

VGP Location³



**Focus on the
VGP Foundation**
and much more...

18/2020



HOPE
SEES THE INVISIBLE,
FEELS THE INTANGIBLE,
AND ACHIEVES THE IMPOSSIBLE

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

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VGP Location³

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Dear readers,

When looking back to the beginning of 2020, we have to admit that none of us could have imagined that this year would be so exceptional.

We at VGP had prepared ourselves for another year of major milestones for us as a company, and this has come true. We have invested a lot, and in recent months we have considerably strengthened the foundations for our future development. Not only have we been able to attract new and talented employees who will help us to achieve our ambitious growth plans, we were also able to announce or open further VGP parks. We have expanded geographically and, among other things, laid the foundation stone for KraussMaffei's new site in Parsdorf near Munich, where the concept of a "smart factory" will be implemented.

We have been able to see for some time now that entire industries are on the verge of major change. Many of our clients experience every day the need to strategically realign themselves in the short and long term and initiate long-term transformation processes.

The trends that we have been seeing for a long time, be it digitalisation in manufacturing, mobility, consumer behaviour towards e-commerce and the resulting greater demand for storage, or the demand for renewable energy, have only been accelerated by the pandemic. The speed at which all this is happening is sometimes breathtaking.

The use of new technologies for automation in warehousing is increasing, sustainable solutions in terms of energy are required and the automotive industry is called upon to develop a long-term and sustainable energy concept. It must accelerate the transformation from fossil fuels to alternative and more environmentally friendly power sources. Regeneratively generated electricity and hydrogen will be the focus here in the future.

It is extremely exciting to see how our clients adapt to all these requirements to remain competitive. This represents a great opportunity for us, as it requires us as a company to find solutions to all these challenges our clients are facing in order to support them in the best possible ways on their paths to the future.

We at VGP are proud to be part of this development and as a European company consider it a privilege to contribute responsibly so that new and sustainable technologies help to make Europe strong and competitive for the future.

I hope you enjoy reading Location³

Jan Van Geet

1 Editorial

2
News

4 Business
Macron

8 Project
VGP Park Santa
Maria da Feira

9 Excursion
Discovering Porto
and Lisbon

12 Quo vadis
Interview with
Jan Van Geet

14 Our team
New people
in the VGP team

19 Brand story
Macron

22 Interview
Anne de Paepe

24 Dreams
A veritable menagerie
of beneficiaries –
VGP Foundation

27
Do you need space?



From left side, Dr. Michael Ruf, Jan Van Geet, Prof. Dr. Angelika Niebler, Leonhard Spitzauer and Roland Weigert

Good neighbourly relations – VGP meets three very different mayors in Germany

Far in the north of the Republic – directly at the Baltic Sea – there is a 48-year-old Dane named Claus Ruhe Madsen, an independent entrepreneur with a chain of furniture stores and a caravan rentals business. Since September 2019, this party non-affiliated Dane has been serving as Lord Mayor of the Hanseatic City of Rostock and is the first foreign mayor of a major German city. In Laatzen – Lower Saxony’s “City of the Senses” – Jürgen Köhne has already served for 6 years as full-time mayor of this city of 45,000 inhabitants, and he can look back upon a long and committed career in municipal and cultural development. And in the south, with the change of seasons already visible in the Alps, the 35-year-old Leonard Spitzauer (Christian Social Union) has been since the local election in March 2020 the freshly elected mayor of the Bavarian municipality Vaterstetten. Moreover, he is commander of the Parsdorf-Hergolding Volunteer Fire Brigade. In recent weeks, VGP has had the opportunity to get to know all these dynamic and at the same time so very different characters and to introduce itself as a trustworthy partner and good future neighbour. The “VGP – Germany Tour” started on 3 September 2020 in Laatzen, Lower Saxony. Together with Lower Saxony’s Prime Minister

Stephan Weil, Laatzen’s Mayor Jürgen Köhne, and Krauss Maffei CEO Dr. Michael Ruf, the foundation stone was laid for the new Krauss Maffei Extrusion GmbH plant, which is to become the future centre for the company’s extrusion and recycling

technology. About a week later and more than 600 kilometres to the south, in the community of Vaterstetten, east of Munich, there was the kick-off for another joint project with Krauss Maffei, a company with a 182-year-old tradition. In beautiful Oktoberfest weather, Roland Weigert, State Secretary in the Bavarian State Ministry of Economic Affairs, Regional Development and Energy; Angelika Niebler, President of the Women’s Union and Member of the European Parliament; Leonhard Spitzauer, First Mayor of Vaterstetten; and Dr. Michael Ruf, CEO of the Krauss Maffei Group; met with Jan Van Geet at the construction site to lay the foundation stone for this “project of the century”. Back again in the north, in Rostock’s historic town hall dating back to the 13th century, Germany’s Managing Director, Darius Scheible, together with mayor Claus Ruhe Madsen and Managing Director of the Rostock Economic Development Agency, Christian Weiß, had an opportunity to present plans for VGP Park Rostock, construction of which is scheduled to start in spring 2021. The Hanseatic city is very pleased about VGP’s commitment. “This is a milestone,” the mayor was pleased to say. “It is good proof that Rostock is a good location for logistics.” The upshot of this small journey through Germany is that we appreciate the friendliness and confidence that was shown to us on the part of the municipalities and political representatives, and we very much look forward to future good neighbourly relations.

VGP trading update – people, landbank, leases: building tomorrow today

Over the past ten months, VGP has signed new leases for almost €35 million. As a result, annual rents have risen by 13.5% to €176 million. Currently, 31 projects are under construction, representing just over €48 million in rental income once fully built and let. Almost 80 percent of this has already been pre-let. VGP also bought many new land parcels, including in Giessen in central Germany and in Moerdijk in the Netherlands. “We are already seeing a lot of interest from tenants there, too,” says CEO Jan Van Geet. “In addition, we expect a strong last two months of the year based on our current pipeline, driven by robust

and broad-based leasing activity in all sectors as a result of an acceleration in e-commerce and the need for higher inventory levels,” he says. The group further reinforced the fundamentals on which it is constructing its future as it was “able to attract new talented people to help us with our ambitious growth plans,” Jan van Geet relates, and the capital and liquidity position was strengthened by entering into transactions with VGP European Logistics and VGP European Logistics with a total gross cash income of €318 million. Also, at the beginning of September, VGP raised €109 million through a placement of 929,153 treasury shares.

Another new VGP park shaping up in Romania, already its 4th in that market

In November, VGP launched its new multi-tenant business park in Braşov, in the central part of Romania. On 390,000 m², the park will offer up to 180,000 m² of gross lettable area within a prime location. Part of the first building, with total surface of 9,400 m², will be delivered in mid-2021 to the leading pharmaceuticals distribution company Fildas Trading Srl. That company will occupy 4,000 m² of fully temperature-controlled warehouse with adjacent offices. Fildas Trading's affiliated pharmacy network, Catena, also is

a market leader. The park is located within the Braşov ring road with direct access to the park from the E68 motorway in direction Sibiu and in very close proximity to connection with the future A3 (Bucharest–Braşov–Sibiu) motorway. The site also benefits from direct access to the city's public bus transport network. Such excellent road access and public infrastructure make the park ideally suited for locating regional as well as international distribution hubs. All buildings will be certified BREEAM Very Good.



VGP Park Braşov

Largest, and with a unique location in Central Europe

Directly adjacent to the D1/E58 motorway, in Bernolákovo municipality and less than 6 km from Bratislava (Slovakia), our largest project to date in Slovakia, VGP Park Bratislava, is being developed. We see much interest among potential tenants, because its location makes the park exceptional. The park will offer more than 250,000 m² of prime semi-industrial or logistics premises. VGP Park Bratislava provides an excellent connection with the capital city Bratislava as well as with other European cities (Vienna, Budapest). Bratislava Airport is only 7 km away. In summer 2021, we will be very pleased to welcome the park's first tenant, the logistics company GEIS, which will begin operations there using an area of 18,000 m².



