

Online Appendix

Appendix A Tables and Figures

Tables

Table A1. Sample Selection.

Step	Number	Share
Population	31,535	100.00%
Respondents	3,110	9.86%
Linkage consent	2,701	8.57%

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A2. Summary Statistics.

	mean	sd	min	max
<i>Descriptives</i>				
Women ^a	1.47	0.50	1.00	2.00
Age in years	50.12	8.59	27.00	64.00
Entrepreneur ^b	1.23	0.42	1.00	2.00
<i>Dependent variable</i>				
Probability ^c	5.07	3.12	0.00	10.00
<i>Time limit</i>				
3 months	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
6 months	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
12 months	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
<i>Contribution</i>				
€25	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
€100	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
€150	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
<i>Benefit</i>				
€850	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
€1,400	0.33	0.47	0.00	1.00
€1,950	0.34	0.47	0.00	1.00
<i>Observations</i>				
Individuals ^c	2,701			
Observations ^c	8,103			

Notes: ^a The variable Women is coded as “1” for men and “2” for women.

^b The variable Entrepreneur is coded as “1” for individuals which are currently not entrepreneurs and “2” for entrepreneurs.

^c The number of individuals is 2,495 individuals and 6,192 observations for the variable probability. The other variables do not have missing values.

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A3. Pearson's and Spearman Rank Correlations Between Item Nonresponse and levels of the dimensions.

Item nonresponse		
	(1) Pearson's Correlation	(2) Spearman
Time Limit	-0.010	-0.010
Contribution	-0.295*	-0.294*
Benefits	0.206*	0.206*

Notes: The number of cases is 2,701 individuals with 8,103 observations. * $p < 0.05$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A4. Pearson's and Spearman Rank Correlations Between Levels of Different Dimensions.

	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Pearson's Correlation			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.008	1.000	
Benefits	0.009	0.056*	1.000
Spearman	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.009	1.000	
Benefits	0.009	0.056*	1.000

Notes: The number of observations is 2,495 individuals with 6,192 observations. * $p < 0.05$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A5. Pearson's and Spearman Rank Correlations Between Levels of Different Dimensions When Excluding Contribution 1 (€25)

	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Pearson's correlation			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.024	1.000	
Benefits	-0.003	0.027	1.000
Spearman			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.024	1.000	
Benefits	-0.003	0.028	1.000

Notes: The number of observations is 2,405 individuals with 4,642 observations. * $p < 0.05$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A6. Pearson's and Spearman Rank Correlations Between Levels of Different Dimensions When Excluding Contribution 1 (€25) by Gender.

Women			
	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Pearson's Correlation			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.058*	1.000	
Benefits	0.002	0.011	1.000
Spearman			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.059*	1.000	
Benefits	0.002	0.012	1.000
Men			
	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Pearson's Correlation			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.006	1.000	
Benefits	-0.007	0.042*	1.000
Spearman			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	0.006	1.000	
Benefits	-0.008	0.043*	1.000

Notes: The number of cases is 1,124 women with 2,161 observations and 1,281 men with 2,474 observations. * $p < 0.05$
Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A7. Pearson's and Spearman Rank Correlations Between Levels of Different Dimensions When Excluding Contribution 1 (€25) by Age Groups.

Up to age 50			
	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Pearson's Correlation			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.034	1.000	
Benefits	0.021	0.029	1.000
Spearman			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.034	1.000	
Benefits	0.021	0.030	1.000
Age 51 and above			
	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Pearson's Correlation			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.014	1.000	
Benefits	-0.028	0.027	1.000
Spearman			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.014	1.000	
Benefits	-0.029	0.027	1.000

Notes: The number of cases is 1,188 individuals above 50 years with 2,253 observations and 1,217 individuals up to 50 years with 2,389 observations. * $p < 0.05$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A8. Pearson's and Spearman Rank Correlations Between Levels of Different Dimensions When Excluding Contribution 1 (€25) by Entrepreneurship Status.

