

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aziz Tuncer

The Centro per l'Europa Centro-Orientale e Balcanica of the Department of Political and Social Science welcomes a new research fellow **dr. Aziz Tuncer**, associate professor of Administrative Science in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration in Sakarya University, Turkey. He is also a coeditor of the Journal of Political Administrative and Local Studies.

Prof. Tuncer will stay at the Alma Mater studiorum University of Bologna, Forlì Campus, for ten months to do research on the dynamics of successful regional development policies in ERVET. Like many other unitary states, Turkish Regional Development Agencies have difficulty in installing governance structures which impedes to endorse their project capacity. His argument is based upon the supposition that ERVET experienced similar problems. So he will try to find out how ERVET overcame such impediments and succeed in creating governance structures. Upon the data which he will get, he is planning to write an article and to prepare a proposal for Turkish Regional Development Agencies regarding improvement of governance structures.

The Outline of the Research: “Governance Patterns in EU Encouraged Institutions: The Case of Regional Development Agencies in Turkey and Italy”.

Italy and Turkey are prominent examples of unitary states where administrative mechanisms mainly were inspired from Napoleonic centralized administration. The EU, in contrast, by proliferating the number of actors in administration stipulated the governance structures which became a hurdle for centralized governments to cope with. Especially Regional Development Agencies became a testing for governance capacity of the centralized governments because they are supposed to share their power substantially with subnational governments and business actors. As central governments of the unitary states have been accustomed to be prominent actor of administration, they have difficulty in producing governance oriented practices. Nonetheless, the EU insisted on the implementation of regional policies whose principal target is to create a network among central government, local/regional governments, market actors, universities and non-governmental organizations. So, in the unitary states, Regional Development Agencies became a platform of power struggle between central government and other actors, which hindered to produce positive outcomes that EU expected. Yet, ERVET has accomplished to be an exceptionally successful example which is able to create a synergy among competing actors and to gain considerably successful outcomes in a unitary state.

Turkey, like Italy, has a centralized administrative system. During the pre-accession process the EU stipulated the introduction and establishment of RDA's in Turkey as it is for all candidate countries. Following a long and arduous process, RDAs were established in Turkey in 2006. During the initial stage, it was believed that RDA could provide a platform for the blossoming of governance structures by incorporating especially local actors for local/regional development projects in Turkey. However, in time, RDAs became a platform for the reproduction of centralized administrative patterns and Turkish RDAs have suffered from lack of influential governance patterns. As a consequence, their administrative capacity

is poor to produce EU funded projects and they could not meet the expectation to contribute the invigoration of local sustainable economy.

In this research the following questions are tried to be answered to draw conclusions which can provide example for Turkish RDA's.

- How local/regional governments have been incorporated into administrative structure of ERVET. Upon the implemented projects, how do they overcome the central government's tendency to allocate local/regional actors just secondary roles?
- How do they succeed in taking part with planning/implementation processes of projects on equal foots with central government?
- Do they perceive their position against central government strong enough to take lead in EU funded projects?
- What kind of roles has been implemented by representatives of private sector and how do they contribute for the creation of synergy for regional development?
- Do the business actors perceive themselves equal or secondary to central administration?
- What are the roles attributed to the universities. Are universities just auxiliary actors or do they carry out vital roles?
- Do universities contribute to improve the potential local capacities by participating RDA projects. Or, by taking part in RDA projects, do Universities create new opportunities for their members?
- What kind of projects gives the most fruitful consequences and how the roles were shared in these projects among actors during planning and implementation stages?
- The classification of projects according to main actor/actors who have leading role, and the analysis of the outcomes of projects according to main actor/actors.
- What kind of governance structures has been introduced and installed in ERVET, which makes it a successful example. Could its structure and projects be transferred to other unitary states?