VGP Park Bratislava

VGP and Allianz complete €424 million deal

VGP and Allianz Real Estate announced on 16 November the completion of two transactions worth €424 million. The two transactions together comprise 19 logistics buildings, including 9 buildings in 5 new VGP parks and a further 10 newly completed logistics buildings that were developed in parks that have already been transferred. The 19 buildings are located in Germany, Spain, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Italy, Romania and Slovakia. The first transaction was with VGP European Logistics (the 7th closing between VGP and this joint venture) and has a value of €166 million, with gross proceeds of €127 million. The second transaction was a closing with VGP European Logistics 2 (the 2nd closing between VGP and this joint venture) and has a value of €258 million, with gross proceeds of €191 million. Both VGP European Logistics and VGP European Logistics 2 are 50:50 joint ventures between VGP and Allianz Real Estate. The combined cash proceeds of €318 million will be used by VGP for further extension of the development pipeline, purchase of new development land and financing of both existing projects under construction and new projects to be started soon.

Business

Macron

Leading European company in the production and sale of sportswear

Design and style, superior logistics, and attention to society and the environment are all vital for this highly visible sportswear supplier and team sponsor. An interview with Gianluca Pavanello, CEO of Macron, a European leader in the production and sale of sportswear

Q The Macron brand is increasingly recognised and in demand, but getting goods into shoppers' hands when they want them is crucial. How do you intend for your new warehouse and logistics centre to strengthen your competitive edge in that regard?

The relationship with the customer is our priority, and a precise and punctual delivery service is fundamental. The new MACRON Distribution Center, which hosts our warehouse and logistics, together with all the automation that has been set up to manage the orders, allow us to further speed up all the procedures, thus guaranteeing an optimal delivery time. When we thought about these new spaces, we studied, analysed and then concretely created a modern, functional, agile and technologically advanced structure, because warehouse and logistics are a crucial point in our business. As always, technology and people make the difference.

Q You put a lot of emphasis on environmental aspects in the new buildings project. Can you tell us about the motivation behind that and the benefits you are striving for?

We must preserve the environment in order to let the new generations live and work in perfect harmony with the environment itself. That's not just rhetoric – it's a fact. We have stressed our planet in such a way that we have little time left to find a solution. Fortunately, I see and hear many people who have become aware of this enormous problem, first of all the people who work in MACRON. It was very stimulating to be able to share with them the desire to create an environmentally sustainable workplace. The new headquarters is the full expression of a green philosophy, and the benefits that will derive from our choice will certainly be economic, but also, and above all, they will have

an impact on our employees' welfare and on work itself.

Q What else can we expect to see the company doing in future as part of its "MACRON 4 the planet" initiative?

"MACRON 4 the planet" represents a series of initiatives and best practices widely shared by everyone in the company. We will further develop the production of shirts made with

Eco-Softlock, a 100% recycled polyester fabric from PET, making the most of all that the "good" technology offers. We enjoy the collaboration of many of our sponsored clubs that are sensitive to the issue of environmental sustainability. In addition, we will start to use only 100% recycled and certified material for the packaging of our products. This choice will allow us to sharply reduce the use of paper and consequently CO₂ emissions. Recycling, sustainability, eco-friendliness are the keywords of the present and future at MACRON.

Q Climate change is important, of course, but the more immediate crisis in 2020 arguably has been the COVID pandemic. All the world was watching Italy, and especially northern Italy, with great concern and prayerful hope in the winter and spring. How did MACRON manage the challenges of that time – and even up to today?

As a response to the COVID emergency, everyone at MACRON reacted from the very beginning: from helping with donations in support of the



Gianluca Pavanello, CEO of Macron

Photo © Ramiro Castro Xiques



Macron Headquarters in Valsamoggia, Bologna (Italy)

Photo © Ramiro Castro Xiques



Photo © Ramiro Castro Xiques

Macron Headquarters in Valsamoggia, Bologna (Italy)

community to working hard to keep our production active. We immediately activated the non-profit project “Stop Covid-19 / MACRON #noicisiamo” (editor’s note: translation “We are here”) and chose to make our supply chain and logistics in Asia and Italy available to distribute personal protective equipment that is indispensable for frontline workers in the health sector, civil protection and police. We have created online platforms for the purchase of masks for Italian companies and citizens, and now these are available for all EU countries. In that first phase of the pandemic, we distributed over 40 million devices. Given the current situation, we are in the process of distributing other massive amounts of PPE to entities, companies and private citizens. Internally, as soon as it was possible to start again, we applied all the protocols required by the regulations in order to carry out our activities in full safety.

Q It looks like COVID will be with us for a while still. What effects do you see this pandemic having on professional sport and businesses, like MACRON, that support and also depend upon it? Can there be any silver lining in this very dark cloud?
 Undoubtedly, the impact of the pandemic on the world of sport has been – and is – very severe. We are part of this world and it is undeniable that we have had to “accept” a change of perspective. Empty stadiums and arenas are a very sad image, but at the time safety is our priority. We have to look ahead, work alongside our clubs and their fans and always be ready. For this reason, we’ve never stopped producing our garments to supply all those that depend on our work. It was our response to COVID and its devastating effects. Behind the dark cloud that hangs over us right now, there is a future in which I see people who want

to always give their best, working hard and with passion. That is our company philosophy, and we continue to believe in it because our results and our growth derive from this attitude.

Q It seems like team sponsorship is a tough business. What does it take to compete, and how does a company like MACRON benefit from sponsorship? How important is it for the company’s brand and its growth?
 MACRON is a sponsor today for more than 80 professional clubs and federations in such major team sports as soccer, rugby, basketball and handball. Ninety per cent of these are in Europe, where the games are conducted in a rather unified manner despite being in different countries. So this means that MACRON sees itself as a truly European brand. The sponsorship market certainly is quite competitive, and especially at the level where the brand is positioned today, which means being the third brand in the European football official ranking after Nike and Adidas as ranked by the UEFA. Likewise, it’s fundamentally important to be there not just for visibility but also to earn credibility. Being associated with clubs playing in the Champions League, for example, not only permits the world audience to see and recognise the brand, but also this enables MACRON to bring onto the international stage those unique collections that it has designed together with each club partner. Design and quality are in fact the pillars of the MACRON model.



Photo © Ramiro Castro Xiques

Macron's showroom

Q In 2021, MACRON will be celebrating its 50th

anniversary. The company was quite small through the first 3 decades or so of its life and was really starting to take off about the time you joined in 2005. Had there been a strategic change at the time, and what have been the drivers of that growth?

(Next year) 2021 is a special year. We will reach a very important milestone, and I'm happy to be able to celebrate it in our new headquarters, which fully represents the path and growth of our company. The strategy we have implemented since I joined MACRON has been to continue to do the same thing for which we were born – to produce and distribute technical sportswear – but while working to grow, in a coherent way, on different markets. We have gone from being a company with only Italian turnover, as was the case in 2005, to a company that today achieves 80% of its turnover outside Italy, even though this doesn't mean that the Italian market is not just as strategic as the others. Our Italian spirit is one of our winning assets, translating into the sensitivity to combine style and design with the needs of our customers and partners. The collaboration that is created with a club during the product development phase allows us to understand its history, tradition and the need to communicate these, and then to create a unique and exclusive “tailor made” collection every time. This is one of the determining factors in our growth, together with the quality and technicality of the fabrics.

Q Sport is a super competitive business. Looking to the future, can we say that MACRON is playing near the top of its



Photo © Ramiro Castro Xiques

Macron Headquarters in Valsamoggia, Bologna (Italy)

Our Italian spirit is one of our winning assets, translating into the sensitivity to combine style and design with the needs of our customers and partners.

game or do you think it will be possible to keep up the growth pace of recent years? What do you regard to be the major challenges and opportunities in the coming years?

