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## THEME SECTION

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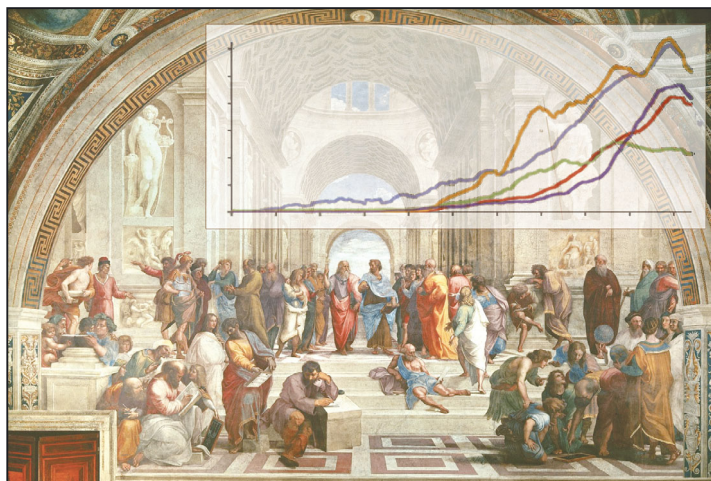
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## Global university rankings uncovered

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Among top academic institutions, the increasing frequency of university name usage since 1800 offers a historical perspective of their reputation and 'intellectual' impact for the end user of university rankings

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*THEME SECTIONS of Ethics in Science and Environmental Politics (ESEP) provide a forum for the interdisciplinary discussion of specific, current topics in the field.*

*This Theme Section (TS) considers how global university rankings, a recent tool for the assessment of higher education institutions, have attained growing attention from university administrations and faculty members, markets, governments, mass media and the public at large. University rankings may affect all aspects directly or indirectly related to academia, such as: university and department curricula, funding and reputation; student admissions, fees and job prospects; faculty member re-*

*cruitment, promotion and wages; and publication records in terms of both quantity and quality. The articles in this TS cover different methodological, socio-political, economical and ethical 'hot issues' emerging from the dominance of rankings in the higher education sector through the views and thoughts of different stakeholders (i.e. university administrators, rankers, scientists). We hope that this TS and the questions it raises will further contribute to the recent debate on and future of university rankings.*

*We are pleased to make all articles of this ESEP Theme Section available online with Free Access.*

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