Entrepreneurs			
	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Pearson's Correlation			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.019	1.000	
Benefits	-0.006	0.019	1.000
Spearman			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.019	1.000	
Benefits	-0.007	0.020	1.000
Not entrepreneurs			
	Time Limit	Contribution	Benefits
Pearson's Correlation			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.043	1.000	
Benefits	0.009	0.060	1.000
Spearman			
Time Limit	1.000		
Contribution	-0.043	1.000	
Benefits	0.010	0.060	1.000

Notes: The number of cases is 1,885 entrepreneurs with 3,637 observations and 520 individuals who are not entrepreneurs with 1,005 observations. * $p < 0.05$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A9. Main Results.

	(1) OLS	(2) OLS only €100 and €150 contributions	(3) OLS only €25 contribution
<i>Time Limit</i>			
3 months	-0.030 (0.089)	-0.061 (0.102)	0.050 (0.178)
6 months (Ref.)			
12 months	-0.077 (0.090)	-0.010 (0.103)	-0.275 (0.184)
<i>Contribution</i>			
€25	1.212*** (0.105)		
€100 (Ref.)			
€150	-0.767*** (0.086)	-0.769*** (0.086)	
<i>Benefits</i>			
€850	-1.378*** (0.093)	-1.474*** (0.105)	-1.125*** (0.184)
€1,400 (Ref.)			
€1,950	0.558*** (0.098)	0.615*** (0.111)	0.362 (0.203)
<i>Observations</i>			
Individuals	2,495	2,405	1,184
Observations	6,192	4,642	1,550

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the individual level and in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A10. Results Including Control Variables.

	(1) OLS	(2) OLS only €100 and €150 contributions	(3) OLS only €25 contribution
<i>Time Limit</i>			
3 months	-0.049 (0.088)	-0.065 (0.100)	0.008 (0.180)
6 months (Ref.)			
12 months	-0.079 (0.089)	-0.007 (0.102)	-0.288 (0.184)
<i>Contribution</i>			
€25	1.249*** (0.105)		
€100 (Ref.)			
€150	-0.759*** (0.085)	-0.760*** (0.085)	
<i>Benefits</i>			
€850	-1.372*** (0.092)	-1.468*** (0.103)	-1.123*** (0.183)
€1,400 (Ref.)			
€1,950	0.571*** (0.098)	0.624*** (0.110)	0.362 (0.203)
<i>Controls</i>			
Women	0.014* (0.006)	0.018** (0.007)	-0.002 (0.010)
Age	-0.057 (0.104)	-0.128 (0.112)	0.139 (0.179)
Entrepreneurs	0.915*** (0.127)	1.007*** (0.137)	0.588* (0.235)
<i>Observations</i>			
Individuals	2,495	2,405	1,184
Observations	6,192	4,642	1,550

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the individual level and in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A11. Fixed-Effects Regression Results.

	(1) FE	(2) FE only €100 and €150 contributions	(3) FE only €25 contribution
<i>Time Limit</i>			
3 months	-0.072 (0.070)	-0.092 (0.076)	-0.269 (0.179)
6 months (Ref.)			
12 months	0.038 (0.072)	0.064 (0.079)	-0.032 (0.174)
<i>Contribution</i>			
€25	2.046*** (0.090)		
€100 (Ref.)			
€150	-0.933*** (0.067)	-1.033*** (0.069)	
<i>Benefits</i>			
€850	-1.804*** (0.074)	-1.891*** (0.084)	-2.052*** (0.211)
€1,400 (Ref.)			
€1,950	0.989*** (0.077)	1.188*** (0.084)	1.052*** (0.220)
<i>Observations</i>			
Individuals	2,495	2,405	1,184
Observations	6,192	4,642	1,550

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the individual level and in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A12. Multilevel Model Results.

	(1) ML	(2) ML only €100 and €150 contributions	(3) ML only €25 contribution
<i>Time Limit</i>			
3 months	-0.057 (0.067)	-0.088 (0.073)	-0.094 (0.151)
6 months (Ref.)			
12 months	0.007 (0.068)	0.049 (0.074)	-0.207 (0.152)
<i>Contribution</i>			
€25	1.806*** (0.072)		
€100 (Ref.)			
€150	-0.865*** (0.064)	-0.933*** (0.060)	
<i>Benefits</i>			
€850	-1.653*** (0.066)	-1.722*** (0.072)	-1.469*** (0.149)
€1,400 (Ref.)			
€1,950	0.864*** (0.070)	1.014*** (0.075)	0.668*** (0.162)
<i>Observations</i>			
Individuals	2,495	2,405	1,184
Observations	6,192	4,642	1,550

Notes: Standard errors are clustered at the individual level and in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Table A13. OLS Results of the First Vignette.