Never think you have reached the top – this is essential. We must continue to work with the same spirit, attention and passion. We have undoubtedly achieved important results, but there is still a long way to go and the challenges to be overcome are still many. We intend to surmount them through technology, quality and our product. Research, development, attention to new and eco-friendly materials: these are the choices to be made in the coming years, together with the awareness that results always come from the hard work and the quality of the people. In the next few years, we want to consolidate our presence on our key markets worldwide and increase the number of clubs' jerseys on which the MACRON Hero – the logo that identifies our brand – stands out. All this with great attention to the environment, because, as I said at the beginning, this is the most important challenge that each of us must put first in our work and personal agendas in the coming years.



Photo © Ramiro Castro Xiques

VGP readying its first park in Portugal at Santa Maria da Feira

The area of today’s municipality Santa Maria da Feira was long a crossroads for traders and travellers even before the Romans showed up here during the first century BC. Its naturally strategic location remains important to this day, so it is no surprise that VGP has decided to construct here its first park within Portugal.

73,578 m²

Land area

29,255 m²

Lettable area

The site is directly at the intersection of the A1 motorway (running from Lisbon north to Porto and beyond) and the A41, which is a part of the so-called CREP 41 (Regional External Circular of Porto). CREP 41 bypasses Porto’s most congested areas while also providing easy access to other parts of northern Portugal and Spain. Lying just 20 km south of Porto, VGP Park Santa Maria da Feira will be able to tap into the workforce within the Porto metropolitan area’s approximately 1.8 million inhabitants. VGP’s new park will consist of one

large building offering 29,255 m² of lettable area on a site of 73,578 m². Due to its excellent motorway access, position within Portugal’s heavily industrialised north, and being on the main road between the port cities of Lisbon and Porto, the expectation is that the park will be occupied

primarily by logistics companies or otherwise for logistics purposes. That is according to José Ferreira, VGP’s Portugal Country Manager. The new building will have excellent visibility from the highway, and VGP has designed it with sustainability in mind. “It will be Breeam Very Good rated,” Ferreira says, “and the building will be prepared to enable rooftop solar panel installation. Of course, charging stations for electric cars are also planned.”

The Municipality of Santa Maria da Feira has been very supportive of the project, Ferreira relates, adding that the local government takes a strong interest in jobs-creating development generally. Although ground was broken at the site in 2020, construction was paused due to covid-19 and will start in March 2021. Meanwhile, VGP is negotiating to acquire several more properties in the Porto and Lisbon areas.



Excursion

Discovering Porto and Lisbon

**Underscoring unique
and shared aspects of
this small country's rich
culture and history**

**Lying at the mouths of the Iberian Peninsula's
two great westward flowing rivers, the Douro
and Tagus, Porto and Lisbon can both boast
of their long histories, economic importance,
cultural attractions, and quality of life.**

For a country of just 10 million, Portugal possesses an extraordinarily rich array of architectural and natural treasures (including 17 UNESCO World Heritage sites), local and national cuisine, and a once-glorious history that is chronicled in its many museums.

We will not judge which of Portugal's two leading cities offers the most or best, but it is true that VGP has chosen Porto for its new country office. José Ferreira, VGP's Portugal Country Manager, is a Porto native. While acknowledging Lisbon's appeal as the larger metropolis (about 2.8 million population versus Porto's 1.8 million), capital city status, and bigger cultural offering, José says he prefers Porto for its "energy, food, people, and quality of life".

Porto is best known abroad for its namesake beverage, a rather sweet and smooth fortified wine. Within Europe, only wine from grapes grown in the Douro Valley and aged in cellars beneath a suburb of Porto can be sold as port. José strongly encourages visitors to take one of the popular boat trips up the River Douro to admire the vineyards clinging to the valley's steep embankments, visit the wineries, and taste the port and other

wines. The Upper Douro Wine Region is a protected UNESCO World Heritage landscape.

Port wine is special for the technique and tradition of its production. It has both higher alcohol and sugar contents than do conventional wines. The winemaker achieves this higher sugar and alcohol by adding a strong spirit (itself distilled from wine) known as *aguardente vinica* to stop the fermentation early. Traditionally, the wine was brought down the Douro in wooden barrels on special flat-bottom boats for aging in the cellars of Vila Nova de Gaia, a suburb on the Douro's

south bank. These days, the boats are mainly for showing off to tourists, but wine to be sold as port must still be aged in Vila Nova de Gaia.

The British are among the world's major port consumers, and Portugal is very popular among UK tourists. This connection has a long history. In 1373, the kingdoms of Portugal and England signed a treaty creating a military alliance that continues to this day. The alliance became all the more important in the Age of Discovery during the 15th and 16th centuries, when Portugal and Spain were rivals in discovering and claiming "new" lands in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. Particularly as France, Netherlands and England itself got into the exploration and colonisation business, the alliance helped Portugal and the English to protect their interests.

An old story says port was invented because the English added brandy to the wine to keep it from becoming vinegar on the voyage to England and allowed the English to abstain from importing wine from rival France.

Not surprisingly, wine will be an important aspect of any visit to Porto. But there is still much more to appreciate. José advises visitors to stay longer than the 2–3 days tourists usually allot for Porto in order to experience and appreciate the city and region's complexity and character.

"Don't just stay in the historic centre and tourist areas," he emphasises. "Forget the guide for a few hours and get lost in the city, its coastline, the Douro River and vineyards, and the neighbouring cities. The views and the food are sure to make it well worth spending that extra time."

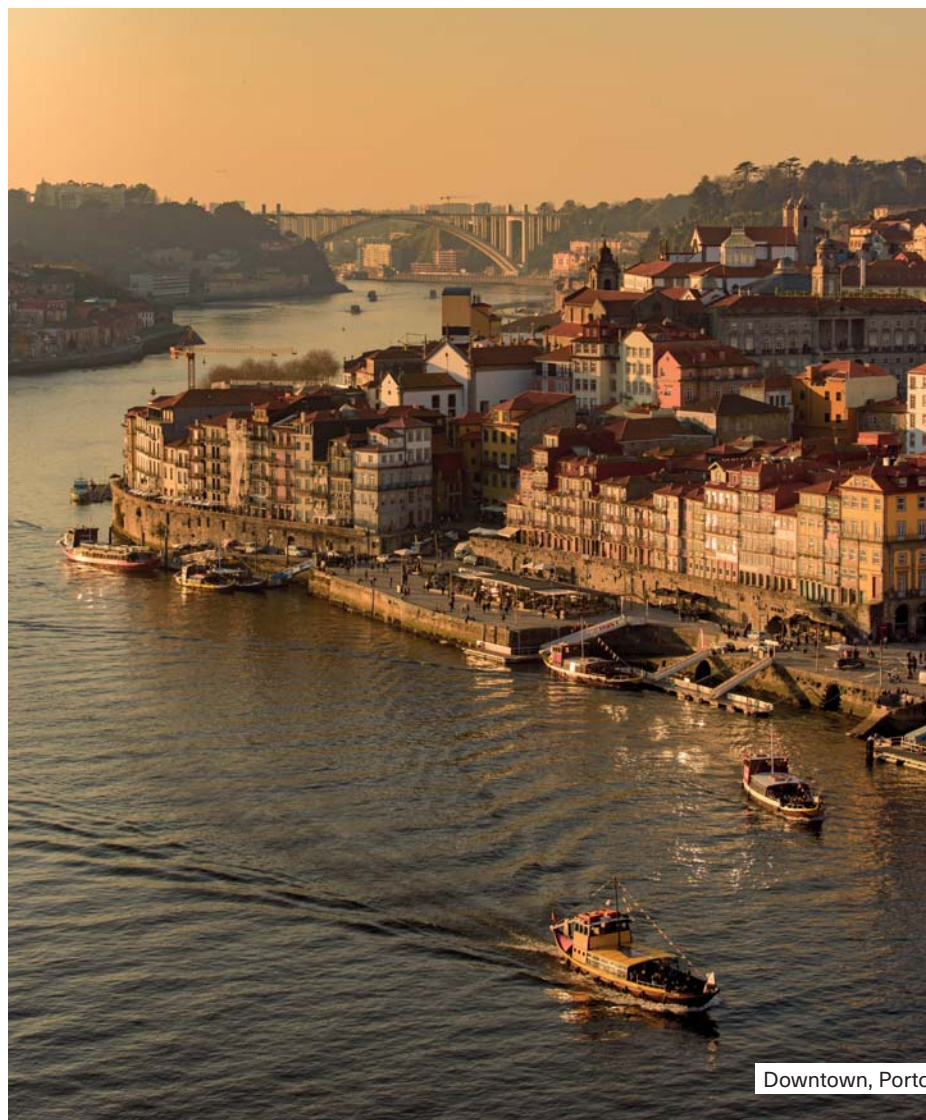
Porto has well preserved architecture spanning centuries, as well as museums and other touristic and cultural sites too numerous to mention. We can share just a taste here.

