



**CHANCENLAND  
VORARLBERG**

## **LIVING AND WORKING BROCHURE**

GETTING STARTED MANUAL FOR  
YOUR LIFE IN VORARLBERG



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Welcome to Vorarlberg! We are happy that you have chosen our region. With this brochure we want to provide relevant information and helpful hints, so that you are in good hands right from the beginning. All the best! | ©Silvretta Montafon

## 01 INTRODUCTION TO THE REGION

Vorarlberg is the most western federal state of Austria and borders Switzerland, Germany, Liechtenstein and Tyrol.

It is divided into four districts: Bregenz, Dornbirn, Feldkirch and Bludenz. About 397,000 inhabitants live in Vorarlberg on an area of 2.601 km<sup>2</sup>.

Besides Vienna Vorarlberg has the highest population density in Austria. With almost 50,000 inhabitants, Dornbirn is the largest city of Vorarlberg and tenth largest in Austria. The capital city Bregenz counts about 30,000 inhabitants. Due to its unique geographical situation Vorarlberg looks back on long tradition of immigration and commuting. Therefore people are open-minded and the economy is internationally oriented.

### 01.01 ECONOMY

Vorarlberg has been one of the leading textile manufacturing hotspots in Europe, until far-reaching changes in the textile market have triggered an extensive transformation of the local economic structure. Not many regions are able to transform a structural change as successfully as Vorarlberg. Today, metalworking, mechanical and electrical engineering, electronics and IT are major branches. The goods produced are targeted to various applications and markets for use by both B2B and B2C customers. This variety brings the region a high resistance to economic crises.

Vorarlberg is Austria's

- most industrialized,
- most export oriented and
- most innovative state.

Many of Vorarlberg's companies have established powerful brands, like Head (ski and tennis rackets | [www.head.com](http://www.head.com)), Wolford (fashion | [www.wolford.com](http://www.wolford.com)), Zumtobel (lighting systems | [www.zumtobel.com](http://www.zumtobel.com)), Rauch (fruit juices and beverages | [www.rauch.cc](http://www.rauch.cc)) or Doppelmayr (cable cars and ski lifts | [www.doppelmayr.com](http://www.doppelmayr.com)).

Additionally, due to the attractive business conditions, a number of international corporations have settled in Vorarlberg, like Liebherr (cranes | [www.liebherr.com](http://www.liebherr.com)), Mondelez International (Milka chocolate | [www.mondelezinternational.com](http://www.mondelezinternational.com)), HILTI (construction equipment | [www.hilti.com](http://www.hilti.com)) or Red Bull (energy drink | [www.redbull.at](http://www.redbull.at)).

For more information about Vorarlberg's economy visit [www.chancenland.at](http://www.chancenland.at) or download the Location Brochure at [www.chancenland.at/locationbrochure.pdf](http://www.chancenland.at/locationbrochure.pdf).

### 01.02 LANGUAGE

German is the official language in Austria and thus a prerequisite for permanently living and working in Vorarlberg. Some may find that the dialect used in this area is somewhat far away from Standard German, however, this is probably the case for most regional dialects in every language. The good news is that you will find no problems getting around with Standard German and English.



Vorarlberg is home to powerful brands – with Doppelmayr being one of it. The world market leader in ropeway construction has installed more than 14,700 ropeways in 90 countries. ©Doppelmayr | RIGHT Language courses are held in small groups and are a good way to find new friends. ©WISTO

## 02 REGISTRATION

### 02.01 AS EU/EEA-CITIZEN

If you are a citizen of the European Union or EEA (Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Iceland), you are allowed to live in Austria without any notification besides your passport or identity card for three months.

If you intend to stay longer, you have to apply for a registration certificate within four months, starting from the day of your arrival in Austria. The application has to be made to the district authority (see 05.02) and costs 15€. For the application process you need to provide the following documents:

- Your passport
- A copy of your employment contract
- A confirmation that you are covered by health insurance. (In most cases the insurance provider will be VGKK. [www.vgkk.at](http://www.vgkk.at))
- For spouse and children: marriage certificate or birth certificate

### 02.02 AS THIRD-COUNTRY CITIZEN

Citizens from non EU/EEA-countries, who want to stay in Austria for more than six months, need to have a residence permit and a work permit. There are different options for residence permits (e.g. Rot-Weiss-Rot Card).

The Rot-Weiss-Rot Card regulates immigration to Austria dependent on criteria like qualification, work experience, language skills and age. The card is valid for one year and entitles for settlement and employment with a certain employer. Find more information at [www.migration.gv.at](http://www.migration.gv.at) or contact the district authority.

Bezirkshauptmannschaft Dornbirn  
Klaudiastrasse 2, 6850 Dornbirn  
[bhdornbirn@vorarlberg.at](mailto:bhdornbirn@vorarlberg.at)  
+43 (0)5572 308 0

## 03 ADMINISTRATIVE STEPS

Within three days after moving to Vorarlberg, you have to register at the municipal office (Meldeamt; see 05.01) in your municipality. Therefore, you need to fill in the registration form (Meldebestätigung) and bring your pass-

port as well as a copy and the original document of your academic degree.

- Download the registration form at [www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/resources/documents/meldez.pdf](http://www.help.gv.at/Portal.Node/hlpd/public/resources/documents/meldez.pdf)
- Fill in the registration form (see p. 18)
- Get the signature of your landlord
- Go to the municipal office and hand in the filled registration form

Be aware that office hours are between 8-12am or after prior arrangement by phone. Offices are closed on weekends. And please note: The registration form is a very important document, so keep it in safe custody. If you move, you have to report to the municipal office again, since it collects data of inhabitants in order to generate statistics and inform you in case of emergencies.

