included in the discourse of globalization (Şenses, 2004: 1). The field of public administration has undergone significant changes in Turkey and in the world in terms of both methods and practices. The most important reason for these changes was the phenomenon of globalization observed in many fields from economy to politics to culture. Globalization brings a new administrative approach and a new model of organization with it. This new approach is called “governance” in the international literature. Governance refers to financially and administratively autonomous entities consisting of the bureaucracy and private sector and civil society organizations. One of the instruments of governance is the Regional Development Agencies, which were developed as a global model for regionalization (Maç, 2006: 1).

Significant changes and developments have been observed in recent times in the conceptualization of regional development and in the strategies for the implementation of regional policies. These changes started with the theoretical foundations of regional development and new factors that explain the development aspect of change; and continued with developments in the fields of aims, goals, and activities (Arslan, 2010:1). As a result, Development Agencies that are autonomous or semi-autonomous of the central government were founded, and began to provide social and economic development incentives in their respective regions.

1. DEVELOPMENT

Development does not consist only of growth in production and per capita income, but also refers to altering and improving socio-economic and cultural structures. Thus, the
theory of development is very much concerned with social, economic, political and psychological factors as well as with economic factors (Güner, 2007: 10).

The concept of development can be defined in different ways by different segments of society, which is only natural. Development is also defined in different ways by historians, sociologists, economists and politicians. For example, there are huge differences between the way Marx explains dynamics of social change, and the way Milner explains them. “Marx explains development with reference to the changes in historical conditions, whereas Milner considers development as an activity of the government currently in power.” (Yavilioğlu, 2002).

The concept of development refers to a process that spans centuries of history. Industrial Revolution and the significant changes brought about by this revolution played an important role in this historical process, which is roughly identical with capitalist development (Günsoy, 1997: 67). The Industrial Revolution changed the fates of states and large masses of people. The countries that were the first to undergo the revolution experienced huge improvements within a very short period of time. Within about two hundred years, the countries that underwent the revolution rapidly developed, whereas countries that failed to catch up with the industrial revolution came to be colonized by the former as a result of the commercial relationships between the two, and all countries in the world were sharply divided into developed and developing categories (Dinler, 1998:110-111).

1.1. The Concept of Region and Regional Development

The word region is etymologically derived from the Latin word “regio: surroundings, area”, and was assigned different meanings in different historical periods. Any definition of region would have to include some economic, cultural, ethnic, administrative or geographical elements (Apalı, 2009: 5). A region can be defined as a homogeneous place in terms of social and cultural characteristics, and units that are functionally integrated can also be referred to as regions (Koyuncu, 2006: 4).

Turkey is divided into seven regions on the basis of criteria such as climate, physical structure and topography. These regions are Marmara, Black Sea, Aegean, Central Anatolia, Eastern Anatolia, Mediterranean, and Southeastern Anatolia (Çalt, 2010). Regions defined by other criteria include underdeveloped regions, declining regions, problematic industrial regions, regions under the pressure of growth, emergency response regions, risk regions, sensitive regions and special-status regions (Çalt, 2010).

A different meaning has been assigned to the concept of region in recent years as a result of rapid technological developments and globalization. Conventionally, region referred to units that consisted of spatially integrated local units next to one another, that were under the control of the nation-state and that had fixed boundaries. In the global approach, on
the other hand, a “region” is a unit that is defined by its network of relationships, which consists of localities that need not have spatial continuity, and that has an international relations aspect and changing boundaries (DPT, 2000: 7).

The concept of “region”, which plays a central role in regional policies, is generally accepted as comprising the following, on the basis of the functions and structures of the European Union:

- Polarized Region
- Homogeneous Region
- Cross-border Region
- Administrative Regions
- Independent Regions
- Planning Regions (Arslan, 2010).