Literally Porto's biggest attraction is its old town, the entirety of which has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage site. Most picturesque is its Ribeira area that begins on the



Monastery of Serra do Pilar, Porto

Photo © Tomasz Warszewski / Shutterstock.com



Downtown, Porto

Photo © Panuvat Ueachananon / Shutterstock.com

Douro's sunny, café-lined north bank and extends up the steep hill towards the greater part of the city as a crowd of brightly painted, tile-roofed buildings. That hill is strikingly topped by the 75-metre, Tower of Clerics. This stone-constructed Baroque tower and its accompanying church were built in the mid-18th century. Visitors with strong legs will be well rewarded by panoramic views for walking up the tower's 240 steps.

Also not to be missed is the city's fortress-like cathedral, partway up the hillside. The cathedral, construction of which began in the 12th century and continued into the 16th, showcases a mix of Romanesque, Baroque and Gothic styles. Its terrace offers stunning views of the old city.

Another UNESCO site is the Dom Luis I double-deck, riveted-iron arch bridge spanning the Douro from Ribeira to Vila Nova de Gaia. Reminiscent of the Eiffel Tower, the 172-metre structure was designed and built by a close associate of Gustave Eiffel and with similar technologies as used for his tower. The bridge's upper deck (85 meters high) carries light rail and pedestrians and its lower deck cars and pedestrians.

Porto's third UNESCO site stands atop a stone outcropping overlooking the south foot of the bridge. The Monastery of Serra do Pilar dates to the 16th century and is most notable for its round church and also circular cloister. A cable car provides aerial connection from the monastery area to a neighbourhood of wine cellars and restaurants downriver.

Although Porto can legitimately claim to have been the central location for the 9th century founding of what would become Portugal, it scarcely can compete with Lisbon's immense role in Portuguese history.

Built on seven hills and with the River Tagus flowing through its heart,



Livraria Lello bookstore, Porto

Lisbon is connected to the sea and distant corners of the globe by its geography and history. The Tagus spreads into a great estuary as it reaches Lisbon, forming an extraordinarily large and well-protected natural harbour. A visitor to Lisbon is reminded constantly of the Age of Discovery, when Portugal's bold explorers set out from Lisbon's harbour to discover northern and western Africa and Brazil. Most famously, Vasco da Gama during 1497–1498 discovered the sea route around Africa's southern tip, sailed up its eastern coast to the horn, then struck out across the Indian Ocean to India.

Lisbon's oldest quarter, Alfama, is situated on a hill rising from the north bank of the Tagus and topped by the stone Castle of St. George. Alfama's name, derived from Arabic, reminds us that Lisbon has changed hands many times through the centuries. During the 8th to 12th centuries, the castle and city were ruled by and home to Arab and Berber Moors.

As in Porto, one of the best places to begin exploring Lisbon is on the river's right bank, in the district

known as Belém. Here are many of the best-known monuments and museums. The most iconic is the 16th century, limestone-constructed Belém Tower. The tower was built sturdily on the embankment as a fortified lighthouse and to guard the entry to the port. This is one of Lisbon's two UNESCO sites. The second, the Jerónimos Monastery, is nearby. It is said da Gama and his men spent the night before their departure in 1497 in prayer within an older church at that site. The monastery was later built to commemorate their voyage to India, and Vasco da Gama's stone tomb is there inside the Santa Maria church.

A 15-minute walk upriver from the Tower, the visitor will find the Monument to the Discoveries, a massive stone and concrete sculpture featuring idealised figures of the 33 most important Portuguese explorers and their benefactors. That location provides an excellent view of the landmark 25 de Abril suspension bridge spanning 2.3 km to connect the opposing banks of the Tagus.

The bridge's striking similarity to San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge is not coincidental. It was built by the American Bridge Company, which had built the San Francisco–Oakland Bay suspension bridge but not the Golden Gate. This brief introduction scarcely begins to describe all that Lisbon offers. José Ferreira warns that a visit of 4–5 days is needed to experience the city properly. Just to sample Lisbon's many museums requires a couple of days. José also recommends that visitors spend an evening in a restaurant enjoying a live performance of sorrowful Fado songs that are a Lisbon tradition and typically accompanied by 12-string Portuguese guitars.

Porto and Lisbon, you see, are enticing treasures for visitors arriving to these shores eager to make discoveries of their own.



Monument to the Discoveries, Lisbon

Quo vadis

Jan Van Geet

Interview with CEO of VGP

2020 has been an extraordinary year in every respect. And it has called for an extraordinary effort by every member of the VGP Family to ensure that the company could meet its commitments to its customers. Jan Van Geet talks about the biggest challenges as well as milestones VGP was facing and what he expects for the coming year.

Q The year 2020 is presenting a challenging market environment for many companies due to the Covid-19 pandemic. How did you experience this special situation for VGP?

It is true, this year was exceptional in every respect. First of all, I am very happy that the entire VGP team – I like to call it the VGP family – was fully operational. We had unrestricted access to our central systems and were therefore able to complete numerous projects on schedule over the past months. I am very grateful for this and that is why VGP's business has also developed well despite the pandemic. All construction activities are currently running according to plan.

Q From your customers' perspective what were the biggest challenges?

The measures taken by the governments of the countries where VGP is active to combat the spread of the virus have led to far-reaching restrictions in many sectors of the economy. Some of our tenants have been unexpectedly and severely affected by the loss of their business activities. We have always tried to find flexible solutions together with the affected customers.

Others were suddenly faced with the challenge of using new technologies and automating their processes much more quickly than expected in order to cope with the increased turnover resulting from e-commerce – especially with food. Many customers were forced to work from home, which inevitably led to many more online orders. The demand for storage capacity

has increased enormously, and everything was happening at breakneck speed at the same time.

Q What do you think were the biggest milestones for VGP in 2020?

The year 2020 was marked by many milestones for us. Examples include the start of construction work for a new park in Bratislava and the expansion of our parks in Göttingen, Laatzen and Magdeburg in Germany, Nijmegen in the Netherlands, San Fernando de Henares in Spain, and Braşov in Romania. In addition to the acquisition of great new properties and the opening of future VGP parks, the launch of our new VGP Renewable

Energy Division is of course a real highlight. Many of our customers are facing the challenge of operating more sustainably, but also cost-consciously at the same time. This in turn is expected by their customers, the end consumers. As VGP we want to offer solutions here.

Let's take the area of "green electricity": the roofs of our halls are ideal here. One example is the VGP Park in Parsdorf near Munich, which will house the largest photovoltaic system ever installed on a building in Europe. A total of 12.5 MWp of power will be generated here.

