

Chapter 5.35

E–Government Practices in Regional Context: Turkish Case

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ABSTRACT

This chapter introduces the importance of the Information and Communication Technologies on the regional development in Turkey. Socio-economic transformation can be done with the efficient service opportunities in regions that have different growth rates. Specially, some regions have migration problems for economic and employment reasons in Turkey. Growth poles are a typical development style for Turkey. Therefore, less developed regions should have more advantage from national economic programs. In this chapter, included in Regional development programs of Turkey in the context of Information and Communication Technologies. The objective of this chapter is to point out importance of

improvements of Information and Communication Technologies and e-government programs in Turkey. At this time, it is defined the role of e-government programs on social, economic and political structures of the regions in Turkey.

INTRODUCTION

Network economies which arise with the development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have caused unavoidable transformation of the paradigm in the social dimension. This is the transformation that has harmonized the information revolution and Information Society. This socioeconomic transformation effects directly the shape of the administration,

the working mechanisms of the state, the level of economic development, and the relationships of the citizen.

The transformation of ICTs offers different alternatives to countries that are efficient and produces service opportunities for their citizens on social, economic, political, and cultural platforms. Specially with this transformation, underdeveloped countries and developing countries could find opportunities of supply by using their resources efficiently, similar to the developed countries.

Beside the potential of minimization of differentiations at development among the countries, regional differentiations are also removed in a country which is another function of ICTs. At the same time, it has given opportunities that are distributed equally among the citizens of a country. In this study, the basic hypothesis is depending on the idea that ICTs can act as instruments for governments to remove the differentiations of development either among different countries or within each country. However, efficient use of this instrument depend directly on the current socioeconomic conditions of the country. This study examined a few cases on efficient use of the e-government system in Turkey. In this framework; first of all, government decisions are analyzed that were used in the regional policy, including development planning decisions about underdeveloped areas or the regions with priority of development. Secondly, it has tried to assess the level of ICTs in Turkey. Finally, it analyzed the effects of ICTs on the socioeconomic life in the regions that have priority for development.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT: DEFINITION AND TERMINOLOGY

Differentiations of development can be based on differentiations of capital and skilled labor investment in certain regions that accumulate imbalances apart from the different geographical conditions in a country (Ozturk, 2001). So, re-

gional planning must include social and economic needs of the citizens when making settlements for inhabitants. Therefore, the aim of the regional planning should be to increase the social and economic welfare of people and at the same time improve the condition of physical living place or working place.

It has been observed that the interregional balanced development in industrialized countries is decreasing the income inequalities, source spending, and harmful effects of the industrialization in more developed regions. But, underdeveloped or developing countries are mostly determining which strategical point is suitable as the starting point of development and deciding whether strategical public investments will make it possible or not (Gurbuz, 2001).

There are two functions to perform in regional planning. First, regional planning must be efficient to increase the country's economic development. In this view, when the settlement system is establishing and decision of infrastructure is taking place, each decision must be efficient enough for betterment of the economy or at least able to create additional positive effects. Second, the function of regional planning is a tool for preventing regional differentiations. In this context, regional planning seems like a mechanism of use to reverse the unequal development in the country (Tekeli, 1981). The aims of the regional development should ensure that (Gurbuz, 2001):

- Regional imbalance is decreased.
- Each source and economic activity must be compatible in delivering within the geographical regions.
- Source of the region must be properly evaluated.
- Regional development must be dispersed in the country.
- Healthy growth in the region must be promoted.
- Interregional distribution of the industry must be balanced.

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