



## Ad-hoc Information

Vienna, 12 June 2002

### **Erste Bank to strengthen capital base through capital increase**

In order to continue to build on its leading position in Central European retail banking with the backing of strengthened capital resources, Erste Bank der oesterreichischen Sparkassen AG, which together with its savings bank partners now has over 10 million customers, plans to conduct a capital increase.

At a meeting on Monday June 10th, Erste Bank's Supervisory Board authorised the Management Board to conduct a public offering of shares through a capital increase. The authorisation permits the issue of at least 8 million shares, representing around 16% of the existing share capital (EUR 368 million). Erste Bank intends to use the funds raised through the capital increase primarily to acquire shares in Ceska sporitelna held by Erste Bank's largest shareholder, AVS, following AVS' tender offer to Ceska sporitelna public shareholders. So far 49.5 million shares in Ceska sporitelna with a combined value of around EUR 615 million have been tendered to AVS.

Further details on the planned share offer are expected to be announced on 25 June 2002.

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