

# An Editorial Note on Regional Development Agency

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## Editorial

Regional development agencies (RDAs) were nine non-departmental public entities established in the United Kingdom between 1998 and 2010 for the goal of economic development of England's Government Office areas. There was one RDA for each of England's NUTS level 1 areas. The Welsh Government Department of Economy and Transport, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in Northern Ireland, and Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise in Scotland all carried out similar initiatives [1]. The UK government announced in June 2010 that the RDAs would be abolished on March 31, 2012, in order to reduce the government's deficit; equivalent economic development would be done by local councils and local enterprise partnerships (LEPs). There was no clear substitute for RDAs because LEPs did not receive financing from central government at initially, and local governments did not receive an equivalent influx of revenue from central finances after being asked to make savings and support similar programmes. The London Development Agency (LDA), which reported directly to the Mayor of London and the London Assembly, was the only RDA that did not report to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Each RDA was overseen by a chair and a 15-member board of directors, both of whom were selected by BIS ministers (except in London, where the mayor appointed). The RDA chairs were all businesspeople, and the boards were made up of individuals from the private sector, local government, labour organisations, and non-profits [2-3].

The Chief Executive, who was selected by the board and subject to confirmation by BIS ministers, was in charge of the RDA's day-to-day operations (or the London Mayor in the case of the LDA). The RDAs' goals were spelled out in each region's Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The RES was a document established and maintained by the RDA for the entire region; it was not only intended to direct the RDA's activity, but also that of other organisations. Each RDA updated their RES on a regular basis (about every three years) after consultation with a wide range of partners and

stakeholders in the region, including local government, non-profits, for-profits, and other interested parties. The RES was submitted for formal approval to the Department of Business, Innovation, and Skills. The RDAs attempted to accomplish their goals in a variety of ways. The most evident was through supporting projects to solve them, either directly from the RDA or indirectly through a supported agency [4].

Second, they attempted to persuade other regional stakeholders to take action as well. Third, they hoped to sway central government decisions that might have an impact on the region. In a variety of areas, the RDAs collaborated, with different RDAs taking the lead in different policy areas. Finally, the three northern RDAs (Northwest Regional Development Agency, Yorkshire Forward, and One North East) partnered on The Northern Way by collectively funding a single secretariat to coordinate this effort. Each RDA had a scientific and industry council (SIC) made up of professionals from the private, public, and academic sectors. Each SIC provided research and innovation investment advice to its RDA. Each area had a distinct focus, but all SICs contributed to the national Technology Strategy (owned by the Technology Strategy Board) through a strategic advisory committee that included the chairs of each scientific and industry council [5].

## Reference

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