

Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index recognizes Erste Group's commitment to promoting gender equality

- **Bloomberg's Gender-Equality Index (GEI) highlights those publicly-listed firms that have demonstrated a commitment to supporting gender equality**
- **Erste Group remains the only Austrian company to be included in the GEI and is one of only four GEI firms headquartered in CEE and one of only 20 from the DACH region**
- **Erste's promotion of gender-equality in the workplace is tightly bound to the inclusive principles that have shaped the bank since its founding in 1819**

Erste Group Bank AG ("Erste Group") today announced that it is one of 380 companies across 11 sectors from 44 countries and regions around the world included in the 2021 Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index (GEI). Companies range from a variety of industries, including automotive, banking, consumer services, engineering and construction, and retail. Through disclosure of gender-related metrics using the GEI framework, the firms included in the 2021 GEI have committed to provide a comprehensive look at their investment in workplace gender equality and the communities in which they operate, raising the bar of what should be expected from other companies within the same industry. Erste Group was included in this year's index for scoring at or above a global threshold established by Bloomberg to reflect a high level of disclosure and overall performance across the framework's five pillars.

"It's a great honour for Erste Group to be selected for the Bloomberg Gender Equality Index for a third year in a row. The issue of gender equality is becoming ever more important for companies and investors – and that's a good thing. At the same time, our inclusion in the GEI encourages us to become even better in this sphere, because there's still a lot to be done," said Erste Group CEO Bernd Spalt. *"Women currently hold 40 percent of the leadership positions across our group and we will continue on a path to full parity."*

"The Bloomberg GEI assesses not only the concrete measures we have taken, but also the degree of transparency with which we collect and share our diversity data and indicators. We significantly improved in these points in the newest ranking. I'm very proud of that, because I'm convinced that a data-based and transparent approach to diversity management is essential," says Julia Valsky, Head of Group Diversity Management at Erste Group. *"Covering a broad range in the area of gender diversity, but also in many other dimensions, makes us more colourful and better – and, of course, being recognized in the Bloomberg GEI is a great motivation to continue on our path."*

A global standard for measuring gender-equality measures and policies

The GEI brings transparency to gender-related practices and policies at publicly listed companies, increasing the breadth of environmental, social, governance (ESG) data available to investors. The comprehensive, transparent GEI scoring methodology allows investors to assess company performance and compare across industry peer groups. The reference index measures gender equality across five pillars: female leadership and talent pipeline, equal pay and gender pay parity, inclusive culture, sexual harassment policies, and pro-women brand.

"The companies included in the 2021 GEI are expanding the ESG data universe to include gender-related data that investors are demanding today," said Peter T. Grauer, Chairman of Bloomberg. *"Their commitment to disclosure is making the business case for inclusion, and driving transparency in the markets."*

Gender equality: a key element of the inclusive principles on which Erste was founded

Erste Group defines diversity and inclusion as an integral part of its corporate strategy and states this commitment clearly in its Statement of Purpose and its Code of Conduct. The Vienna-headquartered banking group actively promotes a work environment free of discrimination and harassment and values the work and worth of each and

every person regardless of gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, skin colour, religious or political affiliation, ethnic background, nationality or any other aspect unrelated to their employment.

Erste Group has implemented a variety of initiatives to support the development of female leadership. Across the Group, over 40% of managerial positions are currently held by women. Focal areas for 2021 and beyond are to further increase the number of women in top executive positions and the development of the internal female talent and succession pipeline in all markets. In Austria, the Erste Women's Hub employee resource group has continued key initiatives such as the promotion of female financial literacy and virtual networking formats and has developed new fora of exchange for parents who – given the environment created by the current pandemic – often feel challenged when reconciling their home office and home schooling responsibilities.

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