

Dawning of a new age?

The journals perspective on data policies



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Agenda

- 1) A difficult relationship: Economics journals and data policies
- 2) Dawning of a new age? A recent study on journals' data policies
 - Aims of the study
 - Methodology
 - A few results
- 3) Some take home messages

1) Economics Journals and Data Policies

- Dewald, Thursby & Anderson (1986): Errors in published empirical articles are “*a commonplace rather than a rare occurrence*” (Dewald, Thursby & Anderson, 1986, 587f)
- McCullough (2009): Since 1993, in total 17 (top-)journals with mandatory data policies with archives for data/code
- Vlaeminck (2013): 40 out of 141 journals (28.4%) with data policy
- Vlaeminck & Herrmann (2015): 71 out of 346 journals (20.5%) with data policy
- Höffler (2017): 343 journals in study, 185 with a data policy (53.9%)
- Chin & Dong (2019): Of 74 journals listed in the *Tilburg Top 100 Ranking*, 58 had a data availability policy (75.7%), 34 of these had a mandatory policy (58.6%)

2) Study* on Data Policies of Economics Journals

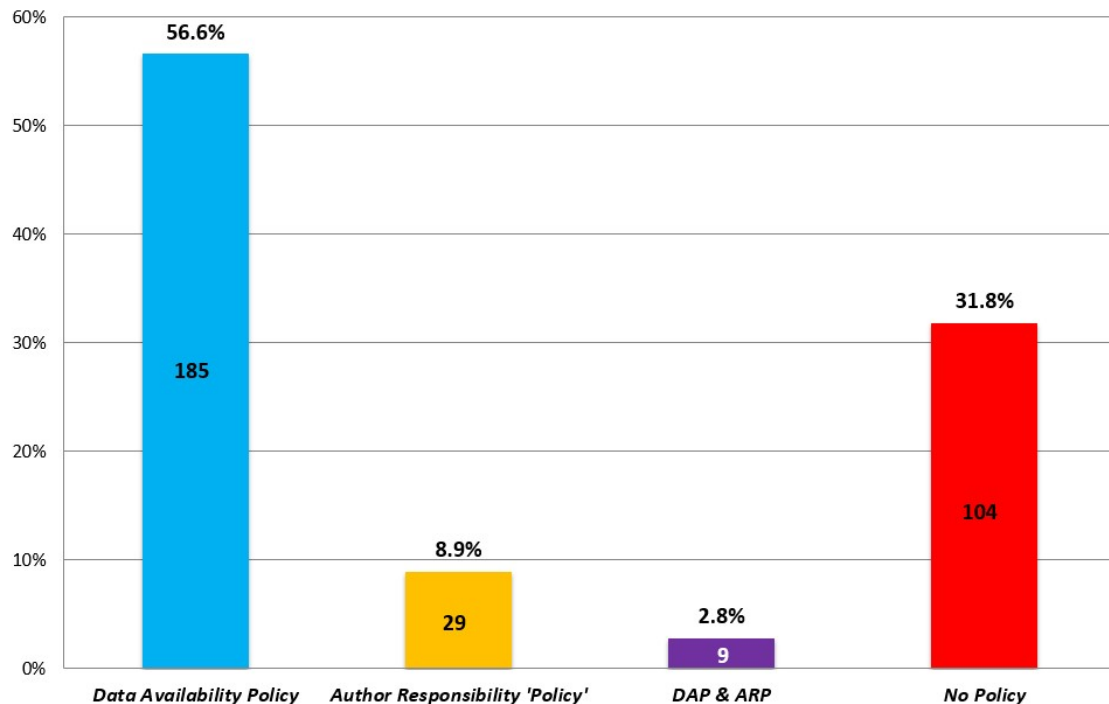
- *Aims:* The study illustrates ...
 - ... the number of economics journals with data policies,
 - ... the types of data policies in use,
 - ... the requirements of these policies (-> files, information, degree of obligation, handling of restricted data,...)
 - ... the changes in the field since 2014,
 - *How (and where) data should be stored or published,*

Methodology of the Study

- Content Analysis -> a structured, systematic coding scheme (-> codebook) is applied to selected text passages
- Selected paragraphs: ‚Information for Authors‘/ ‚Duties of Authors‘ - sections of the journals & dedicated data policies (but: online resources only)
- Sample: 353 journals listed in the Clarivate Journal Citation Reports Edition 2017 for Economics (-> Impact Factor® journals)

Number and Type of Journals' Data Policies (2019)

