

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN TURKEY IN THE INTEGRATION PROCESS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract:

Regional planning approaches include the actions which aim to eliminate the economical, social and cultural differences between the regions. In Turkey, there are serious developmental differences in terms of population, income level, economical and social activities between the regions. To eliminate these differences, the regional planning policies and development plans are made. The main goals are to eliminate the regional inequalities, to solve the economic, social and cultural problems of the regions, to satisfy the efficient use of the resources and to control the population movements.

In the European Union, even though all member states apply their own national regional policies, there is a common regional policy to provide the economical and social development and to remove the regional instabilities. To realize these policies, the European Union benefits from certain instruments like financial aids and structural funds. Turkey, in the accession period has a responsibility of implementing regional policies. The accession partnership documents and progress reports prepared by the Union and national program and preliminary national development plan prepared by Turkey are very important in terms of showing the priorities of the Union and the responsibilities of Turkey.

Keywords: Region, Regional Imbalance, Regional Development, Regional Development Plans, Development Plans.

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AVRUPA BİRLİĞİ'NE UYUM SÜRECİNDE TÜRKİYE'DE BÖLGESEL GELİŞME POLİTİKALARI

Öz:

Bölgesel planlama bölgeler arasındaki ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel farklılıkların giderilmesini amaçlayan, geri kalmış bölgeleri iyileştirmeye yönelik yaklaşımları içeren ve kaynak potansiyellerinin verimli bir şekilde kullanılmasını sağlayan eylemleri içermektedir. Ülkemizde bölgeler arasında nüfus, gelir düzeyi ve sosyal imkanlara erişim noktasında ciddi gelişmişlik farkları görülmektedir. Bu nedenle, 1960'lı yıllardan itibaren planlı kalkınma anlayışına geçilmiş ve bu tarihten itibaren kalkınma planları ve bölge planlaması çalışmaları uygulanmaya başlanmıştır.

Avrupa Birliği'nde ise, farklı ekonomik ve sosyal yapıya sahip olan birçok ülke bulunmaktadır. Tüm bu ülkelerin ulusal bölgesel politikaları olmasına rağmen, Birlik her alanda olduğu gibi bölgesel gelişme konusunda da ortak bir politika benimseme gereği duymuştur. Bu politikaların gerçekleştirilmesi için Avrupa Birliği yapısal fonlar ve diğer mali araçlar gibi bazı araçlardan yararlanmaktadır.

Türkiye Avrupa Birliği'ne katılım sürecinde bölgesel politikalara da uyum sağlama yükümlülüğü altındadır. Bu uyum çalışmaları kapsamında Avrupa Birliği tarafından hazırlanan katılım ortaklığı belgeleri ve ilerleme raporları ile Türkiye tarafından hazırlanan ulusal program ve Ön Ulusal Kalkınma Planı büyük önem taşımaktadır. Türkiye, katılım sürecinde ilk olarak mevcut bölgesel dengesizlikleri gidermeli, bölgelerin sosyal, ekonomik ve kültürel yapılarını geliştirmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Bölge, Bölgesel Dengesizlik, Bölgesel Gelişme, Bölgesel Gelişme Planları, Kalkınma Planları.

INTRODUCTION

The regional development policy has an important place in Turkey's EU membership process. In this context, in Turkey, the regional development studies have two purposes. The first purpose is to control the overgrowth of the metropolitan cities. Whereas the second has to do with developing the backward areas and remove the developmental gaps between the regions. Additionally, the development of regions with rich but uncultivated resources is also the origin of these studies. For many years, lots of regional plans have been prepared in order to remove or reduce the regional inequalities. The plans to develop South Anatolia, to control the development in Eastern Marmara Region and to use the resources of South East Anatolia can be quoted as the examplars of these regional plans.

In this study, firstly the conceptual framework is drawn in parallel to the historical development of the regional planning and organization in Turkey. Then, the characteristics of the regional structure in Turkey are analyzed. In this part, the examples are given about organizational models in regional development and the policies are explained. In the light of these projects, the evaluation of the regional development policies in Turkey and administrative organizations are discussed. Under the title of the regional policies and planning approaches in the European Union, the objectives of the European Union about regional planning, the development of regional politics and regional planning instruments in the European Union are examined.