Additionally to your registration at the municipal office, you have to register at the district



### LEARNING GERMAN

German language courses are offered at

Volkshochschule (VHS)

Bludenz [www.vhs-bludenz.at](http://www.vhs-bludenz.at)

Bregenz [www.vhs-bregenz.at](http://www.vhs-bregenz.at)

Göttzis [www.vhs-goetzis.at](http://www.vhs-goetzis.at)

Hohenems [www.vhs-hohenems.at](http://www.vhs-hohenems.at)

WIFI [www.vlbw.wifi.at](http://www.vlbw.wifi.at)

AK-Bildungszentrum [www.ak-vorarlberg.at](http://www.ak-vorarlberg.at)

Inlingua Vorarlberg [www.inlingua-vbg.at](http://www.inlingua-vbg.at)

Creative Center [www.creative-english.at](http://www.creative-english.at)

authority (see 05.02).

## 04 INFRASTRUCTURE

The distances in Vorarlberg are easily manageable, since the roads and the public transport system are highly developed. From Partenen, the most southern village of Vorarlberg, it takes about an hour by car to get to the most northern municipal Hörbranz.

### 04.01 TRAVELLING BY TRAIN

The railway system of ÖBB (Austrian railway company) connects every city at the direct route from Bregenz to Schruns (see map on p. 001). Additionally Zurich, Munich, Innsbruck and Vienna can be reached directly.

Be aware, that you have to buy your train ticket before boarding the train – either at a ticket machine, at a ticket counter at the railway station,

online or via the ÖBB Ticket app. If you plan your trips some weeks ahead, you can get great ticket deals online. Find schedules and prices at [www.oebb.at](http://www.oebb.at). When travelling frequently you should invest in a VORTEILScard that allows you up to 50 % discount on all routes. The VORTEILScard can be bought online. It costs 99 € per year, 19 € for anyone under the age of 26 and for families.

There are different types of trains running in Vorarlberg. The S-Bahn is the slowest one and stops at every station on the route (67 min from Bregenz to Bludenz). Regionalexpress (REX) is a fast train that only stops in larger stations (such as Bregenz, Dornbirn, Hohenems, Feldkirch and Bludenz). And railjet, InterCity, Euro City are international trains, that pass Vorarlberg on their way to Zurich, Vienna or Munich. They stop only at the larger stations and are the fastest (45 min from Bregenz to Bludenz).

When travelling to Montafon by train, you switch from ÖBB to the red-yellow Montafonerbahn (MBS) in Bludenz. This private train runs from Bludenz to Schruns in 20 minutes and stops at every station. Timetables and tickets are coordinated with the ÖBB, therefore you can also buy your ticket online at [www.oebb.at](http://www.oebb.at) or at the ticket machines.

Also, the region of Bregenzerwald has its own private train, it is called Wälderbähnle. But it is more of an attraction than a real means of transportation. The old steam locomotive runs from Bezau to Andelsbuch on Saturdays, Sundays and special occasions. [www.waelderbaehne.at](http://www.waelderbaehne.at)



### BUSINESS HOURS

In Vorarlberg most shops are open from 9am to 6pm, Monday through Saturday. Most grocery stores have extensive business hours, opening at 7.30am and closing at 7.30pm. Only when fulfilling certain conditions grocery stores are allowed to open on Sundays too, e.g. Sutterlüty at Dornbirn's main train station or Spar in tourist places like Schruns. Out of regular shop hours most gas stations offer small shops that sell food and drinks.

Banks, doctors, pharmacies and offices are usually manned 8-12am and 1-5pm.

### 04.02 TRAVELLING BY BUS

Thanks to the association Vorarlberger Verkehrsverbund (VVV), the railway network is directly connected to the bus system. Therefore, most tickets are valid for trains and buses equally. You can buy them directly in the bus. Find schedules and prices at [www.vmobil.at](http://www.vmobil.at).

If you are going to work by bus or train daily, it is advisable to buy monthly or annual tickets. Get information from the bus driver or at the train station ticket counter. There are different ticket types available, e.g. the Maximo ticket allows you to take buses and trains in Vorarlberg all

year round. This ticket costs 199 € for everyone under the age of 26 and 378 € for adults.

## 04.03 TRAVELLING BY CAR

All highways in Austria are subject to toll, therefore you have to buy a badge (Vignette) in advance for using them. The badge is available at gas stations, kiosks or online (see <https://shop.asfinag.at>). There are different types of badges for cars:

10-day badge	9.20 €
2-month badge	26.80 €
1-year badge	89.30 €

If you bring your own car to Austria, it has to be registered within the first month. Please contact the insurance company of your choice for help (see a list of insurance providers on p. 017).

In Austria third-party car insurance (Haftpflichtversicherung) is compulsory. This also has to be arranged with the insurance company. You have to get insurance coverage before you can have your car licence plate and car registration document (Zulassungsschein).

Valid driving licenses issued by the EU, Liechtenstein, Norway and Iceland are accepted in Austria. You don't have to rewrite your license.

All others (Switzerland included) have to rewrite their license within six months after moving to Austria. You can arrange this at a district authority (see 05.02), where you bring your passport, foreign driving license, a translation of the driving license, when not in English or in German, one valid passport photo (35 mm x 45

mm) not older than six months, a medical report and the residence registration form.

## 04.04 DRIVING SAFETY

The maximum speed limits (if not indicated otherwise) for cars and motorcycles are:

- In town: 50 km/h, often 40 km/h
- On country roads: 100 km/h
- On highways: 130 km/h

Please make sure you always wear seat belts and carry along a reflective vest, a breakdown triangle and a first aid kit in your car. Otherwise you risk a fine. Between November 1st and April 15th the use of snow tires is compulsory in Austria. For more information about fines, alcohol limits, speed limits and traffic rules visit [www.oesterreich.gv.at](http://www.oesterreich.gv.at) (section Freetime and Mobility).

The main motoring organisations in Austria are ÖAMTC and ARBÖ. They offer a variety of insurance coverage, breakdown assistance and other services. [www.oeamtc.at](http://www.oeamtc.at), [www.arboe.at](http://www.arboe.at)

## 04.05 CYCLING

Vorarlberg's citizen love to cycle and the region is voted as bike-friendly in Austria. This is shown by the properly tended cycling routes all over the landscape and the more than 1,500 km of marked mountainbike trails. A cycling map of Vorarlberg is available at the State Government and at many municipal and tourism offices. You can also plan your cycle route with the online cycle route planner at [radplaner.vmobil.at](http://radplaner.vmobil.at).



