

Report of the Editor

American Economic Journal: Economic Policy

The *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, or *AEJ Policy* for short, published its first two issues in 2009 and will commence publication at its normal rate of four issues per year in 2010, beginning with the February issue.

As stated in the call for papers posted on the journal's Web site,

AEJ Policy will publish papers covering a range of topics, the common theme being the role of economic policy in economic outcomes. Subject areas will include public economics; urban and regional economics; public policy aspects of health, education, welfare, and political institutions; law and economics; economic regulation; and environmental and natural resource economics.

Editorial Procedures

AEJ Policy is a peer-reviewed journal, following the same double-blind procedure that has been used for several years by the *American Economic Review*. The submission fee is \$100 for AEA members and \$200 for nonmembers. The journal reserves the right to reject some papers on the basis of an initial screening by the editors (in which cases submission fees will be returned to authors). Unlike the *AER*, *AEJ Policy* does not have separate sections of longer and shorter papers. Along with the other new journals, we have adopted a liberal republication policy, granting authors of published papers the right to republication in any work in any form, including digital repositories. We follow the *AER*'s policy with respect to the posting of information, requiring that authors of accepted papers that employ data in econometric exercises, simulation models, or experiments agree to post their data and programs on the journal Web site unless an exemption for proprietary data is requested and granted. Summary statistics regarding data posting and exemptions are presented below in Table 6.

Submissions to the journal must be made electronically, via the journal Web site, www.aeaweb.org/aej-policy/, using editorial software set up for the journal by Manuscript Central, the same software platform being used by the other new journals and also now by the *AER*. All subsequent editorial correspondence with referees and authors is also being done electronically, including the provision of ultimate decision letters and referees' reports to authors.

One novel element of the journal's operation is coordination of the review process with the *AER*, following a common procedure worked out in consultation with the editors of the other new journals and the *AER*. When submitting their papers via the *AEJ Policy* Web site, authors of manuscripts previously reviewed by the *AER* may request that, subject to the referees' agreement, the full correspondence files of the *AER* referees (including not just the referees' reports but the referees' cover letters as well) be shared with the editors of *AEJ Policy*, who will have the discretion to make a decision based on these reports or to request additional reports. This process of transferring information from the *AER* already has been utilized extensively and has worked very smoothly. Four of the 18 papers published in the journal's first year of operation were submitted in this way.

The editor assigns each manuscript either to himself or to the co-editor, and all subsequent responsibility for handling the manuscript, including the decision whether to reject summarily, the choice of referees, and the ultimate disposition of the paper, rests with the person to whom the paper has been assigned. The journal has adopted a policy to avoid conflicts of interest that papers by department colleagues, current students or co-authors will be assigned to the other member of the senior editorial team. It is also anticipated that other members of the editorial board may, on occasion, be asked to assume responsibility for papers, but this procedure has not yet been followed for any submissions to date.

Editorial Staff

The journal's co-editor is Hilary Hoynes of the University of California. The 22 members of the *AEJ Policy* editorial board are James Banks, Severin Borenstein, Julie Cullen, Mihir Desai, Mark Duggan, Robert Feenstra, Kristin Forbes, Michael Greenstone, Jonathan Gruber, Louis Kaplow, Michael Keen, Brian Knight, Christopher Knittel, Wojciech Kopczuk, Jeffrey Liebman, Jens Ludwig, Brigitte Madrian, Thomas Nechyba, John Quigley, Gérard Roland, Jonathan Skinner and Dan Silverman. Two members of the board, Rebecca Blank and Austan Goolsbee, resigned their positions during the year because of conflicts with government service.

Board members provide valuable advice concerning journal policy, aid in the identification of suitable referees, serve as referees themselves, and may be asked on occasion to assume additional editorial responsibilities. Additional members may be added to the board as the distribution of submissions by field indicates missing areas of expertise.