Finally, Turkey's European Union membership process is discussed. In this section, accession partnership documents, progress reports, national programme and pre-accession economic programme are analyzed. Then, the key proposals are discussed to make regional policies and plans more effective and efficient.

I) REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

A) Region and Regional Development

Region is "a territorial authority directly below the state central level" (Bourne, 2003: 598). It is the expression of the differences that are embodied in many forms such as historical heritage, geographical structure and economical activities in all parts of a country. The main features of the

region are: “Covering a geographical region, enjoying similar economical and social structure, being formed of a community spoke the same language that has the common ethnic, cultural and religious characteristics” (Mengi, 1998: 43).

Moving from this definition, it is possible to examine the regions in terms of economical structure and level of development. According to the economical structure, we can talk about three types of regions (Keleş, 2002: 342). The first one is the homogenous region which shows continuous characteristics and the locality part whose units are similar. Second one is the polarized region which defines the interconnected polarized settlement areas in a settlement echelon. The third one is the planning region defined so as to enable the application of the economical development plans and to provide the combination, integrity, accordance and coordination between economical decisions concerned with these development plans. In terms of economical development, there are three main regions (M.G.K., 1993: 21). The first one is the developed regions that are above the average of the country in terms of income level and income growth rate, socially and culturally developed, have higher educational level and adequate infrastructure, The second one is underdeveloped regions whose characteristics are the opposite of the developed regions. These regions lost their development potential. The third one is the overcrowded regions due to the industrialization where the environmental and urban services are problematic.

Regional development is “the increase in welfare of a region” (OECD, 1969: 22). This welfare is the indication of income per capita, availability of social services and adequacy of legal and administrative systems. Regional development is possible by the creation of regional policies. Regional policies can be defined as “the policy gross in order to improve the underdeveloped regions which aims at reducing or removing the regional differentials because of the reasons like underdeveloped infrastructure, inconvenient geographical conditions and the mushroom growth in industry” (Açıklın, 1990: 7). Regional growth is not restricted with only the social, economical, political, cultural and technological elements, also it includes the cooperation of public organizations, private sector, volunteer organizations, local, regional and global units (Erkan, 2000: 63).

B) Regional Development Plans

The application of national plans which determine the development strategies of a country in production units are realized with regional planning. In other words, while the national planning is a central planning activity which covers and affects the whole country, the regional planning is the planning that concerns a region. The main principles of national planning are the improvement of the per capita income, the achievement of the full employment, the achievement of the foreign trade equilibrium, the achievement of the interregional balance and the application of the principles of social justice in income distribution (Taneri, 1986: 17).

Regional plans are the ones that undertake some part of an economy or an industrial sector. They are grouped as the plans prepared for underdeveloped regions, metropolitan plans, plans prepared for regions that have rich resources and private zones. Metropolitan plans are the type of plans that tend to solve the problems of the big cities and metropolitan areas and to realize the systematic settlement of them like İstanbul metropolitan plan. These plans cover not only the municipal borders of the cities, but also a wide region that has an integrity in terms of economical, social and land base. Secondly, South Anatolia Project is an example of the plans which are prepared for the regions that have rich but uncultivated resources. And finally, the plans prepared for underdeveloped regions are the plans to develop these regions. The East Anatolia Project is such kind of a plan to develop the East Anatolia and its environment (M.G.K., 1993: 44-45, Dunham and Hilhorst, 1971: 48).

The main objectives that lie under the regional planning attempts are to remove the socio-economical welfare instabilities between the regions, the allocation of national resources in order to give the maximum economical and social utility, to make the contribution of regions to national development and the ways of evaluating the facilities and the arrangement of the localities in a rational form (M.G.K., 1993: 6).

