

Report of the Editor of European Accounting Review for the Year 2014

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This annual report presents the summary statistics on the operations of *European Accounting Review*, together with my commentary. Since 2012, this report is published (after approval by the Publications Committee) on the EAA website in a continued effort to increase the transparency of the editorial process. I hope that the report provides insights to *EAR* authors, reviewers, and readers about how the editorial team has discharged its responsibilities.

We received 400 submissions, of which 292 were new manuscripts.¹ The number of original submissions has increased by about 10 percent compared with 2013 and 2012. The total includes 28 manuscripts that were submitted to the special issue on *Accounting Insights from the Healthcare Sector* and 5 studies (so far) submitted to the special issue on *Tax Research*. In 2014, the journal published 27 articles in 820 published pages. Physically, the journal has adopted the new bigger size, which makes it possible to present often complex tables with findings in a still legible format.

The journal's visibility and impact continue on a strong upward trajectory. Not only are we attracting studies from some of the most prolific authors in the field, but *EAR*'s innovative editorial practices have been adopted by other leading journals. Among these innovations, the preferred editor choice, the formal appeals process, the opportunity to list non-preferred reviewers, and the special encouragement for Young Scholars has made *EAR* an example to follow. Among the recognitions of *EAR*'s standing in the field of accounting are its distinction as an A* journal (i.e., the highest quality tier) in the most current Australian Business Deans Council journal ranking. More recently, the German Academic Association for Business Research (VHB), has promoted *EAR* to A status, putting the journal in the same category as key competitors such as *Contemporary Accounting Research*, *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, and *Review of Accounting Studies*. This journal ranking is based on a vote of the VHB membership and thus reflects the perceptions of an important segment of the EAA constituency.

Both the one-year and the more stable five-year impact factor have increased compared to last year. *EAR*'s one-year impact (based on citations and publications from 2011 and 2012) is currently 0.942 (2013: 0.654), while the five-year impact (computed over 2008-2012) stands at 1.519 (2013: 1.465).

Table 1 details the number and timing of submissions received throughout the year. The country of origin of the submitting author is summarized in Table 2. Authors from Australia, Germany, France, Italy, the UK, the US, Spain and Taiwan are among the most frequent contributors. There are no major shifts in the geography of submissions.

Table 3 presents the (self-reported) subject area of new manuscripts. Financial accounting remains the most active area, representing about 45 percent of all submissions. Managerial accounting is next (21 percent compared with 14 percent in 2013), followed by auditing (12 percent, down from 16 percent in 2013). In 2013, we received a surprising number of tax submission, but this area reverted to the longer-term average of about 5 percent of submissions. Nevertheless, with a special issue scheduled on tax research, we might expect to see a larger number of submissions in this area again in 2015. The journal attracts a diverse set of papers. However, across years, the distribution remains remarkably similar. Empirical/archival methods are used in about 60% of the studies, followed by field work (14 percent), analytical (12 percent). Experimental and interpretative work are less common (and are used in 5 and 3 percent of manuscripts, respectively).

The editorial team continued to pay especial attention to ensuring a good turnaround time for authors. To increase transparency about the length of time manuscripts are in process, I have started to report key editorial statistics in the print edition of each issue of the journal. What's more, to reflect the improvements in turnaround time, I have tightened the informal target of 100 days to now 90 days. The

¹ These numbers exclude the revised submissions received by the Past Editor, which are under his team's responsibility.

average number of days from submission to first decision is 48 days (up from 47 days reported in last year's report). More important than this average turnaround, however, is perhaps the statistic that 89 percent of papers is decided within 90 days. Details based on manuscripts with decisions from the start of my tenure in 2012 are reported in Table 4.

Only 2 percent of manuscripts take more than 150 days. In some cases, especially those that exceed the 180 days turnaround, the delay is caused by an appeal procedure. Delays are mostly due to the assigned reviewer(s) returning their reports late. Sometimes, however, editors assign additional reviewers when they feel that the first reviewer's report did not provide them with a sufficient basis to make a decision.