Q How can your customers benefit from this business area in the future, and how important is it to your customers that you integrate sustainability measures into your daily activities?

Ten years ago, it was all about standardised warehouses. Today, however, it is all about an integrated total package. The customer is faced with the ever-increasing demands of new technologies and wants to be able to react quickly and concentrate on his core business. For this reason, as many of his building equipment requirements



Jan Van Geet

“With the VGP Foundation we want to promote nature conservation, support citizens and communities through social projects and preserve Europe’s cultural heritage.”

as possible should already be integrated. Automation should be possible, but therefore – and this may come as a surprise to many – more people usually work inside the buildings. Therefore, special foundations, special fire protection, and much more are required. Sustainably generated energy and alternative drive methods for the vehicles are in demand, and fossil fuels are to be replaced. We are thinking about how we can offer our customers hydrogen for their delivery fleet, or geothermal energy for heating and cooling. This trend cannot be stopped. This is the VGP of the future, and we are already working on it today.

The establishment of the VGP Foundation also reflects these sustainability efforts and ambitions. With the VGP Foundation we want to promote nature conservation, support citizens and communities through social projects and preserve Europe’s cultural heritage.

We want to help improve the quality of life in all European regions and municipalities, not just where we operate our logistics and industrial parks. In our foundation work, we can learn a great deal through the exchange with our partners and foundation board members. Through NABU*, for example, we can learn what an enormously valuable ecosystem moorlands are and why they are worth protecting. But we will also continue to be active in education. Investing in the future of socially disadvantaged children is another of the foundation’s goals. Much remains to be done for the future.



Photo © NABU

Conservation program of snow leopard in Tajikistan



Photo © Gabriele Boisselle

Lipizzaners in Piber



Our team

New people in the VGP team

VGP is making significant additions to its international team, thereby positioning the company even better to uphold its promise of quality and to generate growth. Here are some of VGP’s team members.



Jürgen Bechtloff

Construction Supervisor, Germany

Jürgen has been working as a construction site supervisor and project manager since 1991. During his professional life, he has been wholly or partially responsible for civil engineering, turnkey home construction and industrial engineering, as well as for plant engineering and power plant construction. Construction sites where he was involved were rarely close to his home. He has been assigned to the likes of Poland, France, Kosovo, Uzbekistan, and several countries in the Balkans. Jürgen likes to spend his leisure time with his adult children, ride his motorbike, and enjoy life. Since June 2020, he has been working as project manager for VGP and VGP Park Munich. Jürgen has already settled down in his new job and is sure that coming to work for our company was his best decision.

Vincent Bedarf

Assistant to the Management Board, Germany

Vincent has been working as assistant to the Management Board for VGP Germany since 1 March, 2020. He received his master’s degree in international business management after 2 years studying in Düsseldorf and 2 years in Lancaster (UK). Vincent had worked 2-1/2 years with a business consulting company specialising in the real estate industry and public sector in Düsseldorf. As a consultant with project responsibility, he focused on strategic and organisational projects. He is particularly involved in structural and organisation development, as well as in operational business at VGP. Vincent enjoys sporting activities in his spare time, in particular American football.





Markus Schmitz

Technical Procurement, Germany

Born in Düsseldorf, Markus Schmitz has been working as a technical buyer for VGP since August 3, 2020. The trained boatbuilder worked for the past 6 years as a project manager at Vizona GmbH, based in Langenfeld, where he was responsible for such well-known customers as Peek and Cloppenburg, Ansons, Karl Lagerfeld and Reserved. From the project calculation to the handover of the keys, he was involved in the design implementation and business development. Markus lives in Neuss with his wife and two children. In his spare time he likes to be in his workshop where he transforms his favorite material wood into furniture, rocking horses and much more.

Anna Ermisch

Purchasing Assistant, Germany

Anna has been working as purchasing assistant with VGP since 1 September 2020. She completed her training as an administrative assistant in 2005 and has been in business administration ever since. For the past 13 years, Anna has worked as business specialist on the internal sales team with etna GmbH.



Hatice Dagli

Project Assistant, Germany

Hatice has been working as project assistant with VGP in Düsseldorf since 1 October 2020. She previously had worked for Gertec GmbH & Co. KG (a planning and engineering company) in Essen for 12 years, where she supported the team as business administrator. Changing her job has contributed to her personal development, and Hatice says she has gained deeper insight into the construction industry. She looks forward to meeting new challenges, as well as her new colleagues. She enjoys listening to music, travel, and participating in sports activities during her spare time.



Daniel Dehnel

TGA Construction Supervisor, Germany

Daniel has been working as TGA construction supervisor for VGP since May 2020. Before joining VGP, he had worked as construction supervisor for various exporting and engineering companies. He has been employed in the construction industry for the past 20 years. Daniel likes to spend his leisure time in the countryside focusing on philosophy, art and literature.

Andreas Kohrs

Property Acquisition, Germany

Andreas has more than 15 years of experience in real estate expansion. Andreas received his master's degree in business administration after finishing his MBA studies in Durham, England. He had been active in the fashion industry for companies like Esprit and Tom Tailor, as well as the Budnikowsky drugstore company from Hamburg. Most recently, Andreas worked as a real estate transaction manager for Amazon, with responsibility for construction of the Amazon Sort-Center Business in Germany. In particular, Andreas was involved in property acquisition where Amazon developed its own fulfilment centre. Andreas is responsible for expansion and/or property acquisition in German-speaking countries for VGP. He is 46 years old, married, with two girls: Valentina (10 years) and Johanna (8 years). He lives with his family in Hamburg.



Károly Palovics

Country Manager, Hungary

Karoly joined VGP on 1 September as Country Manager in Hungary. Karoly has 25 years of experience both in construction and real estate development in Hungary. With his background as civil engineer, he worked for major construction companies in different managerial positions and has a wide knowledge of the construction market in the country. In this role, he will be responsible for the expansion of our Hungarian operations with a short-term goal of extending VGP's presence nationwide.



Dorien Lambrechts

Financial Controller, Benelux

Dorien started in June 2020 at the Antwerp office as Financial Controller for the Benelux. She is delighted to support the Benelux team in making a difference for all stakeholders every day by following up the projects from a financial point of view. In addition to taking up the role as Financial Controller Benelux, Dorien also participates actively in the Group's reporting and consolidation activities. Dorien holds a master's degree in commercial engineering from the Catholic University of Leuven. Before joining VGP, she worked 5 years at Deloitte, where she took up the role of audit manager. In her spare time, Dorien is a passionate dancer. Every Friday evening and Sunday morning, she entertains a class of young adults in her jazz dance courses.

Stephanie Wittmer

Senior Financial and Tax Accountant, Luxembourg

Since January 2019, Stephanie has been working as Senior Financial and Tax Accountant for the VGP team in Luxembourg. After her graduation in business administration (with specialisation in tax, accountancy and controlling) Stephanie worked in the tax department of PwC Luxembourg and for the accounting department of an e-commerce company in the telecommunications industry. In her spare time, the 35-year-old loves spending time with her family, travelling, snowboarding, and hiking.



Cristian Vladescu

Commercial Manager, Romania

In August 2020, Cristian Vladescu joined the VGP Romania team as Commercial Manager. Cristian has a background in logistics, as he has been working for 10 years within Romania's market-leading 3PL firm. In his last position, he was in charge of the contract logistics division at national level, having responsibility for almost 200 employees. Also, over the past year he has been working as commercial manager for another international real estate developer with a presence on the Romanian market. Apart from spending time with his wife and 4-year-old daughter, Cristian likes playing football, billiards/snooker, and skiing.

