

Lecture

The Successful Implementation of Radical Reform

Austria, Bavaria, and Prussia in the first half of the 19th century

Oene de Haan
University of Utrecht



THU
23. April 2026
Start: 5pm

PSK-Building, 1010 Vienna,
Georg Coch-Platz 2,
4th floor, Room 5

During the decades around 1800, radical land reforms were implemented in major European realms. How did these regimes manage to change or even abolish ancient rights of the privileged members of the society of orders and simultaneously restructure innumerable property titles? To explain the success of such operations, historians have pointed to various factors, such as the central bureaucracy, a compromise between crown and nobility, and local institutions and actors. How and to what extent each of the factors contributed to reform remained, however, unclear. Oene de Haan has now reconstructed and analyzed the implementation of the land tax reform in a comparative way across central Europe, focusing on the crucial local level where the reforms were actually implemented. His case studies on cadaster reform include the province of Lower Austria between 1810 and 1834 in the Habsburg monarchy; and, the Isar and later Lower Bavaria district between 1808 and 1851 in the kingdom of Bavaria. In Prussia, he examined the implementation of radical reform (*Oktober Edikt*) as carried out in the district Frankfurt an der Oder in the province of Brandenburg between 1807 and 1840. His talk will focus on the reasons behind the success of the implementation in Lower Austria followed by a short comparison with Bavaria and Prussia.

Dr Oene de Haan graduated from the Rotterdam School of Management in 1985. He spent the first three decades of his professional life in commercial positions within a US telecom multinational in Europe and North America, followed by civil service positions at the City of Amsterdam. He received an MA in History at the University of Utrecht in 2015. At the same university, on 31 October 2025, he successfully defended the doctoral thesis on which his talk is based.

ORGANIZER

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