



Vorarlberg  
unser Land



Rote Wand, Lechquellen range



Hohe Kugel, view to Lake Constance



Bregenz Festival



Research made in Vorarlberg



Playgrounds



Active Alpine farming

# Vorarlberg Compact

About the country and its people

# VORARLBERG

Compact and clearly arranged



**Markus Wallner**  
State Governor



**Harald Sonderegger**  
President of the State Parliament

**Dear reader,**

In this brochure you will find in compact and clearly arranged, numerous key figures and useful information about Vorarlberg and its people. The booklet aims at giving all interested readers a first idea about our region – with a focus on its history, traditions, the pronounced dialects, lively cultures and arts, the strong social cohesion, the impressive economic power and last but not least a glance at the multifaceted and attracting natural landscape of Vorarlberg.

The Vorarlberg population distinguishes by its open-mindedness, which is certainly due to the geographic location right in the heart of Europe as well as to the strongly export-oriented economic structure. Vorarlberg, embedded in the border region between Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Germany and Austria counts – together with the region around Lake Constance – among the most successful economic areas of the European Union.

People in Vorarlberg distinguish by their high motivation as well as by their creativeness and personal commitment. Values such as community and family are an extremely high priority in our country and are reflected in numerous associations and manifold community services. This particular combination results in the high quality of life and the remarkable economic development in Vorarlberg.

You will find the most important information in this brochure – more detailed data and facts can be found on the internet at [www.vorarlberg.at](http://www.vorarlberg.at).



Schattenburg and Katzenturm/Feldkirch



Parliament of School Students



Bregenz harbour/Kunsthhaus Bregenz



Novaturm / Great Walser Valley



Bus station/Dornbirn



Ski jumping centre Montafon Nordic



Pedestrian mall/Bludenz



Shipping/Lake Constance



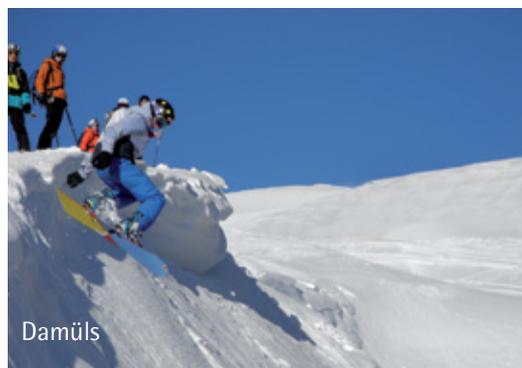
Alpine dairy Sibratsgfall / Bregenzerwald



