

European Region-Press Release on the “TotA 2019”

The Maximilian Year 2019

The next Tour of the Alps will take place in a special anniversary year marking 500 years since the death of Emperor Maximilian I. Event and celebrations will be going on throughout the “Maximilian Year” 2019 to honour the contribution of an emperor who was particularly active in the area today covered by the Euregio, is considered to have been the “first European” and is today still known as a unifying force.

The Tour of the Alps will provide a spectacular opening to the 2019 cycling season. From 22 to 26 April this professional stage race will take riders through three regions in the Alps: Tirol, South Tirol Trentino. All eyes in the world of cycling will be on their beautiful landscapes during the Tour of the Alps, which is set to once again generate widespread media coverage and act as the perfect tool to promote the Euregio.

Emperor Maximilian I is known not only as the last knight but also as the first European. To mark the 500th anniversary of his death, the region of Tirol has declared the year 2019 to be Maximilian Year. It was under his rule that Innsbruck became a key political hub in the dynastic politics of the Habsburgs and attracted numerous important artists. Emperor Maximilian I paved the way into a new dimension of European culture. The area today covered by the Tirol-South Tirol-Trentino Euregio already lay at the heart of Europe – geographically, politically and economically – during Maximilian’s reign. It was of enormous significance to Emperor Maximilian and his political activities.

Showcasing Maximilian’s legacy

For historians, Maximilian was a unifier. Major international sporting events such as the Tour of the Alps also regularly succeed in bringing people and cultures together. “By declaring 2019 the Maximilian Year we want to shine a light on the history of Tirol and, at the same time, emphasise how important Maximilian remains today for our region,” says Regional Governor of Tirol, Günther Platter. Throughout the year there will be a range of events and activities

going on to commemorate the Maximilian's life and work and showcase his legacy, which continues to be felt today.

Uniting Europe

Emperor Maximilian was, however, much more than just the first European. He is also considered to have been a great networker of his time. That's why in 2019 people will be able to learn more about the lives of Maximilian and those close to him via social media. "This is an opportunity for us to include the younger generation and introduce them to the exciting and eventful life led by the emperor," explain Regional Governor Günther Platter and Regional Minister for Culture, Beate Palfrader. Together with his wars and marriage policy, Maximilian's networks were a key factor behind his success in uniting Europe under Habsburg rule.

Maximilian's link to the Euregio

Emperor Maximilian had a special connection to the southern and eastern parts of the Tirol-South Tirol-Trentino Euregio. In the beautiful landscapes which will be negotiated by riders as part of the Tour of the Alps in April 2019, Maximilian was able to significantly expand his empire. In 1490 he took over control of Tirol from Archduke Sigismund and began expanding his residence in Innsbruck as well as the fortresses throughout the region. In 1500 he acquired Lienz and the Pustertal Valley as the result of a marital agreement. In the Bavarian War of Succession he added Kufstein, Rattenberg and Kitzbühel in 1505. And after waging war against Venice (1508 to 1516) he claimed Rovereto, Riva and Ala, which today still form the southern border of the Tirol-South Tirol-Trentino Euregio.

The connection to the Tour of the Alps comes full circle in the place where Maximilian was crowned emperor. On 4 February 1508 he assumed the title "Chosen Roman Emperor" in the Cathedral of Trento, located in the northern Italian region of Trentino-South Tirol.