

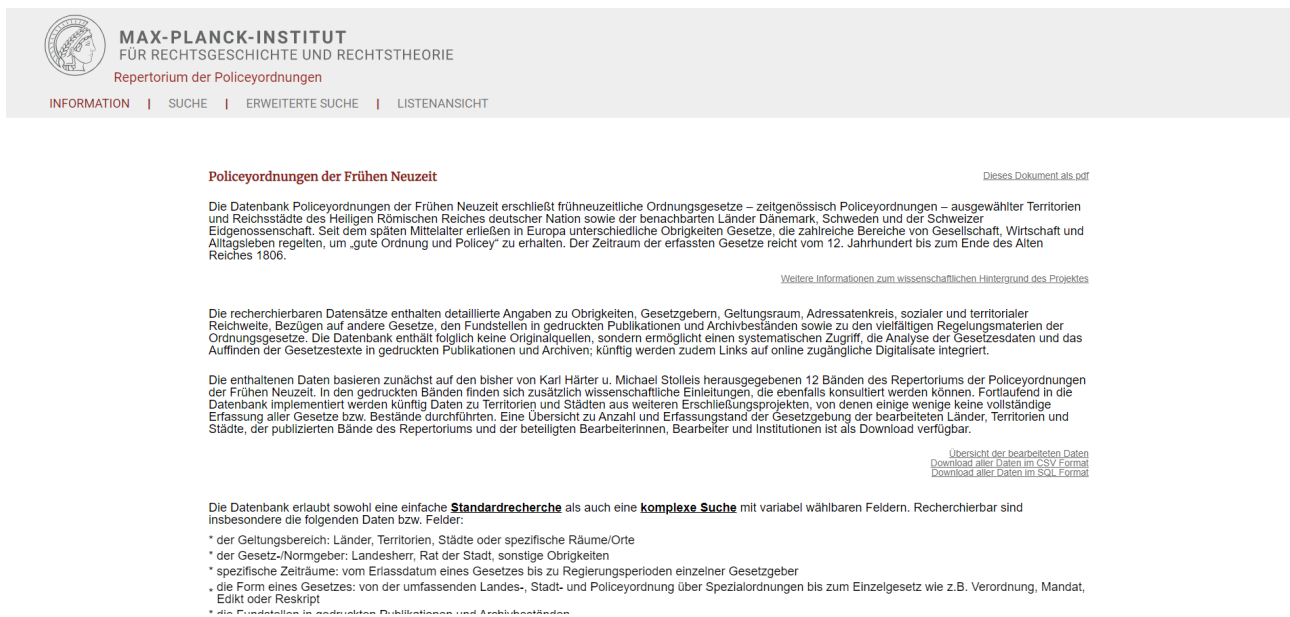


Publishing license: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/> CC-BY 4.0

Title:	A Database of Early Modern Police Ordinances.
Author(s) and contributors:	Karl Härter
Issue:	1
Year:	2023
DOI:	10.21825/dlh.85516
Abstract:	A short notice on a/ the Database of Early Modern Police Ordinances as published by the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory. : https://policy.lhlt.mpg.de

A Database of Early Modern Police Ordinances: <https://policey.lhlt.mpg.de>

As a particular type of administrative law, police ordinances (*Policeyordnungen*) are important legal sources which facilitate multifarious research in early modern history. From the Late Middle Ages onwards, the authorities of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation and other European countries alike issued a growing number of police ordinances to maintain order, security and welfare of state and society. They addressed all social groups, aimed at regulating social behavior and covered a variety of subject matters. The provisions dealt with religious matters, blasphemy and swearing, sexual behavior, sumptuousness and luxury, clothing, festivities, drinking and gambling, violence, marginal groups, poor relief, public health, agriculture and forests, business, trade and craftsmen, infrastructure, fire and natural disasters – to name but a few of the expanding regulatory areas.