	(1) OLS	(2) OLS only €100 and €150 contributions	(3) OLS only €25 contribution
<i>Time Limit</i>			
3 months	0.144 (0.165)	0.058 (0.189)	0.406 (0.333)
6 months (Ref.)			
12 months	-0.025 (0.166)	0.027 (0.194)	-0.148 (0.323)
<i>Contribution</i>			
€25	1.298*** (0.174)		
€100 (Ref.)			
€150	-0.445** (0.157)	-0.441** (0.158)	
<i>Benefits</i>			
€850	-1.124*** (0.161)	-1.228*** (0.189)	-0.842** (0.307)
€1,400 (Ref.)			
€1,950	0.355* (0.172)	0.370 (0.201)	0.301 (0.333)
<i>Observations</i>			
Individuals	1,988	1,473	515
Observations	1,988	1,473	515

Notes: The sample is restricted to the first vignette for each respondent. Standard errors are clustered at the individual level and in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Figures

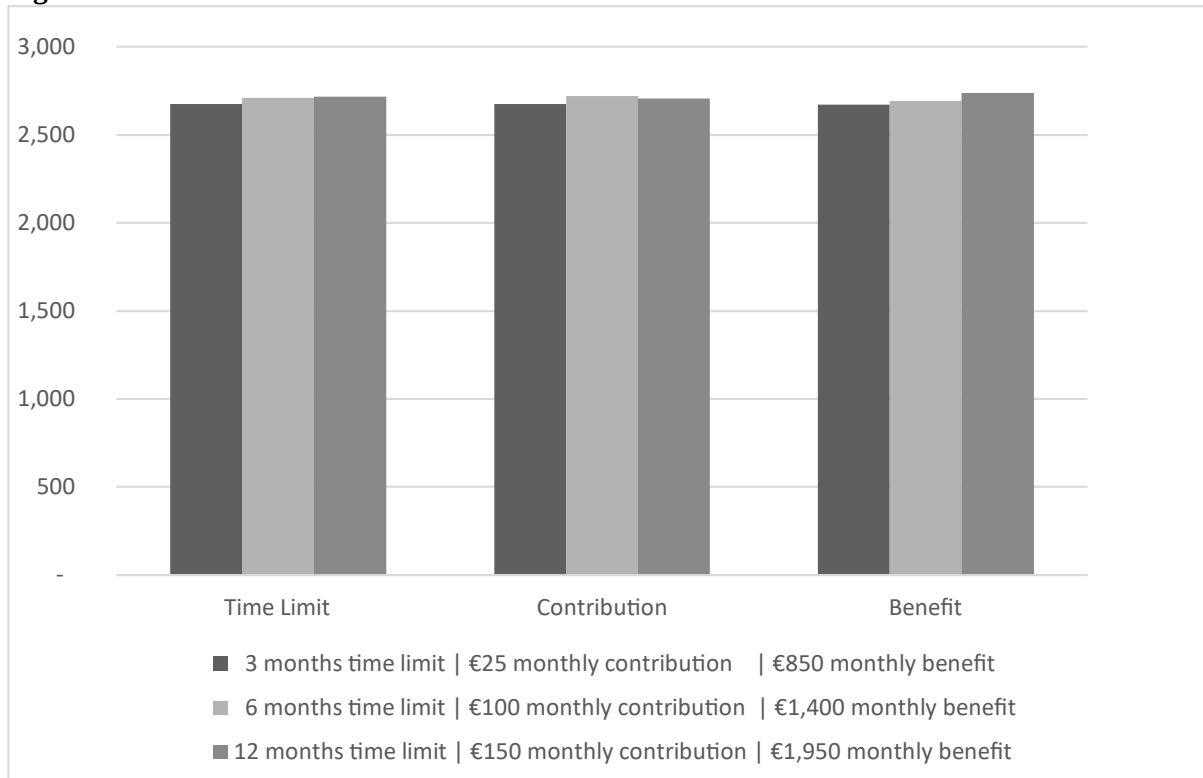


Figure A1. Distribution of surveyed levels by dimension.

