CREATING DEPENDENCY INSTEAD OF PROSPERITY: A CRITIQUE OF INFORMATION SOCIETY POLICIES IN TURKEY

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To show the failures of neoliberal policies of information society.
To contribute to the literature by empirical facts.
To promote a better understanding of development.
To promote a critical understanding of e-government.
THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- Why to focus on Turkey?
- Why to focus policy papers?
- Why to focus Turkey’s latest policy papers, entitled as 2015-2018 Information Society Strategy and Action Plan?
Contradictions of positions.

- An enduring contradiction.
  - Neoliberalism against protectionism.

  - Maturity against obsolescence.
8 axes of information society:

- Information Technologies Sector.
- Broadband Infrastructure and Sector Competition.
- Qualified Human Resources and Employment.
- Penetration of ICTs into the Society.
- Information Security and User Confidence.
- ICTs Supported Innovative Solutions.
- Internet Entrepreneurship and e-Commerce.
- User Centered and Effective Public Services.
Balance sheet of the last decade:

- Lack of a robust market.
- Lack of production capacity.
- Lack of competition in fixed broadband access.
- High prices of access and ICTs devices due to low competition and high taxation.
- ICTs employment problems.
- Low ICTs awareness and skills.
- Digital gap.
- Incomplete legal regulations.
**Information Society Strategy (2006-2010):**

- Culmination of neoliberal policies in Turkey.
- Pillars of information society in the document:
  - Widespread diffusion and usage of ICTs by individuals and companies.
  - Low access price of the competitive market.
  - Increasing awareness and education of the people.
  - Online public services and e-government for mobilization.
  - A competitive IT industry and improved R&D as an end result.

- The latest document of 2015 ➔ Confession.
The strategy document of 2015
- Increasing public ICTs investments.
- Raising number of online public services.
- Raising number of users.
- High percentage of user satisfaction.

Relativity of the success
- Dependency for importation.
- Trade deficit
- Weakness of private sector.
- Discarding the potential of emancipation
THE STRESS ON LOCAL PRODUCTION

- New targets → E-commerce, software production, digital games.
- FATIH project → The core of new strategy.
  - 10.6 million tablet computers for students and teachers.
  - Internet access for all schools.
  - Smart boards for all classrooms.
  - Digital education content.
Free market oriented neoliberal policies:
+ Poor results in terms of growth and employment.
+ Growing technological dependency.

Turning away from the mistake:
+ Importance of local production.
+ Lost of precious time.

The critical relationship between neoliberalism and e-government.