

Governing by Numbers - Key Indicators and the Politics of Expectations

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The latest issue of the journal [*Historical Social Research \(HSR\)*](#) is published!

[HSR Vol. 44 \(2019\) No. 2: Governing by Numbers - Key Indicators and the Politics of Expectations.](#)
ed. Walter Bartl, Christian Papilloud & Audrey Terracher-Lipinski

In this special issue of Historical Social Research, indicators are considered epistemic devices that render the world governable by quantification. While endowed with an aura of objectivity, indicators are not neutral devices. Instead, they transform the world they claim to describe. Against the backdrop of a global proliferation of indicators, we argue in favour of a research agenda focused on the processes that lead to the institutionalisation and systematic use of key indicators in societal fields. Furthermore, we propose a heuristic for analysing how indicators are involved in shaping imaginations of the future following three distinct dimensions of meaning (factual, social, temporal) . The articles in this special issue range from theoretical and conceptual contributions to empirical studies on the genesis and use of key indicators in different policy fields, some of which also consider alternatives to key economic indicators. They will be of particular interest to scholars who strive towards a more systematic understanding of the relationship between the construction of quantitative knowledge and power in society.

You will find table of contents and abstracts [online](#). With a moving wall of six months, the HSR has a rich [open access archive](#).

All the best!

The HSR editorial team

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