Research laboratory Getzner Werkstoffe/Bürs



University of Applied Sciences/Dornbirn



Damüls



Bregenzerwälder Juppe

# HISTORY

## Vorarlberg, then and now

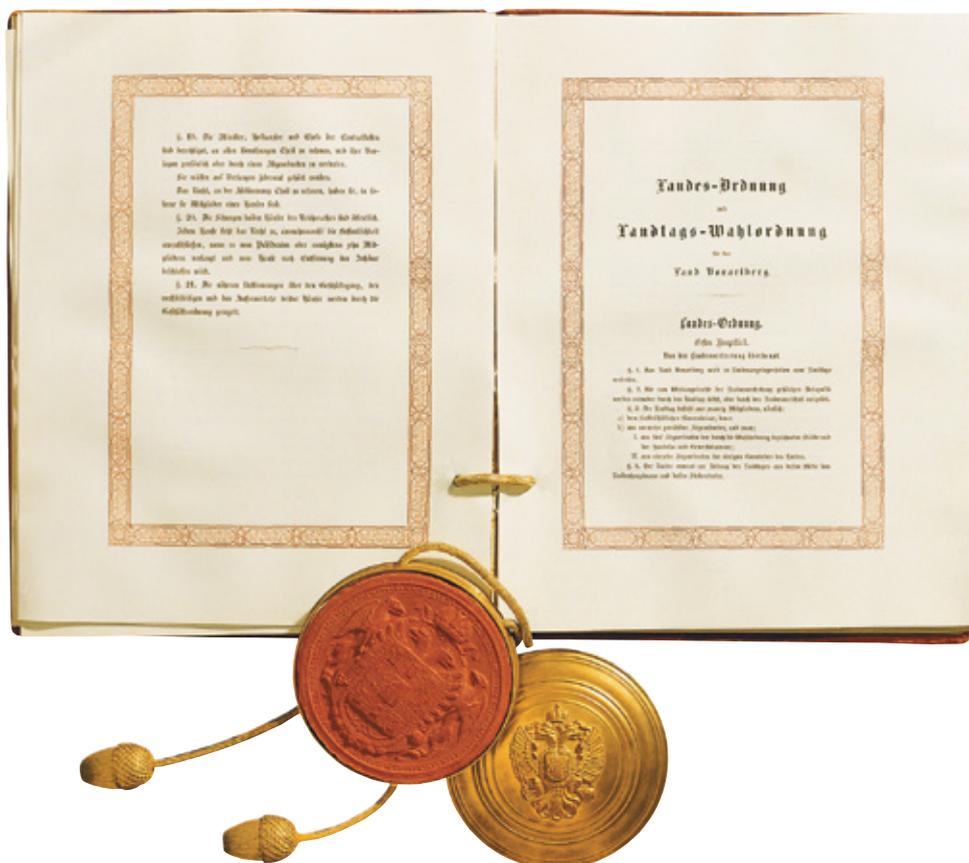
Evidence of human settlement goes back as far as the Palaeolithic Age, and particularly convenient locations in Vorarlberg were permanently populated already during the Bronze Age. Celtic tribes dominated life in the alpine valleys from the 4th century B.C. to 15 B.C. when the Romans conquered the region that is now known as Vorarlberg, integrating it as a part of the Province of Rhaetia and gradually Romanising the population. Brigantium (Bregenz) became the regional centre. As from the middle of the 6th century Alemanni settled in this region; however, in the southern part of the country, the Romansh population remained predominant through several centuries.

Under the dynasty of the „Udalrichinger“, the castle of Bregenz (first mentioned in 802) became the origin of new dynasties. The counts of Bregenz dominated large areas in the southern and northern parts of the Lake Constance area.

The counts of Montfort and of Werdenberg were descendants from these dynasties and as territorial sovereigns they founded the towns of Feldkirch, Bregenz and Bludenz.

### Vorarlberg as an entity

Between 1363 and 1523, they acquired the demesnes of Neuburg, Feldkirch, Bludenz, Bregenz



Vorarlberg Election Procedure as of February 1861



Members of the Parliament and the Vorarlberg Government

and Sonnenberg as well as the courts of Mittelberg and Tannberg. The 'Landstände', the political representatives of the estates and the urban and rural courts who approved of extraordinary taxes applicable beyond the borders of their districts during the estates assembly and who cooperated in the organization of the defence of their country, enhanced the development of a sense of identity of the region. In the 18th century the name of „Vorarlberg“ appeared for the first time and was used for the region that had been called up to then generally the "demesne before the Arlberg". Today's borders of the Vorarlberg were defined in the year 1814. The Vorarlberg Parliament was established in 1861.

### Modern constitution

Some few days before the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy collapsed, a provisional Parliament assembled in Bregenz on the 3rd of November 1918. In holding to the right of self-determination of the nations, a resolution was unanimously passed to establish Vorarlberg as an „independent province within the scope of the German-Austrian State“. The State Constitution of 1919 was adjusted in alignment with the Federal Constitution of the Republic of Austria in 1923, and again amended in 1934 to conform with the authoritarian corporative state. After the

annexation of Austria, (the "Anschluss") to the German Reich in 1938, Vorarlberg lost its independence and became part of the state of Tyrol. It was only on the 11th of December 1945, when the new Parliament that had been democratically elected some days before, reinstated the constitution of 1923. Up to today, it forms – after several amendments – the basis of the political system in Vorarlberg.