378 € will bring you through Vorarlberg by bus and train all year long. ©Harald Eisenberger/ÖBB | LEFT The city pharmacy in downtown Bregenz. ©Stadt-Apotheke/2019 Bregenz Tourismus & Stadtmarketing

Some of the most beautiful mountainbike routes can be found at <https://touren.vorarlberg.travel/en/tours>.

Even though Austria's criminality rate is low, it is advisable to lock your bike when parking and use bike lights in the dark. Children up to 12 years must wear a helmet.

You can buy used bicycles at reasonable prices at special bike markets, that regularly take place in many cities. Find dates and details at the municipal office or the website of your city ([www.bregenz.at](http://www.bregenz.at), [www.dornbirn.at](http://www.dornbirn.at), [www.feldkirch.at](http://www.feldkirch.at), [www.bludenz.at](http://www.bludenz.at)) or check [www.laendleanzeiger.at](http://www.laendleanzeiger.at) for online bargains.

Many municipalities and cities offer subsidies for so-called *Kiki* (bicycle trailers for kids) and cargo trailers. For more information, contact your local municipal office directly.



#### 04.06 LOCAL SUPPLY

##### FOOD AND DRINKS

Common grocery stores in Vorarlberg are:

- Spar, Eurospar, Interspar [www.spar.at](http://www.spar.at)
- Sutterlüty [www.sutterluety.at](http://www.sutterluety.at)
- Hofer (Aldi) [www.hofer.at](http://www.hofer.at)
- Lidl [www.lidl.at](http://www.lidl.at)

Vorarlberg offers the highest standard of living in Austria, therefore prices are slightly higher than in other regions. However, this is compensated by higher wages.

Cosmetics are mostly available at groceries, for a broader range visit the shops dm ([www.dm-drogeriemarkt.at](http://www.dm-drogeriemarkt.at)) or Bipa ([www.bipa.at](http://www.bipa.at)).

Prescription drugs can only be bought at pharmacies. Alcohol is available in every grocery store, wine and beer from the age of 16 up, high-proof alcohol from 18 up. Smoking is allowed from 18 up as well. Cigarettes are available at tobacconist's, supermarkets and gas stations.

## 05 PUBLIC AUTHORITIES

There are some public authorities you will sooner or later get in contact with:

### 05.01 MUNICIPAL OFFICE

The municipal office is responsible for all kinds of public services within your home municipality. When moving to Austria you have to register at the municipal office and the district authority ([see 02](#)).

### 05.02 DISTRICT AUTHORITY

Contact the district authority to register in Vorarlberg after arrival ([see 02.01](#)) or to confirm your foreign driving license.

Bezirkshauptmannschaft Bregenz  
[www.vorarlberg.at/bhbbregenz](http://www.vorarlberg.at/bhbbregenz)

Bezirkshauptmannschaft Dornbirn  
[www.vorarlberg.at/bhdornbirn](http://www.vorarlberg.at/bhdornbirn)

Bezirkshauptmannschaft Feldkirch  
[www.vorarlberg.at/bhfeldkirch](http://www.vorarlberg.at/bhfeldkirch)

Bezirkshauptmannschaft Bludenz  
[www.vorarlberg.at/bhbludenz](http://www.vorarlberg.at/bhbludenz)

### 05.03 STATE GOVERNMENT

Applying to the Austrian citizenship is done at the Vorarlberg's state government in Bregenz. In order to be allowed to acquire the citizenship you have to live in Austria for more than ten years.

Amt der Vorarlberger Landesregierung  
Landhaus, 6900 Bregenz  
[www.vorarlberg.at](http://www.vorarlberg.at)

### 05.04 EMBASSIES

For renewing your foreign passport you have to contact the embassy of your home country. Find a list of foreign representation agencies at [www.bmeia.gv.at/botschaften-konsulate](http://www.bmeia.gv.at/botschaften-konsulate).

Honorary Consulate of Italy  
Inselstraße 11, 6830 Rankweil  
[bregenz.onorario@esteri.it](mailto:bregenz.onorario@esteri.it)

Honorary Consulate of Norway  
Kaiserstraße 33, 6900 Bregenz  
[norwegen.konsulat.vbg@btv.at](mailto:norwegen.konsulat.vbg@btv.at)

Honorary Consulate of Hungary  
Belruptstraße 20, 6900 Bregenz  
[nemes@nemes-textil.at](mailto:nemes@nemes-textil.at)

Honorary Consulate of Germany  
Messestraße 11, 6850 Dornbirn  
[bregenz@hk-diplo.de](mailto:bregenz@hk-diplo.de)

## COUNTRY CODE

For international telephone calls to Austria dial +43 or 0043. The zero of the area code is excluded, when making international phone calls, e.g. +43 5572...

## 06 MONEY

Austria is member of the European Union (EU) and its currency is Euro (€). 1 € equals 100 Cent.

For receiving your wage, paying your rent and realising other monetary transactions you will be asked to have an Austrian bank account. You can easily open an account at one of the local banks, e.g. at Hypo Vorarlberg (offering Online Banking in English). [www.hypovbg.at](http://www.hypovbg.at)

Find a list of additional banks at [page 017](#). Don't

forget to bring your passport.

Most shops, restaurants and bars accept credit cards. You find ATMs/cash machines at banks or frequented places, it doesn't matter which one you are using, fees are the same.

## 07 ACCOMMODATION

### 07.01 FIND YOUR NEW HOME

The best way to find an apartment is online, e.g. at [www.laendleimmo.at](http://www.laendleimmo.at) or [www.immo-agent.at](http://www.immo-agent.at). For shared flats check [www.fhv.at/studium/service-und-ressourcen/unterbringung-unterkunft/wohnungsangebote](http://www.fhv.at/studium/service-und-ressourcen/unterbringung-unterkunft/wohnungsangebote).

