

Nudging for lockdown: behavioural insights from an online experiment

Thierry Blayac
Dimitri Dubois
Sebastien Duchene
Phu Nguyen-Van
Ismael Rafai
Bruno Ventelou
Marc Willinger

2022-5 Document de Travail/ Working Paper



Economix - UMR 7235 Bâtiment Maurice Allais
Université Paris Nanterre 200, Avenue de la République
92001 Nanterre Cedex

Site Web : economix.fr
Contact : secreteriat@economix.fr
Twitter : @EconomixU



Nudging for lockdown: behavioural insights from an online experiment

Thierry Blayac [1] Dimitri Dubois [1] Sébastien Duchêne [1] Phu Nguyen-Van [2]
Ismaël Rafai [1] Bruno Ventelou [3] Marc Willinger [1]

[1] CEE-M, Univ. Montpellier, CNRS, INRAE, Institut Agro, Montpellier, France.

[2] EconomiX, CNRS, UPL, Université Paris Nanterre (France) & TIMAS, Thang Long University (Vietnam)

[3] Aix Marseille Univ, CNRS, AMSE, Marseille, France.

Abstract

We test the effectiveness of a social comparison nudge to enhance lockdown compliance during the Covid-19 pandemic, using a French representative sample (N=1154). Respondents were randomly assigned to a favourable/unfavourable informational feedback (daily road traffic mobility patterns, in Normandy - a region of France) on peer lockdown compliance. Our dependent variable was the intention to comply with a possible future lockdown. We controlled for risk, time, and social preferences and tested the effectiveness of the nudge. We found no evidence of the effectiveness of the social comparison nudge among the whole French population, but the nudge was effective when its recipient and the reference population shared the same geographical location (Normandy). Exploratory results on this subsample (N=52) suggest that this effectiveness could be driven by non-cooperative individuals.

Keywords: COVID-19; Lockdown compliance; Social Comparison Nudge; Risk preferences; Time preferences; Social preferences

1. Introduction

In the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous governments have made the choice to lockdown their populations (Ferraresi et al., 2020a). By limiting freedom of movement and assembly, lockdowns reduce physical contact and appear as an efficient way to slow down the spread of the disease (Bonardi et al., 2020; Ferraresi et al., 2020b). However, this strategy is efficient if and only if it is accepted and followed by the population. When (part of) the population does not comply with the lockdown, enforcing it is both costly for governments and raises important democratic questions (Bargain and Aminjonov 2020; Amat et al. 2020). Therefore, it is of the utmost importance for policy makers (1) to understand the determinants of lockdown compliance and (2) to design effective policies to enhance it. Based on a representative sample of the French adult population, this article provides behavioural insights into those issues, (i) by empirically investigating the role of individual and social preferences, (ii) by experimentally testing a social-comparison nudge, and (iii) by exploring the mediating role of preferences in channelling the nudge.

Lockdown compliance is costly for individuals as it reduces their freedom of movement, but is beneficial for society as a whole by reducing viral exposure and thereby the likelihood of infection. The decision to comply thus implies a clear trade-off between a health social benefit and some individual costs. Many factors have already been investigated as predictors of compliance to anti-COVID-19 restrictions (including lockdown). These include lockdown characteristics in terms of duration, flexibility or intensity (Gollwitwer et al., 2020); individual characteristics such as age, gender or education, political orientation, income, and trust in science and medicine (e.g. Gadarian et al., 2021; Nivette et al., 2021; Bertin et al., 2020; Sailer et al., 2020; Painter et al., 2020; Plohl et al., 2020; Wright et al., 2020), personality traits such as empathy, impulsivity, amorality, egoism, or psychopathy (Zettler et al., 2020; Kuiper et al., 2020; Zajenowski et al., 2020), economic factors (including risk and time preferences) and social preferences (e.g. Müller and Rau, 2021; Sheth and Wright, 2020; Campos-Mercad et al., 2021). Testing to what extent, and in what direction, this concept of *preferences*, borrowed from behavioural economics, can be used to explain individuals' actual behaviours facing Covid-19 is one of the objectives of the paper.¹

In this paper, we tested an intervention aimed at increasing compliance with lockdown, and rely both on incentivized and stated social preferences to investigate their role as well as their interaction with the intervention. This intervention is inspired by the concept of “nudge” (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008). Nudges are based on the view that policy makers could use knowledge from behavioural science as input when formulating public policy. Compared to traditional forms of policy, nudges constitute

¹ Testing whether psychological traits have an impact on this kind of trade-off has already been studied for specific health decisions, like vaccines, also showing a dilemma between social benefits and individual costs (Massin et al. 2015; Collange et al., 2016).

“soft” interventions, which exploit an individual’s behavioural biases and are in general well accepted by the population (Rafai et al., 2021). The aim is to steer people’s behaviour in a predictable direction, without significantly impacting their actual incentives (which can be costly), nor limiting their set of available opportunities.² In the public health domain, nudges are increasingly popular. For example, several papers have discussed the insights from behavioural economics in promoting vaccine uptake (Betsch et al. 2015, Chen and Stevens, 2017), emphasising the potential for nudge policies to increase vaccination rate.³ This literature -- mainly sourced in behavioural economics -- can also be connected with the literature in social psychology concerning “descriptive norm manipulation”, evocating *this is what most people do*, to influence one subject’s behaviour by providing information on the behaviour of others (Nolan, 2017, Suls and Wheeler, 2017, Bichieri and Dimant, 2019).

We report the expected observed behavioural patterns induced by a *social comparison nudge*, SCN thereafter (Chen et al. 2017). Our SCN consisted in communicating respondents’ true information about the degree of compliance of their peers, in order to influence their own compliance intention. SCNs refer to policy interventions that rely on feedback about peer behaviour, pushing individuals to an interpersonal comparison. Disseminating information about prevalent behaviour tends to lead people to copy it. Such behaviour is supported by theories of preference for conformity in psychology (e.g. Ash, 1951, 1956), in economics (Akerlof, 1980, Bernheim, 1994), and by theories of interdependent preferences, such as psychological game theory. SCNs have been successfully implemented in many domains: for example, energy consumption (Allcott, 2011; Allcott and Rogers, 2014; Costa and Kahn, 2013), contributions to public goods (Chen et al., 2010) or traffic violations (Chen et al., 2017). Their effectiveness is based on two different mechanisms. First, a SCN informs about what other people do, which may induce a feeling of social disapproval in the case of deviant behaviour (Thøgersen, 2014). Second, by making the common attitude more salient while the individual’s decision is formed, the SCN emphasises a “social norm” that can shape behaviour through automatic decisional heuristics (Cialdini, Kallgren & Reno, 1991). This second mechanism does not really suppose a rational deliberation (*system-2*, to use the famous terms of Kahneman); it is more a kind of subcortical process of ‘human animals’ in search of conformity (*system-1*). Here again, we contribute to the literature in social psychology (Gollwitzer et al, 2011, Suls and Wheeler 2011,

² The definition of nudges remains somewhat vague, as many types of interventions may qualify as a ‘nudge’. In this paper, we do not discuss definitional issues about what can be considered as a genuine nudge. We refer the reader to Mongin and Cozic (2018). Nor do we address the ethical debate about the legitimacy of nudge policy and libertarian paternalism (see e.g. Lecouteux, 2015).

³ In particular, Korn et al. (2018) especially rely on the mechanism of the social dilemma, where an individual’s interests may conflict with group interests, as we do in the present paper. It proposed implementing a social-comparison nudge, using feedback information to influence an individual’s vaccination uptake; the authors did not find confirmatory results at the “conventional criteria of statistical significance” (as said), suggesting the need for further research.

Thurmer et al, 2020), questioning by which precise channels peer influence can be effective on the targeted subjects, via their impulsive behaviour or via (some of) their more profound cognitive deliberations (the reflective-impulsive dual process of Strack and Deutsch, 2004).

To summarise, we contribute to the literature on anti-COVID-19 policy design, by focusing on the behavioural determinants of lockdown compliance in a representative sample of the French population. We do this by (i) testing a “social comparison” nudge (SCN), and (ii) investigating behavioural determinants that could affect the effectiveness of such a type of nudge for lockdown compliance. We add two new features to the existing literature. First, while mobilising a representative sample, we elicit individuals’ preferences not only with self-reported measures but also based on incentivized and validated experimental tasks in an online lab-in-the-field setting. Second, we implement a Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT), on this same representative sample, to test the effectiveness of a SCN on lockdown compliance intentions. We are thus part of a general tendency to search for external validity of experimental economics, by pushing open the doors of the laboratory to investigate in the field.

Our results suggest a weak explanatory power of experimentally elicited preferences, in contrast to self-reported measures of preferences and that our social nudge was effective only when the recipient of the nudge shared the same geographical region as the reference population. Moreover, in line with studies investigating individuals’ *nudgeability* (to what extent an individual is susceptible to being nudged, see de Ridder et al., 2021), we carried out an exploratory analysis to investigate the moderators of nudge effectiveness. In particular, we are interested in the moderating role of risk, time and social preferences.⁴ Our exploratory results suggest that cooperativeness, elicited through economic games, could be a moderator of this effectiveness: the SCN mainly affecting participants who did not cooperate in the economic games, pushing them towards a higher acceptance of future lockdown instruction.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. Section 2 describes the methodology, Section 3 presents our key findings and Section 4 provides a discussion and concludes.

2. Methodology

We start with a short description of our database (2.1) and sanitary context (2.2) before providing a detailed description of our SCN (2.3). We then discuss the choice of the dependent variable that was

⁴ We are not the first to investigate the role of preferences in moderating nudges effectiveness. Most studies have investigated the mediating role of preferences on default nudges effectiveness. For example, Robinson et al. (2021) found that risk preferences moderate the effectiveness of a default nudge on insurance uptake. Taube & Vetter (2019) showed that people with stronger pro environmental attitudes reacted more strongly to a default nudge promoting “green” products. While Theotokis & Manganari (2015) found an opposite result with a nudge promoting towel reuse.

targeted by the SCN (2.4) and the explanatory variables that are potentially activated by the SCN (2.5).