Table 5 provides information on the acceptance and rejection rates. These statistics need to be interpreted with care as they only include manuscripts submitted to the current editorial team. A relatively robust statistic, however, is the percentage of papers rejected in the first round (including desk rejections), which equals approximately 75 percent. Another relevant statistic is that of the 673 manuscripts with a final decision on December 31, 2014, 52 were accepted for publication (yielding an accept-reject ratio of $52/621=8$ percent). Consistent with editorial policy, most accepted papers received a favorable decision in the third round, although a significant number of papers had to undergo further revision before a final decision could be taken. Papers that need further revision in a fourth and fifth round usually have been accepted conditionally upon satisfying minor concerns. While the editorial team is keen to keep the number of revision rounds limited, especially for the YST, we are willing to be a little more patient if the paper holds significant promise.

Based on inquiries from a concerned reader, I investigated publication ethics concerns with a paper published in issue 1 of volume 23 by Bartlett, Johnson, and Reckers ("Accountability and role effects in balanced scorecard performance evaluations when strategy timeline is specified"). This paper contains content that is closely related to a subsequent publication in *Journal of Management Accounting Research* by the same author team (vol. 26, issue 1, p. 165-184). The investigation revealed that the editorial and review process had been compromised by the authors' non-disclosure of the related study. Based on my advice, the Publications Committee placed the paper published in *EAR* under a Notice of Concern. This Notice of Concern will appear in print in the first issue of volume 24 and is available on the publisher's website. Unfortunately, the editorial team has been called upon to deal more and more frequently with various publication ethics problems. As a member of the COPE (the Committee on Publication Ethics), *EAR* is fully committed to the highest standards of proper scholarly conduct.

European Accounting Review depends on the volunteer efforts of the reviewers and associate editors. With an increasing submission flow, their workload has commensurately gone up too. A formal thank you to the reviewers is included in the first issue of the 2015 volume of the journal. The Management Committee appointed Professor Victor Maas (University of Amsterdam) to replace Eddy Cardinaels as the associate editor for experimental research. Eddy Cardinaels stepped down to accept a position as Editor at *The Accounting Review*. In the final quarter of 2014, Steven Monahan resigned from his position as associate editor for personal reasons. Both Eddy and Steven contributed significantly to *EAR*; they provided authors with careful feedback and considered decisions. *EAR* will miss their wisdom. I have asked Thorsten Sellhorn (LMU) and David Veenman (Erasmus University) to serve as associate editors on an ad hoc basis. Both are members of the *EAR* editorial board and have accepted editorial responsibility on several submissions in recent years.

The functioning of the *EAR* editorial office continues to be the responsibility of Mrs. Kristel Suijs. She deals with the initial screening of the submissions, the prepublication interface with the publisher, and she compiles the statistics for the editor's report. Overall, she contributes in an important way to the smooth running of the day-to-day business of the journal.

European Accounting Review regularly publishes special issues. The topic of the special issue is showcased during the EAA annual meeting by means of a dedicated symposium. In 2014, the symposium on *Accounting Insights from the Health Care Sector* with guest-editors Eddy Cardinaels and Naomi Soderstrom and speakers Margaret Abernethy, Hans Christensen, and Chris Ernst was well-attended and offered a range of views on the topic. The special issue on *Executive Compensation and Disclosure*, guest-edited by Robert Goex and Fabrizio Ferri, is near completion and will most likely be published in the 2015

volume. For the 2015 annual meeting, the topic for the EAR symposium is *Tax Research in Accounting*. The special issue on this topic will be guest-edited by Martin Jacob (WHU) and Richard Sansing (Dartmouth). Invited speakers include Mike Devereux (Oxford), Edward Maydew (UNC), Rainer Niemann (Graz), and Leslie Robinson (Dartmouth). In addition, the guest-editors have organized (together with the Free University Berlin) a small-scale conference. The idea is that authors who wish their papers to be considered for the special issue, will also submit to the conference. In this way, authors will receive significant feedback on their work and increase their chances of publication. While the deadline for this special issue is in the Fall of 2015, we have already had a substantial number of high quality studies submitted for consideration by the time of writing this report.

In 2014, there were no appeals filed against editorial decisions. The details of the appeals procedure are available in the author guidelines and reproduced in every print issue of the journal. Authors are encouraged to avail themselves of this opportunity in those cases they believe errors have been made in the editorial decision process.