II) THE REGIONAL POLICIES AND REGIONAL PLANNING APPROACHES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

In the European Union, regions can be classified as cultural, historical, administrative, political, economic, metropolitan and geographical regions (Casellas and Galley, 1999: 552). According to Begg there are four types of regional problem which cause regional disparities in the European Union. These are: lack of development, peripherality, remoteness or inaccessibility, loss of competitiveness and finally the consequences of economic integration (Begg, 2003: 163-164). That's why the European Union has developed a common regional policy. The aims of European Union's regional policies are to reduce economic and social disparities, to show solidarity and to meet the challenges of the 21st century. EU regional policy is defined as an investment policy which supports job creation, competitiveness, economic growth, improved quality of life and sustainable development (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy).

A) The Development of Regional Policy of The European Union

There are three main structural policies of the European Union such as regional policy, social policy and agricultural policy. Before the common regional policy of the European Union, member states applied certain measures and incentives to obtain regional development. Then inequalities between the countries increased and regional policies of the member states was not enough to solve the regional problems, a common regional policy has emerged.

In the Introduction and the Second article of Rome Convention (1957) which formed the European Union, it was predicted that the economical and social differences between the member states must be removed to satisfy economical integration. The main objectives of regional policy were to increase the employment, to develop infrastructure and to increase the revenues.

In 1968 Directorate General for Regional Policy of the European Commission and in 1975 European Regional Development Fund was created. In 1980's with the arrival of Spain, Greece and Portugal, regional disparities within the Union began.

Cohesion was accepted as one of the main objectives of the Union with Maastricht Treaty in 1993. EU regional policy was associated with the cohesion policy. In the Article 2, it was said that European Community should raise the standart of living and quality of life and promote economic and social cohesion and solidariy among member states. With this treaty, The Committee of The Regions and Cohesion Fund for the poorer member states were established. This fund is used to finance the projects about environment and transportation (Bourne, 2008: 292-294).

For 2000-2006, Agenda 2000 defined certain Community policies like agricultural policy and regional policy. Then, for 2007-2013 European Union's regional policy has three main objectives. These are convergence to reduce regional disparities, regional competitiveness and employment to create jobs and making the regions more attractive and European territorial cooperation to encourage cooperation across borders (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy).

B) The Objectives of Regional Policies of the European Union

The regional policy of the Union is based on four fundamental principles (Akşahin, 2008: 18-21). Firstly, national regional policies should be consistent with the EU regional policy. Secondly, national regional policies should be consistent among themselves. In this context, each country should inform others about their own regional policies. Thirdly, regional policies and other community policies like transportation, energy, environment and agriculture should be consistent. And finally, regional aid should be transparent and focus on the areas that are most needed. In other words, Union determines some objectives like providing coordination between the regional policies of the member states, considering the regional effects of the other policies of the Union and eliminating the problems of underdevelopment.

With the regional policy of the Community, the main aims are to provide the equal distribution of wealth and to solve the regional problems in both national, regional and community level.

C) Instruments of the European Union Regional Policy

1) Structural Funds

European Development Fund (ERDF) is the most important structural fund and the main instrument in the EU for providing community aid. It is used for the projects about assistance for small and medium state enterprises, assistance for productive investments, improvement of infrastructures and speeding local developments. Each EDF concluded for a period of five years. The last one covers the years between 2008-2013. European Social Fund (ESF) was established by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 to reduce the differences in prosperity and living standarts across EU and to promote the social and economic cohesion. European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) is the Union's most important common policy and rural development policy aid. It finances direct payments to farmers and measures to regulate agricultural markets. Financial Instrument For Fisheries Guidance (FIFG) is used for achieving a balance between fisheries resources and their exploitation, strengthening the competitiveness of operating structures, improving market supply and the value added to fishery and aqaculture products, contributing to revitalize areas dependent of fisheries and aquaculture (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy).

2) Other Financial Tools

Cohesion Fund is a structural instrument that helps member states to reduce economic and social disparities and to stabilize their economies. Eligibility is restricted to Member States whose per capita gross national product (GNP) is less than 90% of the community average and who have a programme designed to achieve the conditions of economic convergence as set out in Article 104 of the Treaty establishing the European Community. Four member states are eligible under the cohesion fund. These are Greece, Ireland, Portugal and Spain. Besides, in these countries two categories of projects are eligible to use this fund. These are environmental projects and transport infrastructure projects (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy).