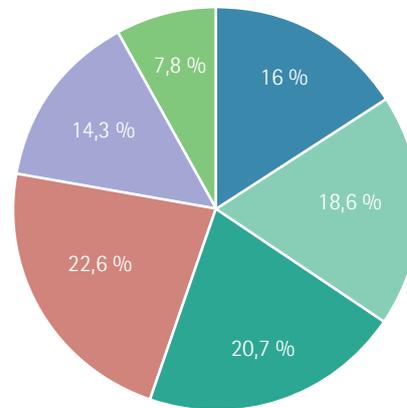
The old Vorarlberg coat of arms of 1864

# POPULATION

## People in Vorarlberg

Second only to Vienna, Vorarlberg is the most densely populated province of the Republic of Austria. The average population density is of 147 inhabitants per square kilometre. Over the last three decades, population in Vorarlberg has increased by 22 percent which is, compared to the other federal states, the highest percentage. Vorarlberg has the youngest inhabitants in Austria: in Vorarlberg the share of children and adolescents under 15 years of age is the highest of Austria. Around 2/3 of the population are "crowding" 1/5 of the territory – in the Rhine valley the population density is almost comparable to those of urban agglomerations. Presently, around 383,000 persons have their main place of residence and about 27,000 have a second place of residence in Vorarlberg. The share of foreign nationalities is of about 15 percent. This is also reflected by the religious affiliations: about 70 percent of the population are of Roman-Catholic confession, the remaining inhabitants are either Muslims, unaffiliated with any religion or affiliated with other Christian communities. According to forecasts, up to 400,000 people will live in Vorarlberg by 2025.

## Age groups in Vorarlberg



Source: Vorarlberg Statistical Office (30.6.2015)



## Dialect – High German

allpot – hin und wieder  
Äne und Ana – Großvater und Großmutter  
a biz – ein bisschen, ein wenig  
bläga, blära – weinen  
Böscha – Gebüsch  
daham, dahem, dahoam, dahuam – daheim  
Däta – Vater, Papa  
Dilli – Dachboden  
drümmelig – schwindlig  
eppas, etsches – etwas  
fära, vorfära – letztes Jahr, vorletztes Jahr  
fürba – mit dem Besen kehren  
Gagla, Goga – Kinder  
Gfret – Ärger, Unannehmlichkeit  
Gschpana – Spielkamerad, Freund  
güllna – mit Gülle düngen  
ha – entspricht etwa „Wie bitte?“  
Häs, Hes – Kleidung  
hehl – glatt, eisig, auch: einschmeichelnd  
hoi – je nach Region Ausdruck des Erstaunens od. Gruß  
hudla – sich beeilen  
keia – hinfallen  
Kemmifäg'r – Schornsteinfeger

Kog, Koga – Kerl (abwertend)  
Kutze – Wolledecke  
Lälla – Zunge  
lätz – schlecht, verkehrt  
losa, losna – hören  
Moatle, Meigi – Mädchen  
Mutz – Kuss, Bussi  
netza – gießen  
nüd, nünt – nicht, auch: nichts  
od'r – oder (als Interjektion)  
Pfüate – Verabschiedungswort  
Pfulfa – Polster  
Ribl, Brösl – Vorarlberger Gericht aus Weizengrieß  
roos – ziemlich  
Schesa – Kinderwagen  
Schopf – Schuppen  
schwätza – reden  
Strucha – Schnupfen  
Tschopa – Jacke  
Und ätza? – Und jetzt?  
v'rtruckt – schlau  
wellaweg – wahrscheinlich  
Zizile – Frankfurter Würstchen

A unique characteristic of Vorarlberg's population is its distinctive language dialect. Unlike to other regions this dialect is not limited to a use in a private environment, but it is commonly used. Contrary to the other parts of Austria, the Vorarlberg population does not speak a Bavarian, but an Alemannic German closely related to Swiss German and to the dialects of the neighbouring German "Allgäu". The dialects even differ within the State itself – especially in the Bregenzerwald, in Lustenau and in the Montafon.

