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Moldovan art takes centre stage in Vienna: Pavel Brăila's Ringturm artwork officially unveiled

Titled "Your Happiness is in Your Own Hands", Vienna's largest public-space art installation was officially presented this morning. The ceremony was attended by Moldovan Deputy Prime Minister Eugeniu Osmochescu and Austria's Minister of the Economy Wolfgang Hattmannsdorfer.

With this year's wrapping of its headquarters, Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein is turning the spotlight on contemporary Moldovan art – masterfully putting it centre stage in the heart of Vienna over the coming weeks. The 4,000m² Ringturm wrapping was officially unveiled this morning at a special ceremony – Your Happiness is in Your Own Hands was designed by Moldova's Biennale representative Pavel Brăila, whose work has also been shown at the documenta exhibitions. Work on transforming VIG's headquarters started in early May, and the installation will be on display until the end of September.

"It is important to highlight the long-standing and historic cooperation between the Republic of Moldova and Austria, which is built on sustainable partnerships, mutual trust and shared values.

Pavel Brăila's artistic installation on the Ringturm reflects the strong cultural, tourism, investment and economic links between our countries. It also represents a valuable platform for promoting the Republic of Moldova's image and cultural heritage in the global arena. We highly appreciate the Austrian investment projects in our country, and the contribution to the economic development of the Republic of Moldova in strategic sectors such as industry, automotive and electronics, banking and financial services, insurance, IT and digitalisation. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my gratitude to the Vienna Insurance Group for its initiative in promoting the Republic of Moldova as a destination for investment, innovation and economic cooperation, while also showcasing our cultural and creative potential and development opportunities," mentioned Moldovan Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economic Development and Digitalisation, **Eugeniu Osmochescu**. The initiative highlights the strong cultural and economic ties between Moldova and Austria. By combining contemporary art, business dialogue and cultural exchange, the Ringturm wrapping and the accompanying programme create a platform for presenting Moldova's creative identity, while also reflecting the Vienna Insurance Group's long-term presence and investment in the Moldovan market.

"The work for this year's artistic covering of the Ringturm is far more than a remarkable project. It clearly demonstrates the depth and breadth of the relations between Austria and Moldova. And it forms part of a series of flagship projects that are raising the profile of our cooperation and bringing it to life. Enduring partnerships don't come about through treaties or economic ties alone. They develop through personal interactions, mutual trust and an understanding of your opposite number's history, identity and viewpoints. This is the foundation for the close, trusting partnership between Austria and Moldova that has grown and evolved successfully in many respects over the past few years. It is also reflected in our close economic links: Austria has long been one of Moldova's most important business partners and investors. And this partnership still has a long way to go before it reaches its full potential – in economic and cultural terms, as well as in a shared European context," emphasised **Wolfgang Hattmannsdorfer**, Austria's Minister for Economy, Energy and Tourism.

A long-standing initiative of Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein, this is the 18th artistic wrapping of the Ringturm. *"Now a firmly established tradition, the artistic covering of our headquarters is the Group's flagship cultural project, because it highlights what we stand for as the leading international insurance group in Central, Southern and Eastern Europe: international networking, strong partnerships and a lived sense of togetherness that transcends national borders. Through 'Your Happiness is in Your Own Hands', over the coming weeks we will be artfully creating dialogue between Vienna and Chişinău – and we're absolutely delighted to be doing so,"* commented **Robert Lasshofer**, Managing Board Chair at Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein, the main shareholder of the Vienna Insurance Group (VIG).

"VIG has been operating in Moldova for 12 years through Group company Donaris and recently became market leader through the acquisition of Moldasig. The Moldovan insurance market is currently in the development phase. As a reliable partner for businesses and society, our aim is to drive the evolution of the local market and enhance its resilience. We're delighted that we can provide such a special stage for Moldova in the form of this year's Ringturm wrapping," commented **Peter Höfinger**, Deputy CEO at VIG and Country Manager for Moldova. The Moldasig acquisition takes VIG's share of the Moldovan market to around 25%.