Additionally check adverts in regional newspapers like WANN & WO and Vorarlberger Nachrichten (VN). WANN & WO is free of charge, is published every Wednesday and Sunday and freely delivered to every household. VN is the most common regional newspaper. It costs 1.70 € on weekdays, 2.00 € on weekends and has a special real estate section every Saturday. Both papers are products of Russmedia. [www.russmedia.com](http://www.russmedia.com)

### 07.02 GOT IT

After signing the rental contract you normally can move out in accordance to a 3-month-cancellation period or if you find a new tenant.

It is common that your landlord asks you for a deposit, that is about three times the monthly



The municipal office in Innerbranz does not only offer its services to the citizens, but also convinces by its design. ©Christian Flatscher/vorarlberger holzbau\_kunst | LEFT The newly opened Sutterlüty Ländlemarkt at Jahnplatz in Feldkirch. ©Christian Kerber/Sutterlüty



#### RENTING COSTS (SOURCE: IMMOGUIDE SPARKASSE 2019)

The average rent for a nice apartment (up to 65 m<sup>2</sup>) in good location without running costs is about

- Bregenz 11.00 €/m<sup>2</sup>
- Dornbirn 10.50 €/m<sup>2</sup>
- Lustenau 9.00 €/m<sup>2</sup>
- Hohenems 8.60 €/m<sup>2</sup>
- Götzis 9.20 €/m<sup>2</sup>
- Feldkirch 9.20 €/m<sup>2</sup>
- Bludenz 8.60 €/m<sup>2</sup>
- Schruns 6.60 €/m<sup>2</sup>

Therefore you can expect monthly renting costs for a flat with 60 m<sup>2</sup> of about 540 € without gas, electricity, etc.

rent. Best you deliver the deposit in form of a savings book, since you get interest rates for the money while it is in your landlords' custody.

In most cases you are supposed to pay for water, gas, electricity, internet and GIS yourself. In Austria you are expected to register your TV and radio set for a monthly fee, which is raised by GIS. Registration can be made online at [www.gis.at](http://www.gis.at) and costs 21 € per month.

Ask your landlord about electricity and gas, because in some cases you have to register for it yourself ([www.vkw.at](http://www.vkw.at)). The costs will be calculated according to your previous tenants demand and paid monthly. Once a year the real consumption is being calculated and invoiced at real costs.

It is common to pay a mandatory garbage fee to

the municipal office. This is annually collected to pay communal waste disposal and you will get some waste bags in return.

Please try to separate garbage in glass, metal, plastic, paper, bio and residual waste. The last four will be picked up regularly from your home. Glass and metal waste is supposed to be brought to special garbage stations, in addition any other kind of waste can be disposed at the so-called *Bauhöfe*. Ask your landlord or at the municipal office for details.

#### 07.03 BUY FURNITURE

The most common stores for buying furniture are Lutz ([www.xxxlutz.at](http://www.xxxlutz.at)), Mömax ([www.moe-max.at](http://www.moe-max.at)) and Kika ([www.kika.at](http://www.kika.at)). If you need any stuff for home or garden improvement (e.g. paint, tools, plants) visit Baumax ([www.baumax.at](http://www.baumax.at)) or BayWa ([www.baywa.at](http://www.baywa.at)).

Additionally, there are branches of IKEA in Innsbruck, Ulm (DE) and St. Gallen (CH). [www.ikea.at](http://www.ikea.at)

#### CHECKLIST RENTING A FLAT

Before signing the contract ask about commission and contract fees as well as limitations of the contract.

After signing the contract:

- pay deposit via savings book
- register for electricity/gas [www.vkw.at](http://www.vkw.at)
- register for internet  
see list of providers on [page 017](#)
- register for GIS [www.gis.at](http://www.gis.at)
- register at the municipal office with your new address - [see 05.01](#)

## 08 COMMUNICATION

### 08.01 MOBILE

Austria has three major telephone providers:

- A1 Telekom Austria [www.a1.net](http://www.a1.net)
- Drei [www.drei.at](http://www.drei.at)
- Magenta [www.magenta.at](http://www.magenta.at)

Rates are relatively cheap compared to other European countries. Check [www.tarife.at](http://www.tarife.at) for the

most suitable one. There are also some pre-paid providers, e.g. Bob ([www.bob.at](http://www.bob.at)) and Yesss ([www.yesss.at](http://www.yesss.at)). Note: Compare costs for international calls and roaming in advance.

## 08.02 INTERNET

In some flats you will find an internet connection port, that can be activated with different providers, see a list of providers on [page 017](#).

If you don't have a port in your flat you can use an internet mobile stick. You can get one at the mobile providers stated above. The rates are relatively cheap compared to other European countries and the connections are good. In rural areas it is still advisable to check the connection first.

## 09 WORKING

### 09.01 FIND A JOB

If you are looking for a job in Vorarlberg, check [www.chancenland.at](http://www.chancenland.at). The site features details about the region, working conditions and companies. In the job database you can find open positions suitable for your interests and know-how. The website is directed especially towards engineers and IT specialists. Additionally, you can find jobs online at [www.laendlejob.at](http://www.laendlejob.at) and [www.westjob.ch](http://www.westjob.ch) (in German).

Also take a look at the regional newspaper Vorarlberger Nachrichten (VN), offering a special career section on Saturdays – together with a section for rentals and housing.

If you need to find out whether your qualifica-

### ELECTRICITY

Austria uses 220 volts (50 Hz) electricity. If you don't use Type C plug-ins (plug-in with two round prongs) in your country, keep in mind to bring an adapter for your notebook and other electrical appliances.



tions are being recognized, AST offers free multi-lingual consultations ([www.zemit.at](http://www.zemit.at)).

