SOC100 – HW2

Ekumenopolis & Comparison of Neoliberalism in Turkey and Other Countries

I read <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/national-neoliberalism-in-turkey> to better understand the implementations of neoliberalism in Turkey(I was a kid when most of these were implemented).

So, the most important and probably the biggest difference of implementations of neoliberalism between Turkey and other, more developed, countries is that Turkey sold their assets to non-national sources and friends/families of the state to make Turkey a viable option for international investment and to gain money for themselves. This approach worked and turkey had 942% increase in foreign companies that were operating in Turkey from 2002 to 2017. Wow what an amazing change, right?

Now take a look at this data from <https://www.haberturk.com/ekonomi/altin/haber/1417032-ceyrek-altin-fiyatinin-21-yillik-seyri> . In 2002 “çeyrek altın- quarter gold” was 32 Turkish liras. That is about 123 Turkish liras in 2016. However, in 2016 “çeyrek altın- quarter gold” was about 214 Turkish liras. So that means from 2002 to 2016 the buying power of Turkish liras, in respect to gold, has been almost halved.

We already know that other currencies have gained value against Turkish liras in the last 18-20 years so I don’t think I need to show the evidence for that.

Despite all this fact I just laid down, this decrease in monetary value is not neoliberalism’s fault, since other countries implemented it with much more success. While other countries sold their assets to companies that could use the profit gained from state assets to create more work, more opportunities in their own countries, Turkey sold them to companies that would not do those for Turkey. To support this, when we look at the data from <https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/T%C3%BCrkiye%27de_i%C5%9Fsizlik> we see that from 2002 to 2016 unemployment rate stayed relatively same. This means that relative to the net change in working power Turkey failed to create work opportunities.

Is there a change caused by neoliberalism that affected Turkish people positively? Other than friends and family of the state, I don’t think so. Other countries reaped the benefits of neoliberalism in exchange for inequality. Turkish people lost their national assets in exchange for more inequality.