Alongside high-ranking political representatives, numerous distinguished guests from the worlds of politics, business and culture accepted the invitation of Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein, including H.E. Victoria **Roşa** (Ambassador of the Republic of Moldova to Austria), Anca **Dragu** (Governor of the National Bank of the Republic of Moldova), Irina Tolstousov (Deputy Director of the Invest Moldova Agency), MMag. Markus **Figl** (District Mayor of Vienna's Innere Stadt), Dr Günter **Geyer** (Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein), Dr Peter **Thirring** (Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Vienna Insurance Group), Dr Ralph **Müller** (Chief Executive Officer of Wiener Städtische Versicherung), Dr Judit **Havasi** (Chief Executive Officer of DONAU Versicherung), Mag. Sonja **Brandtmayer** (Deputy Chief Executive Officer of Wiener Städtische Versicherung), Mihai **Tecău** (CEO of Omniasig VIG), Victor **Coadă** (CEO of Moldasig S.A.), Oleg **Boian** (Deputy Managing Director of Moldasig S.A.), Dinu **Gherasim** (CEO of Donaris VIG), Andrei **Plămădeală** (CFO of Donaris VIG), and artist Dorota **Sadovská**.

Happiness in our own hands

Moldovan performance artist Pavel Brăila, who also represented his home country at the 2026 Biennale in Venice, becomes the 10th artist from the CEE region to design the artistic covering of VIG's head office. Made up of 30 printed netting sheets, the 4,000m² artwork "Your Happiness is in Your Own Hands" will transform the Ringturm into a large-format symbol of memory, identity and cultural ties. It shows a colourful choreography of hand movements that serves as a guide to preparing a traditional Moldovan dish: sarmale. Using a minimalist visual language, Brăila puts the focus not so much on the recipe as on the stories that are connected with the dish. For him, sarmale symbolises experiences of belonging and cultural identity. *"Traditions and cultural practices are born out of doing – they are kept alive by the things we pass on and reinterpret. They create connections and identity, and can give us a feeling of home, no matter where we are. The artistic covering of the Ringturm is an invitation to share experiences and put them on show in everyday life. This also encapsulates its subtle message: that belonging, memory and maybe even a little happiness lie in our own hands,"* said **Pavel Brăila**.

Pavel Brăila

Pavel Brăila was born in Chişinău (Moldova) in 1971. The internationally acclaimed artist works with a variety of different media – from film, video and photography to installations and performance art. He made his name with works including the film project "Shoes for Europe", which premiered at the documenta11 exhibition in 2002. Brăila's oeuvre examines questions of memory, identity, migration and social transformation. His work has been shown at countless international exhibitions including documenta14 and Manifesta 10, as well as at venues such as the Tate Modern in London. Pavel Brăila lives and works in Chişinău and Berlin.

An evening with a Moldovan flavour

The unveiling of this year's artistic wrapping of the Ringturm will also be accompanied by an evening reception at Redroof Vienna, offering guests a direct experience of Moldova's culinary and cultural identity. Organised with the support of Invest Moldova Agency, the event will bring together representatives of the Austrian and Moldovan business, diplomatic and cultural communities, including Moldovan Deputy Prime Minister Eugeniu Osmochescu, Moldova's Ambassador to Austria, Her Excellency Victoria Roşa, VIG Deputy CEO Peter Höfner, artist Pavel Brăila and Invest Moldova Agency Deputy Director Irina Tolstousov. The reception will feature selected Moldovan wines, traditional dishes such as sarmale and babă neagră, and a dedicated sarmale masterclass. Beyond showcasing Moldova's cultural heritage, the evening aims to create an informal platform for networking, dialogue and new connections between Austrian and Moldovan partners, while highlighting Moldova's growing visibility as a destination for investment, business cooperation and cultural exchange.

Limited edition: 500 stylish shopping bags

Once it is taken down in September, the material used to create the 4,000m² artwork will be transformed into creative, one-of-a-kind tote bags – a sustainable, social and ecofriendly initiative that has already become something of a tradition. Around 500 handmade shopping bags produced by employees of Viennese label gabarage – which promotes social reintegration – will be raffled off to employees and members of the public.