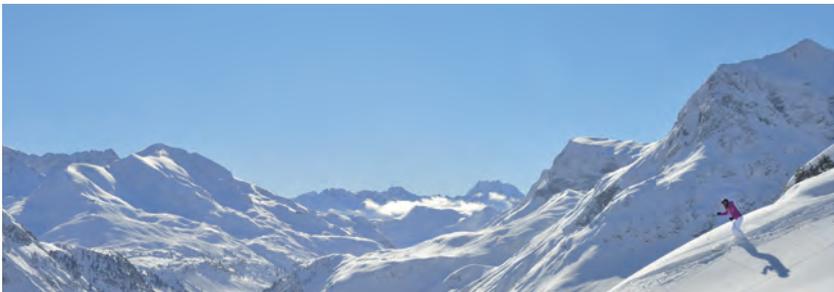
### 09.02 APPLY FOR IT

When applying for a position, it is common to send your CV with a portrait photo, an application letter and relevant certificates. It is important that you adapt your CV and application letter directly to the specific position and company you are applying for.

For an interview bring your CV, dress appropriately, prepare relevant questions to show your interest in the position and be on time. Being properly informed about the company will significantly increase your chances.

### 09.03 WORKING CONDITIONS

By law normal working hours in Austria are up to 8 hours a day, up to 40 hours a week. Depending on industry and collective agreement deviations are possible (e.g. 38,5 hours per week). Employees are entitled to take 5 weeks of paid



Lech-Zürs, with its 305 kilometres of ski runs and over 200 km of high Alpine powder runs, is the most successful ski resort in the entire Alpine region. ©Sepp Mallaun/Vorarlberg Tourismus | LEFT The POSTGARAGE at CAMPUS V provides a digital innovations hub for start-ups, initiatives, institutions and companies. ©PRISMA

## HR CONSULTANTS

There are several HR consultants that can be contacted for extensive career support.

CCR Management [ccr-management.com](http://ccr-management.com)

Eduard Konzett [konzett.at](http://konzett.at)

HRM Personal Institut [hrm-institut.at](http://hrm-institut.at)

Klien Executive Search [klien-search.com](http://klien-search.com)

Kathan & Sepp [die-personalberater.at](http://die-personalberater.at)

Kathan & Partner [kathan.jobs](http://kathan.jobs)

Mayer Gruppe [mayer.co.at](http://mayer.co.at)

vacation a year (equals 25 working days).

Many companies offer a flexible working time, i.e. you determine within an agreed time frame the beginning and end of your daily working time.

Wage is usually paid monthly. Additionally to 12 regular wages, Austrian employees receive two extra salaries, one paid in summer (for vacation) and one paid in winter (for Christmas).

Usually the first month of work is probational. Afterwards there is mostly a notification period of three months, if not stated otherwise.

### 09.04 INCOME TAX

If you live in Austria for more than six months a year, you have to pay income tax. The income tax will be deducted directly from your salary. The tax rate in Austria is progressive, the more you earn the higher your tax rate.

At the end of a year it is recommended to do an end of year adjustment (Arbeitnehmerveranlagung) to make sure you have paid the proper amount of taxes and to take advantage of certain tax-cuts. Register at [finanzonline.bmf.gv.at](http://finanzonline.bmf.gv.at) and follow the instructions.

At [bruttonetto.arbeiterkammer.at](http://bruttonetto.arbeiterkammer.at) you can calculate your brutto (before deductions) and netto wage (after deductions), income tax and social insurance dues.

## 10 HEALTH SYSTEM

In international comparison Austria ranks amongst the top nations regarding quality of life and health system. 94% of Austrian inhabitants are satisfied with the nation's health offerings, resulting in second place after Belgium.

For medical emergencies go directly to the nearest hospital in Bludenz, Feldkirch, Rankweil, Hohenems, Dornbirn or Bregenz. Otherwise, make an appointment with a doctor. At [www.medicus-online.at](http://www.medicus-online.at) you find a list of doctors according to your location and needs. An appointment with a specialist can usually be arranged directly - a referral from a general doctor (Hausarzt) is not necessary in most cases.

Pay attention that you choose a doctor partnering VGKK (likely your provider), if you consult a private doctor you have to pay for the services yourself.

If you feel sick, inform your company immediately and visit a doctor. Your employer can – and



Start your career at one of Vorarlberg's innovative companies, e.g. at the world market leader for automation technology Bachmann electronic. ©Marcel Hagen/CHANCENLAND VORARLBERG | RIGHT The *outdoor* is one of the toughest relay competitions in the world in the disciplines of mountain running, paragliding, white water kayaking and mountain biking. ©Markus Gmeiner

## PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

The following 13 days are public holidays in Austria and therefore non-working days.

January 1st	New Year
January 6th	Epiphany
March/April	Easter Monday
May 1st	Labour Day
May	Ascension Day
May/June	Pentecost/Whit Monday
May/June	Corpus Christi
August 15th	Assumption Day
October 26th	National Day
November 1st	All Saints Day
December 8th	Immaculate Conception
December 25th	Christmas Day
December 26th	St. Stephen's Day

mostly will – aks for a doctor's verification of your sick leave.

## 11 INSURANCE

As soon as you start working fulltime you are insured and insurance costs are directly deducted from your salary. The insurance package comprises health, accident, unemployment and retirement pension insurances.

### 11.01 HEALTH INSURANCE

The health insurance covers costs caused by diseases as well as maternity leave, e. g. treatments by doctors and dentists, medicines, psychotherapy and hospital care.

14 days after registration (that will be arranged by the employer) you will receive an electronic chip card called e-card, with which you can use services of doctors and hospitals free of charge. It is recommended that you always carry it with you – even abroad, since the e-card also covers costs of doctors in other EU states. [www.sozialversicherung.at](http://www.sozialversicherung.at)

Different to Germany and other countries, health insurance in Austria is compulsory and you are automatically insured with one provider, depending on the job and branch you are in. That saves you effort and time. Almost all

employees in Vorarlberg are covered by VGKK. Special branches such as doctors, farmers and people working in public institutions have special insurance providers.

The health insurance covers also your spouse and children, when they are living in Austria, mostly without additional costs. The insurance of your family members needs an extra application at VGKK. Contact them for the right form and required documents. [www.vgkk.at](http://www.vgkk.at)

If you are living in Germany and working in Vorarlberg, the situation is a little more complicated. In Germany you have to chose a health insurance provider for yourself (see [www.krankenkassen.de](http://www.krankenkassen.de) for help) and inform VGKK about your choice. The latter will arrange a cooperation with the German provider and you can then visit doctors in Austria and Germany. In order to insure your family members in Germany, send the form E106 to your German insurance provider.