Notes: The y-axis illustrates how often a level was shown in total to respondents. The survey levels are 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months for the time limit dimension, €25, €100, and €150 for the monthly contribution dimension, and €850, €1,400, and €1,950 for the benefits dimension. The number of cases is 2,701 individuals with 8,103 observations.

Source: Own survey and own calculations

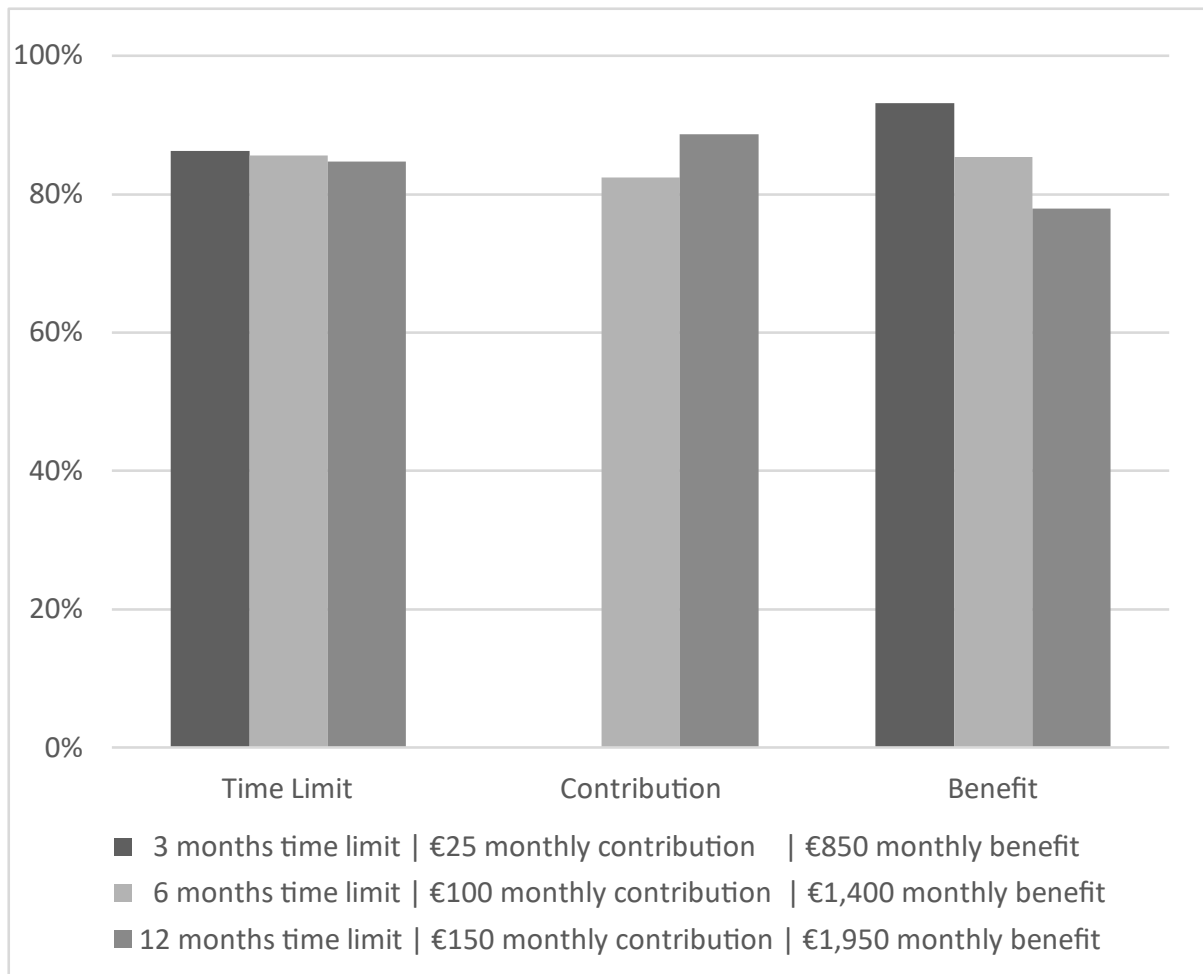


Figure A2. Response rates of levels by dimension when excluding level 1 (€25) of contributions.

