

A young woman with brown hair, smiling, wearing a black blazer over a white top, with her arms crossed. In the background, a blurred office setting with large windows and another person working at a desk.

Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme 2010 – 2011

Enter the world of Erste Group



„We have proved that we can operate successfully in more difficult economic circumstances, we have access to the largest retail funding base in the region. Our real strength, though, is the commitment of our 50 thousand employees in Central and Eastern Europe.“

Andreas Treichl, CEO

Erste Group – a bank where employees make the difference

Erste Group has set itself the goal of becoming the key financial service provider in Central and Eastern Europe. We want to become the best retail bank in the region, but not because we think that being big, in itself, should be the goal. We want to be the best because we are different to other banks.

We were founded 190 years ago in order to help people that can not help themselves and we have an ownership structure that also makes a difference because a quarter of our profits are reinvested directly into the region where we are active. In contrast to many other banks, we do not own a foundation, but rather, we are owned by a foundation. This makes a huge difference. Facing the biggest economic crisis since the beginning of the 20th century, we are also facing the biggest loss of trust towards banks and bankers. Changing this situation is a pretty tough job that can only be done by bankers who are dedicated to their region and to their clients.

Achieving this goal is both a major challenge and a huge opportunity for young talents. Here is your chance to work in an international group of companies – with over 55,000 employees from a rich variety of backgrounds – whose enormous growth potential and attractive scope for development is still waiting to be unleashed in Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Serbia, Romania and Ukraine.

Our employees are the driving force behind our ambition to follow our strategy and to make a difference in banking. With their special talents, recent graduates bring the new ideas to a company that has never closed their doors since 1819 and whose strategy, to focus on the mass market, has proven to be right even in the deepest crisis.

Each year, we give a group of bright and highly skilled graduates like you, the opportunity to discover the world of Erste Group, to acquire the fundamental knowledge on how banking is conducted, to gain a solid qualification in our core business fields, as well as the exposure needed to have a long and successful career within the Group.

Once having successfully completed the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme, our strategic partnership with the University of Vienna gives you the opportunity to receive ECTS credits towards an MBA, which can further increase your value within Erste Group.

This brochure provides insight into our company and the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme. You can learn about our activities and the Erste Group spirit that places the emphasis on teamwork, initiative, mobility, and flexibility.

Join us!

Andreas Treichl,
Chairman of the Management Board
Erste Group Bank AG



The individual countries where Erste Group is active are multifaceted, distinctive and special, just like the people living there.

About us

Profile

Erste Group was founded in 1819 as the first Austrian savings bank ("Erste österreichische Spar-Casse"). In 1997, Erste Group went public with a strategy to expand its retail business into Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). Since then Erste Group's customer base has grown through numerous acquisitions and organic growth; from 600,000 to 17.5 million. 95% of all clients are citizens of the European Union. The EU membership gives the countries of the region a stable regulatory framework that supports their economic development. Today Erste Group is one of the largest financial services providers in Central and Eastern Europe in terms of clients and total assets. It has always focused on retail and SME banking.

Strategic Objectives

Business focus – Retail and SME banking:

Being almost 200 year old Erste Group is primarily a savings bank and lender that uses deposits to finance the loans that it grants. As such, it is less dependent on external financing.

Geographical focus – Central and Eastern Europe:

Ten years ago we defined CEE as our extended home market. Today, 95% of our 17.5 m clients live in EU member states. This gives us the stability of the EU framework as well as the long term growth potential of these countries as they aim to catch up the average living standards of the original 15 EU member states.

Efficiency:

Our new group structure reflects the recent split of responsibilities and increases the overall efficiency within the Group: the retail and SME business is managed locally while Group Corporate & Investment Banking and Group Markets are managed by the central holding company.

Over 17.5 million clients in Central and Eastern Europe

Austria

Clients: 3.1m
Branches: 1060

Slovakia

Clients: 2.6m
Branches: 271

Croatia

Clients: 0.7m
Branches: 124

Romania

Clients: 4.6m
Branches: 657

Czech Republic

Clients: 5.3m
Branches: 655

Hungary

Clients: 0.9m
Branches: 204

Serbia

Clients: 0.2m
Branches: 74

Ukraine

Clients: 0.1m
Branches: 135

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Junior Trainee Programme

A portrait of Alice Toma, a young woman with long brown hair, wearing a light-colored collared shirt. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera with a neutral expression.

Alice Toma from Romania

My name is Alice Toma and I am 22 years old. Shortly after graduating with a bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Finance and Banking in Bucharest, I joined the programme as a trainee in the Corporate Risk Management Department in Romania.