Mirella Parrella

Accountancy Assistant, Italy

Mirella joined VGP Italy in September 2019, initially as Office Manager and a year later, when the Italian branch started to expand, began work as an accountant. A graduate in accounting and business management from the University of Milan–Bicocca, she completed her studies with an internship in a tax consultancy firm. Mirella began her career working in the accounts departments of small and medium-sized companies in Italy and then moved to Australia to fulfil her lifelong dream of experiencing a vibrant foreign culture. There, she grew up personally, improved her English language skills, and became more independent. After this experience, she is now excited about the opportunity to be working and growing professionally in such a dynamic and ambitious European company as VGP that invests in young people. Mirella has practiced judo for many years now, loves extreme sports, and never goes on holiday in the same place twice.



Azzurra Carone

Commercial Manager, Italy

Azzurra joined VGP in May 2020 as Commercial Manager. She is a graduate in engineering geology from University of Milan–Bicocca, and she did an exchange programme along with her master’s thesis at Universiteit Utrecht in the Netherlands. Azzurra has always had a particular interest in real estate, which is why she did also a master’s in real estate valuation at Luigi Bocconi Business University. She has worked as a project manager and project specialist at Arcadis Italia Srl for 4 years. There, she was responsible for projects aimed to provide technical services to real estate investors and financial institutions, including technical due diligence, building surveying, monitoring services, and program management supporting potential acquisitions and developments. Azzurra says she feels honoured to be part of VGP as a manager to develop and implement commercial strategies according to company goals and objectives aiming to accelerate company growth and identify opportunities to expand the business, including through partnerships and researching new tenants for the company. She loves travel, photography, fashion, and good food.

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career?**

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Brand story

MACRON

**Still hitting home runs
after nearly 50 years**

**For a European sport apparel
company, Macron started out
in a most unlikely way...**

The firm was founded in Bologna in 1971 as the exclusive Italian distributor of baseball equipment for an American sporting goods manufacturer and several other baseball brands from the United States.

The US baseball equipment company (MacGregor Sports) is long out of business, but Macron has continued to keep its eye on the ball, earned a spot as a player in the big leagues of sport apparel, and occasionally even knocked the ball out of the park. Today, it is a European leader in the production and sale of sportswear. It is a technical sponsor for more than 80 professional sport clubs worldwide, providing uniforms and fan merchandise.

Macron is still selling baseball uniforms, by the way, but it also kits out players of soccer, rugby, basketball, volleyball, team handball, and wheelchair hockey. The company also dresses all Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) referees.

The year 2001 was a milestone for Macron, because that is when this producer of sports uniforms and distributor of diverse sporting equipment signed its first sponsorship of a top-level football club: Bologna FC 1909. Today, the recently restyled “Macron Hero” insignia is displayed on the uniforms of more than 80 professional clubs in various sports that the company sponsors all around the world.

Success in business, as in sport, never results from one single factor. In Macron’s case, the customer sees a highly visible brand driven by clubs sponsorship, as well as appealing style, high quality, and functional



design. Behind the product and brand, but still very important, are efficient supply chain management and logistics, constant innovation, and distribution that is organised to present Macron’s merchandise attractively to those who want it, when and where they want it.

Macron’s customer reach in terms of product and stores has been developed substantially in the past decade, with the launch of a new store concept in 2010, a leisure clothing line in 2012, and a collection for runners in 2015.

The company presently has four product lines. The first is Teamwear, which means customisable sports

uniforms and accessories for professional, semi-professional, and amateur sports. Second is Merchandising, which consists of licensed team apparel, like jerseys and other gear that professional teams can sell to their fans as official merchandise. Third, the Run & Train collection is targeted towards running and fitness enthusiasts who can appreciate the same functionality and design that goes into high-quality team apparel. Finally, the “Athleisure” clothing line offers informal comfort that is inspired by sport.

The four product lines combined encompass more than 10,000 articles, ranging from jerseys, sweatshirts and track suits to socks and underwear as well as sport bags, balls and accessories. To maintain the rapid pace at which the Macron brand and sales have been growing in recent years, the company has pursued a multi-channel distribution strategy.

Brick-and-mortar stores are combined with e-commerce options to maximise exposure and accessibility for Macron goods. Varying by location, the company has its single-brand retail stores, sells its products within multi-brand stores, and provides official club stores for professional teams. The most comprehensive format, known as Macron Stores, offers all four product lines, assistance to team managers in selecting custom teamwear, and personalisation services for adding logos and team patches. Macron’s most important distribution channel, though, consists of more than 800 multi-brand stores, where its goods compete alongside other brands’ apparel and sports equipment.



Distribution to and through all these channels is managed at a modern new logistics warehouse, created to handle up to 60,000 units daily, and a new headquarters office. Constructed by VGP at a single site in Bologna, these facilities were completed in spring 2020. The 16,105 m² warehouse and 6,700 m² office building were designed with a view not only to efficient distribution and supply chain management but also to human comfort and environmental sustainability.

The headquarters building is BREEAM certified Very Good. The building features abundant use of natural light inside – and out. It has rooftop solar panels rated at 350 kilowatts peak (kWp) and charging stations for electrical vehicles. The 55,000 m² site is also populated by 150 trees, 3,200 m² of bushes and other vegetation, and 15,000 m² of grass. A rainwater collection system and underground storage tanks provide water for irrigating the vegetation.

The importance of low environmental impact and sustainability is not lost on the people at Macron, who are working to make those aspects integral to the brand. “MACRON 4 THE PLANET” is a new environmental sustainability initiative. Even some of the company’s sports jerseys are going green, as several of its sponsored clubs are now being dressed in shirts made of fabric produced from recycled PET drink bottles.

The new fabric, known as Eco-Softlock, is produced using TopGreen thread that is itself manufactured from 100% recycled PET (polyethylene terephthalate) plastic. The process of making polyester from drink bottles and other packaging is less energy demanding than to make virgin



Photo © Ramiro Castro Xiques



Photo © Ramiro Castro Xiques

polyester. A typical sport jersey is thereby produced from about 13 half-litre drink bottles. Macron is also working to reduce its use of packaging materials and plans to introduce a 100% recycled polyethylene bag for packaging.

Macron has come a long way since its early baseball days, and in 2021 it will be celebrating the 50th anniversary since its founding. So long as people continue to appreciate sports, fashion, and healthy living, there will be a market for products like Macron’s, but the competition to serve those consumers is never going to get easier. If Macron is to continue hitting home runs for many years to come, the whole company and the teams it sponsors will need to remain true to its slogan: “Work Hard. Play Harder.”

Anne de Paepe

VGP Foundation board member

Aneta Vyšehradová, VGP Foundation Administrator, interviewed Prof. Dr. Anne De Paepe, a member of VGP Foundation’s board of directors, about her ambitions and expectations at our foundation

Q When did you first hear about VGP, and what made you decide to become a board member of the VGP Foundation? I learned about the Foundation around 2 years ago as part of my responsibility as Rector of Ghent University, where Hugo Van Geet was a member of the Board of Directors. He made me aware of the mission of the VGP Foundation, which attracted my interest.

Then I met with Jan Van Geet in 2019. He described his ideas, what he wanted to achieve with the VGP Foundation, and the teams he wanted to develop. I must say I was very impressed, it appealed to me and I wanted to lend my support immediately. We discussed the Foundation’s various initiatives, and he mentioned the environmental reserve, nature conservation and cultural heritage teams.

With my background, especially in socio-educational projects, I felt I could add value and a social component to the Foundation’s goals and teams. I appreciated that the Foundation’s activities all serve to create a better world, a better environment, and a better society in different ways. I believe I have reached a point in my career where I can use the experience that I have built up over the years to invest in these goals.

Q From your professional background and especially your engagement as board member of TAJO, you have a lot of experience and expertise with education and childcare, one of the main areas of interest for the VGP Foundation. How will you bring this experience into the Foundation’s work?