European Investment Bank (EIB) was created by the Treaty of Rome in 1957 as the long term leading bank of the European Union. The main objectives of this bank are to contribute towards the integration, balanced development and economic and social cohesion of the member states. It has

six priority objectives. These are cohesion and convergence, support for small and medium size enterprises, environmental sustainability, implementation of the Innovation 2010 initiative, development of Trans-European Networks of transport and energy and sustainable, competitive and secure energy (www.eib.org).

European Coal and Steel Community (ESCS) was established by the ECSC Treaty in 1951. In the Introduction of this Treaty, it was said that the regional differences must be eliminated for the success of economic integration of the Community. The Article 158 says that “The Community will aim to reduce the disparities in the development level in different regions and the lagging in the less attractive regions” (http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy).

III) THE REGIONAL PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION IN TURKEY

There are some differences in the Turkish regional structure in terms of population, income level, social and economical activities. There is a huge migration from the regions with low income levels to the developed regions especially to the metropolitan areas.

The urbanization rate is low in Black Sea Region, Central Anatolia Region and Eastern Anatolia Region in comparison to other regions. Marmara Region is the most important center where the most important economical activities take place and big industrial organizations are formed. In the length of time, the geographical and historical advantages of this region increased, it became a polarized region increasingly. Eastern Anatolia and Southeast Anatolia Region is the underdeveloped regions of Turkey because of the economical structures emanating from the land structure.

A) National Development Plans

After 1960, in Turkey, a period of planned development has started. Following this period, the regional planning had two main functions. The first one is that the regional planning contributes to the economic development of the country. The second one is that regional planning as the important way to eliminate regional differences (Tekeli, 2008: 69).

In the First Five-Year Development Plan (1963-1967), priority was given to the underdeveloped regions in the geographical distribution of the public services. This plan consisted of starting the evaluation studies in regional terms with Eastern Anatolia Region and Southeast Anatolia Region, forming an Interdepartmental Committee to apply the programs which are developed oriented, sending the personnel with the adequate number and quality to these regions and training of regional development experts. In this period, “the development areas” were determined within the country and the eventuate of the development of Eastern Marmara with industry, Çukurova with agriculture and industry, Antalya with agriculture and tourism and Zonguldak with industry was predicted.

In the Second Five-Year Development Plan (1968-1972), with a particular emphasis on the importance of the regional development, the regional planning policy consistent with the regional development, urbanization and settlement policies were implemented. In this period, with the aim of providing the organized development of the economical and social facilities of the regions, there were some suggestions about regional settlement policies which guided the sectoral activities.

In the Third Five-Year Development Plan (1973-1977), regional development and planning approaches were more cursory than the others. There was an idea of trying to accelerate the elimination of the development inequalities between districts.

In the Fourth Five-Year Development Plan (1978-1983), there were some suggestions such as division of labor to obtain economical development, providing the balanced dispersion of services, industry, and infrastructure countrywide. Besides, about Priority Regions In Development, the special importance was given to Eastern Anatolia Region and Southeast Anatolia Region.

In the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1985-1989), it was emphasized that the main aim of the regional plans were to accelerate the economic development and to use the resources in an efficient way. On the other hand, the aim of this plan was to remove the inequalities between regions also (OECD, 1988: 35).

The Sixth Five-Year Development Plan (1990-1994) also embraced the idea of the stable development between regions. In addition, this plan stressed that while establishing and adopting the regional development policies, the regional policies of the European Union must be considered.

According to the Seventh Five-Year Development Plan (1996-2000), the sustainable development would decrease the regional differences with the object of increasing the national solidarity and integrity.

In the Eight Five-Year Development Plan (2001-2005), the implemented regional planning projects were explained particularly. According to the plan, the main principles in regional development policies were sustainability, integrity, equilibrium between the social and economic development and the rise of the quality of life. It asserted that the success of the regional planning would depend on the coordination and accordance between the social and economical development plans in the country and the local plans. Also, the national priorities must be reflected to the local plans (Keleş, 2002: 404).

