

Sound Toll Registers online

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In 2009 the University of Groningen and Tresoar, the Frisian Historical and Literary Centre, Leeuwarden, The Netherlands, undertook, in co-operation with the Danish National Archives, Copenhagen, and the Frisian Academy, Leeuwarden, the realization of an electronic database for the complete Danish Sound Toll Registers (STR).

The database, Sound Toll Registers online, will gradually become accessible via the internet in the course of 2011, 2012 and 2013: www.soundtoll.nl. At this moment the database published on www.soundtoll.nl contains the passages of the period 1787-1799 covering about 125.000 passages.

STR online is funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), several Frisian cultural foundations, the University of Groningen and Tresoar.

The STR are the records of the toll the king of Denmark levied on the passage of the ships through the Sound, the strait between Sweden and Denmark connecting the North and Baltic Seas. They cover 1.8 mln passages and 300 years in the period 1497-1857. They include a practically uninterrupted series from 1574-1857. They are kept by the Danish National Archives, Copenhagen. They are well-known but, because of their sheer volume and detail, under-used as a source for early modern history. STR online will facilitate full use of the STR as a source for local, regional, national, European and global history.

The STR contain – in principle - for each passage the following data:

the passage date

the shipmaster's name

the shipmaster's domicile

the port of departure

the port of destination (from the mid-1660's)

the nature and quantity of the cargo

the toll paid

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We have outsourced the entry of the data to Breed, the social workplace at Nijmegen.

Breed enters the data in the original spelling of the source (the STR) and delivers the data files to Tresoar. RUG and Tresoar accept or reject the data after a quality check by random sample.

After acceptance Tresoar corrects the data.

Subsequently, RUG and Tresoar add extra fields to the database with standardized and categorized geographical and commodity names.

To facilitate the use of the database by a broad audience RUG and Tresoar have added a user interface.

After completion of the the STR online database RUG and Tresoar will maintain both the database and the website.

We encourage everybody to use STR online, to carry out research using STR online and to organize conferences for the presentation of research based on STR online.