20 years of the artistic wrapping of the Ringturm

In addition to its wide-ranging support for social initiatives, Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein is committed to promoting cross-border cultural exchange. Championing culture and the arts is a key objective for VIG's main shareholder. The artistic covering of the Group's headquarters is a high-profile symbol of this philosophy. In cooperation with Vienna-based company Movelight®, in most years since 2006 all four sides of the Ringturm have been covered piece by piece with a total of 30 printed netting sheets – each around 3m wide and up to 63m long – using 15,000 cable ties to construct an eye-catching 4,200m² artwork. Having previously focused exclusively on works by Austrian artists, in 2012 the invitation to design the artistic covering was opened up to include artists from the countries where the Vienna Insurance Group operates. Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein's Ringturm wrapping sends out a vivid statement in favour of cultural exchange with Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. Pavel Brăila is the tenth artist from the CEE region to be commissioned for the artistic covering of the Ringturm.

Artistic wrapping of the Ringturm, 2006-2026

2026	Pavel Brăila	Your Happiness is in Your Own Hands	Moldova
2025	Marcin Maciejowski	Linking Tales	Poland
2024	Johanna Kandl	With the Best Ingredients	Austria
2023	Gottfried Helnwein	My Sister	Austria
2023	Vanja Bućan	Wandering icebergs	Slovenia
2022	Dóra Maurer	With each other	Hungary
2019	Daniela Kostova	Future Dreaming	Bulgaria
2018	Gottfried Helnwein	I saw this	Austria
2017	Mihael Milunović	Vision	Serbia
2016	Ivan Exner	Unburdened	Czech Republic
2015	Tanja Deman	Summer Pleasures	Croatia
2014	Arnulf Rainer	Veil of Agnes	Austria
2013	Dorota Sadowská	Ties	Slovakia
2012	László Fehér	Society	Hungary
2011	Xenia Hausner	A Sense of Family	Austria
2008	Hubert Schmalix	Tower in Blossom	Austria
2007	Robert Hammerstiel	Tower of Life	Austria
2006	Christian L. Attersee	Don Giovanni	Austria

Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein is the main shareholder of Vienna Insurance Group AG Wiener Versicherung Gruppe (VIG), the holding company for the Group's international insurance operations. Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein supports the Group's cultural and social activities, with an emphasis on cross-border exchange with the Central and Eastern European countries in which VIG has a presence. Its partnerships and initiatives are geared specifically towards supporting the activities of social organisations which provide space and scope for personal and cultural development.

The **Vienna Insurance Group** (VIG) is the leading insurance group in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). With more than 50 insurance companies and pension funds in 30 countries, the Group has a long-standing tradition, strong brands and close customer relations. VIG's 30,000 employees take care of the needs of more than 33 million customers day in day out. VIG shares have been listed on the Vienna Stock Exchange since 1994, in Prague since 2008 and in Budapest since 2022. The VIG Group has an A+ rating with positive outlook from the internationally recognised rating agency Standard & Poor's. VIG cooperates closely with Erste Group, the largest retail bank in Central and Eastern Europe.

Invest Moldova Agency is a public institution founded by the Government of the Republic of Moldova under the Prime Minister's Office, created and mandated to attract strategic investments in the Republic of Moldova, contribute to export growth, promote the country's image and develop the economic diplomacy dimension

Enquiries to:

Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein
Press and PR
Schottenring 30, 1010 Vienna

Romy Schrammel

Tel. +43 (0)50 350 21224

E-mail: r.schrammel@wst-versicherungsverein.at

VIENNA INSURANCE GROUP AG Wiener Versicherung Gruppe
Schottenring 30, 1010 Vienna

Karin Kafesie

Tel: +43 (0)50 350 21336

E-mail: karin.kafesie@vig.com

Press inquiries:
Invest Moldova Agency

Valeria Botnari

MD-2005, Eugen Doga 2, street
Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Tel: +37 (0)379472104

E-mail: valeria.botnari@invest.gov.md