Editorial Data

As of October 31, 2009, the journal had received 450 submissions. The distribution of these submissions by year is shown in Table 1. Of these original submissions, 147 (33 percent) were summarily rejected, including a small number of papers that were deemed to be on topics outside the journal's purview; another 11 papers were withdrawn after submission, prior to being reviewed, and 191 additional papers were rejected after the normal refereeing process. Of the remaining papers, 77 received an invitation to revise and resubmit (of which 33 had been accepted by October 31, 2009), and the remaining 24 papers were still in the initial review process as of that date.

TABLE 1—MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED AND PUBLISHED, 2007–2009

Year	Submitted	Published	% Published
2007	57	0	0.0
2008	176	0	0.0
2009	217	18	8.2

Notes: Submissions to *AEJ: Economic Policy* for each year include all new submissions from November 1 of the previous year through October 31 of the stated year. Publications include the February and August issues of the stated year.

Table 2 shows the estimated performance of the journal with respect to the distribution of first decision times for papers submitted during the period Nov. 1, 2008–Oct. 31, 2009, projected using Kaplan-Meier hazards. Table 3 shows the total publication lags for papers published during 2009. The table indicates an average lag of 20 weeks from initial receipt to acceptance, with an additional lag of 35 weeks from acceptance to publication. This second lag may be shortened as the journal moves to a publishing frequency of four issues per year starting in 2010.

TABLE 2—DISTRIBUTION OF FIRST DECISION TIMES, BY SUBMISSION YEAR

Months to response	2009	
	Monthly percent	Cumulative percent
1	33	33
2	9	42
3	26	69
4	17	85
5	9	95
6	5	99
7	1	100
8	0	100
9	0	100
10	0	100
11	0	100
12	0	100

Notes: Submission year denotes period from November 1 of the preceding year to October 31 of the stated year. The 2009 distribution for *AEJ: Economic Policy* is projected from Kaplan-Meier hazards computed from the right-censored distribution of decision times of manuscripts submitted between November 1, 2008 and October 31, 2009.

TABLE 3—AVERAGE PROCESSING LAGS BY YEAR OF PUBLICATION

Year of publication	Number of weeks		
	Receipt to acceptance	Acceptance to publication	Receipt to publication
2009	20	35	56

Notes: Receipt to acceptance includes all papers submitted to *AEJ: Economic Policy* between July 15, 2007 and October 31, 2009, including the initial solicitation period for papers. Lags for acceptance to publication and receipt to publication are for all papers published in 2009.

Table 4 lists the average page length for manuscripts published in 2009, and Table 5 lists the *JEL* classifications of these papers (with multiple categories possible).

TABLE 4—DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLICATION TYPE, BY YEAR

Year of Publication	Articles	
	Number	Average page length
2009	18	28

Notes: The table refers to the February and August issues of *AEJ: Economic Policy*.

TABLE 5—SUBJECT MATTER OF PUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS, 2009 (COUNTS OF AREAS)

Subject category	2009
Microeconomics	6
Macroeconomics and monetary economics	2
International economics	1
Public economics	14
Health, education, and welfare	8
Labor and demographic economics	5
Law and economics	1
Industrial organization	6
Economic development, technological change, and growth	3
Agricultural and natural resource economics; environmental and ecological economics	5
Urban, rural, and regional economics	1
Total:	51

Office Staff and Other Assistants

The main editorial office for AEA journals, including *AEJ Policy*, is in Pittsburgh. I would like to thank Michelle DeBlasi, managing editor of *AEJ Policy*, for her continuing contributions to getting the journal up and running, and Amanda James, the journal's editorial assistant, for her day-to-day efforts at keeping the journal's flow of manuscripts and correspondence running very smoothly.

Finally, I extend my deep appreciation to those who have refereed for this new journal in its opening months. Their willingness to provide timely and informative reports for yet another journal is a satisfying demonstration of professional commitment.

ALAN J. AUERBACH, *Editor*

TABLE 6—2009 DATA-POSTING POLICY STATISTICS

Issue	Number of papers	Papers with data	Exemptions	First-round compliance	Second-round compliance	Noncompliance
February	10	8	4	8	0	0
August	8	7	2	5	1	0