There are social life differences between developed and non-developed regions. This is a phenomenon observed in almost all countries. Countries look for new ways to deal with these regional imbalances and to create a sustainable and balanced process of development. The establishment of regional development agencies was a solution offered to deal with this problem, with the first regional development agencies being established in the 1930s (Tutar and Demiral, 2007).

In the aftermath of the Second World War, states started to use the concept of region as an instrument in the implementation of their development policies (Aliyev and Hasanoğlu). Regional development is a strategy that aims to diminish developmental differences between different regions and to provide economic and social harmony between them, most effectively used in the European Union but also implemented for many years in the examples of Tennessee, USA, Mezzogiornio, Italy, and Shanghai Pudong, China (Tanla, 2010).

The need for planned development was an important factor behind the increasing concern for regions. One of the reforms following the proclamation of the Republic in Turkey was the “1st Five-Year Industrialization Plan”, adopted in 1938; however, with the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, this plan had to be shelved. Implementation of regional development policies in Turkey started with the 1st Five-Year Development Plan for the years 1963 to 1967, and the nine development plans since have aimed to provide regional development. The 9th Development Plan covers the years 2007 to 2013 (Resmi Gazete, 2006). Although these plans aimed to diminish and even to eliminate social and economic differences between the regions, they were not successful in diminishing inter-regional differences and exacerbated them in some cases due to maneuvering in national politics and changing priorities. Regional Development Agencies were established to help
diminish inter-regional differences and to facilitate Turkey’s accession to the European Union.

1.2. General Information on Regional Development Agencies (RDAs)

The Dictionary of the Turkish Language Institution defines agency as a business that makes profit by collecting and disseminating news, and by promoting commercial organizations and providing information on them. In Turkish, this word is not used as a general organizational name for public bodies. In Western languages, it is generally used to refer to organizations providing representation and promotion services (Güler, 2006).

The concept of Development Agency is defined in a number of different ways.

Looking at different examples from around the world, development agencies can be defined as structures that are established by law and that aim to provide economic development in a geographical region of a country by facilitating cooperation between all companies, public or private, local authorities and civil society organizations in the region (Koçberber, 37).

EURADA, the European Association of Development Agencies, defines regional development agencies as follows: “Regional Development Agencies identify sectoral and general development problems, come up with proposals and solutions to deal with them, and support projects to implement these solutions.” (Kayasü, 2003: 7).

SPO, State Planning Organization of Turkey defines regional development agencies as “units of development that are coordinated by the SPO at the national level, have a technical and financing (budget) mechanism of their own, do not seek profit, make and implement decisions quickly, are autonomous of the local and central government structures, bring public and private sectors and NGOs together, have a legal entity, are subject to private law in their activities not governed by Law No. 5449, are established by a Decision of the Council of Ministers, have high technical capacity, and do not implement but support, coordinate and catalyze projects” (www.dpt.gov.tr).

Many European countries have established RDAs since the 1950s and 1960s to stimulate, organize and develop regional economies. RDA experiences vary from country to country, and each organization acts in unique ways (Kaya, 2007: 101).

Regional development policies implemented in Turkey had a national to local (top down) approach. DPT policies devised for the whole country were observed to be not very effective, and the need for a local to national (bottom up) approach emerged. Thus, regions started to devise their own plans and strategies on the basis of local needs and problems, with the condition that they did not interfere with national plans. Agencies that
The most important goal of the RDAs is the economic development of their respective regions. Their economic goals include creating conditions suitable for long term regional economic development, environmental goals include increasing the attractiveness of the region, and social goals include developing the socio-cultural values of the region (Kayasü, 2003: 9).

**Tasks of Development Agencies**

*The main tasks of development agencies are as follows:*

- To support the development and preparation of regional strategies,
- To support and develop entrepreneurship,
- To provide help with permit and license procedures to attract investment to the region and to promote investments,
- To facilitate cooperation between public and private sector companies and NGOs in the region,
- To support rural development projects,
- To improve project production and development capacity,
- To conduct/fund research on the region and create databases,
- To mediate and coordinate with the purpose of making a more effective use of EU funds,
- To make calls for project proposals and monitor and evaluate these projects.