The Ninth Five-Year Development Plan (2007-2013) gave specific importance to regional development. In this plan, the regional development was accepted as an important objective. The main suggestions were the activation of development policies in regional level, the satisfaction of development on the basis of local dynamics and internal potential, building the institutional capacity in the local level and the improvement of rural areas. This plan tried to increase the competitiveness and employment, strengthen human development and social solidarity, ensure regional development and increase quality and effectiveness in services (DPT, 2006: 2).

B) The Authority in Regional Planning: State Planning Organization and Ministry of Development

The authorization of making the regional plans were given to the State Planning Organization (SPO) which was founded in 30.09.1960 with the law number of 91. The main target of this formation was to solve the problems arised from the regional instabilities and especially to develop the Eastern Anatolia Region. The most important task of this organization was to determine the resources and facilities of the country, to assist to the

government while determining the economical and social policies, to provide coordination between Ministries, to make plans which achieve the objectives about regional development, to monitor the execution of the plans and to offer measures which lead the private sector activities to be compatible with the objectives of the plans.

In 2011, with the establishment of Ministry of Development, SPO was closed. Regional Development Board and Regional Development Committee were established and affiliated to the Ministry. Regional Development Board determines the general policies about regional development and approves the national strategy. Regional Development Committee handles technical issues about regional development and develops suggestions.

C) The Regional Development Projects in Turkey

In Turkey, the main regional planning studies were prepared in the years between 1957-1958. As the result of these efforts, the regional planning attempts which tended to solve the different problems but not covered the whole country were implemented. The primary regional planning studies were conducted in selected pilot regions. These regions were Marmara, Eastern Anatolia and South East Anatolia Regions. The main aims of these plans were to solve the economical and cultural problems, to examine the problems arising from industrialization and to develop underdeveloped regions.

The first regional development plan prepared in Turkey was the Eastern Marmara Region Plan. The project area of this plan covered Balıkesir, Bursa, Çanakkale, Edirne, Kırklareli, Kocaeli, Sakarya and Tekirdağ. This plan was the product of the effort of metropolitan planning. The main idea of this plan was that the growth of İstanbul is inevitable and it must be supported. The main suggestions given in the plan were the need for the dense settlement in the region, giving priority to the development of Anatolian part of the region, forming the industrial settlement between İzmit and Adapazarı. Additionally, there were some suggestions in the plan such as the protection of the natural, historical and cultural values, protection of the fresh water resources and the creation of the new settlement areas (Keleş, 2002: 381).

The Southeastern Anatolia Project is a multi-sector integrated regional development plan which covers the dams, hydraulic power plants and irrigation facilities on Euphrates and Tigris and the investments and services in urban and rural infrastructure, transportation, industry, education, health, tourism and various other sectors (M.G.K., 1993: 336-337, Sarıca, 2001: 167). Its basic objectives include the improvement of living standards and income levels of people so as to eliminate regional development disparities and contributing to such national goals as social stability and economic growth by enhancing productivity and employment opportunities in the rural sector. The project area covers nine administrative provinces: Adıyaman, Batman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Kilis, Mardin, Siirt, Şanlıurfa and Şırnak.

East Anatolia Region is the largest geographic region of Turkey. There are three reasons because of the underdevelopment of this region. These are the differences of the labor productivity between the agriculture and other factors, inadequate industry and the differences of the labor productivity between the subsectors and the regions in industrial and other sectors (İsbir, 2002: 20).

With the Seventh Development Plan, there was an effort to prepare a regional development plan for the Eastern Anatolia Region. The main aims of these efforts were to develop Eastern Anatolia, to develop economic activities especially in agriculture and livestock, to highlight the spatial dimension of the regional development plan and to build infrastructure for the investments of private sector. With the EAP Master Plan three target groups were determined. These were economic, social and environmental targets. Besides, within the framework of these targets seven priority areas were identified in the master plan. These were the improvement of human resources, expanding organizations, providing infrastructure, improvement and management of pasture, melioration of environmental quality, fighting against poverty and finance (DPT, 2000a: 3).