### 11.02 ACCIDENT INSURANCE

The accident insurance covers costs of accidents at work, traveling from or to workplace



### SPORTIVE FESTIVALS

Several of the festivals held in Vorarlberg are combined with sports activities. The M3 Mountainbike Marathon draws bikers to Montafon, the Open Faces Freeride Festival has established as hotspot for freeriders. The Sparkasse 3-Länder-Marathon from Lindau via Switzerland to Bregenz has developed into the second largest marathon event in Austria.

and diseases caused by work. Accidents during leisure time are not covered. [www.auva.at](http://www.auva.at) Since the insurance only covers accidents directly connected to your job, it is recommended to conclude an additional private accident insurance, see list of insurances on [p. 017](#).

### 11.03 UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

If you have worked in Austria for at least 52 weeks within the last two years, you can apply for jobseeker's allowance, in case of unemployment. The rate of the allowance is calculated on the basis of the previous income. Find regulations, criteria and conditions at [www.ams.at](http://www.ams.at).

### 11.04 RETIREMENT PENSION INSURANCE

Entitlement for a pension starts after working in Austria for more than 15 years. The retirement age in Austria is 60 years for women and 65 years for men. The level of pension depends on the wage earned, the years worked and the age retired.

Inhabitants of EU-member states and Switzerland receive a pension according to Austrian law if they have worked in Austria for more than a year. [www.sozialversicherung.at](http://www.sozialversicherung.at)

### 11.05 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you earn less than 446,81 € a month, you are enrolled in the accident insurance only. Then you should think about concluding an optional pension and health insurance.

The staff provision fund (Mitarbeitervorsorgekasse) is an additional social programme in Austria. Employers pay 1.53% of the employee's brutto wage monthly into a fund, that is paid off as a lump sum when retiring.

## 12 EDUCATION

### 12.01 STUDYING

In Austria universities can decide for themselves whether to raise study fees or not. At Vorarlberg's University of Applied Sciences (FHV) in Dornbirn and at Pädagogische Hochschule Vorarlberg (university of education) in Feldkirch, studying is free of charge.



### FHV STUDY PROGRAMMES

- International Business (BA)
- Mechatronics (BSc/MSc)
- Mechanical Engineering (BSc)
- Electrical Engineering Dual (BSc)
- Engineering&Business Administration (BSc)
- Computer Sciences (BSc/MSc)
- Business Process Management (MA)
- Accounting, Controlling & Finance (MA)
- International Marketing & Sales (MA)
- Energy Technology & Economy (MSc)
- HR & Organization (MA)
- Management & Leadership
- Social Work (BA/MA)
- Healthcare and Nursing (BA)
- InterMedia (BA/MA)

FHV offers bachelor's and master's degree programmes (full- and part time) and a high practical as well as international orientation (see factbox). [www.fhv.at](http://www.fhv.at)

Additionally the centre for postgraduate education Schloss Hofen offers attractive studies in cooperation with international universities. [www.schlosshofen.at](http://www.schlosshofen.at)

### 12.02 SCHOOLS

Find a list of all schools in Vorarlberg at [www.vobs.at](http://www.vobs.at) (in German). For general information about the Austrian education system see CHANCENLAND VORARLBERG Location Brochure. [www.chancenland.at/locationbrochure.pdf](http://www.chancenland.at/locationbrochure.pdf)

## 13 LEISURE

In Vorarlberg people are indeed hard-working and ambitious about their career, but in their freetime they are impressingly spontaneous with embracing the nature around them. Skiing, hiking, rock-climbing – it is not just a myth, people live it. They take their vacations very seriously, love to travel and are adventuresome. Find information about leisure activities and some highlights at [www.chancenland.at](http://www.chancenland.at) and [www.vorarlberg.travel](http://www.vorarlberg.travel).

### 13.01 SPORTS CLUBS

If you want to enroll at a sports club, there are a lot to choose from. The Vorarlberger Sportverband (VSV) supports 740 clubs in 64 different sports with over 85,000 members. [www.asvoe-vbg.at](http://www.asvoe-vbg.at)

In Vorarlberg most sports activities take place outdoors since nature and landscape offer almost unrestricted possibilities. In winter downhill skiing, ski touring, snowboarding and ice hockey are very popular. In summer it's hiking, trekking, golfing, swimming, paragliding and more. Soccer, handball, tennis, volleyball and squash are played all year round.

If you want to try canyoning, rafting, bungee jumping or canoeing check out [www.outdoor.at](http://www.outdoor.at).

Vorarlberg is a region of associations. Most inhabitants are members of some kind of club or association, be it the volunteer fire brigade, some sports club or scouts. These associations are a good way to find new friends!

### 13.02 SHOPPING

In bigger cities, but also in most small municipalities you will find farmers markets at specific days where you can buy regional products (e.g. cheese, bread, sausage) and flowers. In Dornbirn the market takes place every Wednesday and Saturday and is a hotspot for people to meet, chat and drink a glass of sparkling wine.

The largest shopping centres are Messepark in Dornbirn ([www.messepark.at](http://www.messepark.at)) and Zimbapark in Bludenz-Bürs ([www.zimbapark.at](http://www.zimbapark.at)). There are also a lot of shops in the city centres of Bregenz, Dornbirn, Feldkirch and Bludenz.

For sport equipment visit e.g. Intersport ([www.intersport.at](http://www.intersport.at)), Hervis ([www.hervis.at](http://www.hervis.at)), PANTO OUTDOOR ([www.panto.at](http://www.panto.at)) or Skinfit ([www.skinfit.at](http://www.skinfit.at)).