The tasks listed above show that the role of development agencies consists mostly of support and coordination rather than actual implementation of projects. (Izka, 2008: 540-541).

EURADA defines 4 main groups of RDAs:

1. Strategic Agencies: These are agencies that aim to facilitate information exchange, conduct research on sectoral and general socio-economic factors, promote the region at national and international levels, provide information for SMEs, and create awareness about the inner potential of the region.

2. General Purpose Agencies: The main aim of these agencies is to prepare inter-sectoral development projects that cover all sectors of the region. All functions provided by
3. Sectoral Agencies: These are agencies established to improve a certain activity in a sector or region.

4. Agencies established to increase the inner attractiveness of the region (www.planlama.org).

2. SOME ACTIVITIES of RDAs

The following is a descriptive account of some of the activities of Izmir Development Agency (IZKA) and Çukurova Development Agency (ÇKA), which are among the most well-established and successful development agencies in Turkey. Because development agencies in other regions are newly established, it is too early to assess the results of the support they have provided.

“Project for Increasing Production Capacity and Improving Marketing Capacity”, developed by Üstek Machine Industry and Trade Limited Company was implemented with the support of the Izmir Development Agency. Üstek Machine manufactures automotive and mechanical spare parts, and focuses on the production of precision industrial parts, spare parts for agricultural machinery, small scale precision parts, pistons, pins, rings, and aviation parts that require multi-axis machining. With the project, new employees were hired to increase production capacity. To improve marketing capacity, consulting services were purchased. In addition, the knowledge and skills of the production personnel were improved by training programs. The project helped the company improve its competitiveness and product variety, and decrease production costs. When the project was completed, a 29% increase in production capacity, 20% increase in employment, and 15% decline in unit costs were observed. With the help of the project, the company acquired a competitive advantage in the market (IZKA, Projem İzmir1).

“Investment Project to Increase Brake Shoe Production Capacity”, developed by Nurçeşlik Molding Press Industry and Trade Limited Company and supported by the Izmir Development Agency resulted in the production of more brake shoes in unit time, with lower costs and a standard quality. The company was thus able to increase its market share, become more resistant to the pressure of foreign markets, and increase its exports. Production capacity in the first three months of 2010 reached 55 percent of the total production in 2009. The increase in capacity and sales resulted in the employment of 13 more people. Unit costs declined by more than 1 Euro, production capacity increased by 120 percent, the number of temporary and permanent employees increased by 13, three new products were added to the portfolio of the company, and the number of national and foreign customers increased (IZKA, Projem İzmir1).
Project for Technology Villages supported by the Çukurova Development Agency (ÇKA) aims to disseminate the effective use of information and communication technologies (ICT) and thus improve access to information among men and women. The project will reach rural areas and people with little access to technology and help close the digital divide by providing them with computer literacy and digital content (www.cka.org.tr).

3. BEBKA (BURSA- ESKİŞEHİR-BİLECİK DEVELOPMENT AGENCY)

Bursa, Eskişehir, Bilecik Development Agency (BEBKA) was founded by the Council of Ministers Decision no. 2009/15236, dated July 25, 2009, under the coordination of the State Planning Organization, pursuant to Article 3 of the “Law on the Establishment, Coordination and Duties of Development Agencies” no. 5449, dated January 25, 2006. Bebka’s code number is TR41 (www.bebka.org.tr).

Bebka’s main goal is “to improve regional development, to create sustainability, and to help diminish intra-regional and inter-regional differences in development by improving the coordination between the public and private sector and civil society organizations, encouraging correct and effective use of resources, and stimulating the local potential” (www.bebka.org.tr).