Table 1
Submission and Resubmission Timing of Papers Submitted in 2014

Month	Original	Revised	Total
January 2014	26	12	38
February 2014	19	10	29
March 2014	31	8	39
April 2014	23	10	33
May 2014	17	10	27
June 2014	17	6	23
July 2014	40	8	48
August 2014	24	16	40
September 2014	23	10	33
October 2014	19	10	29
November 2014	18	3	21
December 2014	34	5	39
Total	291	108	399

Table 2
Country of Origin of Corresponding Author Submitted Articles in 2014

Author Country	Original	Revised	Total
Australia	25	6	31
Austria	6	1	7
Belgium	2	0	2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	0	1
Brazil	2	0	2
Canada	4	7	11
China	7	3	10
Cypres	2	0	2
Czech Republic	1	0	1
Denmark	2	0	2
Egypt	2	0	2
Finland	7	2	9
France	16	5	21
Germany	23	19	42
Ghana	2	0	2
Greece	4	0	4
Hong Kong	3	1	4
Iceland	1	0	1
India	8	0	8
Iran, Islamic Republic of	8	0	8
Ireland	1	2	3
Israel	1	1	2
Italy	29	12	41
Japan	4	3	7
Jordan	1	0	1
Korea, Republic of	2	1	3
Kuwait	2	0	2
Lebanon	2	0	2
Morocco	3	0	3
Netherlands	6	4	10
New Zealand	5	0	5
Nicaragua	1	0	1
Nigeria	1	0	1
Norway	3	0	3
Pakistan	2	0	2
Palestine, State of	2	0	2
Poland	1	2	3
Portugal	5	1	6
Saudi Arabia	1	0	1
Singapore	1	4	5

Slovenia	2	0	2
South Africa	2	0	2
Spain	14	3	17
Sweden	6	4	10
Switzerland	6	2	8
Taiwan	13	5	18
Tunisia	4	0	4
Turkey	2	0	2
United Arab Emirates	3	0	3
United Kingdom	25	6	31
United States	15	14	29
Summary	291	108	399

Table 3
Original Submissions by Subject Area and Method

Submissions by subject area

Area:	2014		2013		2012	
	# of papers	Percentage	# of papers	Percentage	# of papers	Percentage
Financial accounting	132	45%	125	47%	136	49%
Managerial accounting	61	21%	36	14%	45	16%
Auditing	35	12%	43	16%	37	13%
Accounting information systems	9	3%	5	2%	3	1%
Taxation	13	5%	47	18%	4	1%
Other	42	14%	9	3%	52	20%
Totals	292	100%	265	100%	277	100%

Submissions by method

Method	2014		2013		2012	
	# of papers	Percentage	# of papers	Percentage	# of papers	Percentage
Empirical/archival	184	63%	158	60%	165	60%
Field work (including case studies and surveys)	40	14%	28	11%	45	16%
Analytical	34	12%	38	14%	34	12%
Experimental	15	5%	19	7%	14	5%
Interpretative, narrative, and historical	10	3%	12	4%	11	4%
Other	9	3%	10	4%	8	3%
Totals	292	100%	265	100%	277	100%

Note: subject area and method are as reported by the authors during the submission process.

Table 4
Turnaround Statistics of Submissions Decided in 2012, 2013 and 2014

Processing time	Number	Cumulative %
0-30 days	357	33
31-60 days	322	62
61-90 days	288	89
90-120 days	80	96
121-150 days	16	98
151-180 days	2	99
181 or more days	3	100
Total	1068	
Average turnaround	48 days	

Table 5
Decisions Statistics for Submissions in 2014, 2013 and 2012

Decisions for manuscripts submitted in a given year and with a decision on Dec. 31, 2014

Editorial Decisions	Number 2014	% 2014	Number 2013	% 2013	Number 2012	% 2012
Rejected	246	63%	211	60%	222	67%
R&R	113	29%	121	35%	104	31%
Accepted	32	8%	16	5%	5	2%
Total	391	100%	348	100%	331	100%

Decisions for manuscripts submitted since 2012 and with a decision on Dec. 31, 2014

Decisions by round	Rejected	Revise	Accepted
Round 1	585	207	0
Round 2	28	79	8
Round 3	8	28	24
Round 4	0	6	15
Round 5	0	0	5
Total	621	320	52