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## **EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC EDUCATION ON SOCIAL AND POLITICAL VALUES, BELIEFS AND ATTITUDES: RESULTS FROM A SURVEY IN PORTUGAL**

### **Abstract:**

The purpose of our work is to inquire whether or not economics studying has a relevant effect on the social process of molding values, beliefs and attitudes, a crucial element of the trust-building process in democratic societies. According to what was argued by several authors, mainstream economics, based on the model of self-interest, corresponding to rational, maximizing, individualistic representative agents, tends to produce relevant indoctrinating effects, creating or reinforcing both political conservatism and selfishness among students. In this paper a contribution for these discussions is made, based on the results of a survey performed in Portugal, referring to a considerable diversity of samples (economics students, other students and ordinary citizens of both rural and urban milieus) and being applied in three different years: 2006, 2009 and 2012.

### **Keywords:**

Mainstream economics; free-riding; political conservatism; trust; sociopolitical values and behaviors; Portugal

**JEL Classification:** A13, A20