Region TR41 connects the Central Anatolian and Marmara regions, and makes up 3.7% of the total surface area of Turkey with its 29,095 km² surface area. The region consists of the provinces of Bursa, Eskişehir and Bilecik (Bebka Regional Plan, 2010:21).

Bebka region (TR41) comprises three provincial governorships and 49 district governorships. In addition, many public organs besides the local administrative bodies of special provincial administrations, municipalities and village administrations have directorates actively working in the region (Bebka Regional Plan, 2010:23).

The organizational structure of Bebka is as follows:

1. Development Board: The development board undertakes the duties of support, recommendation and consultation with respect to assessing problems and opportunities of the region, and consists of 100 members from public institutions and organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and local administrations in the provinces of the region (www.bebka.org.tr).
2. Executive Board: Executive Board is the decision-making organ of the agency, and consists of the following members, as required by law:
Governors of the provinces in the region
Mayors of the provinces in the region
Chairs of the provincial councils of the provinces in the region
Chairs of chambers of commerce and industry in the provinces of the region (www.bebka.org.tr).

3. Secretariat General: Secretariat general is the executive organ of the agency and consists of a secretary general, experts and support personnel (www.bebka.org.tr).

Figure 3.1: Organizational structure of the development agency

Bebka provides the following types of support to public and private organizations in its region:

- Technical Support
- Financial Support
  - Loan Support
  - Calls for Project Proposals
  - Guided Project Support
  - Direct Activity Support
The different types of support are described as follows:

**Call for Project Proposals:** As part of a specific support program run by the agency, potential applicants with clearly identified qualities are called to make project proposals on pre-determined subjects with the pre-set conditions (www.bebka.org.tr).

**Technical Support:** The agency can provide technical support services of an institutional and capacity-building nature to institutions and organizations, such as holding training programs, supporting program or project development, temporarily assigning expert personnel, providing consulting services, lobbying, and forming international relations, with the condition that it follows fair, clear and transparent rules and that the support is not associated with any calls for project proposals issued by the agency, using its own personnel and facilities and purchasing services when necessary (www.bebka.org.tr).

**Loan Support:**

**Interest Support:** Interest support refers to a grant from the agency for the payment of interests that accrue on the loans drawn by for-profit legal persons and real persons from intermediary organizations to finance their projects that have the qualities identified in the application manual. The amount of maximum interest support to be granted to each project cannot exceed five percent of the total allowance earmarked for interest support that year (www.bebka.org.tr).
Interest-free loan support: Interest-free loan support refers to a grant from the agency for the provision of loans, via intermediary organizations, to for-profit legal persons and real persons to finance their projects that have the qualities identified in the application manual, and the repayment of these loans to the agency by the beneficiary in installments without any interest, within the framework of the provisions and procedures of this regulation. The beneficiary does not make any payments for at least three months following the date of the contract, and repayment is completed within four years of the date of the contract at the latest (www.bebka.org.tr).

Guided Project Support: The agency can provide direct financial and technical support for infrastructure and/or operation projects that require large scale financing and that are expected to develop the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of the region in areas specified in regional plans or field studies, such as business development centers, science parks, and technology development centers, and fairs, trade centers, exhibition halls, laboratories and workshops open to the public use of businesses, without making a call for project proposals and with the condition that it is clearly stated in its work schedule. In these projects, sectoral specializations that are in line with regional plans and strategies are encouraged. The agency can use this support to provide a maximum of ninety percent of the funding for each project (www.bebka.org.tr).

Direct Activity Support: The agency can provide direct support for activities that will contribute to making use of important opportunities for the development and competitiveness of the region, to taking emergency measures to prevent threats and risks concerning the regional economy, to initiating and implementing strategic and preparatory work that are potentially significant for the region, such as critical research and planning work and feasibility studies for the establishment of business development centers aiming to improve the entrepreneurial and innovation capacity of the region, technology development centers, and science parks, and to guiding and influencing large scale investment decisions in the short term. The total annual amount that can be given as direct activity support cannot exceed two percent of the annual expense budget of the agency (www.bebka.org.tr).

