
Wiener Städtische buys further share in s Bausparkasse from Erste Bank

Wiener Städtische Allgemeine Versicherung AG (Wiener Städtische) will acquire a further three percent of shares in Bausparkasse der österreichischen Sparkassen AG (s Bausparkasse) from Erste Bank der österreichischen Sparkassen AG (Erste Bank). Wiener Städtische will therefore increase its current holding from two to five percent. Due to the successful development of its cooperation with s Bausparkasse, Wiener Städtische has now fully exercised the option to increase its stake. The remaining 95% in s Bausparkasse will continue to be held by Erste Bank.

Wiener Städtische has been co-owner of s Bausparkasse and its distribution partner for home loans and savings products since April 2004.

Andreas Treichl, CEO of Erste Bank, says: "Taking over a further three percent of s Bausparkasse underlines just how well we cooperate with Wiener Städtische, who has also been a very strong partner for us in Central Europe for years."

The transfer of the shares are expected to take place before the end of April 2006. The purchase price will remain undisclosed.

Günther Geyer, CEO of Wiener Städtische, says: "The alliance between Vienna Insurance Group and Erste Bank Group is continuing to work extremely well both in Austria and in neighbouring states where both companies do business. We are pleased to increase our holdings in s Bausparkasse, a financial services provider within the Erste Bank Group, one that is strong in earnings power and with whom we have a very positive partnership. The home loan and savings business is an excellent means of rounding off our product portfolio and constitutes our approach to providing a comprehensive range of services for our customers."

Expanding the stake in s Bausparkasse will strengthen the successful alliance of Erste Bank Group and Vienna Insurance Group in Austria.

"The partnership between Wiener Städtische and s Bausparkasse has proved very successful. Increasing this holding will intensify our business relations, which can only benefit both companies." emphasises Josef Schmidinger, CEO of s Bausparkasse.