2.1 Design of the survey: sample and representativeness

We managed a web-based lab-in-the field collection of data from a representative sample of the French population (see Online Appendix for information on representativeness). The targeted sample size was $N=1000$ to ensure good representativeness of the French population, as well as high statistical power.⁵ Beginning at the end of March 2020, the survey institute *Viavoice*⁶ recruited respondents by phone for the online questionnaire. Of the 7500 persons contacted by telephone, 5331 accepted and received a web link, and a total of 1154 responded to the online survey with a fully completed questionnaire and a signed online informed consent form (response rate 21.6%). The web-based survey, was developed with the oTree platform and hosted on a dedicated server managed by the research-team.⁷

2.2 Sanitary context

The survey was administered at the end of the first French lockdown (which began on March 17th and ended on May 10th. The first respondent completed the questionnaire on May 4th, the last respondent on May 16th. At the time of the survey, the end date of the lockdown had already been communicated. After 6 weeks of lockdown, the epidemic was controlled (with fewer new admissions to hospital than discharges). Up to that date, 93,372 people had been hospitalised in France (including 51,371 cured) and 25,201 had died from COVID-19.

2.3 Randomised Controlled Trial with a SCN

Our SCN, which relies on the principle of peer to peer comparison, was inspired by nudges often applied in the domain of energy consumption⁸. The principle is to influence individuals by providing them with a favourable social pattern to compare to. In the case of energy consumption, people receive feedback on energy use by their “neighbours”, which tends to push them to energy conservation.

⁵ Representativeness was important, in particular because older generations are amongst the most vulnerable groups of society concerning COVID-19, and are not included in many studies because of technological barriers, which may bias the results. With a sample of $N=1000$, the probability of detecting a small effect size (Cohen’s $d=0.2$) at the 5% level, with a two-sided t-test is equal to 0.88. This probability raises to 0.92 with $N=1154$.

⁶ <http://www.institut-viavoice.com/>

⁷ Other studies using the same sample, but analysing different data are Blayac et al. (2021, 2022), Rafai et al. (2022), Wang et al. (2022), and Wen et al. (2022).

⁸ Research on social comparison about energy consumption include Kantola, Syme, and Campbell (1984); Allcott (2011, 2015); Ayres, Raseman, and Shih (2013); Costa and Kahn (2013); Dolan and Metcalfe (2013); Allcott and Rogers (2014); and Sudarshan (2014). Delmas, Fischlein, and Asensio (2013) reviews 156 published field trials studying social comparisons and other informational interventions to induce energy conservation. We especially relied on Costa and Kahn. (2013).

Transposed to the field of lockdown compliance, this principle consists in informing respondents about the lockdown compliance of their proximate counterparts.

The practical implementation of the SCN took advantage of the information and similar verbatim in the one released on the 24/7 news channel (e.g. see Figure A2 in Appendix). We accessed the Web-Application *Covimoov* (Covimoov - GEO4CAST)⁹ providing road-traffic pattern information, from which we extracted the information for two dates: April 3rd (positive treatment, denoted as “nudge +”) and April 17th (negative treatment, “nudge -”), about road-traffic in the Normandy Region (see Figure A3 in Appendix). Our objective was to provide traffic information with the greatest possible contrast between the two feedbacks (positive vs negative). From all regional data available in the ‘Coovimoov app’ we selected the Normandy region as it was the region exhibiting the greatest difference between two proximate dates just before the survey.¹⁰

We informed the respondents as follows:¹¹

“The application Covimoov identifies daily traffic in the regions, and compares it to a normal pre-crisis period.”

Then we randomised our 1154 respondents into two groups:

G1 (N=566): message (nudge +): ***“(April 3rd info...): greatly reduced traffic was recorded for a Friday in Normandy, with barely 40% of the usual flow of traffic, demonstrating scrupulous respect for lockdown.”***

G2 (N=588): message (nudge -): ***“(April 17th info...): near-normal traffic was recorded for a Friday in Normandy, showing a certain disregard for lockdown.”***

This randomised treatment was followed by the question (common to both groups):

What do you think about the level of lockdown compliance today in your own region? Please select only one of the following: [Scrupulous respect; Respect; Disregard; Complete disregard]

The nudge was also followed by the question (common to both groups):

⁹ <https://www.geo4cast.ai/covimoov/>

¹⁰ Another way to proceed might have been to present either a neutral message, or not to propose any message, as a control group. At the study design, we decided to test positive vs negative social information as we expected statistical power to increase with the contrast between the two types of message. Now, knowing the state of opinions at the date of the survey (3 weeks after the design of the study), we believe that the negative framing could be considered as the control condition, as there was abundant information about “non-compliant behaviour” in the news.

¹¹ Original material (in French) is available in the Appendix.

In the event of a new lockdown made necessary by an upsurge in the epidemic, would you say that you will scrupulously respect government instructions concerning lockdown? Place your answer on a 0-10 scale (with 10 being the most scrupulous respect)

The answer to this last question measures the intended degree of compliance (IDC, thereafter) of a future lockdown and is the variable from which we will construct the main dependent variable.

2.4 The dependent variable

Let IDC_i be the intended degree of compliance to a future lockdown reported by respondent i on the 0-10 scale (0 for the lowest and 10 for the highest IDC). The distribution of this variable (Figure 1) shows a left-skewed distribution with the mode at 10.

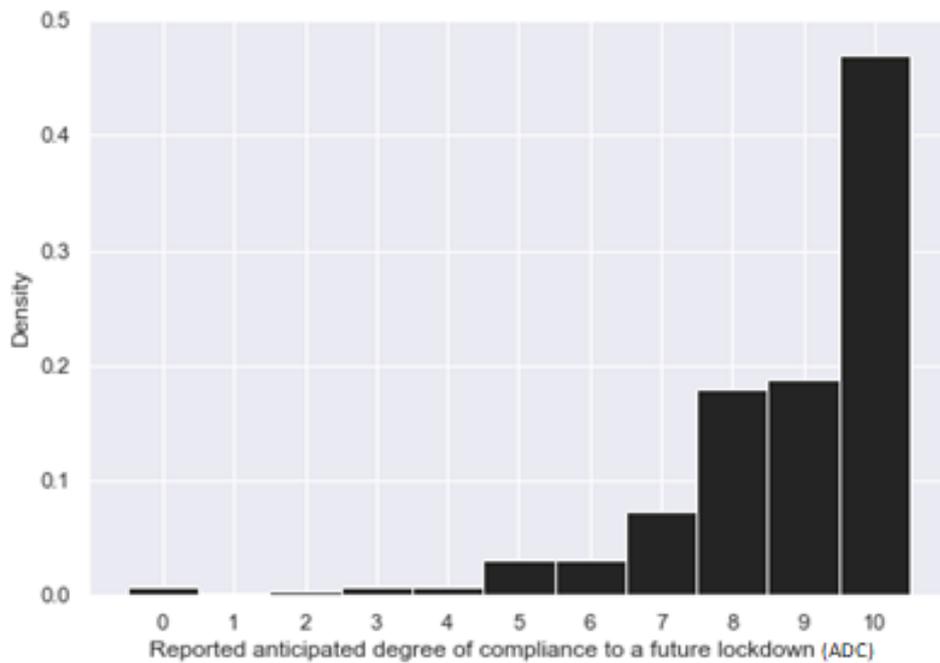


Figure 1: Distribution of intended degree of compliance

IDC is a discrete ordinal variable and in theory, an appropriate modelling would be an ordered probit/logit regression model. However, since there are too few observations for low IDC values, ordered modelling is not reliable. Thus, some grouping is necessary. This kind of grouping has often been employed in other literature, such as subjective well-being, job satisfaction (see, e.g. Winkelmann and Boes, 2006). The grouping should be such that we have enough observations in each group, therefore requiring us to group IDC from 0 to 8 together. Our reference specification is thus a binary probit model based on coding IDC as a binary dependent variable, noted IC (intended compliance): $IC = 1$ if the IDC is either 9 or 10 and $IC = 0$ otherwise. The probit regression model is:

$$P(IC = 1|X_i) = \Phi(X_i'\beta)$$

where $\Phi(\cdot)$ is the cumulative normal distribution and X_i is the vector of explanatory variables. The latter includes our (incentivized and stated) behavioural measures, and several control variables (gender, age, day of the survey, etc. - see Table 2 notes for the complete list). For a robustness check, we also provide in Appendix results of Tobit regressions, where the original dependent variable *IDC* is censored between 0 and 10 (*IDC* is then left-censored at 0 and right-censored at 10). Results remain similar to the probit regression.

2.5 Behavioural explanatory variables

Two types of behavioural measures were collected in the following order: incentivized preferences based on experimental tasks, and stated preferences. In order to compare the empirical relevance of these two types of variables, we collected stated preferences and experimentally elicited preferences for two dimensions: risk preferences and time preferences. Social preference dimensions were measured by stated preferences (trust) and through experimental tasks (cooperativeness and pro-sociality). Those three dimensions (risk, time and social preferences) were chosen as they are the main dimensions used to model choice in behavioural economics (Jullien, 2018). Table 1 below gives a summary of the tasks, the associated variables collected, and their mean and standard deviation. The block of incentivized tasks consisted of 4 different tasks. Participants were informed that only one of the four tasks would be randomly selected for final payment. All participants played the tasks in the same order. As standard in the economic literature, those tasks were economic games given without any particular context, intended to measure general preferences (Kagel and Roth, 2020). The first task was a portfolio choice task (Gneezy and Potter, 1997),¹² the second was a linear (four players) voluntary contribution game.¹³ The third task consisted of the 6-item Social Value Orientation (SVO) as in Murphy et al. (2011).¹⁴ The fourth task corresponded to a convex time budget (CTB) method (Andreoni and Sprenger, 2012)¹⁵. The block of stated preferences consisted of (a) self-reported willingness to take risks in general, in financial situations or in health domains, as in Dohmen et al. (2011), (b) self-reported level of patience (Falk et al. 2018), and (c) self-reported level of trust in

¹² Participants decided how much from a €20 endowment to invest in a risky asset with equal probability of receiving three times the invested amount or losing the investment (in addition to the remaining endowment).