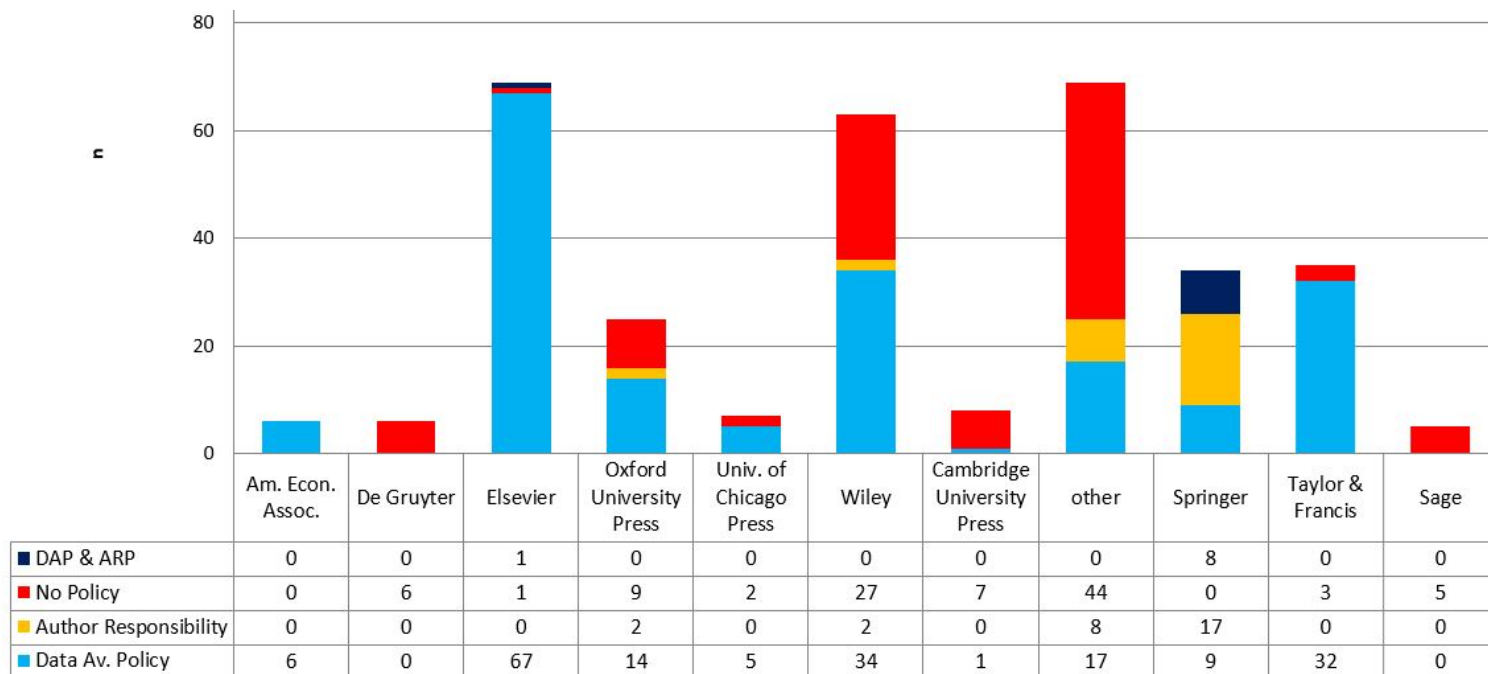
(n=327)



- More than 68% of all journals that publish empirical/'data-based' articles now have a data policy
- The majority uses DAPs
- ARPs and a combination of both policy types are less relevant
- Almost one-third of the journals do not yet have a policy



