

Municipal elections

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General information

Every five years, the people of Vorarlberg and EU nationals having their main residence in Vorarlberg are invited to elect their municipal council and, in many municipalities, the mayor of their municipality. The last municipal elections in Vorarlberg were held in September 2020; the next elections will take place in 2025.

The municipal council is the supreme body of the municipal administration. The number of municipal councillors to be elected depends on the number of inhabitants in a municipality.

up to 500	inhabitants	9
from 501 to 1 000	inhabitants	12
from 1 001 to 1 500	inhabitants	15
from 1 501 to 2 000	inhabitants	18
from 2 001 to 2 500	inhabitants	21
from 2 501 to 5 000	inhabitants	24
from 5 001 to 8 000	inhabitants	27
from 8 001 to 11 000	inhabitants	30
from 11 001 to 15 000	inhabitants	33
more than 15 000	inhabitants	36

If at least one candidate party proposes, in addition to the nominations for the municipal council, a candidate for the post of mayor, and this person receives more than half of the valid ballots cast, the mayor is elected directly by the municipal electorate; in other cases, the mayor is elected by the newly elected municipal council.

Municipal elections are governed by the provisions of the Act on electoral procedure for municipal and mayoral elections (**Gemeindewahlgesetz – GWG**).

Who is entitled to vote in municipal elections?

In municipal elections, **the right to vote** is granted to persons who:

- **possess Austrian citizenship or citizenship of another EU country;**
- **have not been disqualified from voting;**
- **have reached the age of 16** at the latest on the day of the election; and

- had their **main residence** in a municipality of Vorarlberg on the date of the election (this day is set by the Vorarlberg Provincial Government).

Disqualification from the right to vote may be ordered by a court on a case-by-case basis as a result of certain criminal acts. In addition, anyone who has not been a resident in the municipality for at least one year on the election day is excluded from the vote, provided that this person's stay is manifestly only temporary. This includes, for example, seasonal workers who deregister their main place of residence at the end of the season.

Former residents of Vorarlberg are **not entitled to vote** in municipal elections.

Who can stand as a candidate for municipal elections?

Any person entitled to vote who has reached the age of 18 at the latest on the day of the election is **eligible to stand for election to the municipal council**. Foreign EU citizens are eligible to stand for election to the municipal council if they have not been excluded from standing for election as a result of a criminal conviction in the country of which they are a citizen.

Election to the office of **mayor** is only possible for those who, in addition to the above requirements, hold Austrian citizenship.

Nominations for municipal elections must be submitted to the returning officer and must be accompanied by statements of support. The number of statements of support depends on the number of voters in a municipality. The required number of statements of support ranges between 10 and 100. If nominations are submitted by a political group represented in the municipal council, the signatures of the majority of the municipal representatives of that group are deemed sufficient. A **nomination for the post of mayor** may only be submitted by a group of voters who also submit a nomination for the municipal council election.

If no candidate obtains more than half of the valid ballots in the mayoral elections, a second round of voting must be held (**runoff** vote). The second round includes the two candidates who obtained the highest number of valid ballots in the first round.

If no nominations are submitted in a municipality, an electoral procedure must be carried out **in the absence of nominations**. In this case, blank ballot papers are sent to the voters and placed in the voting booths, in which voters can enter the names of municipal citizens who, in their opinion, should be elected to the municipal council. The new municipal council is formed by the candidates who are the most frequently named.

Results of past municipal elections

The results of past municipal and mayoral elections can be found [here](#).

Reports from the Statistics Department on past municipal elections can be found [here](#).

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