¹³ Participants decided how much from a €20 endowment to invest in a public good. Each euro invested in the public good earns €0.5 for each of the four members of the group.

¹⁴ The SVO was composed of 6 different allocation decisions (for this task, only one of the decisions was selected for payment) where the participant had to choose a monetary repartition between themselves and another participant randomly selected.

¹⁵ The task consists of two different allocation decisions between two different dates (for this task, only one of the two decisions can be selected for payment). In the first decision, participants allocate €40 between May 18th and June 18th. In the second allocation decision, participants allocate €40 between June 18th and July 18th. If the decision was selected for payment, the participant earned the amount invested at the earlier date and 1.2 times the amount invested at the latter date.

general, and in family and professional circles (as in the General Social Survey¹⁶). All stated preferences were reported on a 0-10 Likert-scale.

¹⁶ <https://gss.norc.org/>

	Task	Variable	Definition	Mean (std)
R i s k	Task 1: Portfolio choice task (Gneezy and Potter, 1997) Incentives (M=€22.17)	Risk_aversion	Amount of money not invested in the Portfolio choice task.	5.445 (7.619)
	Self-reported willingness to take risk In general, in financial, and health domains (Dohmen et al., 2011) No incentive	Risk_general	willingness to take risk in general (0-10)	3.931 (2.695)
		Risk_financial	willingness to take risk in financial situations (0-10)	2.653 (2.529)
		Risk_health	willingness to take risk in health situations (0-10)	2.335 (2.529)
S o c i a l	Task 2: Voluntary contribution to a (linear) public good Incentives (M=€25.37)	Cooperativeness	Amount of money invested in the public good	5.376 (7.287)
	Task 3: SVO (Murphy et al., 2011) Incentives (M=38.23€)	SVO_angle	Social Value Orientation angle as in Murphy et al. (2011).	32.012 (13.29)
	General Social Survey (GSS). Self-reported level of trust in general, family and professional domains. No incentive	Trust_general	trust in general (0-10)	4.457 (2.563)
		Trust_family	trust toward family members (0-10)	7.586 (2.756)
Trust_professional		trust toward colleagues (0-10)	4.639 (2.807)	
T i m e	Task 4: Convex Time Budget method (Andreoni and Sprenger, 2012) Incentives (M=€31.24 + €13.97)	Discount	Share of endowment invested at the first dates.	0.348 (0.309)
	Self-reported patience (Falk et al. 2018) No incentive.	Present_bias	Ratio of the investment on the first date between the two periods.	2.031 5.700
		Patience	Self-reported level of patience (0-10)	5.919 (2.749)

Table 1: Variables - definition and distribution.

3. Results

We start with the effectiveness of the SCN to enhance lockdown compliance, as a function of the distance between the reference population (Normandy) and the recipients of the nudge (inhabitant of Normandy vs neighbouring department vs France). Then we present results on the behavioural determinants (self-reported and incentivized measures of preferences) of lockdown compliance (Table 2). Finally, as an exploratory analysis, we investigate whether those behavioural determinants moderate nudge effectiveness.

Result 1: The SCN did not increase future lockdown compliance except when the recipient belonged to the reference population.

Figure 2 presents the proportion of respondents reporting a high intention to comply with future lockdown (i.e. $IDC > 8$), as a function of the SCN (negative vs positive SCN) and the geographical location of the recipient of the nudge (Normandy vs neighbouring departments vs France).¹⁷

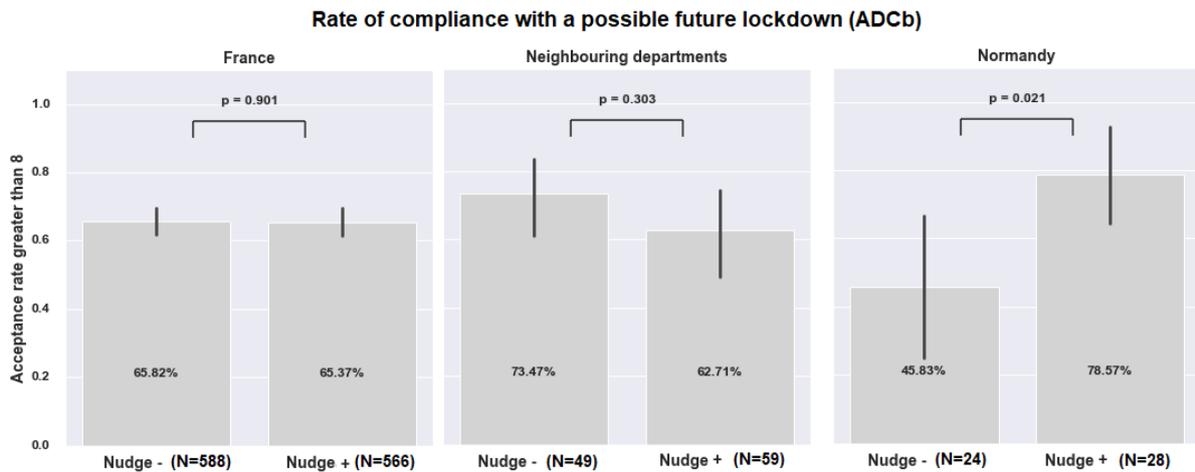


Figure 2: Compliance to a future lockdown as a function of the SCN and geographical distance.

The positive SCN increased the acceptance probability of the future lockdown in Normandy (*Nudge -* : $M = 45.83\%$, *Nudge +* : $M = 78.57\%$, *Fisher-exact test*, $p = 0.021$) whereas the effect was not significant either in the neighbouring departments (*Nudge -* : $M = 73.47\%$, *Nudge +* : $M = 62.71\%$, *Fisher-exact test*, $p = 0.303$) or for the whole population (*Nudge -* : $M = 65.82\%$, *Nudge +* : $M = 65.37\%$, *Fisher-exact test*, $p = 0.901$). Those results were confirmed by probit regressions (see Table 2) and by Tobit regressions (see Table A2 in Appendix).

¹⁷ Why did we introduce neighbouring departments? We tested it because we wanted to see whether there is a feeling of regional identification in the immediate surroundings of Normandy (cross-border externalities in peer influence). As the test was not significant, we did not pursue the analysis based on this subsample in the rest of the paper.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Nudge	-0.030 (0.082)	-0.028 (0.089)	-0.027 (0.082)	-0.025 (0.090)	-0.035 (0.084)	-0.015 (0.092)	-0.038 (0.085)	-0.019 (0.092)
Nudge × Normandy	0.926* (0.378)	0.947* (0.393)	0.947* (0.380)	0.963* (0.395)	1.048** (0.391)	1.056** (0.408)	1.094** (0.394)	1.090** (0.412)
Nudge × Neighbouring	-0.273 (0.267)	-0.208 (0.285)	-0.275 (0.268)	-0.212 (0.286)	-0.272 (0.276)	-0.255 (0.292)	-0.285 (0.277)	-0.270 (0.292)
Risk_aversion			-0.005 (0.056)	-0.023 (0.060)			0.034 (0.058)	0.014 (0.062)
SVO_angle			0.031 (0.038)	0.019 (0.042)			0.048 (0.040)	0.023 (0.044)
Cooperativeness			0.043 (0.056)	0.053 (0.060)			0.061 (0.058)	0.079 (0.062)
Discount			0.054 (0.039)	0.065 (0.043)			0.054 (0.040)	0.065 (0.044)
Present bias			0.028 (0.040)	-0.008 (0.042)			0.031 (0.042)	-0.003 (0.043)
Risk_general					-0.151** (0.051)	-0.157** (0.056)	-0.161** (0.051)	-0.167** (0.057)
Risk_financial					-0.024 (0.045)	-0.028 (0.050)	-0.034 (0.046)	-0.037 (0.050)
Risk_health					-0.193*** (0.047)	-0.155** (0.051)	-0.187** (0.047)	-0.149** (0.051)
Trust_general					-0.063 (0.052)	-0.049 (0.057)	-0.071 (0.052)	-0.057 (0.057)
Trust_family					0.115* (0.049)	0.115* (0.052)	0.117* (0.049)	0.121* (0.053)
Trust_professional					-0.113* (0.054)	-0.117* (0.058)	-0.114* (0.054)	-0.120* (0.059)
Patience					0.092* (0.040)	0.107* (0.043)	0.098* (0.040)	0.110* (0.043)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Normandy	-0.518* (0.263)	-0.618* (0.272)	-0.525* (0.263)	-0.630* (0.273)	-0.537* (0.269)	-0.581* (0.280)	-0.545* (0.272)	-0.592* (0.282)
Neighbouring	0.214 (0.201)	0.162 (0.215)	0.239 (0.201)	0.182 (0.216)	0.218 (0.207)	0.156 (0.220)	0.257 (0.208)	0.187 (0.221)
Constant	0.413*** (0.057)	-0.174 (0.418)	0.410*** (0.057)	-0.191 (0.419)	0.443*** (0.059)	-0.248 (0.425)	0.444*** (0.059)	-0.269 (0.425)
Observation	1154	1047	1154	1047	1154	1047	1154	1047
Log Likelihood	-738.826	-637.171	-736.972	-635.616	-687.418	-598.092	-684.216	-595.695
Aikaik Inf. Crit.	1489.653	1332.341	1495.944	1339.232	1402.837	1270.184	1406.432	1275.391
Mc Faden Pseudo R ²	0.00534	0.05253	0.00783	0.05484	0.07455	0.11064	0.07886	0.1142

Table 2: Determinants of lockdown compliance, probit regressions.

Note: * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$. Standard deviation in parenthesis. All explanatory variables had been normalised prior to regression. Controls included i) gender, ii) below 25 y.o, iii) above 60 y.o., iv) household wage, v) locked down in a house, vi) alone, vii) with children, viii) living in high infected region (“Grand Est” or “Ile de France”), ix) being at risk, x) living with a vulnerable person, xi) the day of the survey.

Result 2: Experimentally elicited preferences did not predict future lockdown compliance.