The Black Sea Region is the third underdeveloped region of Turkey after the Eastern Anatolia and Southeast Anatolia Regions. Therefore, there was a need for the plan which covers the eastern provinces of the region. The study area of the plan covered seven provinces: Artvin, Bayburt, Giresun, Gümüşhane, Ordu, Rize and Trabzon. The main objectives of the plan were to formulate a development plan for the region, to reduce the regional

disparities between the region and the other regions, to identify priority sectors of the region. The regional development strategy of DOKAP consisted of four elements: strengthening of transportation and communication infrastructure, the development and management of multi-purpose water resources, improvement of land management and strengthening of local government (DPT, 2000b: 1-4).

With the beginning of the planned period, in addition to development plans the importance of regional planning increased and the institutions began to give priority to the research facilities. The planning projects in Turkey started to find solutions to current inequalities between regions. But because of the discontinuity between institutions worked on the regional planning in Turkey and the absence of coordination, these plans were not implemented.

The main features of the projects made before the formation of State Planning Organization were that they specifically focused on geographical problems of the region and cultural, economical and social features of the regions were not discussed. Also these plans were seen as the pilot projects whose main task was only the training of the personnel about regional planning (Tekeli, 1972: 141-142).

IV) TURKEY AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

It is necessary to complete the adoption of Turkish legislation and institutional structure with the European Union *acquis*. There are six main fields of the adoption. These are, legal framework, institutional framework, administrative capacity, programming, monitoring and evaluation and financial control and audit (DPT, 2007: 20).

In Turkey, for compliance there was a policy change (Bafail and Kaya, 2009: 26). Accordingly, in 1971, Priority Provinces for Development were created to reduce regional inequalities and to develop the underdeveloped regions. On the other hand, between 2006-2009, 26 regional development agencies were established. These agencies are the examples of the policy change in Turkey. Because with the establishment of these agencies regional policies changed “from top down development policy to the bottom-up development policy” (Sobaci, 2009: 58). The main roles of the development

agencies are to increase the investments, to develop the infrastructure, to increase mobility, to increase institutional and human capacity, partnership and cooperation (Saylan and Kiroğlu, 2007:7).

There are four main documents that orient the participation period of Turkey to the EU. These are accession partnership (prepared by EU), progress reports (prepared by EU), national programme (prepared by Turkey) and pre-accession economic programme (prepared by Turkey).

A) Accession Partnership Documents

Accession partnership documents define the short and medium term priorities and the responsibilities of the candidate states. There are four accession partnership documents about Turkey. The first one was accepted in 2001. In this document, the short and medium term priorities and intermediate objects were identified. The short term priorities about the regional policy were to prepare a NUTS classification with Community rules, to adopt a strategy for the development of an effective regional policy and to start introducing regional policy criteria in the selection of projects in Turkey's planning process. In the medium term, priority is to develop a national policy for economic and social cohesion with a view to diminishing internal disparities (DPT, 2001: 2-5).

The second accession partnership document was accepted in 2003. Just as in the first one, the priorities are divided into two groups: short and medium term. The short term priorities about the regional policy were to develop a national policy for economic and social cohesion aimed at reducing regional disparities through a National Development Plan and the establishment of regional development plans at NUTS 2 level, to adopt a legislative framework that would facilitate the implementation of the *acquis communautaire* under this chapter, to establish pluri-annual budgeting procedures setting out priority criteria for public investment in the regions and to strengthen the administrative structures for managing regional development. The medium term priority was to set up regional branches at NUTS 2 level to implement regional development plans (DPT, 2003: 16-21).

The third accession partnership document was accepted in 2006. The short term priorities about regional development were to develop the

strategic framework for economic and social cohesion, aimed at reducing regional disparities and to establish the necessary legislative and administrative framework to absorb EU pre-accession funds. The medium term priorities were to strengthen the administrative capacity for the implementation of regional policy at both central and regional level and to establish multi-annual budgeting procedures setting out priority criteria for public investment in the regions (www.abgs.gov.tr).

