

CO³ voices: Tamara Rendić



Karin Kafesie: You recently celebrated a very special anniversary; can you briefly summarize the main milestones in the history of Wiener Osiguranje?

Tamara Rendić: Wiener Osiguranje VIIG celebrated its 25th anniversary in September 2024 – a significant period during which the company has solidified its position as one of the leading local insurers, achieving sustainable and profitable growth. Key focus areas have been the strengthening of the non-life insurance segment, advancing digital transformation, investing in employees, promoting sustainability and social responsibility. The company has undergone numerous significant milestones since its establishment in 1999. Highlights include the merger of Erste Osiguranje in 2018, that established Wiener Osiguranje at the forefront of the life insurers, reaching one billion Kuna in premiums in 2021, and receiving the prestigious *Golden Kuna* award for the best insurance company twice.

When and how did you join the company and could you share some of your personal highlights of your years with Wiener Osiguranje?

Tamara Rendić: I joined the company in 2012 as a CFO after spending 13 years with KPMG as an auditor. I held the CFO position for 11 years before stepping into the CEO position in July 2023. My colleagues on the Management Board are Božo Šaravanja and Alan Jelovečki. The history of Wiener Osiguranje is a unique one as the company was formed through the merger of four VIIG companies: Cosmopolitan Life, Helios, Kvarner and Erste. These mergers took place between 2010 and 2018. As a management team we are fostering an open, exchange orientated corporate culture, positioning Wiener Osiguranje as a forward-thinking organization in comparison to more traditional approaches seen in some of our local peers.

When talking about highlights, insuring the construction of the Pelješac Bridge – one of Croatia's most challenging infrastructure projects – was definitely one of them. Another key milestone was becoming the leading life insurer in Croatia just like the introduction of the Euro as an official currency in Croatia in January 2023.

As the only VIG company operating in Croatia, your setting for collaboration is different from other countries. How do you exchange ideas with your peers across borders? Are there countries you would describe your exchange particularly close?

Tamara Rendić: When it comes to IT-solutions, we've been closely collaborating with our colleagues from Bosnia and Serbia – KING being a recent example. In terms of product expertise exchange, we have benefitted from the motor expertise of our colleagues at Omniasig and shared our insights on the Euro conversion with Bulgarian companies. Recently, we also experienced a 'different type of exchange' with our colleagues from the Baltics, as they planned their incentive trip to Croatia.

Furthermore, we continue to benefit from the insights of our Supervisory Board members, who provide us with guidance on which subjects an intensified exchange makes sense business-wise. Of course, our CO³ ambassadors also play a key role, offering a comprehensive range of topics worth sharing.

Last but not least, we have a trustful collaboration with the colleagues at the Headquarters. Special thanks go to Werner Matula and his team, who have consistently supported us with great dedication.

Looking ahead: What are the most important projects and goals for the next 1-3 years?

Tamara Rendić: First and foremost, our focus remains on achieving further growth by strengthening our retail segment, particularly through profitable products such as health, personal property, motor liability insurance and life regular insurance. Special attention is on local collaboration with our strategic partner, Erste & Steiermärkische Bank.

Digital transformation is another cornerstone of our future success. Erste Bank plays a significant role in this regard as well – our digital product portfolio offered through George is already highly comprehensive.

In terms of expanding our social footprint, we are committed to deepening our engagement in mental health initiatives and to advancing efforts to improve financial literacy – an area where the Croatian market faces considerable challenges.

What are you most proud of in your role as CEO of Wiener Osiguranje?

Tamara Rendić: I am most proud of our success in fostering an open-minded corporate culture and creating a working environment where people feel valued, empowered and motivated. Our employees are self-driven, highly committed, and dedicated to driving the company's continued growth and development. This positive atmosphere is not only visible in our day-to-day operations but is also validated by the results of our latest *Great Place to Work* survey, which underscores our achievements in building a supportive and engaging workplace.