Joining the Erste Group Junior Trainee Program seemed to me to be one of the best choices for a young graduate who wants to follow a successful career in banking. The highly motivating work environment, the enriching cultural diversity of the trainees, the professionalism of the trainers and the overall teamwork and spirit are only a few of the positive features of the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme.

There are many new things to learn, and each seminar provides the opportunity for a profound understanding of Erste Group and the banking industry.

I am truly convinced that, by the end of this programme, I will possess both the appropriate knowledge and the adequate skills to become a success within Erste Group.

Erste School of Banking and Finance

Erste School of Banking and Finance is the learning hub of Erste Group.

It is the group forum for all training and learning programmes as well as its interface to universities, peers and other industries.

Erste School of Banking and Finance offers a series of open courses, e.g. a series of lectures and a series of closed access programmes, like the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme.

It promotes out-the-box-thinking and is a strategic tool for the future development of the entire organisation.

“All trainees get to know the various banks of Erste Group and thereby establish their own knowledge networks. They will not merely profit as individuals – we firmly believe that this program will help move forward the Group as a whole.”

Bernhard Spalt, Member of the Holding Board

The methodology of Erste School of Banking and Finance programmes integrates the following different aspects:

- **Multidisciplinary** – which seeks to overcome the barriers between disciplines, helps to solve complex real problems and gives a broader overview of divisions and processes.
- **“Brick & Click”** – a blend of preparatory learning, classroom work and post-classroom learning, leading to a more thorough understanding.
- **High academic standards** – the programmes are modular. Some modules will be officially accredited for certain parts of academic degrees.
- **On-the-spot learning** – Regional and international deployments will encourage a greater understanding of local differences and competing issues.
- **Strategic focus** – our programmes reflect the strategic needs of our organization.
- **Thinking out of the box** – prepares students for complex challenges, encouraging the use of different skills and fostering the ability to think creatively towards new solutions.

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Anita Tatalovic from Serbia

My name is Anita Tatalovic, I am 27 years old and I am a trainee in the Research and Development department at Erste Group Bank AG in Vienna. I was born in Belgrade and after obtaining my BA in Finance from Boston University, I studied to complete an LLB and MBA in London and New York City, respectively.

Upon the conclusion of my studies, I sought out a trainee programme because, in my opinion, it is the most effective way for young graduates to get the most out of their first work experience in the least amount of time. The Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme is particularly unique because it places great focus on developing both hard and soft skills of its participants. The programme has provided me with an opportunity to gain practical experience in different countries, work with diverse groups of individuals, build relationships with high-ranking colleagues and obtain in-depth knowledge of the workings of various departments within the Group. I consider these experiences to be of immeasurable value not only for my future career in Erste Group but also for my personal development.



Overview

The Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme is an intensive, group wide trainee programme for specialists, which includes a basic and an enhanced qualification in various business divisions within the Erste Group:

- Risk Management
- Corporate Banking
- Investment Banking
- Capital Markets
- Organisation / IT

In addition local and international deployments will give the trainees the chance to build up a network of relationships within the Erste Group.

Programme language

The programme language is English. The entire training content will be presented in English. However, during the different department stays the trainees will be expected to converse mostly in the local language.

For the visits of CEE-partner departments during the job rotation, English should be used.

Programme duration

The trainee programme lasts 12 months.

Trainees

All trainees will have gone through an assessment process and will be expected to fulfil the following criteria, among others:

- Have excelled at university
- Be highly motivated
- Be flexible and willing to work abroad
- Fluent in English

HR-Support

Local HR-departments are responsible for all organisational and logistical matters in the respective countries.

Lecturers

The lecturers in the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme are experts from Erste Group as well as external university staff or professional trainers.

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Christian Herzog from Austria

My name is Christian Herzog, I am 24 years old and I work for the corporate analysis department of Erste Bank Oesterreich. I'm from Austria and graduated from the FH Wien University of Applied Sciences of WKW, where I studied the degree programme entrepreneurship and corporate management.

My motivation for the application for Erste Group and in particular for the Group Junior Trainee Programme was that I wanted to have a chance to bring my academic knowledge, personality and individual strengths to bear in this programme and to kick-start my career.

So far, my expectations, to get to know as many contacts as possible, to build up a huge personal network and also to become acquainted to the structures of Erste Group by means of job rotations to other departments, divisions and countries, were completely fulfilled.

To put it in a nutshell, the Group Junior Trainee Programme offers all trainees the best conditions you can expect to start your career in the world of Erste Group!