Notes: The y-axis illustrates how often a level was shown in total to respondents. The survey levels are 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months for the time limit dimension, €25, €100, and €150 for the monthly contribution dimension, and €850, €1,400, and €1,950 for the benefits dimension. The number of observations is 2,405 individuals with 4,642 observations.

Source: Own survey and own calculations

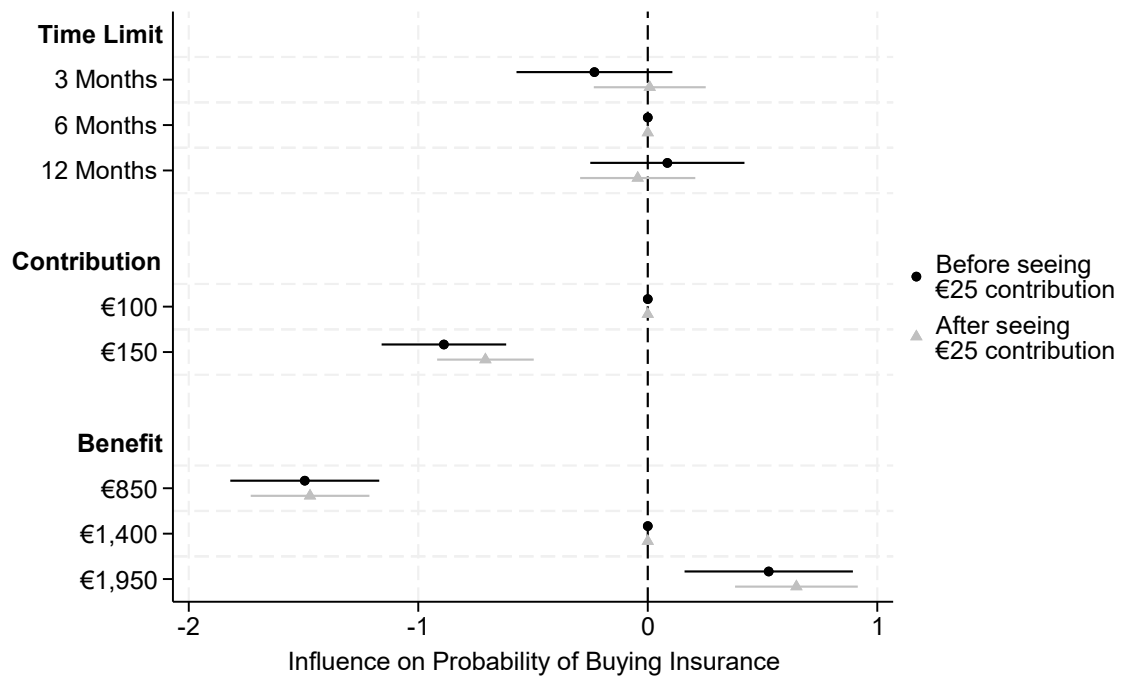


Figure A3. Response behavior before and after seeing an implausible vignette.

Notes: The dependent variable is the probability of buying voluntary unemployment insurance for entrepreneurs. We excluded vignettes with the €25 contribution, but the results are robust to including these vignettes. The number of cases is 1,584 individuals with 3,133 observations before seeing a vignette with a €25 contribution, and 1,153 individuals with 1,529 observations after seeing a vignette with a €25 contribution. The standard errors are clustered at the individual level, and the confidence intervals reported are at the 95% level (two-tailed t-test).

