



ERSTE Stiftung

**Die Zweite
SPARKASSE** 
In jeder Beziehung zählen die Menschen.

PRESS RELEASE

Die Zweite Sparkasse Now in the Federal Provinces

Vienna, 27 August 2007 – the first six months following the opening of “Die Zweite Sparkasse” were intended to be the pilot phase of an extraordinary project. However, the outcome was not just a report on the experiences, but rather a success story. More than 800 people now have access to a bank account at the Vienna-based branch office as well as free insurance coverage provided by WIENER STÄDTISCHE Insurance Group thanks to the support of Caritas or debt counselling services. Now, further branch offices of the “bank for the unbankable” will open in the federal provinces, starting with Tyrol.

Die Zweite Sparkasse offers credit accounts to people who have got into financial difficulties and no longer have access to banking services. It was initiated by ERSTE Foundation, majority shareholder of Erste Bank Group and established in cooperation with social welfare institutions such as Caritas as well as debt counselling services. The bank's only branch office so far, based in Vienna's Glockengasse, is operated by voluntary staff members of Erste Bank. Now, our colleagues at the Tiroler Sparkasse (the Tyrol-based savings bank) are getting involved as well. On 14 September, Die Zweite Sparkasse will open a branch office in Innsbruck, with further offices to follow in Salzburg, Carinthia and Styria.

From the opening of Die Zweite Sparkasse on 21 November 2006 in the presence of the Federal President of Austria, Heinz Fischer, to mid-August 2007, more than 800 people have obtained bank cards enabling them to make cashless payments instead of using costly payment slips. Without being burdened with extra charges, customers benefit from holding a regular bank account, which is indispensable for getting back on their feet after a distressful situation.

Die Zweite Sparkasse Board Chairman Reinhard Ortner announces “credit accounts now also available for people not living in Vienna”

“The response to our new product has been tremendously positive right from the start and from all directions, be it the people who desperately need these accounts or our NGO partners or the press” says Reinhard Ortner, Chairman of the Savings Bank Board of Die Zweite Sparkasse. “Particularly Caritas and the debt counselling services have confirmed that our product is indeed useful, because it promotes self-help. Therefore, very soon there was the urge to offer this service to other Austrians who do not live in Vienna”, he adds.

Ortner is particularly pleased that they have been able to encourage others to join. “WIENER STÄDTISCHE offers our customers insurance coverage which they receive free of charge together with an account. And now we are able to offer this package in the federal provinces as well due to the financial commitment of the individual savings banks and their staff members”, he says.

The savings banks in Tyrol, Salzburg, Carinthia and Styria were the first to provide locations and the necessary infrastructure for opening branch offices of Die Zweite Sparkasse. These branch offices will also be operated by local staff members who will work on a voluntary basis.



ERSTE Stiftung

Die Zweite
SPARKASSE 
In jeder Beziehung zählen die Menschen.

PRESS RELEASE

On 14 September, Die Zweite Sparkasse will open a branch office in Innsbruck-Mariahilf, Tyrol. This year another branch office will start offering its services in Salzburg. Further branch offices in Klagenfurt (Carinthia) and Graz (Styria) are to follow next year.

The products of Die Zweite Sparkasse

Just like the customers of the Vienna-based branch, customers in the federal provinces will have access to the following products of Die Zweite Sparkasse:

- Basic account including bank card
- Investment account with increased interest rates
- An optional building loan contract (s-Aufbau-Bausparvertrag)

And in cooperation with WIENER STÄDTISCHE:

- Legal advice service, available once per quarter and free of charge
- Accident insurance, free of charge

Both are available automatically when opening an account. The range of products also includes:

- An optional homeowners insurance at low cost

Cooperation with Caritas and debt counselling services

The credit account is not a singular product aimed at people in personal distress but one component of a complete package of counselling and support services provided by welfare organisations such as Caritas or debt counselling services. For this purpose, the credit account was developed in close cooperation with these institutions. In order to be entitled to such an account, which is limited to three years, customers must already use the services of one of these organisations and be recommended by them.

Initiated and financed by ERSTE Foundation

The starting capital of EUR 5.8 million for Die Zweite Sparkasse has been provided by ERSTE Foundation, which also initiated this project. Holding a stake of 30.6%, ERSTE Foundation is the majority shareholder of Erste Bank Group, which operates in Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine, and is one of the largest foundations in the region.

For further information, please contact:

ERSTE Foundation, Communications (also for Die Zweite Sparkasse in Vienna)
Maribel Königer, Tel. +43 (0) 50100 - 15453, maribel.koeniger@erstestiftung.org
Graben 21, 1010 Vienna, Austria

Tiroler Sparkasse (Tyrolean Savings Bank), Communications, Jakob Knapp,
Tel. +43 (0) 50100 – 70111, jakob.knapp@tirolersparkasse.at

Salzburger Sparkasse (Salzburg Savings Bank), Communications, Birgit Weszelka
Tel. +43 (0) 50100 - 48145, birgit.weszelka@salzburg.sparkasse.at

Kärntner Sparkasse (Carinthian Savings Bank), Communications, Philipp Heiser
Tel. +43 (0) 50100 – 30677, heiserp@kaerntnersparkasse.at

Steiermärkische Sparkasse (Styria Savings Bank), Communications, Barbara Kunzfeld-Muhr,
Tel. +43 (0) 50100 - 35055, barbara.kunzfeld-muhr@steiermaerkische.at