However, the distinctive dialects all have one feature in common, the absence of the so-called 'New High German diphthongisation', which led to the introduction of umlauts in the High German language from the 12th Century. The Vorarlberg dialect corresponds with an older form of language without diphthongs (e.g. 'Hus' instead of 'Haus' – for the English 'house'). The preterit tense is not used, and past actions are only spoken of in the perfect tense. No person in Vorarlberg would ever say, "Ich war" (I was), but "Ich bin ... gsi" (I have been). That is why the natives of Vorarlberg are also jokingly referred to as the "Gsi-Berger". For a better understanding we have enclosed to the present brochure a selection of "vocabularies" from Vorarlberg dialect with a translation into High German (see page 6).

## Health

The State of Vorarlberg has been a pioneer for many years now in the matter of healthcare and the promotion of public health. This is one of the reasons why life expectancy of the Vorarlberg population is one of the highest in Europe.

## Outstanding helpfulness

Vorarlberg maintains a high degree of community service. According to a study by the University of Applied Sciences in Vorarlberg of 2014, almost half of the population (aged more than 15 years) commit themselves to voluntary service. More than 150,000 persons in Vorarlberg are working in a honorary capacity in almost 4,500 associations in Vorarlberg or they participate in neighbourhood assistance. Around 14,000 persons are active in the social sector, e.g. in social welfare organisations and institutions for the disabled.



Children to the centre – this initiative of the State aims at developing Vorarlberg to the most child- and family-friendly region.  
[www.vorarlberg.at/kim](http://www.vorarlberg.at/kim)

The tight social network is subsidized by public funds in a yearly amount of more than 250 million Euros, of which 54 percent is allotted to social welfare aid, care of the elderly and nursing care, 35 percent to integration assistance and the remainder to child, youth and family welfare services. Altogether: great appreciation and active support provided by helping people!



Honorary commitment in the Citizens' Council: this new form of political participation allows randomly chosen persons to discuss the future of their living space.

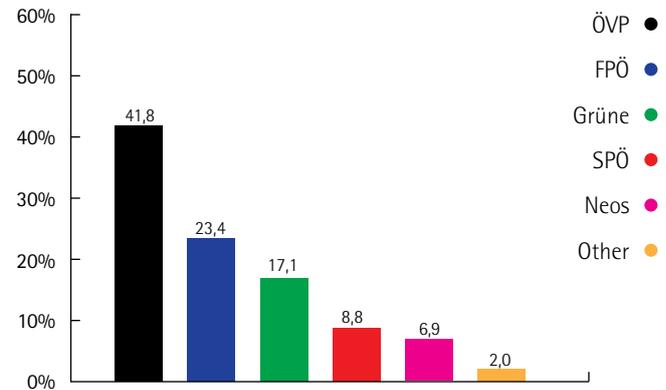
# POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION

## Vorarlberg at a glance

Since the end of the Second World War, the 'Österreichische Volkspartei' - the Austrian People's Party - (VP) has been successful in having its candidate elected to the office of the governor of Vorarlberg. The State parliament of Vorarlberg consists of 36 members, who are elected to serve for a period of five years. Since the elections to the State parliament on 21st of September 2014, the Vorarlberger Volkspartei (the Vorarlberg People's Party) has 16, the 'Freiheitliche Partei' (Austrian Freedom Party) 9, the 'Grünen' (Green Party) 6, the 'Sozialdemokratische Partei Österreichs' (Social Democratic Party of Austria) 3 and the 'NEOS' 2 seats to represent the interests of the Vorarlberg population. The 'Landtag' (Parliament) is responsible for the State legislation, it has budgetary sovereignty and controls the government and the administration. The President of the Parliament is Mr. Harald Sonderegger (VP). Mr. Ernst Hagen (FPÖ) and Ms. Gabriele Nußbaumer (VP) are vice-presidents. Moreover, since 1999 Vorarlberg has its own audit court that controls as an organ of the Parliament the financial management of the State - since 2013 also communities with less than 10,000 inhabitants. The Vorarlberg population can communicate any worries and complaints regarding the State administration to the People's Advocate's Office that has been established in 1985 and that is also an organ of the Parliament.



