



First Cash Card with Photo and ID Function: BANKCARD STUDENT ID

06.09.2006

As information published by the Financial Markets Data Service (FMDS) in 2005 shows, Austrian consumers are from mobile in terms of their banking habits. Bank customers are extremely loyal customers and highly unwilling to move their account to another bank. On average only one per cent of customers per year change their main bank. The Sparkassen Group therefore attaches particular importance to clearly positioning itself on the Austrian market as the preferred bank for students with special offers and products designed to win the loyalty of these customers early on.

As a further step in this direction, a completely new, and in Austria unique, product is now being offered to all students who have a student account at Erste Bank or Sparkasse: **the BankCard StudentID**.

The familiar cash card has been **expanded and can now be used as an international student identity card**. It combines the payment functions of a cash and debit card with all the benefits and functions of the International Student Identity Card.

Thanks to an exclusive co-operation with STA Travel, an international student identity card can now be integrated into the existing cash card. The BankCard StudentID also offers another technological innovation - the photograph of the card holder on the back of the card. This technology represents a unique innovation on the 6.7 million Maestro cash card market in Austria and also provides an additional security feature for the customer. The co-operation partners for this product are the Wiener Städtische Insurance Group and the Austrian Students' Union. Moreover, for university students, the BankCard StudentID also serves as the membership card for the Austrian Students' Union (ÖH Card).

"Today's students are tomorrow's customers," says Peter Bosek, head of Erste Bank's retail network. "They are an important core target group, and providing them with sustained and effective service will safeguard the next generation of customers for the bank," Bosek continues. The latest studies show that the vast majority of students open their first student account between the ages of 18 and 20, and more than two thirds of students insist that they want to keep their account with their present bank after they have finished their studies.

International Student Identity Card (ISIC)

The number of Austrian students participating in international Erasmus exchange programmes has increased fivefold since 1992. Almost 30 per cent of graduates from universities or universities of applied sciences take part in a study abroad programme during their studies, and the number is expected to increase still further in the next few years.

The International Student Identity Card – widely known by its abbreviation ISIC – is the only internationally accepted student identity card with EU and UNESCO recognition, and offers a range of concessions and services to students in more than 110 countries all over the world. Currently ISIC cardholders can take advantage of more than 37,000 international discounts and benefits. By continuously expanding its range of offers, the ISIC card has developed into a service card with which all aspects of student life can be made cheaper and more comfortable.

The ID card is issued by the ISIC Association, a global association of student travel organisations based in Amsterdam. The ISIC Association maintains a close relationship with UNESCO, as the two organisations pursue the common goal of enabling young people to get to know different cultures and promoting international understanding and student mobility. Since it was launched in 1968 the ISIC card has been used by 40 million students all over the world.

As Erste Bank has worked hard to increase international mobility and promote an understanding of the cultures of Central and Eastern Europe since 1997, the development of a card which combines a cash card function and the International Student Identity Card was an idea which was pushed ahead speedily. The International Student Identity Card expands Erste Bank's range of student programmes which already includes the Summer University Danubia (organised in co-operation with Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration) which has been taking place since 2001 and which each year offers sixty Central European students a practically oriented course of study at Central European business schools, and the recently announced Executive MBA Programme for 30 Romanian students (in co-operation with OMV and the Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration).

The features of the new BankCard Student ID:

Cash card with Maestro functions (= can be used to make payments at 10.3 million merchants throughout the world and for cash withdrawals from ATMs) **Quick Function** (= the Austrian electronic wallet)

Enables users to enjoy 37,000 benefits worldwide and offers discounts of up to 50% in more than 110 countries: at hotels, restaurants, shops, for car hire, flights, bus, rail and ferry services and at cultural institutions such as museums, galleries and theatres etc.

International Student Identity Card function (ISIC): the only international student card with EU and UNESCO recognition.

Replaces the Austrian Students' Union card for Austrian students: is accepted as an Austrian Students' Union card and allows the holder to utilise the benefits offered by the World of ÖH scheme.

The BankCard StudentID can be obtained free of charge from Erste Bank. The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) usually costs EUR 10 per year in Austria.