

Press release

17 March 2010

Erste Group reinforces its retail focus by establishing a dedicated position on the Group's Management Board

The economic developments of the last two years have shown that Erste Group's business model focussed on retail and corporate customer businesses is not only crisis-resilient but also value-creating for our stakeholders and the regional economies. To reflect the importance of Erste Group's core businesses in our governance and management structures, the Supervisory Board has decided in its yesterday's meeting to establish responsibilities for the retail business on the Group's Management Board and, as a consequence, Martin Škopek was appointed member of Erste Group's Management Board responsible for the retail business effective 1 July 2010.

Martin Škopek is currently a board member of Banca Comercială Română (BCR) responsible for the retail business in Romania. He will resign from this position as of 30 June 2010. The Czech born manager has gained extensive retail banking experience during his 11 years in the industry. Prior to joining BCR's Board, he was a member of the Management Board of Česká spořitelna, responsible for retail banking.

Management of the local retail business will remain under local responsibility in each individual market, which is a key strength of Erste Group's governance model. However, presence on the Group's Management Board will allow for better steering of the overall strategic development of the retail businesses, assisting the local banks in the implementation of the Group's strategy, promoting the sharing of best practices and leveraging synergies across the Group.

To facilitate the new governance structure, a number of other appointments have been made across the Group. Given the wealth of experience within Erste Group built over the past years, all management positions have been filled internally.

Banca Comercială Română

Oana Petrescu, who is currently responsible for Operations and IT at BCR, will take over Martin Škopek's retail responsibilities on the bank's Management Board from 1 July 2010. Dominic Bruynseels, the CEO of BCR, will assume responsibility for her previous role until her successor has been appointed.

In line with best practice at Erste Group's major subsidiaries, following the completion of BCR's integration and development programme, a decision was reached to appoint a fully dedicated Chief Risk Officer at the Management Board of BCR, a function previously within the remit of the bank's Chief Financial Officer.

This role will be filled by Michael Beitz, a long standing risk manager within the Erste Group and current CRO of Slovenská sporiteľňa, as of 1 August 2010. Helmuth Hintringer will remain in his role as Chief Financial Officer and will assume additional responsibility for the newly structured property management business.

Slovenská sporiteľňa

After great success in improving Slovenská sporiteľňa's operating result by increasing the bank's efficiency and taking advantage of synergies within the Group, Jan Rollo, the CEO of Slovenská sporiteľňa, has decided to take up new challenges outside Erste Group.

"On behalf of the Supervisory Board, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jan Rollo for his remarkable dedication and his valuable contribution to Slovenská sporiteľňa during a difficult economic period in Slovakia. We wish him all the best for the future," said Franz Hochstrasser, Head of Slovenská's Supervisory Board.

Jozef Síkela, currently CEO of Erste Bank Ukraine, will join the Management Board of Slovenská sporiteľňa and will take over as CEO and Chief Risk Officer effective 1 June 2010.

Erste Bank Oesterreich

Following 33 successful years with Erste Group and its predecessor banks, Elisabeth Bleyleben-Koren has decided to retire from the Management Board of Erste Bank Oesterreich effective 1 July 2010. She was responsible for the successful implementation of the spin-off of the Austrian business from Erste Group, positioning Erste Bank Oesterreich as an important player in the Austrian market. Mrs. Bleyleben-Koren has held a number of important management positions within the Group, including those of board member of Erste Bank Oesterreich since 1997 and CEO since 2007. Following her retirement, the bank will be headed by the existing Management Board team consisting of Thomas Uher as speaker and Peter Bosek.

Andreas Treichl, CEO of Erste Group, commented: *“Elisabeth Bleyleben-Koren is certainly the most successful banker in Austria. She has a strong personality and has always been highly dedicated to her work. A major part of the success of our banking group is down to Elisabeth’s achievements. She has left a lasting impact on the banking landscape in Austria and has been a pillar of support in her position as my deputy. Of course, I respect her decision to make way for a younger team and wish her well in her retirement.”*

Erste Bank Ukraine

Pavel Cetkovský will succeed Jozef Síkela as CEO of Erste Bank Ukraine. Andreas Klingens, currently Head of Group Strategy, will join the Management Board of Erste Bank Ukraine as CFO, assuming additional responsibility for the corporate business and treasury.

All appointments announced today are subject to approval by the individual banks’ supervisory boards and the local regulatory bodies.

Press department:

Michael Mauritz (Head of Group communications)
Hana Cygonková (Head of External communications)
Alina Costache (Group Press Officer)
Doris Hartl (Group Press Officer)

Tel: +43 50100 - 19603
Tel: +43 50100 - 11675
Tel: +43 50100 - 11681
Tel: +43 50100 - 11676

E-Mail: michael.mauritz@erstegroup.com
E-Mail: hana.cygonkova@erstegroup.com
E-Mail: alina.costache@erstegroup.com
E-Mail: doris.hartl@erstegroup.com

Erste Group, 1010 Wien, Graben 21, Fax: +43 50100 – 19849

This release is also available on our website at www.erstegroup.com/pressrelease.

Erste Group is one of the leading financial providers in CEE. More than 50,000 employees serve 17.5 million clients in 3,200 branches in 8 countries (Austria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Ukraine). As of 31 December 2009 Erste Group has reached EUR 201.7 billion in total assets, a net profit of EUR 903.4 million and cost-income-ratio of 50.2%.