

Press release

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## Erste Group is ranked first for best IR work in Austria

For publically listed companies, 2009 certainly was one of the most challenging ones in which the information and support service of investors was rather determined by the strategic positioning of companies – especially financial service providers – instead of economic issues only.

All the more honourable it is that Erste Group is ranked first in the annual ranking of the U.S. business magazine "Institutional Investor" for the best investor relations work in Austria. Erste Group could therewith prevail against Austrian companies such as Telekom Austria, Voestalpine, OMV and Andritz which secured second to fifth place.

*"In the current economic environment, an active and transparent communications policy for capital markets is more important than ever - we have therefore made it our highest priority to provide a comprehensive and timely information service for our shareholders. We are all the more pleased that our efforts have been acknowledged by such well-known international financial markets experts at a time like this",* says Gabriele Werzer, Head of Investor Relations at Erste Group.

The award is based on a survey conducted by means of 15 to 20 minutes telephone interviews among more than 800 analysts and portfolio managers who were asked about the quality of investor relations activities of European companies. As a basis for assessment the constancy and transparency of the finance information as well as the extent of how companies deal with current challenges of the financial market are taken into consideration.

The main parameters of good investor relations – as outlined by the Institutional Investor magazine – are as follows: good access to the management, presenting a complete and transparent picture of the company, daily updated facts and figures in a high quality and a competent and timely response to requests.

Press department:

Michael Mauritz (Head of Group communications)  
Hana Cygonková (Head of External communications)  
Alina Costache (Group Press Officer)  
Doris Hartl (Group Press Officer)

Tel: +43 50100 - 19603  
Tel: +43 50100 - 11675  
Tel: +43 50100 - 11681  
Tel: +43 50100 - 11676

E-Mail: [michael.mauritz@erstegroup.com](mailto:michael.mauritz@erstegroup.com)  
E-Mail: [hana.cygonkova@erstegroup.com](mailto:hana.cygonkova@erstegroup.com)  
E-Mail: [alina.costache@erstegroup.com](mailto:alina.costache@erstegroup.com)  
E-Mail: [doris.hartl@erstegroup.com](mailto:doris.hartl@erstegroup.com)

Erste Group, 1010 Wien, Graben 21, Fax: +43 50100 – 19849

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