“With my background, especially in socio-educational projects, I felt I could add value and a social component to the Foundation’s goals and teams”

TAJO is the abbreviation for a talent studio for young people. Jan Van Geet asked us to present concrete projects or proposals which could both be implemented and embody what he had in mind. From my point of view, TAJO is just such a project in the socio-educational field. Consequently, I decided to present the TAJO project to the Board of Directors and explained its aims to convince them to make a concrete investment in the future of socially disadvantaged children. It was an excellent example of how to meet the aim of promoting the socio-educational goals that VGP has set for itself.

Q Could you describe the project in more detail? It is an initiative which aims at promoting the development of children between the ages of 10 and 14. This age category is important because we need to reach out to children at a young age to make a real difference and have an impact on their future and education. And the project aims to offer them additional educational workshops over a period of 3 years, every Saturday. The children must commit themselves to regularly participate during these 3 years and to follow this programme of very engaged and practical workshops closely. The aim on our part is to convince the children that it is important for them to learn and continue to educate themselves, so that they can later find employment and improve their own social situation.

During my professional career, I have been able to discern repeatedly that education is a decisive factor in determining what social opportunities and which social environments are available to an individual. Investing in education is a key way of improving the prospects of those who come from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

We really try to get the young people excited about the learning process, to convince them that it is important to learn a profession, that they need to take their futures into their own hands, and that they need to believe in themselves. We often see that many children from these circumstances

have very low self-confidence and a poor self-image, so we really try to invest in this aspect of their personality.

The practical implementation is done through workshops which are focused on a specific theme or professional discipline and which require teamwork from the children. For 3 weeks the children “get to grips with” the theoretical content and in the fourth week they get to put what they have learned into practice and see how jobs are done. The project is of course very demanding; it requires a lot of good will and expertise from many people. For all these sessions on Saturdays we have teachers on a voluntary basis. They must provide really good teaching and training in their sessions.

Q How do you find these teachers? And how do you identify the children?

To reach the children, we identify them within specific areas in Ghent where we know that there are many socially disadvantaged children. We also work closely with local schools, who know the background, know the families, and help us to find out which children can benefit from this programme. All children are interviewed in advance and tested for their motivation for the programme. This also involves close contact with the parents, as it is very important that they are also supportive in this process.

The teachers have different backgrounds – some come from a university or college, others from companies or from governmental organisations. There is a very wide variety of people who are involved on a voluntary basis. It is also crucial to have a coordinator with a professional educational background participating every Saturday. They take care of all organisational matters and are in close contact with the children. These coordinators give the children guidance, and that is important for the project’s success. The Foundation has committed itself to providing financial support in the

Prof. Dr. Anne De Paepe

Prof. Dr. Anne De Paepe is currently Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Ghent University Association, Honorary Rector of Ghent University and Professor of Human & Medical Genetics of the Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences at Ghent University. An expert in the field of Rare Hereditary Diseases and Medical Genetics, she developed the Ghent University Centre for Medical Genetics into an internationally renowned institution where more than 200 people are researching hereditary diseases today. Since 2019 she has been actively involved with TAJO as a Board member, supporting disadvantaged children in the greater Ghent-area in Belgium.

coming years with the intention of investing in the future of these children. I am grateful to the Foundation for recognising the importance of this programme and being willing to support this project.

“It is the aim of the Foundation to start similar projects in other European countries in the future”

Q Will there soon be projects in other European countries, too?

TAJO is the starting point; we want to learn from that project. But obviously these challenges are not only present in Ghent but in other Belgian and European cities as well. It is absolutely the aim of the Foundation not to limit this kind of support to the Ghent region, but to start similar projects in other European countries in the future.

Q How do you measure success?

One of the parameters is that the children stay involved in the programme and there is no drop-out. We are now 1 year into the programme, and the result has been successful. The children were 100% committed, spoke very enthusiastically about the project at home and with peers. The children are our principal ambassadors.

So far, we have achieved what we wanted to achieve. Surely, there will be further success criteria. For example, we will ask: How many will reach school graduation successfully? How many children will get a job afterwards? And how many will get involved in the future to support the project?

Q How many children are engaged in the project?

We started with 50 children, which may not seem like a great deal, but, with regards to the intensity and quality of the program, this represents quite a commitment. We will now expand the project to 100 children, and the target going forward is 300–500 children in the Ghent area. This is ambitious! We will see what the future brings. It is our clear ambition to continue to expand the whole programme in the Ghent region and to support similar initiatives also in other European countries.



Aneta Vyšehradová
VGP Foundation Administrator

Aneta is a graduate from Masaryk University in Brno, where she obtained her diploma in English and French languages. She has multiple experiences in working with children as a teacher and has been involved in various children's free time activities, mostly related to personal development and building a positive attitude towards nature. Aneta is currently responsible for the administration of the VGP Foundation, where she is in charge of identifying new projects, daily management, internal and external communication and serving as a secretary to the Board of Directors. Children, nature and art have been her passions for many years, and she believes that it is by giving to others that we receive the most.

Dreams

A veritable menagerie of beneficiaries

VGP Foundation

**VGP's new charitable
foundation is already making
a difference, and its work is
just beginning**

Among the first expected beneficiaries of the new VGP Foundation will be migrating birds, snow leopards, talented but disadvantaged children, Lipizzaner horses, primeval forest in the Carpathians, insects in Germany, shrinking peatlands in the Baltics and volunteers working at a bird sanctuary in Spain's largest wetland.

The charitable VGP Foundation was formally registered in 2019 as a Belgian private foundation. It received start-up capital from VGP, which also will provide annual funding from its profits as well as various forms of administrative, expert, and other in-kind support. Project selection and planning is today well on its way. VGP Foundation's five-member board gathered for its inaugural meeting in late-May and the directors began to consider project proposals. Several projects were chosen for immediate or contingent funding.

There are three main areas within which the Foundation is focusing its efforts and contributions. These are:

- Social projects, and in particular supporting education for children and young people in need;
- Nature conservation, especially the preservation, creation of biospheres and nature conservation zones;
- Cultural heritage, with an emphasis on protecting European cultural assets.

Each of VGP Fund's directors is specialised in his or her own areas of professional and personal interest. Therefore, the board members themselves presented several proposals for consideration. Of course, there are many wonderful ideas and very worthy projects, so each must be very carefully considered, and, unfortunately, the Foundation cannot support them all.

In addition to Jan Van Geet, CEO of VGP, and Hugo Van Geet, a Belgian Certified Public Accountant who has had a long career in serving family-owned multinational companies, the Foundation's directors include Olaf Tschimpke, Anne De Paepe, and Tereza Van Malderen.

Mr Tschimpke is Chairman of the International Nature Conservation Foundation, established in 2009 by Germany's Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union. Ms De Paepe (see interview on page 22) is a professor of Human & Medical Genetics and Honorary Rector at Ghent University, as well as a Board member of TAJO, an organisation supporting disadvantaged children in Belgium. Ms Van Malderen is a graduate of the Academy of Art in Prague with long involvement in the art world.



The Foundation's work is already underway on a social project involving TAJO that was introduced to the board by Anne de Paepe. The name TAJO is short for Talentatelier voor jongeren in Flemish (Talent Works for Youngsters, we can say in English). The programme's aim is to help disadvantaged children 10–14 years of age in Belgium's Ghent region to build self-confidence, self-knowledge,

social skills, and resilience in order to reduce the risk that they will drop out of school, to create possibilities for them to see career and life opportunities open to them, and to help the youth to discover the paths that can lead them to those promising futures.

TAJO organises "experimental learning" on Saturdays for youth enrolled in the programme. Led by professional guest teachers, the workshops teach about expert disciplines and careers in science, journalism, health care, law, and many others. There are 45 young people in the programme now, but, with help from VGP Foundation and others, the goal is to expand that number to 300, then 500 and more in coming years while also moving beyond Ghent.