Bebka’s regional planning work starts with a situation analysis. First, the literature is reviewed, and available data are collected and analyzed. At the same time, views of all public agencies and organizations, universities, private sector representatives and civil society organizations in the region are consulted. This exchange of ideas serves both to inform the stakeholders about the agency, and to benefit from their experiences and information on the subject and the contributions they can make. Another component of the situation analysis is the survey of the national plan, the sectoral plan, and EU integration documents to learn about and analyze their insights and strategies concerning the region (Bebka Regional Plan,2010:13-14).
At the end of the process of analysis, decisions concerning investment support are made and implemented. Support required for sustaining implementation is continued.

3.1 Demographic Indicators of BEBKA Region

Demography is the branch of science that studies characteristics of human populations such as the distribution of age and occupation groups, and changes in human populations such as birth and mortality rates.

A total of 3,508,133 people live in the region TR41, making up 4.8% of the population of Turkey. Figures for population density, annual population growth and urbanization rate of the region are above the national average. In terms of socio-economic development, Bursa, Eskişehir and Bilecik, the provinces in the region, are close to the top of the list. Average household sizes in all provinces of the region are smaller than the average for Turkey. Fertility rate in the region is lower than the average for Turkey, but the
population growth rate is higher, which is explained by incoming migration to the region (BEBKA Regional Plan, 2010: 28).

Figure 3.1.1. Displays population growth in the provinces of the region over time.

The graph above shows that the population in Bursa increased by a larger margin compared to other cities in the region. Eskişehir and Bilecik experienced a smaller growth in their populations. Bebka analyses predict Bursa to be the center of attraction in the region, and the population in Bilecik to increase further.

Of the three provinces in the region, Bursa is the one with the highest rate of population growth. Considering its connection with the sea and the highways that connect Bursa to other major cities in Turkey, Bursa is located at a very strategic position. Establishment of Tofaş and Renault automobile factories in Bursa in the 1970s made the city a major migration destination (Ertuğrul, 2005: 70).

3.2. Labor force and Employment in the Region

Labor force refers to all people, employed or unemployed, who are aged 15 to 64. The Dictionary of the Turkish Language Institution, on the other hand, defines labor force as the segment of the active population that works at prevailing wage and work levels plus the unemployed (tdk.gov.tr).

Employment refers to continued involvement of the current labor force of a country in economic activities. According to another definition, employment refers to the level at which factors of production in an economy are used in line with the current level of technology (wikipedia.org).
Improvement of labor markets and sustainable growth with an employment focus are the main aims of the development policies implemented in Turkey (Bebka Regional Plan, 2010: 54).

Levels of participation in the labor force, which are on the increase in Turkey as a whole, are in decline in the TR41 region, and the unemployment rate is on the rise. The economic crisis of 2008-2009 may be one of the reasons behind these trends. Figure 3.1.2 shows these trends in graphs (Bebka Regional Plan, 2010: 54).

**Figure-3.1.2:** Levels of participation in the labor force, and unemployment and employment rates in the region

Unemployment, which is one of the most important economic and social problems, significantly increased in Turkey with the global economic crisis. The unemployment rate was 10.3% in 2007, increased to 11% in 2008, and jumped to 14% in 2009 due to the economic crisis. The number of unemployed increased by 46.1% in 2009 compared to the pre-crisis period - almost a 50% increase (Tisk İşgücü Piyasası, 2009).

**3.3. Industrial Sectors in the Region**

Reflections of the economic activities in the region on the people and social life are very important. Regional policies are shaped on the basis of these reflections. Data reported in “Competitiveness of Provinces 2008-2009”, a study conducted by URAK, International Center for Competitiveness Research, shows that Bursa came fifth with a score of 35.61,
Eskişehir came sixth with a score of 32.05, and Bilecik came 54th with a score of 14.29. Istanbul was at the top of the list with a score of 84.04 (Urak, 2008-2009: 10).