The experimental measures of risk aversion, social preferences (SVO and cooperativeness) and time preferences (discount and present bias) were not good predictors of the intended compliance. None of the associated coefficients were statistically significant (see Table 2, Models 3, 4, 7, 8), and adding those variables did not increase the model goodness of fit significantly [*Likelihood ratio tests: Table 2: Model 4 vs Model 2: $\chi^2(5) = 3.110, p = 0.683$; Table 2: Model 8 vs Model 6: $\chi^2(5) = 5.523, p = 0.355$].*

Result 3: Self-reported measures of preferences did predict future lockdown compliance.

The self-reported measures of risk attitude, trust in others and patience were good predictors of the intended degree of compliance, since adding those variables significantly improved the model goodness of fit [*Likelihood ratio tests: Table 2: Model 6 vs Model 2: $\chi^2(7) = 68.281, p < 0.001$; Table 2: Model 8 vs Model 4: $\chi^2(7) = 70.695, p < 0.001$].*

In particular, the probability of reporting high intended compliance with a future lockdown was higher for the participants who reported higher trust in their family circle [*Table 2, Model 8, Average Marginal Effect (AME) = 0.0395, p = 0.020*], for those who reported lower trust in their working circle [*Table 2, Model 8: AME = - 0.0389, p = 0.041*], for those who reported lower willingness to take risks in general [*Table 2, Model 8: AME = - 0.0543, p = 0.003*] and in the health domain [*Table 2, Model 8: AME = - 0.0486, p=0.003*] and for those who reported higher levels of patience [*Table 2, Model 8: AME = 0.0359, p=0.012*]. We found no significant effect for the general level of trust reported [*Table 2, Model 8: AME = - 0.0185, p=0.321*] nor for the reported risk aversion in the financial domain [*Table 2, Model 8: AME = - 0.0046, p=0.817*].

Exploratory Result 4: Positively nudged free-riders foster compliance.

For the subpopulation of Normandy for which the SCN was effective, we investigated potential moderators of nudge effectiveness among elicited and self-reported preferences. Since we rely only on a small sample (N=52), we ran separate probit regressions (one for each measure of stated and revealed preferences) and considered the obtained results as exploratory. Detailed results for the revealed (stated) preferences are presented in Table 3 (Table 4). Concerning revealed preferences, we found a significant interaction between the SCN and the amount of contribution in the voluntary contribution game: nudging positively the participants who did not invest in this task had a positive impact on the level of future compliance [*Table 3, Model 3: interaction variable Nudge \times Cooperativeness, p=0.008*].

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Risk_aversion	SVO	Cooperativeness	Discount	Present bias
Nudge	0.831** (0.381)	1.084*** (0.403)	0.681 (0.421)	0.902** (0.376)	0.827* (0.440)
Nudge × Risk_aversion	-0.705 (0.369)				
Nudge × SVO_angle		-0.252 (0.381)			
Nudge × Cooperativeness			-1.233*** (0.465)		
Nudge × Discount				0.184 (0.358)	
Nudge × Present bias					1.027 (1.150)
Risk_aversion	0.428 (0.256)				
SVO_angle		0.415 (0.381)			
Cooperativeness			0.781** (0.385)		
Discount				0.008 (0.238)	
Present bias					1.027 (1.150)
Constant	-0.077 (0.268)	-0.226 (0.284)	0.126 (0.312)	-0.107 (0.264)	0.012 (0.326)
Observation	52	52	52	52	52
Log Likelihood	-29.067	-29.702	-26.855	-30.815	-29.872
Aikaike Inf. Crit.	66.135	67.404	61.709	69.629	67.745
Mc Faden Pseudo R ²	0.148	0.130	0.213	0.097	0.125

Table 3: Elicited preferences as moderators of Nudge efficiency.

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

This interaction is represented in Figure 3 which shows the intended compliance in Normandy for cooperative individuals (who invested a positive amount in the public good game, left figure) and free-riders (who did not invest in the public good game, right figure), when facing a negative or a positive SCN. There was no effect of the nudge for cooperative participants [$N=16$, Fisher exact test: $p=0.585$]. However, for free-riders we observed an increase from 29.41% to 84.21% of the estimated probability to report a high intended degree of compliance [$N=36$, Fisher exact test: $p=0.002$].

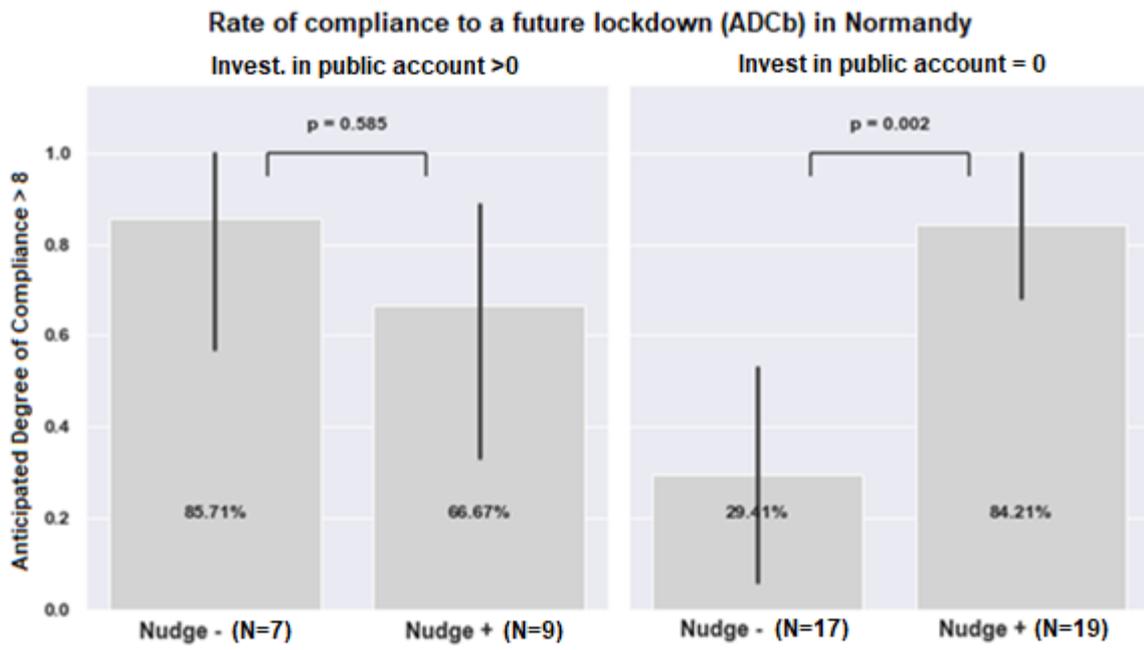


Figure 3: Intention to comply to a lockdown as a function of the SCN and cooperativeness

We did not detect any significant interaction between the SCN and stated preferences [Table 4, no significant interaction coefficient].

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
	Risk_general	Risk_financial	Risk_health	Trust_general	Trust_family	Trust_prof	Patience
Nudge	0.998* (0.411)	0.897* (0.373)	1.257** (0.434)	0.877* (0.376)	0.901* (0.372)	0.784* (0.381)	0.817* (0.384)
Nudge × Risk_general	0.223 (0.403)						
Nudge × Risk_financial		0.050 (0.358)					
Nudge × Risk_health			0.112 (0.500)				
Nudge × Trust_general				-0.184 (0.393)			
Nudge × Trust_family					0.006 (0.358)		
Nudge × Trust_prof						-0.044 (0.420)	
Nudge × Patience							-0.496 (0.399)
Risk_general	-0.648* (0.296)						
Risk_financial		-0.101 (0.248)					
Risk_health			-0.669* (0.356)				
Trust_general				-0.070 (0.272)			
Trust_family					0.014 (0.283)		
Trust_professional						-0.302 (0.310)	
Patience							0.087 (0.290)
Constant	-0.057 (0.276)	-0.115 (0.258)	-0.271 (0.293)	-0.091 (0.262)	-0.106 (0.257)	-0.048 (0.265)	-0.085 (0.265)
Observation	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
Log Likelihood	-27.084	-30.998	-27.250	-30.633	-31.095	-29.779	-29.948
Aikaike Inf. Crit.	62.168	69.997	62.501	69.267	70.191	67.557	67.896
Mc Faden Pseudo R ²	0.207	0.092	0.202	0.103	0.089	0.128	0.123

Table 4: Stated preferences as moderators of Nudge efficiency.

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Finally, we also tested if the beliefs about local peer compliance at the time of the survey (rated from 1 = “Scrupulous respect” to 4 = “Complete disregard”¹⁸, see Section 1.2) were a good moderator of the nudge, with a probit regression on *IC*. We found no direct effect of the beliefs on lockdown compliance [$p=0.427$] and no direct effect of the nudge on the beliefs [$p=0.607$].

4. Discussion and conclusions

In their advocacy of “social and behavioural science to support COVID-19 pandemic response”, Van Bavel et al. (2020) mention that nudges can be an alternative to coercive means for changing behaviours. They can also be used “to complement regulatory, legal and other imposed policies when widespread changes must occur rapidly”. However, relying on nudges to improve or enforce compliance is questionable. Although we lack perspective, the scant available evidence seems to

¹⁸ This was the question asked just after the randomised information on road traffic (see Section 2.3).

convey a rather negative message, excepting the Indian experience (see Debnath and Bardhan, 2020). Hume et al. (2020) found that a nudge that emphasises attention to others positively affects short-term intentions to comply, but that these good intentions quickly fade away, as shown by their follow up study. Sanders et al. (2020) failed to replicate the classical loss aversion nudge in the context of the Covid pandemic (N = 500). In the same vein, the management of the crisis by the British government, based on nudging citizens, was severely criticised (Sibony, 2020)¹⁹.

In this paper, we introduced a novel type of nudge based on social comparisons, hence our terminology *social comparison nudge* (SCN). The SCN is based on the idea of conveying social information about lockdown compliance, relying on the hypothesis that social comparisons affect an individual's likelihood to comply with the lockdown. Specifically, respondents were randomly assigned, either to a positive or to a negative feedback about the state of lockdown compliance in Normandy, a region of France. As we were seeking to communicate using the greatest contrast possible between the two feedbacks (positive vs negative), the Normandy region was selected because it was the location giving the greatest difference between two proximate dates just before the survey, from all regional data available in the 'Coovimoov app'. A stronger sensitivity of Normandy respondents to the SCN was anticipated, but we did not anticipate that the salience of the Normandy region would be so marked that non-Normandy respondents would not be affected at all. Our study is not the first to test a nudge for lockdown compliance (Debnath & Bardhan, 2020). However, to our knowledge, we are the first to discriminate the psycho-economic traits that are most strongly correlated with the likelihood of a positive outcome for the nudge policy, based on a representative sample.

