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Vienna Insurance Group celebrates 25th anniversary of Vienna Stock Exchange listing

Dividend distributed every year since IPO in 1994

On 17 October 1994 the Vienna Insurance Group (VIG) – at that time still called Wiener Städtische Versicherung – was listed on the Vienna Stock Exchange for the first time. Since then, the Group has continuously paid a dividend every year – overall a total of around EUR 1.8 billion.

Opportunity to participate in the Group's successful development

For Vienna Insurance Group Supervisory Board Chairman Günter Geyer, who promoted and shaped VIG's expansion into Central and Eastern Europe during his time as CEO, the Group's listing was not only a significant milestone in its history. He believes it was also an effective way of raising the capital needed for the Group's expansion in CEE: *"The additional responsibility towards investors and analysts enriched our traditional corporate culture. Today, as back then, all stakeholders should be able to participate in the Group's sustainable long-term growth."*

Total dividend payout of around EUR 1.8 billion

Reliability has also been a hallmark of the Group's dividend policy. Since its IPO in 1994 the Group has paid out a dividend to shareholders every year – a total of about EUR 1.8 billion – also in challenging economic times such as the 2007/08 economic and financial crisis. VIG's shares offer an attractive dividend yield (4.93% in 2018). In March 2019, the dividend policy was adapted in line with feedback from investors. The policy now stipulates a distribution of between 30% and 50% of consolidated profit after tax and non-controlling interests. *"Our goal is to ensure that the dividend per share is aligned with the Group's performance, in order to position ourselves as a stable, reliable partner. A solid capital base provides the best foundation for sustainable, profitable growth, and we are making best use of it with our around 50 Group companies in 25 countries,"* explains Elisabeth Stadler, CEO of the Vienna Insurance Group.

VIG with highest rating in the ATX

This strong capital base is also one of the factors highlighted by rating agency Standard & Poor's. The agency rated VIG with A in 2004, which was upgraded to A+ with a stable outlook one year later and has remained unchanged ever since. As a result, VIG has the best rating out of all companies listed in the ATX, the leading index of Vienna Stock Exchange. *"Vienna Insurance Group has demonstrated since its listing 25 years ago how a business can grow by making use of the capital market. As an integral part of Austria's leading index ATX, VIG enjoys highest visibility and outstanding liquidity on the Vienna Stock Exchange, not just on the domestic market but also among international investors,"* comments Christoph Boschan, Chairman of the Management Board of Wiener Börse AG.

Initial listing on the Vienna Stock Exchange

On 17 October 1994, the former Wiener Städtische Versicherung's preference shares were listed on the Vienna Stock Exchange at an issue price of ATS 1,030 (EUR 74.85), completing the company's IPO. Due to the issue of preference stocks as opposed to ordinary shares, investors outside Austria took little notice of the stock. At that time, the free float was 11%.

Shares listed in the ATX since 2005

Preparations for a major stock market campaign and moves to open up towards the international capital market were made ten years later. The 2005 Annual General Meeting adopted a resolution approving the 1:1 conversion of preference shares into ordinary voting shares. The Group also committed itself to the Austrian Code of Corporate Governance. All 86,357,600 Wiener Städtische shares were listed on the Vienna Stock Exchange's prime market segment as of 20 June 2005, and they were included in the ATX from 19 September onwards of the same year. This laid the foundation for the share's international presence.

First capital increase leads to increased free float of 29%

By 2005, the Group had already successfully expanded into the CEE region and operated in 15 countries. In order to raise the funds required for the Group's ongoing growth, preparations were made for the first large-scale capital market transaction. A total of 18,642,400 new shares were issued on 2 December 2005. The offer price was EUR 49 per share and the SPO generated proceeds of around EUR 910 million. This increased the free float to about 29%. The new umbrella brand, Vienna Insurance Group, was launched in January 2006, and shares were traded under this name since 1 February 2008. VIG shares have also been listed on the Prague Stock Exchange since 5 February 2008.

Second capital increase in 2008 oversubscribed several times

On May 2008, VIG carried out its second major capital increase, totalling EUR 1.14 billion. The share price was set at EUR 49.50. This replaced the 2005 increase as the largest ever share placement by an insurance group on the Vienna Stock Exchange. The global issue was oversubscribed multiple times. The proceeds of the capital increase funded the acquisition of Erste Group's insurance business in Austria and CEE, and the newly established distribution partnership. The 15-year cooperation agreement signed at the same time was extended in May 2018 ahead of time until the end of 2033.

New holding structure since August 2010

With effect from 3 August 2010, VIG's Austrian insurance operations were separated from the holding company functions. Since then, the Vienna Insurance Group – the exchange-listed holding company – has focused on Group steering functions, the international corporate business and reinsurance.

At present, Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein holds around 70% of VIG's 128 million ordinary shares, the free float amounts to roughly 30%. The free float split is the following: 25% Austria, 27% Continental Europe, 34% North America, 12% UK and Republic of Ireland and 2% other countries.

Vienna Insurance Group (VIG) is the leading insurance specialist in Austria as well as in Central and Eastern Europe. About 50 companies in 25 countries form a Group with a long-standing tradition, strong brands and close customer relations. VIG has close to 200 years of experience in the insurance business. With more than 25,000 employees, Vienna Insurance Group is the clear market leader in its Austrian and CEE markets. It is therefore excellently positioned to take advantage of the long-term growth opportunities in a region with 180 million people. The listed Vienna Insurance Group is the best-rated company of ATX, the leading index of Vienna Stock Exchange; its share is also listed on the Prague Stock Exchange.

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