The screenshot shows the header of the website, which includes the logo of the Max-Planck-Institut für Rechtsgeschichte und Rechtstheorie and the title 'Repertorium der Policeyordnungen'. Below the header, there is a navigation menu with options like 'INFORMATION', 'SUCHE', 'ERWEITERTE SUCHE', and 'LISTENANSICHT'. The main content area features a section titled 'Policeyordnungen der Frühen Neuzeit' with a sub-header 'Dieses Dokument als pdf'. The text describes the database's scope, covering early modern police ordinances from the 12th century to 1806. It also provides links for more information, a list of territories, and download options for the data in CSV or SQL format. A list of search criteria is provided, including jurisdiction, issuer, date, and form of the ordinance.

Image 1. Landingpage for the 'Policeyordnungen der Frühen Neuzeit' on the Web. Source: <https://policey.lhlt.mpg.de/web/> (accessed: 11 December 2022).

The database *Policeyordnungen der Frühen Neuzeit* – available in open access at <https://policey.lhlt.mpg.de> – is based on the systematic recording and indexing of these normative texts making accessible over 200.000 police ordinances of 58 selected territories and imperial cities of the Holy Roman Empire and adjacent countries (Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland), which were published between the 13th and the early 19th centuries.¹

Currently, the data of the ordinances already published in the twelve volumes of the *Repertorium der Policyordnungen*, ed. by K. Härter/M. Stolleis are available in the database; the data of the remaining ordinances not yet published in the repertory will be implemented soon.²

The database provides information about the legislating authorities/states and the addressees of the ordinances, their social and geographic ambit, references to other laws, the media, contemporary collections and archives in which they were published or preserved and above all the subject matters of the various provisions. The latter are systematically indexed and made accessible through a

¹ List of territories and editors: https://policey.lhlt.mpg.de/web/assets/02_uebersicht_territorien_bearbeiterinnen_publication.pdf.

² <https://www.lhlt.mpg.de/research-project/repertory-of-policeyordnungen>.

threefold hierarchical taxonomy of the police regulations (5 sectors, 25 categories/regulatory areas and approx. 200 subject matters/*Policeymaterien*) and more than 6200 specific keywords.³

The taxonomy and many keywords are also translated into Danish, Swedish and English, thus also facilitating research in languages other than German. The translation will be made available in the Special Issue on Policey in the DLH over the course of 2023

The database provides standard searches (fields: territory/legislator, date, subject matters) as well as complex combined searches with more than 12 flexible selectable fields organized in:

- the ambit and legislator: countries, territories, imperial cities, specific legal districts/jurisdictions, name, period of rule, form, religion of sovereigns/governments
- the ordinance/law: date of legislation/publication/implementation; type/form of the law (ordinance, edict, mandate, rescript); references to related laws/ordinances; references to printed media/collections and archives
- content and regulatory matters of the ordinances indexed through the hierarchical taxonomy of the police regulations and specific keywords facilitating systematic access – for instance all ordinances dealing with the category of socially marginalized groups (= *1.3 Soziale Randgruppen*) – or a search using specific keywords of regulatory matters – for instance Jews (*Juden*), Gypsies (*Zigeuner*) – or a combination of both.

The results of searches are displayed as a tabular list with three available sorting orders:

- 1) ambit/legislator – date of the ordinance – category and subject matter,
- 2) date of the ordinance – ambit/legislator – category and subject matter,
- 3) category and subject matter – date of the ordinance – ambit/legislator.

Through a single click on a law/data line, the ordinance is displayed as a single hit with the whole set of data in the form of a printed repertory.

The search results can be downloaded as single files (limited to 10.000 hits) in three output formats:

- 1) a RTF-file which uses the layout of the printed repertory / the single hit,
- 2) a data file in CSV format,
- 3) a data file in XML format.

The latter formats enable the further processing of the data, for instance, for quantitative analyses and generating charts and diagrams.

All in all, the database enables systematic access to early modern police ordinances, and their location in printed media and archives. It also facilitates quantitative analyses of the generated data, for instance, regarding the temporal development of specific subject matters or the comparison of various countries. Although the database does not provide the authentic texts of the ordinances, it is intended to add digitalized versions of ordinances or links to the respective sources in online collections.

Karl Härter

Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory

haerter@lhlt.mpg.de

<https://www.lhlt.mpg.de/haerter/en.html>

³ These are listed here: https://policy.lhlt.mpg.de/web/assets/03_systematik_index_policeymaterien.pdf