Our study was able to highlight two null-results, based on a French representative sample of 1154 respondents. (1) Social-comparison nudging was not effective in improving lockdown compliance intention, at least when the reference population seemed too far removed; (2) economic preferences, when they are revealed by economic games, were not well correlated to lockdown compliance intention, if compared to stated preferences. These null-results can be contrasted to some "exploratory" results: (3) the SCN was effective when the message really concerned the receivers, particularly those who did not act cooperatively in an economic game. However, those exploratory results have to be interpreted with caution, since they were obtained using a small sample size (N=52) --which is probably the main weakness of our study.²⁰ Another weakness we might acknowledge is

¹⁹ Almqvist and Andersson (2020) asked respondents to rate 5 hypothetical policies, a subsidy, a fine, an information/recommendations device, a nudge and a curfew. Respondents were least in favour of the nudge.

²⁰ Even if not pre-registered (due to the sanitary context and the urgency of running the experiment), we think that our explorative analysis with the Normandy relatedness does not suffer too much from researcher degrees of freedom. Indeed, we had already planned to analyse Normandy relatedness before making the survey: at the very beginning, we were committed to Normandy as being "salient" in the communication strategy (for the reason already stated) and, then, committed to making a deeper analysis on the Normandy population.

that we did not include a control arm when designing the SCN trial. Therefore, we cannot compare the positive SCN with a situation where no information was provided to the participants. However, in the particular context of COVID-19, which was extremely mediated, one may question the ecological validity of a neutral condition (i.e. where participants would have no information about their peers). At the time of the survey, the negative framing “*near-normal traffic was recorded for a Friday in Normandy, showing a certain disregard for lockdown (April 17th)*” could even be considered as a control, as there was a massive diffusion of information about “non-compliant behaviour” on news channels when the survey was administrated (in May 2021). Lastly, we must recognize that we did not observe actual lockdown compliance but a declared self-reported measure, in anticipation of an upsurge. In particular, responses may have been influenced by social desirability concerns, and this could likely bias some of our findings as (e.g. Gächter et al. (2017) showed that norm-sharing is strongly affected by the observation of peer actions, but that this does not necessarily affect actual behaviour). Nevertheless, at a minimum, our results show that the SCN acted on declared intentions of compliance. This point is reinforced by the RCT design of our study, thanks to which the gaps between groups cannot be imputed to omitted variables, but to the nudge-treatment itself. Our conclusion would be to be cautious about SCN and actual behaviour, in the domain of lockdown compliance.

Although our statistical findings have to be taken with caution, we believe that our study brings some stimulating messages. Our interpretation of our main finding – the SCN only affected respondents from Normandy – is that Normandy-respondents were more likely to comply since the SCN was proposing a close in-group comparison. According to social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1979), individuals are more willing to follow their in-group members than the out-groups. Identification to a social group leads individuals to adopt behaviour that conforms to the perceived shared norm of their group (see e.g. Goette et al., 2006; Chen and Li, 2009; Drouvelis and Nosenzo, 2013). We therefore logically found that inhabitants from the Normandy region were more likely to react positively, compared to other respondents, to a nudge targeting residents from the Normandy Region. We expected that inhabitants from the border departments of the Normandy region would be affected, at least to some degree, by the SCN, however it was not the case. The absence of spill-over effects is surprising, and seems at odds with social distance theory (Lieberman et al., 2007) according to which more closely related individuals are more likely to adhere to shared norms of behaviour.

The exploratory result that the effectiveness of the SCN in Normandy was driven by uncooperative participants agrees with experimental results about leading-by-example in experimental voluntary contribution games. These experiments showed that free-riding incentives are tempered when a leader sets a good example (Levati et al., 2007, Drouvelis and Nosenzo, 2013, Préget et al., 2016). An important reason is the combination of strategic uncertainty and preference for conformity. Free riders

who hold (false) beliefs about the free-riding intentions of others were more likely to change their behaviour when the (positive) information about the cooperativeness of others became available.

The design of our study allows us to further analyse the mechanism by which the nudge works, also eliminating red herrings. One might think that the (randomised) information about regional peer behaviour, in April 2020, caused respondents to revise their beliefs about their peers' actual cooperative behaviour at the time of the survey (May 2020). This was not the case, since the belief about contemporary peer behaviour in Normandy was not a mediator of the positive nudging effect (see Result 4, the latest test - however carried out on the 52 respondents of Normandy). Therefore, we had no evidence that the SCN positive effect passed through a revision of beliefs about the behaviour of neighbours on the day of the survey, but rather about the knowledge of a latent social practice in the region. This suggests that the SCN's effectiveness is not a matter of a rational calculation on the return of one's effort ("my neighbours are themselves little exposed, and I can therefore benefit from reducing my own exposure"), as could be suspected. It is more akin to a direct reflex to imitate others and a desire to conform to the main social practice. This observation supports the social identity interpretation (Akerlof, 1980, Bernheim, 1994): people simply plan to adopt behaviours that conform to the perceived shared norm of their peers, without any additional profound deliberation. In short, our results can indicate that norm-nudging involves system-1 rather than system-2 mechanism, a topic that is an open discussion in the economic literature (Bicchieri & Dimant, 2019) but also in the social psychology literature, that tries to distinguish between controlled (/central) and automatic (/peripheral) processing modes of decision making (Strack and Deutsch, 2004). In this latter discipline, recent results – in particular studies that document problematic purchase behaviour (Thurmer et al, 2020) – are in line with ours: the effectiveness of peer influence can be associated with impulsive or automatic processes, rather than with profound cognitive deliberations.

Our data also revealed some puzzling findings. As expected, we found that individuals reporting being more patient and risk averse were also more likely to report higher intended compliance with the lockdown (since respecting the lockdown implies a trade-off between immediate costs and delayed uncertain benefits for self and others). However, we did not find this result for individuals who exhibited more patience, risk aversion, prosociality, and cooperation in the economic games. A possible reason of why preferences elicited through incentivized economic games were poor predictors of future lockdown, if compared to stated preferences, is the methodological gap between the incentivized and the hypothetical questions. Incentivized tasks are designed to reveal "real" preferences, and are provided with no particular real-life context, in contrast to stated preferences questions for which respondents' answers are based on their beliefs about their likely actions. As the survey was administered during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is likely that the actions the participants had in mind when answering the survey were related to COVID-19. Our findings contribute therefore

to the existing literature investigating the concordance between stated and revealed preferences and the external validity of those measures to predict actual field behaviours. Indeed, the generalizability of lab experiments is questionable (Levitt and List, 2007) as well as their ability to predict real life behaviours²¹.

²¹ The correlation between survey measures and incentivized measures of risk preferences was first established by Dohmen et al. (2011) for the German national panel. These findings were replicated by Vieider et al. (2015) for a large sample of nearly 3000 respondents spread over 30 countries, and to a lesser extent by Frey et al. (2017) who found only a weak correlation. Concerning the external validity of the measures, Anderson and Mellor (2008) found evidence that elicited risk measures correlate with risky behaviours in the field (such as smoking, drinking and obesity) for a large non-representative sample of the US population. In contrast, Galizzi et al. (2016) and Charness et al. (2020) found mixed and no evidence for UK and Dutch representative samples. Concerning social preferences, the systematic review conducted by Galizzi and Navarro-Martinez (2019) highlighted mixed evidence for the correspondence between the behaviours in social dilemma, charitable behaviours observed in the field, and GSS survey questions. The literature on time preference is scarcer. Harrison et al. (2018) reviewed the literature between elicited measures of risk and time preferences and smoking behaviour and found no difference in risk preferences between smokers and non-smokers, but found that smoking correlates with the discounting intensity and hyperbolic discounting. Overall, it is fair to say that the evidence about the predictive power of preferences elicited in the lab for outside-lab behaviours is mixed.

References.

- Allcott, H., (2011). Social norms and energy conservation. *J. Public Econ.* 95 (9-10), 1082–1095.
- Allcott, Hunt, and Todd Rogers. (2014). The Short-Run and Long-Run Effects of Behavioral Interventions: Experimental Evidence from Energy Conservation. *American Economic Review*, 104 (10): 3003-37
- Almqvist, G., and Andersson, P. (forthcoming). Carrots, sticks, sermons, and nudges during the pandemic, in “Sweden through the crisis”, *Stockholm school of Economics* [<https://www.hhs.se/en/research/sweden-through-the-crisis/>].
- Amat, F., Arenas, A., Falcó-Gimeno, A., & Muñoz, J. (2020). Pandemics meet democracy. Experimental evidence from the COVID-19 crisis in Spain. *Working Paper*.
- Anderson, L. R., & Mellor, J. M. (2008). Predicting health behaviors with an experimental measure of risk preference. *Journal of health economics*, 27(5), 1260-1274
- Andreoni, J., & Sprenger, C. (2012). Estimating time preferences from convex budgets. *American Economic Review*, 102(7), 3333-56.
- Asch, S. E. (1951). Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgment. In H. Guetzkow (ed.) *Groups, leadership and men*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Press.
- Asch, S. E. (1956). Studies of independence and conformity: I. A minority of one against a unanimous majority. *Psychological monographs: General and applied*, 70(9), 1-70.
- Bargain, O., & Aminjonov, U. (2020). Trust and Compliance to Public Health Policies in Times of COVID-19. *IZA Discussion Paper* No. 13205
- Bernheim, B. Douglas. (1994). A Theory of Conformity. *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 102, no. 5, 841–877.
- Bertin, P., Nera, K., & Delouvée, S. (2020). Conspiracy Beliefs, Rejection of Vaccination, and Support for hydroxychloroquine: A Conceptual Replication-Extension in the COVID-19 Pandemic Context. *Frontiers in psychology*, 11, 2471.
- Betsch, C., Böhm, R., & Chapman, G. B. (2015). Using behavioral insights to increase vaccination policy effectiveness. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 2(1), 61-73.
- Bicchieri, C., & Dimant, E. (2019). Nudging with care: The risks and benefits of social information. *Public choice*, 1-22.

