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Vienna, September 8, 2021

To whom it may concern

According to national laws (Austrian Universities Act 2002, §30(1)); https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/Dokumente/Erv/ERV_2002_1_120/ERV_2002_1_120.pdf), only medical universities in Austria are obliged to implement research ethics committees, with mandatory submission of empirical research projects to these, for ethical clearance. At the University of Vienna, submission to its Ethics Committee is voluntary; hence, economic experiments conducted at the University of Vienna VCEE (Vienna Center for Experimental Economics), adhering to the self-imposed VCEE "Standard Procedures for Experimental Research," are exempt from formal IRB submission and approval as well.

This is to certify that the project titled

"Policy Promises" (AEA registry project: https://doi.org/10.1257/rct.2799-1.0)

by

Juha Tolvanen, James Tremewan, and Alexander K. Wagner

has been conducted in compliance with the "Standard Research Rules for Experimental Research" at the Vienna Center for Experimental Economics (VCEE). These rules can be found as an appendix to this letter.

Sincerely,

Wieland Müller
Professor of Economics
Managing Director VCEE

Standard Research Rules for Experimental Research at the Vienna Center for Experimental Economics

This document describes the standard research rules for experimental research at the Vienna Center for Experimental Economics (VCEE). Experimental research work at the VCEE that complies with these rules is assumed to qualify for approval by the UniVie ethics committee and is exempt from review by the UniVie ethics committee. Via an application to the VCEE Ethics Committee, it will be checked whether the planned research does comply with the standard research rules (see Appendix 2 - VCEE ethics approval application form).

Standard Research Rules

- **Recruitment**
  - Researchers plan to recruit subjects using the VCEE subject pool.
- **Consent**
  - The study does not involve vulnerable groups (e.g., children or those with cognitive impairment).
  - The study does not require the cooperation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited (e.g., pupils at school, residents of nursing homes).
  - It will not be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and informed consent at the time (e.g., covert observation of people in non-public places).
  - No financial inducements are offered that would coerce participation. (That is, only reasonable expenses, compensation for time, incentives in laboratory experiments, or the possibility to win a prize draw are provided.)
- **Potential for harm**
  - The study does not force participants to answer sensitive questions (e.g. sexual activity, drug use, commercially or legally sensitive topics).
  - The study does not induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life.
  - No administration of drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to the study participants takes place, nor will the study use invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind.
  - No pain and no more than mild discomfort is likely to result from the study.
  - The safety of the researcher/research assistants are not in question beyond everyday risks (e.g. international research in trouble-spots).
- **Confidentiality**
  - The study does not involve administrative or secure data that requires permission from the appropriate authorities before use.
  - The study does not involve the sharing of data or confidential information beyond the initial consent given.

- In case the study relies on a third-party platform to collect research data (e.g. SurveyMonkey or Qualtrics), participants are not asked to provide information that would allow one to link the elicited responses to individual participants.
- Personal data of study participants will not be revealed in research outputs or stored data.

- **Data handling**
  - Study participants will be identified in the dataset by a subject identification code that will be unique for each subject. The data will not be associated with any personal information allowing one to identify a particular study participant.
  - The data will be stored at the University of Vienna in the form of a dataset and hard copies (payment slip).