Source: Own survey and own calculations

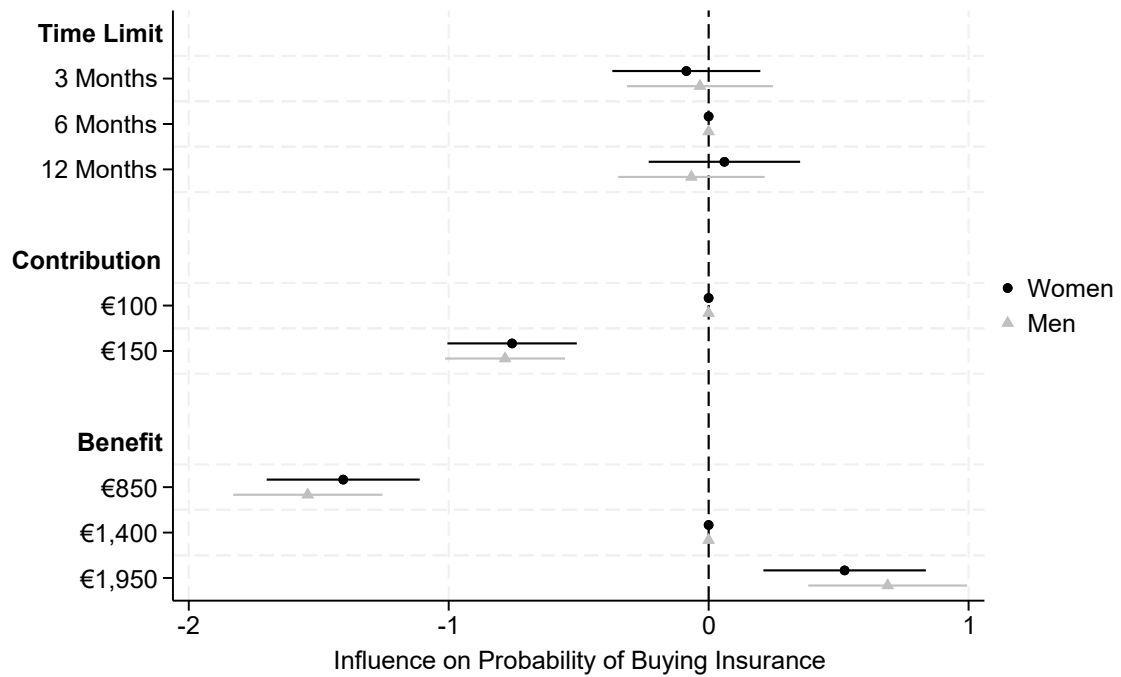


Figure A4. Results by Gender.

Notes: The dependent variable is the probability of buying voluntary unemployment insurance for entrepreneurs. We excluded vignettes with the €25 contribution, but the results are robust to including these vignettes. The number of cases is 1,124 women with 2,161 observations and 1,281 men with 2,474 observations. The standard errors are clustered at the individual level, and the confidence intervals reported are at the 95% level (two-tailed t-test).