Blayac, T., Dubois, D., Duchêne, S., Nguyen-Van, P., Ventelou, B., & Willinger, M. (2021). Population preferences for inclusive COVID-19 policy responses. *The Lancet Public Health*, 6(1), e9.

Blayac, T., Dubois, D., Duchêne, S., Nguyen-Van, P., Ventelou, B., & Willinger, M. (2022). Designing acceptable anti-COVID-19 policies by taking into account individuals' preferences: evidence from a Discrete Choice Experiment. *Working paper. Disponible auprès des auteurs.*

Bonardi, J. P., Gallea, Q., Kalanoski, D., & Lalive, R. (2020). Fast and local: How did lockdown policies affect the spread and severity of the covid-19. *Covid Economics*, 23, 325-351.

Charness, G., Garcia, T., Offerman, T., & Villeval, M. C. (2020). Do measures of risk attitude in the laboratory predict behavior under risk in and outside of the laboratory?. *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*, 60(2), 99-123

Chen, F., & Stevens, R. (2017). Applying lessons from behavioral economics to increase flu vaccination rates. *Health promotion international*, 32(6), 1067-1073.

Chen, Y., & Li, S., .X. (2009). Group Identity and Social Preferences. *American Economic Review*, 99 (1): 431-57.

Chen, Y., Lu, F. & Zhang, J. (2017). Social comparisons, status and driving behavior, *Journal of Public Economics* 155, 11–20.

Clot, Sophie, Charlotte Y. Stanton, & Marc Willinger, (2017). Are impatient farmers more risk-averse? Evidence from a lab-in-the-field experiment in rural Uganda, *Applied Economics* 49, 156–169.

Cialdini, R. B., Kallgren, C. A., & Reno, R. R. (1991). A focus theory of normative conduct: A theoretical refinement and reevaluation of the role of norms in human behavior. In *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 24, pp. 201-234). Academic Press.

Collange, F., Verger, P., Launay, O., & Pulcini, C. (2016). Knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of general practitioners/family physicians toward their own vaccination: A systematic review. *Human vaccines & immunotherapeutics*, 12(5), 1282-1292.

Costa, D. L., & Kahn, M. E. (2013). Energy conservation “nudges” and environmentalist ideology: Evidence from a randomized residential electricity field experiment. *Journal of the European Economic Association*, 11(3), 680-702.

Dean, M., & Ortoleva, P. (2019). The empirical relationship between nonstandard economic behaviors, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 116, 16262–16267.

Debnath, R., & Ronita Bardhan, (2020). India nudges to contain COVID-19 pandemic: A reactive public policy analysis using machine-learning based topic modelling, *PLoS ONE* 15.

Dohmen, T., Falk, A., Huffman, D. & Sunde, U. (2010), Are risk aversion and impatience related to cognitive ability?, *American Economic Review* 100, 1238–1260.

Dohmen, T., Falk, A., Huffman, D. & Sunde, U., Schupp, J., & Wagner G. G., (2011), Individual risk attitudes: Measurement, determinants, and behavioral consequences, *Journal of the European Economic Association* 9, 522–550.

Drouvelis, M., & Nosenzo, D. (2013). Group identity and leading-by-example, *Journal of Economic Psychology* 39, 414–425.

Falk, A., Becker, A., Dohmen, T., Enke, B., Huffman, D., & Sunde, U. (2018). Global evidence on economic preferences. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 133(4), 1645-1692.

Ferraresi, M., Kotsogiannis, C., Rizzo, L., & Secomandi, R. (2020a). The ‘Great Lockdown’ and its determinants. *Economics letters*.

Ferraresi M., Kotsogiannis C., Rizzo L. & Secomandi R. (2020b) COVID-19: lockdown and institutions. *Società Italiana di Economia Pubblica*. <https://ideas.repec.org/p/ipu/wpaper/89.html>

Frey, R., Pedroni, A., Mata, R., Rieskamp, J., & Hertwig, R. (2017). Risk preference shares the psychometric structure of major psychological traits, *Science Advances*.

Friedman, D., Sameh, H., Duncan, J., & Crockett, S. (2018). Varieties of risk elicitation *WZB Discussion Paper*, No. SP II 2018-501

Gächter, S., Gerhards, L. & Nosenzo, D. (2017). The importance of peers for compliance with norms of fair sharing, *European Economic Review* 97, 72–86.

Galizzi, M. M., Machado, S. R., & Miniaci, R. (2016). Temporal stability, cross-validity, and external validity of risk preferences measures: experimental evidence from a UK representative sample. *London School of Economics and Political Science, LSE Library* (No. 67554).

Galizzi, M. M., & Navarro-Martinez, D. (2019). On the external validity of social preference games: a systematic lab-field study. *Management Science*, 65(3), 976-1002.

Goette, L., Huffman, D. and Meier, S. (2006). "The Impact of Group Membership on Cooperation and Norm Enforcement: Evidence Using Random Assignment to Real Social Groups." *American Economic Review*, 96 (2): 212-216.

- Gollwitzer, M., Platzer, C., Zwarg, C., & G6rritz, A. S. (2020). Public acceptance of Covid-19 lockdown scenarios. *International Journal of Psychology*.
- Gneezy, U., & Potters, J. (1997). An experiment on risk taking and evaluation periods. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 112(2), 631-645.
- Gollier, C., & Pratt, J. (1996). Risk Vulnerability and the Tempering Effect of Background Risk. *Econometrica*, 64(5), 1109-1123.
- Gollwitzer, P. M., Sheeran, P., Tr6rtschel, R., & Webb, T. (2011). Self-regulation of behavioral priming effects. *Psychological Science*, 22, 901-907.
- Harrison, G. W., Hofmeyr, A., Ross, D., & Swarthout, J. T. (2018). Risk preferences, time preferences, and smoking behavior. *Southern Economic Journal*, 85(2), 313-348.
- Holzmeister, Felix, and Matthias Stefan, (2020). The risk elicitation puzzle revisited: Across-methods (in)consistency?, *Experimental Economics*.
- Hume, Susannah, Peter John, Michael Sanders, and Emma Stockdale (2020), Nudge in the time of coronavirus: Compliance to behavioural messages during crisis. SSRN. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3644165>
- Jullien, D. (2018), "Under Risk, Over Time, Regarding Other People: Language and Rationality within Three Dimensions", *Research in the History of Economic Thought and Methodology*, Vol. 36C, Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley, pp. 119-155. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0743-41542018000036C007>
- Kagel, J. H., & Roth, A. E. (Eds.). (2020). *The Handbook of Experimental Economics, Volume 2*. Princeton university press.
- Kuiper, M.E., de Bruijn, A.L., Folmer, C.R., Olthuis, E., Brownlee, M., Kooistra, E.B., Fine, A., van Rooij, B., 2020. The Intelligent Lockdown: Compliance with COVID-19 Mitigation Measures in the Netherlands. *Amsterdam Law School Research Paper. No. 2020-20*. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3598215
- Kushner Gadarian, Shana and Goodman, Sara Wallace and Pepinsky, Thomas B. (2020). Partisanship, Health Behavior, and Policy Attitudes in the Early Stages of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3562796>
- Lecouteux, G. (2015). In search of lost nudges. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 6(3), 397-408.

- Levati, M. Vittoria, Matthias Sutter, and Eline Van Der Heijden, (2007). Leading by example in a public goods experiment with heterogeneity and incomplete information, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, 793–818.
- Levitt, Steven D, John A List, Steven D Levitt, and John A List, (2007). What Do Laboratory Experiments Measuring Social Preferences Reveal about the Real World?, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 21, 153–174.
- Lieberman, N., Trope, Y., & Stephan, E. (2007). Psychological distance. In A. W. Kruglanski & E. T. Higgins (Eds.). *Social psychology: Handbook of basic principles* (Vol. 2, pp. 353–383). New York: Guilford Press.
- Lönnqvist, J. E., Verkasalo, M., Walkowitz, G., & Wichardt, P. C. (2015). Measuring individual risk attitudes in the lab: Task or ask? An empirical comparison. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 119, 254-266.
- Massin, S., Ventelou, B., Nebout, A., Verger, P., & Pulcini, C. (2015). Cross-sectional survey: risk-averse French general practitioners are more favorable toward influenza vaccination. *Vaccine*, 33(5), 610-614.
- Mongin, P., & Cozic, M. (2018). Rethinking nudge: not one but three concepts. *Behavioural Public Policy*, 2(1), 107-124.
- Müller, Stephan, and Holger A. Rau, (2020). Economic Preferences and Compliance in the Social Stress Test of the COVID-19 Crisis, *Journal of Public Economics*, 104322.
- Murphy, R. O., Ackermann, K. A., & Handgraaf, M. (2011). Measuring social value orientation. *Judgment and Decision making*, 6(8), 771-781.
- Nivette, A., Ribeaud, D., Murray, A., Steinhoff, A., Bechtiger, L., Hepp, U., ... & Eisner, M. (2020). Non-compliance with COVID-19-related public health measures among young adults in Switzerland: Insights from a longitudinal cohort study. *Social Science & Medicine*, 268, 113370.
- Nolan, J. M. (2017). Social Norms and Their Enforcement, in Harkins, S. G., Williams, K. D., & Burger, J. M. (Eds.). (2017). *The Oxford Handbook of Social Influence*. Oxford University Press.
- Painter, Marcus, and Tian Qiu. (2020). Political beliefs affect compliance with covid-19 social distancing orders. *Available at SSRN 3569098*.
- Pedroni, Andreas, Renato Frey, Adrian Bruhin, Gilles Dutilh, Ralph Hertwig, and Jörg Rieskamp, (2017). The risk elicitation puzzle, *Nature Human Behaviour*, 1–26.