President of the Parliament Harald Sonderegger (centre) with the vice-presidents Ernst Hagen and Gabriele Nußbaumer



Source: State Office for Statistics  
Results of the Vorarlberg State elections 2014



Plenary session of the Vorarlberg Parliament

### Vorarlberg State Governors since 1945



Ulrich Ilg  
1945 to 1964



Herbert Sausgruber  
1997 to 2011



Herbert Keßler  
1964 to 1987



Markus Wallner  
since 2011



Martin Purtscher  
1987 to 1997

## People for Vorarlberg

The State constitution dates back to 1923, but it has been comprehensively modernized during the last decades. Nowadays the Parliament elects seven members of the government by majority voting. Presently the State government is presided by the State Governor Markus Wallner and the further members are: Deputy State Governor Karlheinz Rüdissler, and the State Councillors Erich Schwärzler, Christian Bernhard, Bernadette Mennel (all VP) and State Councillor Johannes Rauch and Katharina Wiesflecker (Green Party).

## Districts and municipalities

The State administration of Vorarlberg is subdivided in 4 political districts: Bregenz, Dornbirn, Feldkirch and Bludenz as well as in 96 municipalities in total.

# ECONOMY

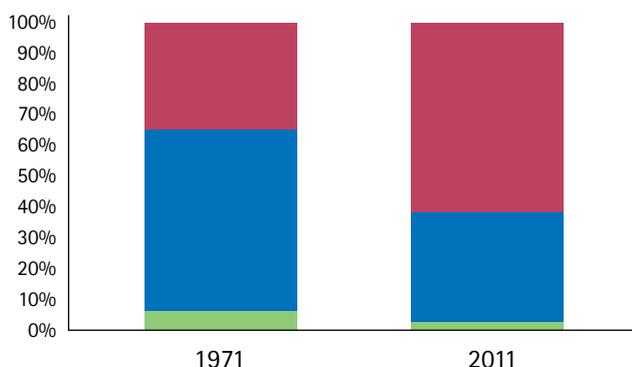
## A specific strength of Vorarlberg

In its market study "Zukunftsregionen" (high-potential regions) the renowned German "Zukunftsinstitut" (Future Institute) is really enthusiastic about the economic development in Vorarlberg that is of course substantiated by facts. The high number of world market leading companies proves that Vorarlberg with about 380,000 inhabitants counts among the top regions in the world in terms of economic strength. Until the 1970s, textile industry was the leading industry in Vorarlberg. The increasing globalization led to a structural change that encouraged the boom of a more versatile industrial landscape. The comparison clearly shows that today iron, metal as well as electrical and electronics industries are in the foreground as regards commodity production beside food and beverage industries.

### Increased production and services

Vorarlberg is a multifaceted production and service location. Industries with an international focus that develop increasingly into holistic problem solvers continue to play an important part. Nowadays, future-oriented industries, such as machinery and metalware industries with important growth rates are dominating. This is the perfect environment for technical and creative service providers.

