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Vienna Insurance Group (VIG) completes mergers of bancassurance companies
Czech companies Pojišťovna České sporitelny and Kooperativa merged with effect from 1 January 2019

The last in the series of mergers aimed at driving growth in the bancassurance business was finalised at the start of 2019. The Vienna Insurance Group has merged Czech bancassurance business Pojišťovna České sporitelny, a.s. with the Group's local company, Kooperativa pojišťovna, a.s.

The merger means that an important part of the Group-wide project designed to strengthen the bancassurance business – an initiative launched in 2018 – has now been concluded according to plan. *"Our goal was to merge the local composite insurers with the life insurance companies specialising in bancassurance, with a view to driving forward the non-life segment. With the mergers in Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia and now the Czech Republic, we have taken this step as planned. We will maintain our focus on successful collaboration, and besides life insurance we will concentrate on growing the non-life and health insurance businesses and integrating them more closely into our online sales processes, as well as developing new, clearly understandable products,"* explained Vienna Insurance Group CEO Elisabeth Stadler.

Boosting sales through banks is one of the objectives of VIG's Agenda 2020 strategic work programme. In collaboration with its partner Erste Group, VIG generated premium income of around EUR 900 million through this particular channel in the first three quarters of 2018. VIG's Group companies currently cooperate with Erste Group und Sparkassen in ten countries: Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia.

The Czech Republic is VIG's second-biggest market after Austria. Based on market data for the third quarter of 2018, VIG Group company Kooperativa will become the leading company in the Czech insurance market, with a share of about 25 percent, as a result of the merger. Also represented in the Czech Republic by Česká podnikatelská pojišťovna, a.s. (ČPP), the Vienna Insurance Group is the largest insurance group in the country, with a market share of around 32 percent. VIG's premium income in the Czech Republic stood at EUR 1,274 million in the third quarter of 2018 – a year-on-year increase of about 6 percent. Pre-tax profit jumped by 9 percent, to around EUR 124 million. The combined ratio in the third quarter of last year was an outstanding 93.6 percent.

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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