Source: Own survey and own calculations

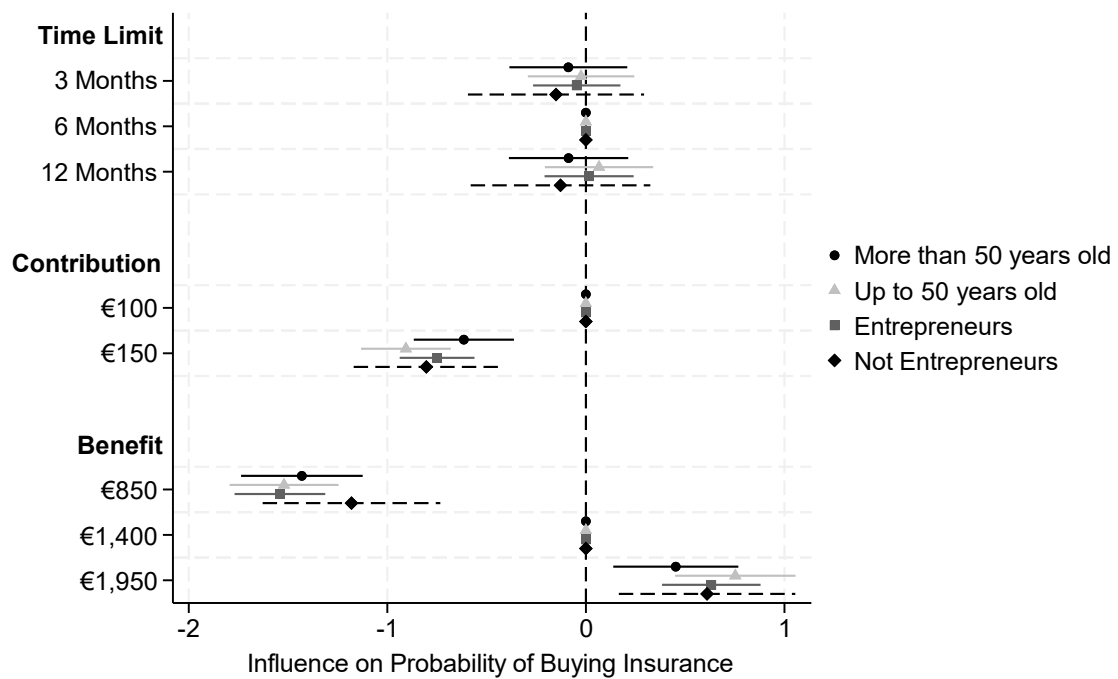


Figure A5. Robustness of Results by Age Groups and Entrepreneurship Status.

Notes: The dependent variable is the probability of buying voluntary unemployment insurance for entrepreneurs. We excluded vignettes with the €25 contribution, but the results are robust to including these vignettes. The number of cases is 1,188 individuals above 50 years with 2,253 observations, and 1,217 individuals up to 50 years with 2,389 observations. The number of cases is 1,885 entrepreneurs with 3,637 observations and 520 individuals who are not entrepreneurs with 1,005 observations. The standard errors are clustered at the individual level, and the confidence intervals reported are at the 95% level (two-tailed t-test).

Source: Own survey and own calculations

Appendix B

Experimental Design of the Unemployment Insurance Model

We modeled our design after the Austrian model for unemployment insurance. We chose the Austrian model due to the similarities between Austria and Germany. For example, these two countries use the same language and share a long history in the Holy Roman Empire (Auswärtiges Amt, 2025). Today, the countries are still often grouped together as German-speaking Europe and share institutional similarities in the labor market, like a focus on dual vocational degrees (Ebner, Graf, and Nikolai, 2013).

In Austria, entrepreneurs can voluntarily take out unemployment insurance and choose their own monthly contribution. The monthly contribution determines the monthly benefits. For example, a monthly contribution of €52.14 would result in €862.28 in monthly benefits in the event of unemployment (Table B1).

Table B1. The Austrian Voluntary Unemployment Insurance for Entrepreneurs Model.

Monthly Contribution	Monthly Benefits ^a
€52.14	€862.28
€208.57	€1,404.93
€312.85	€1,914.13

Notes: ^a In the Austrian model, benefits are calculated daily. We multiplied the daily benefits by 30.33 to represent average monthly benefits.

Source: WKO (2024)

Because entrepreneurs in Germany receive a 50% discount on insurance contributions for the first two years, we divided the contributions by 2 for our design. Furthermore, we rounded the monthly benefits and monthly contribution to reduce cognitive load. These steps lead to our final levels for contributions and benefits (Table B2).

Table B2. Experimental Design.

Monthly Contribution	Monthly Benefits
€25	€850
€100	€1,400
€150	€1,950

References

- Auswärtiges Amt (2025). *Germany and Austria: Bilateral relations*. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/aussenpolitik/laenderinformationen/oesterreich-node/austria-227912>
- Ebner, C., Graf, L., & Nikolai, R. (2013). New institutional linkages between dual vocational training and higher education: A comparative analysis of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. *Integration and inequality in educational institutions*, 281-298.

WKO (2024). Arbeitslosenversicherungsschutz für Unternehmer.

<https://www.wko.at/sozialversicherung/arbeitslosenversicherungsschutz-unternehmer#:~:text=Selbst%C3%A4ndige%20haben%20die%20Wahl%20zwischen,oder%2005%2C9%20Prozent%20aus.>