Four emphases that make TAJO special are its:

1. Broad outlook. Young people learn there are many routes to success, that it is important to discover one's talents and then develop those talents.
2. Early start. Crucial is to get kids on the right track before they get in the kinds of trouble that so often seem to find teenagers.



Photo © Michael Rzepa



Photo © Gabriele Boisselle



Photo © NABU



3. Sustainable journey. These are not one-off weekend events. The children and their parents must commit to stay in the program for 3 years, with 30 sessions per year.
4. Inclusion. The programme brings together young people and segments of society that rarely interact with one another.

Olaf Tschimpke and the Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (known as NABU for short, according to its name in German) are plugged into dozens of projects needing support in preserving and improving the natural world. The Foundation will support NABU in protecting migrating birds seasonally residing in or passing through Cyprus and which are subject to poaching. Mr Tschimpke was tasked with making all the necessary arrangements.

Additional nature projects approved for funding include a programme for raising awareness in Germany about the importance of insects and their protection and a peatland restoration and protection programme that involves purchasing endangered bogs in Estonia and Latvia. Peatlands are important for

storing climate-damaging carbon and constitute a valuable ecosystem.

The Ebro Delta in Spain is the winter home or seasonal resting ground for some 300 species of birds. The Foundation will support reparations work on a house that is used there by volunteers who attend to a bird sanctuary on this largest wetland in Spain.

Europe's last remaining primeval forests exist in the Carpathians and have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. A donation from VGP Foundation will be used to help raise awareness about the importance of this ecosystem and its protection.

The Foundation has also chosen a mascot – the snow leopard. This large cat, which resides in Central and South Asia, sometimes comes into conflict with humans. It needs some space of its own, and it is a real threat to livestock when agriculture and wildlife habitat overlap. VGP Foundation will contribute towards two efforts to construct a sanctuary and rehabilitation centre for the leopards (in Kyrgyzstan) and to help farmers to construct leopard-proof corrals and compensate them for livestock lost to the big cats (in Tajikistan).

Although the general plan is for VGP Foundation's investments to be made primarily in Europe, the board voted unanimously to support these projects "because of the iconic aspects of the snow leopard".

Not every animal to benefit from the Foundation's support will be wild. The board also voted to invest into some iconic domesticated animals – the Lipizzaner horses of the Spanish Riding School in Vienna. Visitors to Vienna are accustomed to seeing these majestic animals in the show ring, but the more mundane parts of their lives may be spent at the Lipizzaner Stud Farm in Piber, Austria. That is where the mares are kept, the young animals are reared, and the retired stallions from Vienna come home to spend their last years in greener pastures and to sire the next generation. VGP Foundation's support will go especially to construction projects at the farm in Piber.

VGP Foundation is still in its very early days, of course, and so its work and social contributions are just beginning. But, as our readers can see, it already has taken on a lot for such a young organisation. The task ahead in the coming months is to ensure that all it has begun will be successful in the end.



Photo © Dennis W Donohue / Shutterstock.com

Do you need space?

Do you need space for your business? If so, you might be interested in what options are currently available to you. We have prepared a brief overview of the current offer for leasing warehousing, logistics and manufacturing space in our parks. Please do not hesitate to contact us in case of any additional questions and to arrange a personal meeting.

CZECH REPUBLIC	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Olomouc	E	built to suit	3,721
	F1	built to suit	25,500
	I	built to suit	14,400
VGP Park Vyškov	A	built to suit	25,517
VGP Park Chomutov	A2		5,100
	D	built to suit	5,309
VGP Park Prostějov	A	built to suit	7,205
	B	built to suit	21,810
	C	built to suit	9,969
VGP Park České Budějovice	A	built to suit	5,920
	B	built to suit	8,750
	C	built to suit	9,410
	D	built to suit	14,070
	E	built to suit	43,669
SLOVAKIA	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Zvolen	A	built to suit	23,272
	B	built to suit	20,384
	C	built to suit	8,049
VGP Park Bratislava	A	built to suit	24,192
	B	built to suit	27,360
	C	built to suit	41,760
	D	built to suit	28,512
	G	built to suit	24,192
VGP Park Malacky	B	built to suit	3,330
SPAIN	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Llica d'Amunt	E	built to suit	13,500
VGP Park San Fernando de Henares	C1	built to suit	7,500
	D	built to suit	25,000
VGP Park Fuenlabrada	A	built to suit	39,000
VGP Park Cheste	A	built to suit	15,000
	B	built to suit	20,000
	C	built to suit	28,000
VGP Park Zaragoza	B	built to suit	35,000
VGP Park Sevilla	A	built to suit	26,000
	B	built to suit	30,000

PORTUGAL	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Santa Maria da Feira		built to suit	30,500
VGP Park Sintra		built to suit	13,195
VGP Park Loures	A	built to suit	9,857
	B	built to suit	5,986
ITALY	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Calcio	A1	built to suit	11,737
	A2	built to suit	11,002
VGP Park Sordio	A	built to suit	13,387
VGP Park Padova	A1	built to suit	8,967
	A2	built to suit	6,144
	B	built to suit	7,161
GERMANY	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Hamburg	E5	built to suit	7,300
	E6	built to suit	2,400
VGP Park Leipzig	C1	built to suit	2,375
	C2	built to suit	2,375
VGP Park Halle	C	built to suit	37,428
VGP Park Magdeburg	B	built to suit	25,000
	C	built to suit	31,628
	D	built to suit	31,628
	E	built to suit	55,931
	F	built to suit	55,931
	G	built to suit	29,005
	H	built to suit	26,381
VGP Park Gießen Am Alten Flughafen	A	built to suit	40,000
	B	built to suit	28,200
	C	built to suit	23,600
	D	built to suit	55,800
	E	built to suit	4,500
	F	built to suit	5,400
VGP Park Ginsheim-Gustavsburg	A	built to suit	4,000
VGP Park Leipzig Flughafen	A	built to suit	15,000

GERMANY	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Berlin–Oberkrämer	A	built to suit	13,400
	B	built to suit	11,000
	C	built to suit	29,100
	D	built to suit	33,400
VGP Park Berlin (Ludwigsfelde)	L	built to suit	4,900
	M	built to suit	15,800
VGP Park Rostock	A	built to suit	20,588
	B	built to suit	7,135
	C	built to suit	17,654
	D	built to suit	28,157
	E	built to suit	21,134
VGP Park Erfurt	A	built to suit	20,000
VGP Park Graz	B	built to suit	7,850
	C	built to suit	33,315
THE NETHERLANDS	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Roosendaal	A1	built to suit	8,044
	B	built to suit	9,307
VGP Park Nijmegen	B3	built to suit	26,800
	B4	built to suit	33,262
AUSTRIA	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Graz	B	built to suit	7,850
	C	built to suit	33,315
HUNGARY	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Alsónémedi	B2	built to suit	4,900
	B3	built to suit	9,800
VGP Park Kecskemét	A	built to suit	21,000
VGP Park Győr Beta	A	built to suit	30,000
	B	built to suit	13,000

ROMANIA	BUILDING	OFFICE AREA (m ²)	WAREHOUSE AREA (m ²)
VGP Park Timișoara	A1	built to suit	15,000
VGP Park Sibiu	A	built to suit	11,700
	B	built to suit	13,700
	C	built to suit	16,000
VGP Park Brașov	E	built to suit	5,700
	A	built to suit	33,130
	B	built to suit	27,600
	C	built to suit	38,600
	F	built to suit	9,225
	G	built to suit	16,042
	H	built to suit	19,527
VGP Park Arad	I	built to suit	24,442
	A	built to suit	28,810
	B	built to suit	40,081
	C	built to suit	8,794
	D	built to suit	27,956
	E	built to suit	40,081
	F	built to suit	38,343
	G	built to suit	11,722

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