### 13.03 INTERNATIONAL FRIENDS

Global Vorarlberg is an initiative bringing together people, interested in international friends and contacts. Everyone can join the events. It is a great chance to meet new people and get to know the region. [www.globalvorarlberg.com](http://www.globalvorarlberg.com)

Also, the following initiatives offer support for expats and/or opportunities to make friends: *Expats in Vorarlberg* (Facebook-group) [www.facebook.com/groups/ExpatsinVorarlberg](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ExpatsinVorarlberg), *femail* (multi-lingual service center especially for women) [www.femail.at](http://www.femail.at), *Meetup Vorarlberg* (make friends) [www.meetup.com/Vorarlberg-International](http://www.meetup.com/Vorarlberg-International), *Relocation Services Höfler* (Support before, during and after your move) [www.relocates-you.com](http://www.relocates-you.com).



Great music and atmosphere at the poolbar festival, which takes place every year for six weeks in the Old Indoor Pool in Feldkirch. ©Matthias Rhombarg for [www.poolbar.at](http://www.poolbar.at) | LEFT The University of Applied Sciences offers practice-oriented training with state-of-the-art infrastructure. ©Friedrich Böhringer/FHV

### 13.04 CULTURAL GUIDE

Inhabitants of Vorarlberg are laid-back, casual, friendly and open-minded. However there are still some things people will appreciate if you keep them in mind.

Since Vorarlberg's inhabitants are diligent and ambitious about work and career, be in time when having an appointment. Also in leisure time people appreciate punctuality, because it is perceived as a sign of respect. However, if you are still running late, please apologise for your delay.

If someone invites you for dinner at his/her place, it is nice to ask if you should bring something (e.g. dessert or wine). Otherwise just bring a small gift (flowers, chocolates or a bottle of wine).

At the table say „Mahlzeit“ or „Guten Appetit“ before starting to eat and „Prost“ or „zum Wohl“ before starting to drink.

Don't panic if you blunder. People will generally understand, they have mostly been abroad themselves and are casual about it.

## 14 NEWS AND EVENTS

### 14.01 NEWS AND MEDIA

The most common news website in Vorarlberg is [www.vol.at](http://www.vol.at). There you can find latest happenings, information about weather, events, jobs and real estate.

### 14.02 EVENTS

Besides [www.vol.at](http://www.vol.at) you can find current events at [www.kulturzeitschrift.at](http://www.kulturzeitschrift.at) (for leisure events) or [www.wirtschaftszeit.at](http://www.wirtschaftszeit.at) (for business events).

Some annual highlights you shouldn't miss:

#### JANUARY

Der weiße Ring (ski race) [www.derweissering.at](http://www.derweissering.at)

#### FEBRUARY

Carnival Parades and Parties

#### MARCH

Traditional ‚Funken‘  
Bregenzer Frühling [www.bregenzerfruehling.com](http://www.bregenzerfruehling.com)

#### APRIL

Vinobile Weinmesse [www.feldkirch.at](http://www.feldkirch.at)  
Messe SCHAU! [www.messedornbirn.at](http://www.messedornbirn.at)  
Peravinum [www.feldkirch.at](http://www.feldkirch.at)

#### MAY

Pfingstfest in Schruns and Nüziders  
Emsiana Kulturfest [www.emsiana.at](http://www.emsiana.at)  
Hypomeeting Götzis [www.meeting-goetzis.at](http://www.meeting-goetzis.at)

#### JUNE

Bregenzer Jazz Festival [www.bregenz.travel](http://www.bregenz.travel)  
Tanz ist Festival [www.tanzist.at](http://www.tanzist.at)  
Sonnwendfeuer

#### JULY

Poolbar Festival [www.poolbar.at](http://www.poolbar.at)  
Kino unter Sternen [www.alteskino.at](http://www.alteskino.at)  
Milka Schokoladenfest [www.bludenz.travel](http://www.bludenz.travel)  
Origano Festival [www.dornbirn.at](http://www.dornbirn.at)  
Sommer.Lust am Platz [www.lustenau.at](http://www.lustenau.at)  
Bregenzer Festspiele [www.bregenzerfestspiele.com](http://www.bregenzerfestspiele.com)

#### AUGUST

Szene Open-Air Festival [www.szeneopenair.at](http://www.szeneopenair.at)  
Alpine Kurzfilmfestival [www.alpinale.net](http://www.alpinale.net)  
Wolfurt Trophy [www.vc.wolfurt.at/beach](http://www.vc.wolfurt.at/beach)  
Beza Beat [www.bezaubeat.at](http://www.bezaubeat.at)  
Montafoner Berglauf [www.montafon.at](http://www.montafon.at)

#### SEPTEMBER

Dornbirner Herbstmesse [www.messedornbirn.at](http://www.messedornbirn.at)  
Altenstädter Kilbi [www.kilbi.com](http://www.kilbi.com)  
Schaulust Kultur Festival [www.schaulust.net](http://www.schaulust.net)  
outdoortrophy [www.outdoortrophy.com](http://www.outdoortrophy.com)

#### OCTOBER

Emser Oktoberfest [www.oktoberfest.cc](http://www.oktoberfest.cc)  
Lange Nacht der Museen [langenacht.orf.at](http://langenacht.orf.at)  
Lustenauer Kilbi [www.lustenau.at](http://www.lustenau.at)  
3-Länder-Marathon [www.sparkasse-3-laender-marathon.at](http://www.sparkasse-3-laender-marathon.at)

#### NOVEMBER

ArtDesign Feldkirch [www.feldkirch.at/artdesign](http://www.feldkirch.at/artdesign)  
Martinimarkt Dornbirn [www.dornbirn.at](http://www.dornbirn.at)

#### DECEMBER

Christmas Markets

Events and activities are also posted on [www.facebook.com/ChancenlandVorarlberg](http://www.facebook.com/ChancenlandVorarlberg) and [www.instagram.com/chancenland\\_vorarlberg](http://www.instagram.com/chancenland_vorarlberg)

## 14.03 CINEMA

If you are a movie fan you can find cinemas all over Vorarlberg. Find locations and current movies at [www.kino.vol.at](http://www.kino.vol.at).