The sectoral distribution of the industry in the region shows that textiles and clothing, automotives, food, machinery, electrical equipment and ceramic sectors are of special importance for the region. Figure 3.1.3 displays the sectoral distribution of industry on a city basis.

**Figure-3.1.3: Sectoral Distribution of Industry in the Region**

(Bebka Regional Plan, 2010: 67)
The graphs above show that the biggest share in Bursa industry belongs to textiles, and to the metal-goods-machinery-automotive industry in Eskişehir. In Bilecik, non-metal products (ceramics, glass, cement, concrete, plaster, lime, etc.) have the biggest share. The fact that non-metal products have the biggest share can be explained by the type of the soil found in the province.

3.4. Investments in the Region

Public investments play a very important role in the development of a region. Table 3.1.1 reports the distribution of public investments in the TR41 region in comparison with the national figures.

Table 3.1.1: Planned public investment in 2010 (Thousand TLs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Mining</th>
<th>Manufacturing</th>
<th>Energy</th>
<th>Transportation and Communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bursa</td>
<td>29.995</td>
<td>4.375</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4.200</td>
<td>207.954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eskişehir</td>
<td>10.024</td>
<td>9.045</td>
<td>51.688</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28.229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilecik</td>
<td>7.515</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR41</td>
<td>47.534</td>
<td>13.646</td>
<td>51.758</td>
<td>4.202</td>
<td>236.387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>4.188.264</td>
<td>1.419.800</td>
<td>333.472</td>
<td>3.376.100</td>
<td>11.077.404</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tourism</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Other Public Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bursa</td>
<td>2.550</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>38.225</td>
<td>22.400</td>
<td>65.697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eskişehir</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>46.271</td>
<td>9.800</td>
<td>58.995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilecik</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15.267</td>
<td>1.950</td>
<td>15.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TR41</td>
<td>2.550</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>99.763</td>
<td>34.150</td>
<td>140.240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>182.934</td>
<td>157.021</td>
<td>4.247.971</td>
<td>1.868.225</td>
<td>6.981.775</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: (Bebka Regional Plan, 2010: 137).

The table above shows that transportation-communication receive the biggest share of public investment in Bursa, mining and manufacturing receive the biggest share in Eskişehir, and education and other public services receive the biggest share in Bilecik. BEBKA will support the investments needed in the region, announcing recently that it will grant 12 million Turkish liras for investment purposes (www.showhaber.com).

Table 3.1.1 shows that the amount of planned investment in Bilecik in manufacturing and energy fields is zero. This results from the fact that Bilecik is a Type 1 incentives region (the lowest), and does not appeal to investors. For example, Tofaş produces in Bursa but
CONCLUSION

Long years of experience show that central management is an ineffective way for eliminating inter-regional differences in Turkey, and that support by local administrations and the effective use of individual regions’ own resources can be a viable alternative. Turbulence, lack of stability and constantly changing decisions in national politics distort priorities.

With globalization, inter-state competition has gradually come to be replaced by inter-regional competition. In an age of global competition, local and regional initiatives, effective use of local resources, use of knowledge, skills and experience by local administrations for the benefit of the region, and specialization in strategic fields are factors that would help regions gain comparative advantage in the face of global competition from rivals. These strategies would contribute not only to the development of individual regions, but to the national economy, stability and growth of the country in question. An examination of the policies followed by developed countries also suggests that implementing regional plans is a more effective strategy for development.

In the process of EU integration, Turkey established Regional Development Agencies to implement regional development policies, to benefit from EU funds and to harmonize its regional policies with those of the European Union; EU funds are channeled through the RDAs. Development agencies can provide effective solutions to problems with their flexible structures and by facilitating cooperation between public and private sectors. In addition, Development Agencies represent an important opportunity for development in the less developed part of Anatolia.

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