### Working population in Vorarlberg according to industrial sectors

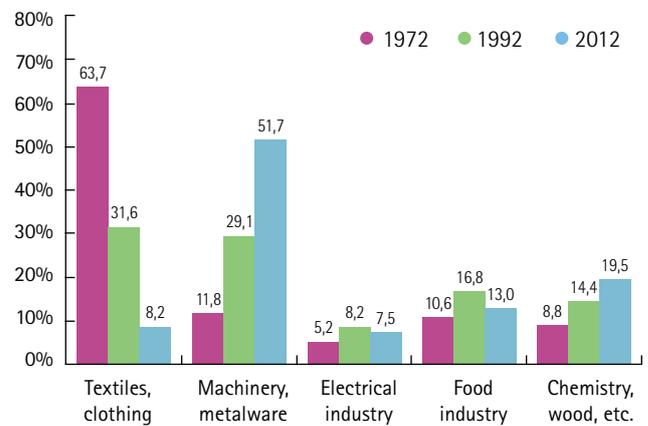


- Services
- Industry and trade
- Agriculture and forestry

Source: Statistics Austria

### Industrial production in Vorarlberg

Development of the economic structure – shares across industrial sectors in %



Source: Vorarlberg Chamber of Commerce

### Energy as an economic driver

It is particularly the energy sector that has developed to an essential factor in the regional economy. Hydroelectric power has positioned itself clearly as the main energy resource! Vorarlberg generates approximately the same quantity of electricity from renewable energy as is needed – it is even able to export green electricity into the neighbouring countries – particularly to Germany.



### Benefits from export activities

The knowhow and the products from regional industries are in great demand all over the world. As compared with the other Austrian states, Vorarlberg has the highest export rates.

In 2014, exports of goods and commodities amount to a total sum of 8.85 billion Euros. About 60 percent of the goods produced by the regional industries are exported (throughout Austria as a whole, the export rate is 40 percent).

Products manufactured by machinery and metalware industries as well as by electrical and electronics industries account for the highest export rate.

(Export: no. 1: steel and metalware industry, no. 2: hollow-ware industry and machinery, no. 3: food and beverage industry)



High-tech production and most modern architecture

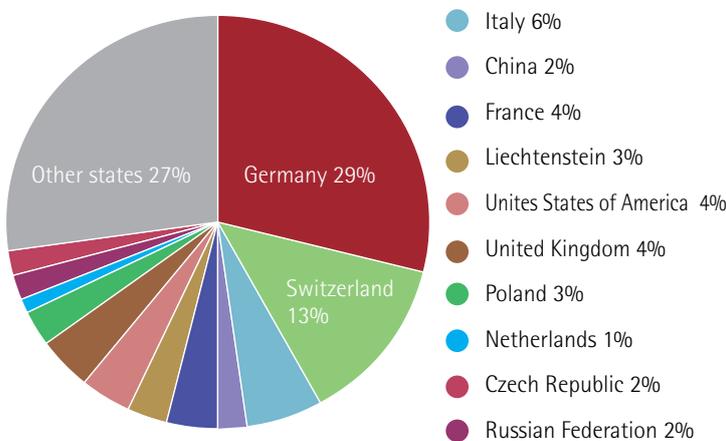


Gottesacker Plateau in the Little Walsertal

### All-year-round tourism

In less industrialized regions of the country, tourism is one of the most important sources of income and consequently plays an essential macroeconomic role. Particularly in the Arlberg region, the Bregenzerwald, the Kleinwalsertal and the Montafon people are living on tourism. Around 2.3 million guests spend each year about 8.6 million nights in Vorarlberg – approximately 60 percent of the overnight stays are during winter and 40 percent during summer.

### Exports to foreign countries



Source: State Office for Statistics, data 2014

### Vorarlberg commits itself to qualification

Promotion of youth employment, assistance with re-entering the labour market for persons who have skill problems, measures to remediate the lack of specialists – these are only some of the most important measures on the labour market that the State of Vorarlberg has taken in close cooperation with the Austrian Public Employment Service (AMS). Workers – both male and female – get the opportunity to enhance their professional skills – entirely in line with the regional industry.

## High quality of life

One of the most distinctive features of Vorarlberg is the high quality of life that has repeatedly been confirmed by independent studies. According to the EU Interreg project MARS (Monitoring the Alpine Regions' Sustainability), Vorarlberg ranks among the most sustainable and liveable regions in the Alpine region.