An exceptional cinema is Rio Kino in Feldkirch, it offers special evenings with delicious food and great program, e.g. Scottish evening with whiskey tasting. [www.rauchg-astronomie.at/rio](http://www.rauchg-astronomie.at/rio)

## 14.04 NIGHTLIFE

Below you can find an extract of bars and clubs in Vorarlberg. The position on the map does not necessarily correspond with the real location.

Find events, clubs and bars also on [www.wohintipp.at](http://www.wohintipp.at). Get information on events and ticket purchases on [www.events-vorarlberg.at](http://www.events-vorarlberg.at), on [www.laendleticket.com](http://www.laendleticket.com) or on the event calendars of the cities or municipalities.



## CHECKLIST

	More Information at	Documents Needed/Info	Status
<b>BEFORE COMING TO AUSTRIA</b>			
Get a Job	<a href="http://www.chancenland.at">www.chancenland.at</a>	CV, Certificates, Application	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get an Apartment	<a href="http://www.laendleimmo.at">www.laendleimmo.at</a>	Bank account, Registration Form	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get a Flight	<a href="http://www.checkfelix.com">www.checkfelix.com</a>	Fly to Zurich, Munich or Innsbruck	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>FIRST DAYS IN AUSTRIA</b>			
Register at Meldeamt	Municipal Office	Registration Form, Passport	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open a Bank Account	see list below	Passport	<input type="checkbox"/>
Register for Gas and Electricity	<a href="http://www.vkw.at">www.vkw.at</a>	Bank Account	<input type="checkbox"/>
Register for Internet	see list below	Bank Account	<input type="checkbox"/>
Register for GIS	<a href="http://www.gis.at">www.gis.at</a>	Bank Account	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>FIRST MONTHS IN AUSTRIA</b>			
Get a Registration Certificate	District Authority	Registration Form, Passport	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get your e-card	<a href="http://www.vgkk.at">www.vgkk.at</a>	Allows you to consult doctors	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get your Working Contract	Employer	States your working conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get a Car	<a href="http://www.laendleauto.at">www.laendleauto.at</a>	Valid Driving License, Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>

### LIST OF PROVIDERS

In order to help you start your life in Vorarlberg we have summarized the most relevant internet providers, insurances and banks for you.

#### INTERNET PROVIDERS

vol.at	<a href="http://www.volhighspeed.at">www.volhighspeed.at</a>
Magenta	<a href="http://www.magenta.at">www.magenta.at</a>
Drei	<a href="http://www.drei.at">www.drei.at</a>
A1 Telekom	<a href="http://www.a1.net">www.a1.net</a>
HoT	<a href="http://www.hot.at">www.hot.at</a>

#### INSURANCES

Allianz	<a href="http://www.allianz.at">www.allianz.at</a>
Uniq	<a href="http://www.uniq.at">www.uniq.at</a>
VLV	<a href="http://www.vlv.at">www.vlv.at</a>

#### BANKS

Bank Austria	<a href="http://www.bankaustria.at">www.bankaustria.at</a>
BTB	<a href="http://www.btb.at">www.btb.at</a>
Hypo	<a href="http://www.hypovbg.at">www.hypovbg.at</a>
ING DiBa	<a href="http://www.ing-diba.at">www.ing-diba.at</a>
Raiffeisen	<a href="http://www.raiffeisen.at/vbg">www.raiffeisen.at/vbg</a>
Sparkasse	<a href="http://www.sparkasse.at">www.sparkasse.at</a>
Volksbank	<a href="http://www.volksbank-vorarlberg.at">www.volksbank-vorarlberg.at</a>



With its thrilling landscape Vorarlberg offers scenes and places for almost all sports. ©Michael Marte

## REGISTRATION FORM Meldezettel

Please cross when applicable,

SURNAME (in block letters), Academic Degree <b>SMITH, MA</b>				
FIRST NAME (according to passport) <b>John</b>				
SURNAME (before first marriage)				
DATE OF BIRTH <b>01.01.1980</b>	SEX Male <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>		RELIGION	
PLACE OF BIRTH (according to passport, state and country) <b>California (United States)</b>				
MARITAL STATUS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Civil Union/Registered Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Resolved Registered Partnership <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Registered Partner				
CITIZENSHIP Austria <input type="checkbox"/> Other state: <input type="checkbox"/> → Name of the state: <b>United States</b>				
INDICATION OF ZMR-NUMBER (if known) <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <span>[ ][ ][ ][ ]</span> </div>				
TRAVEL DOCUMENT Type of Document, f.ex. Passport, ID card    Number <b>C01234567</b> Issue Date: <b>01.01.1990</b> <b>Passport</b> Issuing Authority: <b>Berkeley Post Office, California</b>				
YOUR NEW ACCOMMODATION IS AT	Street <b>Musterstraße</b>	House No. <b>12</b>	Stair	Door No.
	ZIP Code    City, State <b>6850    Dornbirn</b>			
IS THIS ACCOMMODATION YOUR MAIN RESIDENCE? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>				
IF NOT, WHERE IS YOUR MAIN RESIDENCE?	Street	House No.	Stair	Door No.
	ZIP Code    City, State			
HAVE YOU MOVED FROM ABROAD? No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> → Name of the state: <b>Virginia, US</b>				
YOUR LAST ACCOMMODATION WAS AT ...	Street	House No.	Stair	Door No.
	ZIP Code    City, State			
DO YOU MOVE TO A COUNTRY OUTSIDE OF AUSTRIA? No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> → Name of the state:				
NAME (IN BLOCK LETTERS) AND SIGNATURE OF LANDLORD, DATE <b>Thomas Schmitt, 12.12.2012</b>		DATE AND SIGNATURE <b>3</b>		

- 1 ZMR-Number is an administration number that is given to you automatically by the administration software. You can leave the box unfilled.
- 2 These fields are only needed if you want to unregister a previous accommodation in Austria. If you move to Austria from abroad leave these fields empty.
- 3 Your Signature



[WWW.CHANCENLAND.AT](http://WWW.CHANCENLAND.AT)

CAREER

PLEASURE

SUCCESS