- Plohl, Nejc, and Bojan Musil. (2020). Modeling compliance with COVID-19 prevention guidelines: The critical role of trust in science. *PsyArXiv Preprint*. doi: 10.31234/osf.io/6a2cx.
- Préget, R., Nguyen-Van, P., and Willinger, M. (2016), Who are the voluntary leaders? Experimental evidence from a sequential contribution game, *Theory and Decision*, Vol. 81, n° 4, 581-599.
- Rafäi, I., Blayac, T., Dubois, D., Duchêne, S., Nguyen Van, P., Ventelou, B., & Willinger, M. (2022). Stated Preferences Outperform Elicited Preferences for Predicting Compliance with COVID-19 Prophylactic Measures. *Working Paper, Available at SSRN 4031918*
- Rafäi, I., Ribaillier, A., & Jullien, D. (2021). The impact on nudge acceptability judgments of framing and consultation of the targeted population. *Available at SSRN 4055385*
- de Ridder, D., Kroese, F., & van Gestel, L. (2021). Nudgeability: Mapping conditions of susceptibility to nudge influence. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 1745691621995183.
- Robinson, P. J., Botzen, W. W., Kunreuther, H., & Chaudhry, S. J. (2021). Default options and insurance demand. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 183, 39-56.
- Sailer, Michael, Matthias Stadler, Elouise Botes, Frank Fischer, and Samuel Greiff. (2020). Science knowledge and trust in medicine affect individuals' behavior in pandemic crises. *PsyArXiv Preprint*. doi: 10.31234/osf.io/tmu8f.
- Sibony, Anne Lise, (2020). The UK covid-19 response: A behavioural irony?, *European Journal of Risk Regulation* 11, 350–357.
- Strack, F., & Deutsch, R. (2004). Reflective and impulsive determinants of social behavior. *Personality and social psychology review*, 8(3), 220-247.
- Suls, J., & Wheeler, L. (2017). On the Trail of Social Comparison (CHAPTER 5); in Harkins, S. G., Williams, K. D., & Burger, J. M. (Eds.). (2017). *The Oxford handbook of social influence*. Oxford University Press.
- Tajfel, H. and Turner, J.C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In S. Worchel and W. Austin (Eds), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-48). Pacific Grove, CA/ Brooks/Cole
- Taube, O., Vetter, M. (2019). How green defaults promote environmentally friendly decisions: Attitude-conditional default acceptance but attitude-unconditional effects on actual choices. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 49, 721–732.
- Thaler, R., & Sunstein, C. (2008). *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness*. Yale University Press.

Theotokis, A., Manganari, E. (2015). The impact of choice architecture on sustainable consumer behavior: The role of guilt. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 131, 423-437.

Thøgersen, J. (2014). The mediated influences of perceived norms on pro-environmental behavior. *Revue d'économie politique*, 124(2), 179-193.

Thürmer, J.L., Bieleke, M., Wieber, F. and Gollwitzer, P.M. (2020), "If-then plans help regulate automatic peer influence on impulse buying", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 54 No. 9, pp. 2079-2105. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-05-2018-0341>

Van Bavel, J. J., Baicker, K., Boggio, P. S., Capraro, V., Cichocka, A., Cikara, M., ... & Willer, R. (2020). Using social and behavioural science to support COVID-19 pandemic response. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 1-12.

Vieider, Ferdinand M., Mathieu Lefebvre, Ranoua Bouchouicha, Thorsten Chmura, Rustamdjan Hakimov, Michal Krawczyk, and Peter Martinsson, (2015). Common components of risk and uncertainty attitudes across contexts and domains: Evidence from 30 countries, *Journal of the European Economic Association* 13, 421–452.

Wang, Z., Rafai, I., & Willinger, M. (2022). How age affects risk and time preferences: Evidence from a representative sample. *Working paper, Available at SSRN 4031930*.

Wen, X., Rafai, I., Duchêne, S., Willinger, M. (2022) Do mindful people do better in COVID-19? Mindfulness is associated with well-being and compliance with prophylactic measures. *Working paper*.

Winkelmann, R., and Boes, S. (2006). *Analysis of microdata*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Wright, Austin L, Konstantin Sonin, Jesse Driscoll, and Jarnickae Wilson. (2020). Poverty and Economic Dislocation Reduce Compliance with COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Protocols. *University of Chicago, Becker Friedman Institute for Economics Working Paper* (2020-40).

Zajenowski, M., Jonason, P.K., Leniarska, M., Kozakiewicz, Z., (2020). Who complies with the restrictions to reduce the spread of COVID-19?: personality and perceptions of the COVID-19 situation. *Pers. Individ. Differ.* 166, 110199

Zettler, Ingo, Christoph Schild, Lau Lilleholt, and Robert Böhm. (2020). Individual differences in accepting personal restrictions to fight the COVID-19 pandemic: Results from a Danish adult sample. *PsyArXiv Preprint*. doi: 10.31234/osf.io/pkm2a.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Representativeness of the sample

Figure A1 compares several statistics (gender, age, regions) of our sample to those of the National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE).

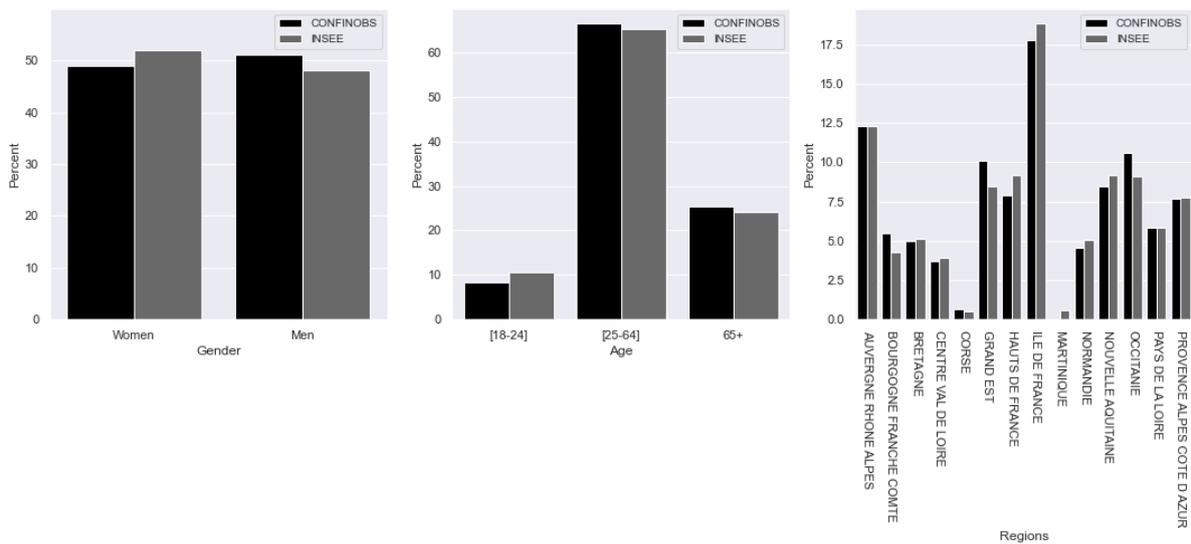


Figure A1. The left graph reports gender frequencies, the middle graph age frequencies and the right graph regional frequencies. The black colour represents our sample (CONFINOBS) and the grey colour the sample of the French National Institute for Statistical and Economic Studies (INSEE, January 2020).

Appendix 2 – Example of information diffused during the lockdown in France.

The screenshot shows a news broadcast from BFMTV. The main headline reads: "D'après une étude de Covimooov, les Français se relâchent quant au respect du confinement" (According to a study by Covimooov, French people are relaxing their adherence to confinement). Below this, it mentions Antoine Courret, president of Géo4cast and creator of the Covimooov app. The broadcast features two maps of France comparing mobility levels to normal. The left map, dated March 26, 2020, shows a high level of compliance with most regions in green and yellow. The right map, dated April 2, 2020, shows a significant relaxation of confinement with many regions turning orange and red. A news anchor, Antoine Courret, is visible on the left. The bottom of the screen displays a headline: "PARIS : UN CONFINEMENT BIEN RESPECTÉ ?" and a sub-headline about a decrease in hospitalizations in Italy. On the right side of the screenshot, there is a "Fil info" (Info feed) section with a list of news items and a weather forecast for Paris showing 7°C.

Figure A2: Screenshot of information given in news channel BFMTV during the French lockdown, at the time of the survey.

Note: At the time of the survey, many information about compliance of the lockdown was communicated to French people through TV News channel.

Appendix 3 – Geographical location of the selected region (Normandy) and its neighbouring departments.

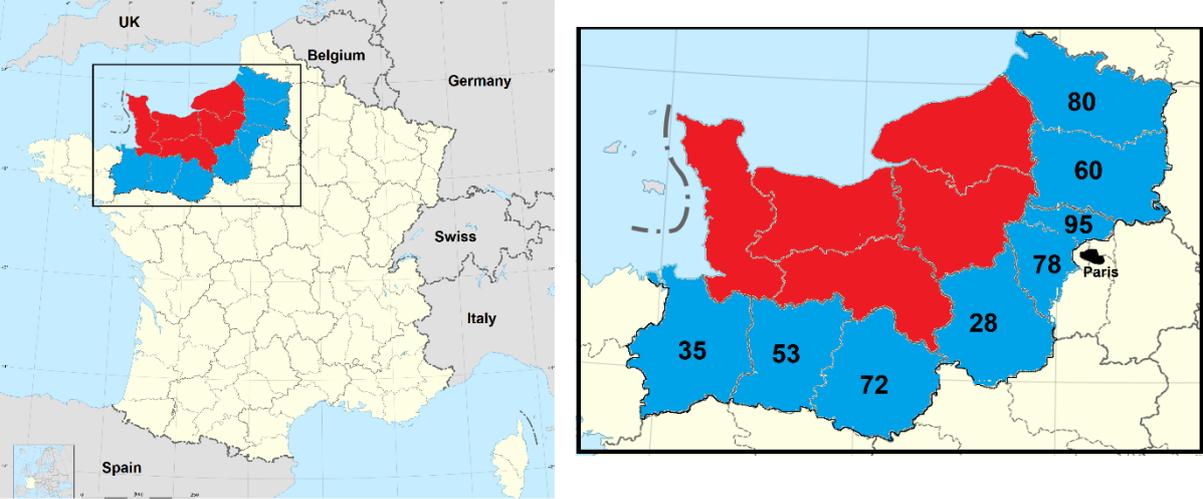


Figure A3: Map of the France and Normandy

Note: Normandy region is in red in the map. It is made of 5 departments There are around 3.5 million of inhabitants in Normandy (>5% of the French population). Normandy’s neighbouring departments are represented in blue. Including: “Île-et-Vilaine” (35), “Mayenne” (53), “Sarthe” (72), “Eure-et-Loire” (28), “Yvelines” (78), “Val d’Oise” (95), “Oise” (60), and “Somme” (80). In total there are around 6.4 million of inhabitants in those departments (~9.3% of the French population).