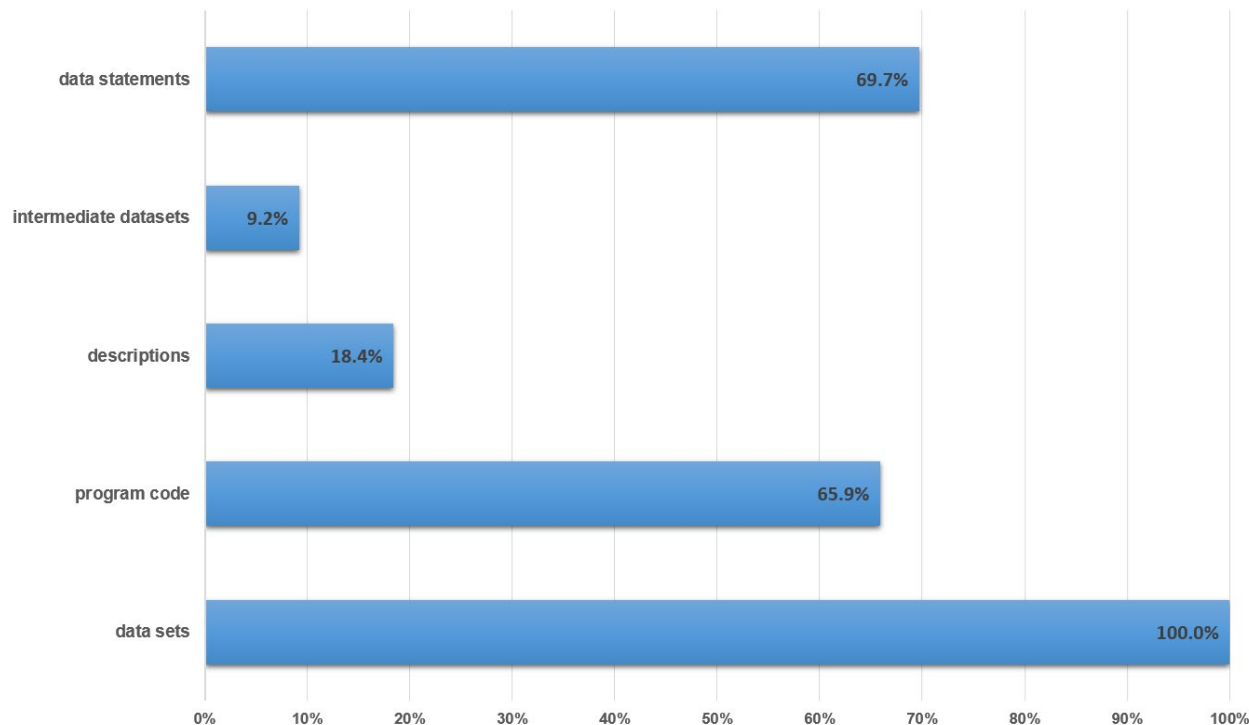
Publishers their Types of Data Policies (2019)



- Elsevier, T&F and the AEA with high rates of journals w. DAP
- Policies often identical for journals of one publisher

What Files and Information the Polices request

Requirements of Data Policies of Economics Journals
(n=185 Data Availability Policies)

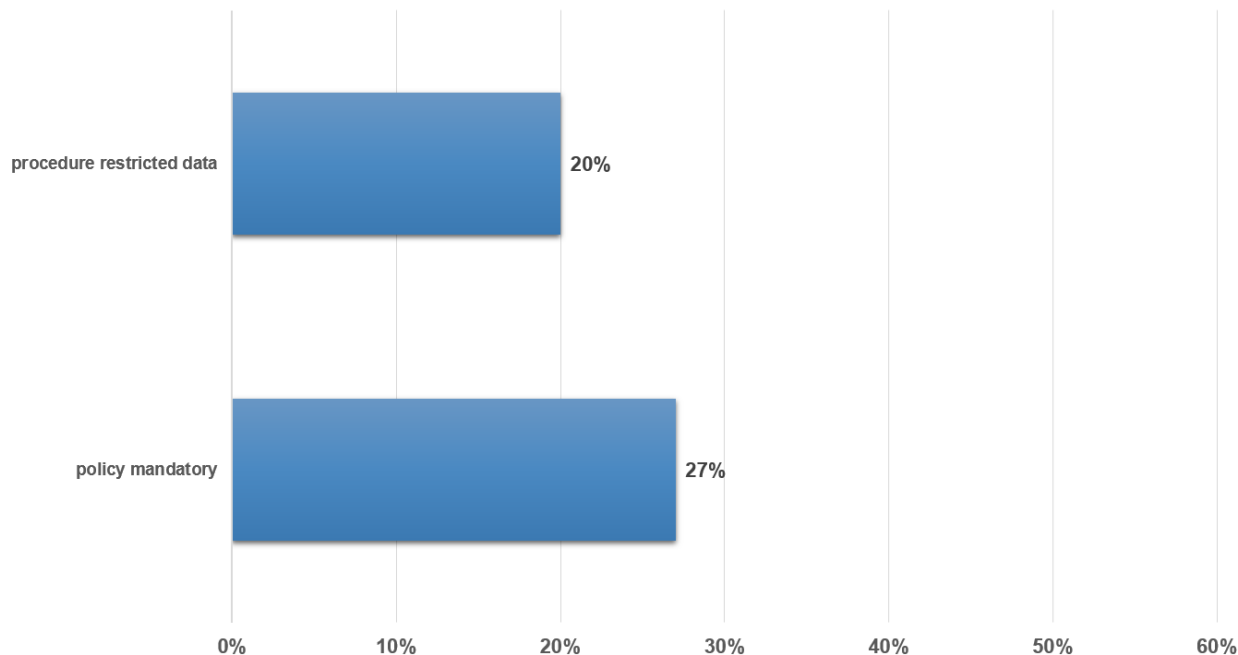


The study's findings suggest that not all data policies can be considered to be robust (in terms of reproducibility)