The last and the fourth accession partnership document was accepted in 2008. The short term priorities about regional development were to reinforce the establishment of institutional structures and strengthen administrative capacity in the areas of programming, project preparation, monitoring, evaluation and financial management and control, particularly at the level of line ministries, to implement EU pre-accession programmes as a preparation for the implementation of the Community's cohesion policy. The medium term priority was to develop the administrative capacity at central, regional and local levels for the implementation of possible future Community cohesion policy (www.abgs.gov.tr).

B) Progress Reports

These reports evaluate the progress of the candidate states on the way towards the accession to the EU. These reports are arranged yearly. The first progress report of Turkey was published in 1998. In the years between 1998-2011 there were 14 progress reports.

In all of the reports about regional policy and coordination of structural instruments, six main areas of progress were examined: legislative framework, institutional framework, administrative capacity, programming, monitoring and evaluation, financial management and control (www.abgs.gov.tr).

C) National Programme

The National Programme is a document which shows the administrative changes, financial and institutional structures, policies, measures and regulations of the candidate states for the implementation of Community's

policies. It is preparing for the accession partnership document published by the Commission.

Three national programmes were published in the years 2001, 2003 and 2008. In the 2001 national programme, it was said that a system similar to NUTS should be identified. In 2003 and 2008, the priority was given to the establishment of legislative and administrative framework and establishment of regional plans at NUTS 2 level. In both national programmes, the classification of the regions in accordance with EU criteria appeared. By State Planning Organization and State Statistical Institute “Nomenclature of Territorial Units For Statistics (NUTS)” were formed. In Turkey, there are 12 NUTS 1, 26 NUTS 2 and 81 NUTS 3 regional units.

D) Pre-accession Economic Programme

In the programme four development axes were determined. These were enhancing the competitiveness of enterprises, developing the human resources and increasing the employment, improvement of infrastructure services and environmental protection and increasing the economic power of regions, reducing the interregional development disparities and accelerating rural development. In the title of “Regional Development” of the programme, disparities between social and economic development levels of regions are analyzed (demographic structure, sectoral distribution of environment, education, health, agriculture, industry, infrastructure and financial structure) (T.C., 2003: 36-48).

CONCLUSION

Regional disparities and imbalances in the EU and in Turkey are the most important obstacles in both regional and national economical and social development. But the important thing here is socio-economic differences between Turkey and EU member states in terms of the insufficient education, inadequate capital accumulation, underdeveloped local markets, geographical conditions and the absence of infrastructure. Therefore, in Turkey, the main features of the regions and development axes are not determined in an effective way.

It is very difficult to solve the development inequalities in Turkey with the current administrative structure so it must be restructured. There are many organizations and institutions responsible for the regional planning and development but there is not an efficient coordination among them. It would be helpful that if a supreme council is formed whose main task is to provide coordination among institutions, to control whether the objectives are fulfilled or not and to develop politics about regional development. This establishment can work as an intermediate organization between the center and the region because of the centralized administrative structure of Turkey. This institution must be authorized not only with the subjects of collection of data, research and planning but also with the application of the plans. In addition to this institution, there must be some research and advisory bodies in the regional levels. In brief, regardless of the organizational model, the success of the regional plans depend on the coordination between the competent bodies (Keleş, 1969: 163; Payaslıoğlu, 1966: 87).

Regional development plans should be in accordance with national development plans which reflect national and regional priorities. They should be comprehensive, integrated and develop strategic visions about the region, it must reflect the national precedences and local demands. While making and applying a regional plan, public support and participation are needed.

Especially in order to benefit from EU regional policy instruments, Turkey should fulfill all requirements in conformity with National Programme and Pre-accession Economic Programme. Also the Progress Reports and Accession Partnership documents are important in terms of

showing whether Turkey is successful about regional development and policies.

The establishment of development agencies, the creation of statistical territorial units and the implementation of priority regions for development are the important steps toward membership. Addition to all these developments, in the accession process, Turkey must remove regional disparities. East and Southeast Anatolia regions still continue to exist as the least developed regions of Turkey. The regional studies for these regions should be increased. In this context, natural resources, transportation potential, entrepreneurial capacity and job opportunities must be increased.

In conclusion, the regional plans in Turkey must consider the socio-economic conditions of the region. They must provide the participation of local and the public administrations. The most important requirement of this participation is the education.

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