According to this study, Vorarlberg is even assessed best in the total evaluation of the three areas of sustainability: economy, environment and social matters!

## Energy autonomy

Energy autonomy means that the annual consumption and the production of energy from renewable resources are well balanced. Vorarlberg projects to be energy-autonomous by 2050 and to this purpose commits itself to energy efficiency, a further development of renewable energy resources and new ways of mobility.

Until 2020, energy consumption is supposed to be reduced by 15 percent to 8,097 GWh and energy generation shall be increased by 14 percent to 3,960 GWh. This would reduce CO2 emissions by a yearly amount of 300,000 tons. Already now, Vorarlberg has the highest density of passive energy houses worldwide.



Good education – Basis for vocational success



Precision in all areas



Vorarlberg is focusing increasingly on train, bus and bike



In Vorarlberg more than 220,000 m<sup>2</sup> of solar panels and about 70,000 m<sup>2</sup> of photovoltaic modules are installed on the house roofs, and this trend is set to increase.

# LANDSCAPE AND NATURE

## Vorarlberg's most beautiful side

Located in the most western part of Austria, Vorarlberg offers a most varied landscape and topography. A total area of 2,601 square kilometres reach from the Alpine Rhine and the south-east part of Lake of Constance to the Arlberg and the Silvretta mountain range. A most remarkable detail: only 69 of the 321 kilometres of borders connect Vorarlberg with the rest of Austria – 35 kilometres border on Liechtenstein, 107 km on Switzerland and 110 km on Germany.

About two thirds of the country are situated at an altitude of more than 1,000 meters above sea-level – the summit of ‚Piz Buin‘ with 3,312 meters of altitude is the highest point in Vorarlberg. Moreover, together with numerous valleys and rivers, the large mountain ranges of Rätikon, Silvretta and Verwall structure the landscape. We have summarized some key figures:

Land use	
Woodland	35,9 %
Alps	23,3 %
Agricultural land	16,1 %
Bodies of water	2,8 %
Gardens	2,4 %
Streets and railway facilities	1,9 %
Buildings and adjacent areas	1 %
Other	16,6 %
Total	100 %

Source: DKM, 1.10.2014



Piz Buin/Highest mountain in Vorarlberg



Lakeside Fußach



Steinernes Meer (literally: the "Rocky Sea")

## Outstanding nature protection

Vorarlberg sets highest priority to the protection of its unique nature. In the „Rhine delta“, a 2,000 hectare nature reserve situated between the Old Rhine and the Dornbirnerach, more than 330 different bird species find sanctuary for breeding, resting and living. The most important wetland area of Central Europe offers shelter to numerous rare and threatened species, both flora and fauna.

Since 2000, special attention is given to a further part of Vorarlberg: the Große Walsertal that was awarded the prestigious title of „Biosphere Park“. The Alpine valley has thus become a model region worldwide in matters of sustainable ecological development.



Alpe Hint. Ischkarnei / Great Walser Valley



Körbersee / Hochtannberg / Bregenzerwald



Bürserberg with St. Joseph's Church

# CULTURE

## Tradition and trends in Vorarlberg

Culture has a high social reputation in Vorarlberg – culture in any form. The geographical openness of Vorarlberg is reflected in the cultural activities: Vorarlberg composers, authors and visual artists have a great renown far beyond the regional borders.

### Bregenz Festival

The most famous international event held in Vorarlberg is, without any doubt, the „Bregenz Festival“. The operas performed on the “Seebuehne” (floating stage on Lake Constance) using the latest stage technologies are attended by an enthusiastic audience of around 200,000 visitors each year. Since the start in 1946, the Bregenz Festival is accompanied by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. The varied cultural program of this festival offers something special for every taste: from theatre world premieres, soloist and orchestra concerts to lectures and spectacles in public spaces.



