

Genetic Influences on Economic Behavior

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ABSTRACT: In a sample of 2,289 ethnically homogeneous residents of Reykjavik, we look for associations between a variety of phenotypes of economic interest and a set of candidate genes that may be involved in decision making. We study a total of 415 single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in 68 genes that have published associations with cognition-related phenotypes and/or are implicated in the dopamine or serotonin systems. After correcting significance thresholds for multiple testing, we find statistically significant associations between discounting-related behaviors (smoking, drinking, and BMI) and the cognition-related gene BDNF, and between social capital accumulation and the dopamine-related gene DRD2. Ongoing work is testing whether these associations replicate in independent samples.