



By: *Emre Alkin*

# Does Big money mean Big success?



An interesting survey has been carried out by the **OECD** aimed at discovering the percentage of the "subjective middle class", which is about people's perceptions and judgment about their social class.

The reason why the OECD decided to investigate this phenomenon was to reveal both the income distribution and whether individuals actually live according to their income. The survey attempts to find out how many of people who say that they belong to middle-class households are actually not middle-income earners.

Put simply, the term middle income earner refers to those who earn an annual income that is 75% to 200% above the average income. Obviously, the spending and investment behaviour of people with such a level of income differs from lower income groups.

In some countries such as Portugal, the United Kingdom and Canada, people feel poor even though they are classified as middle-income earners. Citizens of the United States, Spain, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Germany, Austria and France, are middle income earners, but they do not feel that they live their lives as such.

Some of the citizens of Scandinavian countries, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic and Greece feel as if they are in the middle-income group, even though they earn below the middle income. In Turkey, on the other hand, even though only 45% of the population earn middle-income wages, 75% of the country's total population think they are in the middle-income group.

## The misery index

This is an unusual situation, in terms of purchasing power alone, because this perception also determines the spending preferences of the people.

In Turkey, the majority of people think that they belong to an income group that they do not actually belong to, and lead their lives according to this incorrect conviction. 75% of

citizens do believe that they have middle class status because they live in the city, own a refrigerator, can get a loan or can purchase certain goods or services with a credit card.

A **study** by Focus Economics explores which countries are expected to be the world's most miserable economies in 2023.

## The current trend of constant consumption causes people to be trapped in an endless debt spiral

The misery index starts with Zimbabwe and continues with Venezuela, Lebanon, Argentina, Syria, Iran, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Nigeria, South Africa, Yemen, Kosovo and Turkey.

Based on this data, we could conclude that the "subjective middle class" in these countries will continue consuming and spending at the same pace. However, we should not overlook that the current trend of constant consumption causes people to be trapped in an endless debt spiral.

Of course, some might say, "What's the big deal? Governments are indebted too". But, there is a difference. Governments do not borrow money to repay it. They just need to keep the finances afloat and manage debt.

However, citizens do not enjoy such luxury. They have to pay off their debts eventually. In many countries where there is a middle income illusion, governments tend to believe that every problem can be solved with money.

## Crazy projects

Most developing economies spend extraordinary amounts of money and use extraordinary talents to accomplish "ordinary" things, such as airports that look like shopping malls with no architectural aesthetics, "longest, widest, deepest and largest" buildings that lack in beauty and sensory appeal.

Perhaps the purpose is to cover up the

backwardness that prevails in the country by beguiling the public into admiring such display of so-called powerful leadership. The majority of mega projects, often referred to as "crazy projects", are undertaken in such countries.

While governments boast about these frivolous endeavours, the cost of living is becoming more and more expensive every day. Irreparable mistakes are being made as they waste precious time and money.



*Emre Alkin: We fail to comprehend that spending money, a lot of money, does not necessarily ensure brilliant results*

As citizens of developing countries, we fail to comprehend that spending money, a lot of money, does not necessarily ensure brilliant results. We are, in fact, fooled by temporary success, achieved by spending, or rather wasting, our already limited resources.

What we really do is that we are destroying the environment, and as a result, our morality. Once we start doing the opposite of what we do, there is no doubt that things will get better for everyone. I think there's no need to discuss the power of film and television industry when it comes to warnings for the future and mistakes that humanity has made.

## The Oscar winners and football champions

For instance, the Academy Award for the best picture is rarely presented to the most expensive film. Birdman, a 2014 American black comedy-drama film, won the Academy Award for Best Picture.

The most expensive nominee for the 2015 Academy Awards cost nearly 8 times more than the making of Birdman. Similarly, despite its budget of \$16.5 million, Birdman grossed more than \$103 million worldwide.

The Oscar Committee has apparently made a good decision by understanding the fact that the best doesn't necessarily have to be the most expensive or the highest grossing. The Oscar winner for Best Picture at the 2016 Academy Awards, Spotlight, follows The Boston Globe's 'Spotlight' team and its investigation into cases of systemic child sex abuse carried out by numerous Roman Catholic priests.

This goes to show that skilled actors alone are not enough to make you achieve success - a bold and brave screenplay is a must.

Here's an example from football: the Premier League is perhaps one of the most important and the most expensive entertainments that the United Kingdom offers the world. It is a great money-making collective of talented players where rules are applied fairly and equally to everyone.

Football clubs are trying to keep the fans as well as sponsors enthusiastic and alive by acquiring high-priced players. But, one day, a man changed all the rules. Claudio Ranieri was appointed as the new manager of Leicester City when the club was points away from the relegation zone.

The first thing he did was re-read the statistics. Having cost Leicester a combined £1.4m, Vardy and Mahrez were once among the unremarkable players of the Premier League in 2014-2015.

**No large sums of money are required to "achieve extraordinary success with a team of ordinary people"**

Let me remind you that Manchester United and Liverpool spent respectively £400m and £265m net on transfer fees in the same season.

Sacked from his role as manager of the Greek national team and came to the UK and signed a contract with Leicester City, Ranieri realized that both Vardy and Mahrez had been producing the highest percentage of close to goal shots across Europe according to statistics.

So, he decided to do the one thing that no one had dared to do before. Contrary to common belief that the higher the ball possession percentage, the better the team, Ranieri made history at the end of the 2014-2015 season with his motto, "They can possess the ball as long as they want. We will eventually take the ball and score the winning goal".

Leicester duo Jamie Vardy and Riyad Mahrez were involved in more team goals than any other player so far in the Premier League as of the middle of season 2015/2016, while Manchester United and Liverpool, continue to drop points.

Leicester City senior management, players and all key personnel went down in history, achieving unprecedented success.

Long story short, no large sums of money are required to "achieve extraordinary success with a team of ordinary people". Therein lies the difference between inspirational success stories and the most remarkable achievements in human history.