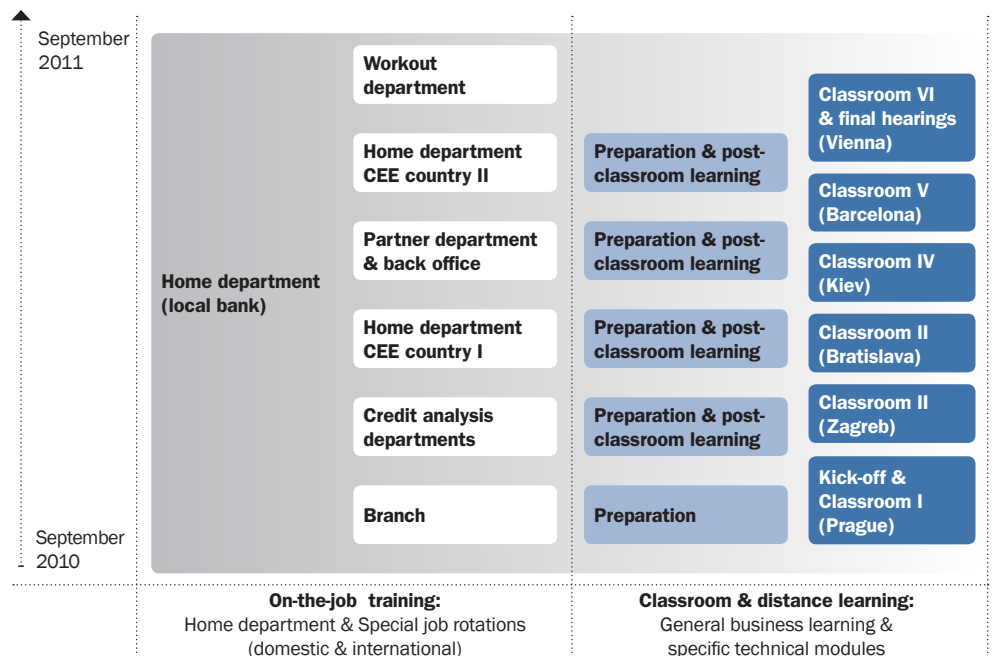
Programme content

The programme will include basics in banking, as well as a deeper insight into each business division. The programme also aims at building a good common understanding of workflows within the various divisions by offering job rotations in related departments.

The following diagram offers an overview of the content of the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme:

“It gives you the opportunity to work and live in an international environment and the combination of job rotation and learning on the job will be a tremendously valuable experience for all of these lucky few”.

Bernhard Spalt, Member of the Holding Board



Erste Group

Junior Trainee Programme

Michael Mesík from Slovakia

My name is Michal Mesík, I am 24 years old and come from Slovakia. I graduated in Banking and International Finance from the Vienna University of Economics and Business and joined the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme in September 2009.

I work as a policy specialist in Group Retail Risk Management of Erste Group Bank AG in Vienna. Our department is relatively new and still growing which gave me a tremendous opportunity to be really involved from the very beginning.

The programme offers a unique chance to develop one's personality and learn – during the classroom phases, soft-skill trainings and especially from our senior colleagues on job rotations and from each other. We get the chance to network with top managers and the best professionals of the bank, who are always open for discussion and questions. All in all, the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme provides us with many opportunities, but it is up to us whether we take full advantage of them or not.



Learning Methodology

Classroom Learning

Classroom Learning will take place in several 'Erste countries', including soft skills training. All trainees will normally meet once a month to attend a series of lectures. Erste Group also has a strategic partnership with La Caixa, a large Spanish savings bank. This creates an opportunity for classroom learning to take place in Barcelona.

Distance Learning

In order to prepare for and to complete the course content, distance learning phases have to be accomplished. The content will be provided over an e-learning platform, which means that the programme involves the integration of various methods of learning (blended learning). Progress of trainees will be monitored by Erste School of Banking and Finance.

Case Study work

Teams of trainees will work on well-defined case studies. They will present their results at the end of the programme. The topics for the case studies are derived from business subjects of Erste Group.

On-the-job training

Last but not least, on-the-job training will form a major part in the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme. The trainees will spend a substantial amount of time in partner departments or departments which are related to their home department in the business process. Two visits to affiliated departments of the CEE countries will broaden the training experience.

Examination concept

The progress of the trainees will be monitored and tested at all programme stages.

Accreditation

The University of Vienna, in joint cooperation with the Erste School of Banking and Finance, offer at total of 16 ECTS points, for courses covered during the Erste Group Junior Trainee Programme, that can be used in the future towards an MBA at the University of Vienna.

Erste Group

Junior Trainee Programme



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