Bregenz Festival

### vorarlberg museum

The new vorarlberg museum was built next to the State Theatre and the Kunsthaus Bregenz. The new museum offers a surface of 6,200 square meters, 2,400 of which are reserved for exhibitions. Compared with the former building this means that the available surface has been doubled. Beside exhibitions that are offered to the public, the institution focuses also on research.

### Schubertiade

A further cultural highlight: the Schubertiade that has evolved since 1976 to become the world's largest Schubert Festival (with more than 30,000 visitors). Between May and September, about 70 events are held in Schwarzenberg and in Hohenems where renowned as well as young artists can prove their skills to an international audience.



vorarlberg museum/Bregenz



Schubertiade/Schwarzenberg



inatura Dornbirn

## Kunsthau Bregenz

The „Kunsthau Bregenz“ is the perfect setting for exhibitions of visual arts. The new building, clad with glass panels, located at the shore of Lake Constance was built between 1994 and 1997 according to the design of the architect Peter Zumthor. The KUB also satisfies highest requirements as an international house as is proven by exhibitions of Erwin Wurm, Jeff Koons, Gilbert & George, Jenny Holzer, Roy Lichtenstein, Ai Weiwei and Antony Gormley.



Illwerke Zentrum/Vandans

## Architecture

„Constructive provocation“ this was the title of an exhibition with which the Kunsthau Bregenz combined its proper function with a further outstanding Vorarlberg feature: architecture. A network of „Vorarlberger Bauschule“ was implemented as early as in the 1960s: intellectuals formulated alternatives to the regional way of living through using conceptual radical wood structures. The result thereof was a dynamic contemporary architecture that has meanwhile given rise to international media interest and that has generated a real architecture tourism. The renowned French architecture magazine „d'A“ described Vorarlberg even as a „paradise for architects“ and pointed out the social background of the innovative regional building design. With the touring exhibition „Getting things done“ the regional architecture is being presented since 2014 on a worldwide tour in the sites of the Austrian Cultural Forums and in architecture centres to an international public.



Architecture exhibition „Getting things done“



Community centre Ludesch



Secondary school Klaus

# AT A GLANCE

Vorarlberg, the westernmost state in Austria



## Key data of the state Vorarlberg:

Area:	2,601 km <sup>2</sup>
Population total:	383,094*
Density:	147 inhab./km <sup>2</sup>
Highest point:	3,312 m
Lowest point:	369 m
Capital:	Bregenz
Districts:	Bregenz, Dornbirn, Feldkirch, Bludenz
Municipalities:	96

\*as of 30.9.2015

## Amt der Vorarlberger Landesregierung

Landespressestelle

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### INDICATION OF SOURCES

Historical summary: Vorarlberger Landesarchiv; „Vorarlberg Chronik“ (3rd revised edition 2005); Karl Heinz Burmeister: „Geschichte Vorarlbergs“ (4th edition 1998). Population: Office of the Vorarlberg government, department of statistics; EUROSTAT; Statistics Austria; Vorarlberg University of Applied Sciences, department of financial matters; Politics and administration: „Vorarlberg Chronik“ (3rd revised edition 2005); office of the Vorarlberg government, department of internal affairs; Vorarlberg Parliament. Economy: „Vorarlberg Chronik“ (3rd revised edition 2005); Sonja Petersen: „Zukunftsregionen“ (Market study of the Zukunftsinstitut GmbH); Wirtschaftsstandort Vorarlberg GmbH: „Standortdokumentation 2006“; Chamber of Commerce Vorarlberg; Office of the Vorarlberg government, department of statistics; Statistics Austria; BAK Basel Economics; MARS Database 2005; Landscape and nature: Office of the Vorarlberg government, department for nature and environmental protection; Office of the Vorarlberg government, department of statistics; DKM digitalized cadastral map. Culture: „Vorarlberg Chronik“ (3rd revised edition 2005); Report on culture issued by the Office of the Vorarlberg government, department of culture; Kunsthause Bregenz; Vorarlberg at a glance: Vorarlberg Geographical Information System (VoGIS), Office for Future Affairs.

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Edition April 2016