Mandatory Data Policies and the Case of restricted Data

**The Share of mandatory Data Policies and
Journals with a Procedure for Articles based on Restricted Data**
(n=185 Data Availability Policies)

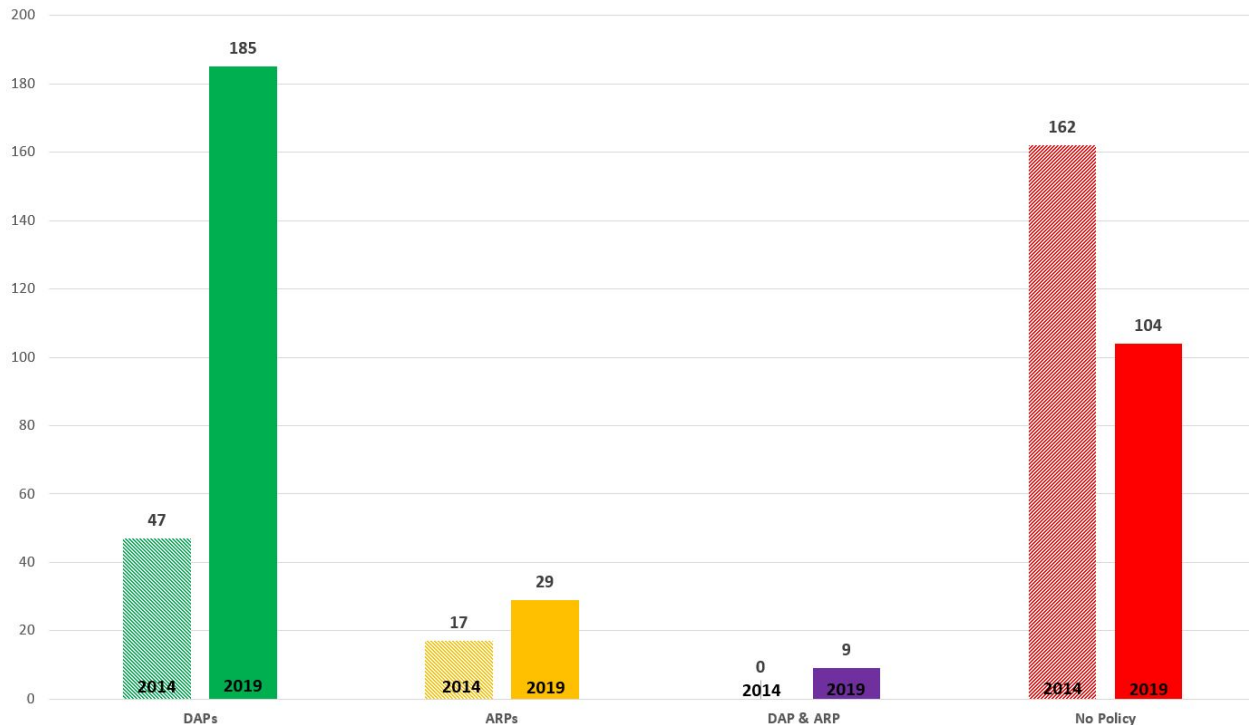


- Only 27% of all journals have a data policy that is mandatory for authors
- A fifth of the journals have a procedure for research based on restricted data

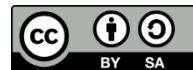
A comparison between 2019 and 2014

Types of Data Policies used by Economic Journals in 2014 and 2019 in comparison

(absolute numbers | n=327 [2019] | n=262 [2014])



- In recent years, there has been a massive increase in journals' data policies
- Publishers seem to be the drivers of this shift
- BUT: The average quality of these policies has not improved. Many are voluntary, not very precise and are not subject specific



3) Take Home Messages

- Data policies of economics journals are a rapidly evolving field
 - The sheer amount of journals with data availability policy has almost almost quadrupled in five years (!)
 - However, the average quality of these policies has not necessarily improved
 - One-third do not require the program code (crucial!)
 - Less than one-fifth ask for descriptions of the data or the research process
 - The proportion of mandatory data policies is still low
 - Best policy and ‚gold standard‘ is still the data policy of the American Economic Association (AEA)
 - For the future: Be prepared to also share your data – [this guide](#) helps!
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Thank you for your attention!

➤ Any Questions?

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