

Identity and Economics: The Economic Welfare and Behavior of Romani People in Turkey

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Abstract : As a well-known fact, neoclassical economics excludes 'what is humanized' out of the literature for a long time. Rationality is defined in a very narrow context in the mainstream economics. Identity economics is one of the challenges raised against this tradition. The concept of 'identity' has been introduced to economics by Akerlof and Kranton (2000). The identity-based analysis mainly searches the links between economic welfare and decision of the actors in question related to ethnic, racial, gender and immigrant issues. This is more about discrimination and its repercussions on economic decisions of the relevant actors in a social sphere. In this article, we, in the context of identity economics, search the economic welfare and decisions of Romani people in Turkey. It is plainly observed that identity is clearly the major determinant for Romani people in economic and social life. They have their own distinctive rationality in making economic decisions. For a more scrutinized and academic analysis, we aim to trace their economic identity in their real social environment. This study is an extension of surveys conducted on Romani people in Turkey. Using data similar to SILC (Statistics for Income and Living Conditions) conducted on Romani people across the whole Turkey, we look for some questions about the income/welfare distribution among them, consumer preferences/habits, living conditions, occupations, education and as such. For this, by employing econometric and statistical analytical tools, we aim to obtain the answers for these questions. We think these analytic results will provide us to evaluate the links between their economic state and their identity more thoroughly. JEL Codes: D1, J 15, R23.

Keywords : identity economics, Romani people, discrimination, social identity and preferences

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