Appendix 4 – Screenshot of the survey.

Partie 1 : Confinement et mesures barrières

Confinement

1 Diriez-vous que vous respectez scrupuleusement la consigne gouvernementale de confinement ? Placez votre réponse sur une échelle de 0 à 10, où 0 correspond à "Pas du tout" et 10 à "Scrupuleusement".

2 ... et pouvez-vous évaluer à quel moment dans la crise Covid-19 vous avez décidé de rester chez-vous :

3 Avez-vous été verbalisé(e) pour non-respect du confinement ?

4 L'application Covimoov recense les déplacements d'automobiliste en région, et les compare à une période normale d'avant-crise. Le 17 avril on enregistrait déjà un trafic quasiment normal pour un vendredi en Normandie, démontrant un certain relâchement du confinement.

5 Quel est selon vous le niveau de respect du confinement aujourd'hui dans votre propre région ?

6 Dans l'hypothèse d'un nouveau confinement rendu nécessaire par un rebond de l'épidémie, diriez-vous que vous respecterez scrupuleusement la consigne gouvernementale de confinement ? Placez votre réponse sur une échelle de 0 à 10

Suivant

Figure A4: Screenshot of the questionnaire (Negative nudge)

Note: Original material. Can be translated as follows. (1) "Would you say that you strictly adhere to the government's guidelines in terms of lockdown? Place your answer on a 0-10 scale, where 0 corresponds to "Not at all" and 10 to "Scrupulously". (2) "... can you evaluate at which time of the Covid-19 crisis you decided to stay at home?" (3) "Have you ever been fined for not complying to the lockdown?" (4) "The application Covimoov identifies motorist trips in the regions, and compares them to a normal pre-crisis period. The 17th of April, almost normal traffic was recorded for a Friday in Normandy, showing a certain looseness for lockdown." (5) What do you think is the level of lockdown compliance today in your own region? (6) "In the event of a new lockdown made necessary by a rebound in the epidemic, would you say that you will scrupulously respect the government instructions of lockdown? Place your answer on a 0-10 scale - (with 10 the most scrupulous respect). The Original French message for the positive nudge was the following: « Le 3 avril, on enregistrait un trafic fortement réduit pour un vendredi en Normandie, avec à peine 40% du flux de déplacements habituels, démontrant un respect scrupuleux du confinement. (G1+G2) Quel est selon vous le niveau de respect du confinement aujourd'hui dans votre propre région ? »

Appendix 5 – Robustness analysis with Tobit regressions.

Table A2 reproduces the results presented in Table 2 with the reported anticipated degree of compliance (ADC) as a dependent variable instead of the binary variable.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>							
	ADC							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Nudge								
Nudge	-0.039 (0.201)	-0.071 (0.205)	-0.037 (0.202)	-0.061 (0.205)	-0.046 (0.189)	-0.027 (0.194)	-0.062 (0.189)	-0.033 (0.194)
Nudge×Normandy	1.546- (0.919)	1.558- (0.890)	1.520- (0.920)	1.490- (0.890)	1.619- (0.860)	1.629- (0.842)	1.611- (0.860)	1.567- (0.842)
Nudge×Neighbouring	-0.590 (0.653)	-0.339 (0.649)	-0.561 (0.652)	-0.336 (0.649)	-0.565 (0.610)	-0.458 (0.613)	-0.563 (0.609)	-0.487 (0.612)
Elicited preferences								
Risk_aversion			-0.187 (0.137)	-0.256- (0.137)			-0.088 (0.130)	-0.156 (0.131)
SVO_angle			0.092 (0.094)	0.046 (0.096)			0.127 (0.089)	0.058 (0.091)
Cooperativeness			0.210 (0.138)	0.253- (0.138)			0.254- (0.130)	0.298* (0.132)
Discount			-0.006 (0.095)	0.012 (0.096)			-0.023 (0.089)	0.001 (0.092)
Present_bias			0.075 (0.096)	0.004 (0.096)			0.075 (0.091)	0.011 (0.092)
Stated preferences								
Risk_general					-0.477*** (0.115)	-0.445*** (0.120)	-0.492*** (0.115)	-0.458*** (0.121)
Risk_financial					-0.090 (0.101)	-0.060 (0.105)	-0.113 (0.102)	-0.077 (0.106)
Risk_health					-0.507*** (0.106)	-0.450*** (0.110)	-0.493*** (0.106)	-0.441*** (0.110)
Trust_general					-0.223- (0.117)	-0.221- (0.121)	-0.236* (0.117)	-0.224- (0.121)
Trust_family					0.370*** (0.110)	0.356** (0.111)	0.365*** (0.110)	0.360** (0.111)
Trust_professional					-0.229- (0.120)	-0.217- (0.122)	-0.238* (0.120)	-0.229- (0.122)
Patience					0.178* (0.089)	0.221* (0.092)	0.172- (0.089)	0.214* (0.092)
Normandy	-0.492 (0.652)	-0.674 (0.632)	-0.447 (0.652)	-0.632 (0.631)	-0.446 (0.610)	-0.463 (0.598)	-0.381 (0.610)	-0.405 (0.599)
Neighbouring	0.368 (0.485)	0.257 (0.484)	0.403 (0.485)	0.294 (0.484)	0.346 (0.453)	0.231 (0.458)	0.402 (0.453)	0.286 (0.458)
Control								
Constant	No 9.774*** (0.145)	Yes 9.259*** (0.284)	No 9.765*** (0.145)	Yes 9.243*** (0.283)	No 9.770*** (0.136)	Yes 9.076*** (0.269)	No 9.770*** (0.136)	Yes 9.062*** (0.268)
Observations	1,154	1,047	1,154	1,047	1,154	1,047	1,154	1,047
Log Likelihood	-1,908.724	-1,711.783	-1,906.735	-1,709.626	-1,837.140	-1,656.430	-1,833.488	-1,653.513
Wald Test	4.278	61.663***	8.271	65.929***	145.339***	168.747***	152.137***	173.704***

Table A2: Results of Tobit regressions.

*Note: standard error in parenthesis. · : $p < 0.1$; * : $p < 0.05$; ** : $p < 0.01$; *** : $p < 0.001$. Results in terms of model comparison are similar to the probit method. Models 3, 4, 7 and 8 are not significantly more accurate than Model 1 [LR-test, $p = 0.552$], Model 2 [LR-test, $p = 0.505$], Model 5 [LR-test, $p = 0.199$] and Model 6 [LR-test, $p = 0.312$].*

Table A3 and table A4 respectively reproduces the results presented in Table 3 and Table 4 with the reported anticipated degree of compliance (ADC) as a dependent variable instead of the binary variable.

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>				
	ADC				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Nudge	1.293 (0.794)	1.626* (0.760)	0.906 (0.810)	1.210 (0.765)	1.106 (0.870)
Nudge×Risk_aversion	-0.923 (0.804)				
Nudge×SVO_angle		-0.771 (0.631)			
Nudge×Cooperativeness			-1.845* (0.913)		
Nudge×Discount				0.745 (0.686)	
Nudge×Present_bias					-2.896 (2.384)
Risk_aversion	0.713 (0.561)				
SVO_angle		1.002* (0.458)			
Cooperativeness			1.400• (0.764)		
Discount				-0.730 (0.477)	
Present_bias					2.292 (2.245)
Constant	9.229*** (0.584)	8.936*** (0.542)	9.580*** (0.638)	9.300*** (0.565)	9.416*** (0.699)
Observations	52	52	52	52	52
Log Likelihood	-78.388	-76.838	-77.045	-78.186	-77.753
Wald Test (df = 3)	5.058	8.584*	7.645•	5.844	5.341

Table A3: Moderating role of elicited preferences (Normandy region, Tobit regressions).

*Notes: standard error in parenthesis. • : $p < 0.1$; * : $p < 0.05$; ** : $p < 0.01$; *** : $p < 0.001$.*

<i>Dependent variable:</i>							
	ADC						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Nudge	1.294• (0.767)	1.439• (0.789)	1.647* (0.790)	1.409• (0.805)	1.440• (0.759)	1.071 (0.787)	1.355• (0.809)
Nudge×Risk_general	0.599 (0.734)						
Nudge×Risk_financial		0.282 (0.742)					
Nudge×Risk_health			0.309 (0.875)				
Nudge×Trust_general				0.024 (0.810)			
Nudge×Trust_family					-1.003 (0.747)		
Nudge×Trust_professional						0.236 (0.855)	
Nudge×Patience							-0.233 (0.835)
Risk_general	-1.109* (0.535)						
Risk_financial		-0.411 (0.522)					
Risk_health			-0.889 (0.632)				
Trust_general				-0.081 (0.597)			
Trust_family					0.812 (0.585)		
Trust_professional						-0.878 (0.661)	
Patience							-0.231 (0.629)
Constant	9.303*** (0.565)	9.106*** (0.573)	9.014*** (0.568)	9.169*** (0.591)	9.050*** (0.553)	9.320*** (0.586)	9.088*** (0.591)
Observations	52	52	52	52	52	52	52
Log Likelihood	-76.640	-78.963	-77.855	-79.284	-78.305	-77.733	-78.875
Wald Test (df = 3)	8.638*	3.990	6.124	3.291	5.585	6.424•	4.095

Table A4: Moderating role of stated preferences (Normandy region, Tobit regressions).

Notes: standard error in parenthesis. • : $p < 0.1$; * : $p < 0.05$; ** : $p < 0.01$; *** : $p < 0.001$.