

## **Erste Group runs viral Christmas campaign in five countries Believe in love, believe in Christmas, #believeinyourself**

**For the first time ever, Erste Group is launching an international online campaign in five countries this Christmas season. Having at its core the Group-wide credo #believeinyourself, the campaign features an extraordinary production that knows how to stir up emotions at Christmas time. Besides Austria, the advert will also be shown in Croatia, Romania, Hungary and Serbia.**

<https://facebook.com/erstebank.sparkasse/videos/272546250112026/>

With the introduction of #believeinyourself slogan last year, Erste Group started to establish a common brand identity for all of its banks in seven CEE countries.

*“The story of the little hedgehog whose spines are making life hard for him is the story of us all – every one of us has experienced such moments and feelings. Throughout its almost 200-year history, Erste has always supported and believed in people, and will continue to do so. This heart-warming #believeinyourself video builds on our core values and translates them into a sweet Christmas story,”* says Martin Radjaby-Rasset, Head of Group Brand Management.

The campaign which is running exclusively on Facebook, taps into this very theme, playing strongly on viewers’ emotions in the weeks leading up to Christmas. Christmas is a season of love. A time when people feel the need to be close to their family and friends. But not everyone is privileged enough to have this opportunity at Christmas. That’s why it is all the more important to believe not only in yourself, but also in others. Armed with this belief, there is no obstacle too great and no path too steep to overcome.

### **The Christmas story of the little hedgehog**

Being the “new kid” in a group is often not easy. Henry the Hedgehog can tell you a thing or two about it. His first day at forest school is already proving difficult and although he would like to get to know his new classmates, there is always something standing in his way: his spines. Over and over, the little hedgehog tries to fit in and play with the other animals. But his classmates are scared of getting hurt by his spines. Time goes by, and as Christmas day arrives, Henry notices his fellow pupils whispering and giggling behind his back. As the little hedgehog sadly walks out of school, his classmates surprise him with a gift they arranged together. What at first appears to Henry as a joke quickly turns out to be the gift he had been longing for all this time: companionship.



Michael Nagy, creative director at Jung von Matt/DONAU says about the advert: *“Thanks to John Lewis, Christmas ads have become a global phenomenon. I am very pleased that our charming #believeinyourself story can be a part of it.”*

*“Especially at Christmas time, a season of love, it’s good to believe not only in yourself, but also in the goodness of others. No matter how insurmountable an obstacle may seem: love will find a way. The little hedgehog and his friends remind us of that,”* adds Andreas Putz, managing director of Jung von Matt/DONAU and writer of the lyrics.

To ensure that the campaign achieves optimal visibility, nothing is being left to chance with regard to its broadcasting on Facebook. *“Erste Group is making the most of its extensive shared structure and is pooling the resources of its communities through crossposting across the region in which it is present,”* says Stephan Gustav Götz of the digital agency MediaBrothers. Additionally, the new “Videopremiere” feature is being used to turn the video’s launch on Facebook into a live event. The online campaign was launched on 2 December on Facebook. The advert can also be viewed on YouTube <https://youtu.be/lcx7hBWeULM>.

## Credits

<b>Commissioned by</b>	Erste Group Bank AG Martin Radjaby-Rasset Daniel Ratzenböck Juraj Flimel	<b>Production</b>	Passion Animation Studios
<b>Agency</b>	Jung von Matt/DONAU	Director	Kyra Buschor & Constantin Paepflow
Account director	Benedikt Nussbaumer	Executive producer	Debbie Crosscup
Senior account manager	Katharina Höller	<b>Media agency</b>	Wavemaker, Katharina Merkle
Creative director	Mike Nagy / Andreas Putz	<b>Social media</b>	MediaBrothers, Stephan Götz
Copywriter	Eva Zefferer / Karin Uebelbacher / Andreas Putz	<b>Music</b>	Mcasso
Art director	Mike Nagy / Eva Zefferer	Composer & music producer	Mike Connaris @ Mcasso

For further information, please contact Erste Group External Communications:

Carmen Staicu  
Peter Klopf

Tel: +43 50100 – 11681  
Tel: +43 50100 – 11676

E-Mail: [carmen.staicu@erstegroup.com](mailto:carmen.staicu@erstegroup.com)  
E-Mail: [peter.klopf@erstegroup.com](mailto:peter.klopf@erstegroup.com)

This press release is also available at: [www.erstegroup.com/pressrelease](http://www.erstegroup.com/pressrelease)