

# **ERSTE BEST OF EUROPE**

**Jointly owned fund pursuant to the InvFG**

Annual Report 2023/24

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## General Information about the Investment Firm

<b>The company</b>	Erste Asset Management GmbH Am Belvedere 1, A-1100 Vienna Telephone: +43 05 0100-19777, fax: +43 05 0100-919777
<b>Registered capital</b>	EUR 2.50 million
<b>Shareholders</b>	Erste Group Bank AG (64.67%) Erste Bank der österreichischen Sparkassen AG (22.17%) Steiermärkische Bank und Sparkassen Aktiengesellschaft (3.30%) Tiroler Sparkasse Bankaktiengesellschaft Innsbruck (1.74%) DekaBank Deutsche Girozentrale, Frankfurt (1.65%) „Die Kärntner“ Trust-Vermögensverwaltungsgesellschaft m. b. H. & Co KG (1.65%) Salzburger Sparkasse Bank Aktiengesellschaft (1.65%) Sieben Tiroler Sparkassen Beteiligungsgesellschaft m. b. H. (1.65%) NÖ-Sparkassen Beteiligungsgesellschaft m. b. H. (0.76%) VIENNA INSURANCE GROUP AG Wiener Versicherung Gruppe (0.76%)
<b>Supervisory Board</b>	Rudolf SAGMEISTER (Chairman) Manfred BARTALSZKY Maximilian CLARY UND ALDRINGEN Klaus FELDERER (from 28.02.2024) Harald GASSER Gerhard GRABNER Harald Frank GRUBER Oswald HUBER (Deputy Chairman) Radovan JELASITY Michael KOREN (from 28.02.2024) Ertan PISKIN Peter PROBER Gabriele SEMMELROCK-WERZER (until 31.12.2023) Reinhard WALTTL (until 31.10.2023) Gerald WEBER Appointed by the Works Council: Martin CECH Regina HABERHAUER Heinrich Hubert REINER Peter RIEDERER Nicole WEINHENGST Manfred ZOUREK
<b>Managing directors</b>	Heinz BEDNAR Winfried BUCHBAUER Peter KARL Thomas KRAUS
<b>Authorised officers</b>	Karl FREUDENSCHUSS Manfred LENTNER (until 31.08.2023) Günther MANDL Gerold PERMOSER Magdalena REISCHL Oliver RÖDER Magdalena UJWARY (from 16.08.2023)
<b>State commissioners</b>	Wolfgang EXL Angelika SCHÄTZ
<b>Auditor</b>	Ernst & Young Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft m.b.H.
<b>Depository bank</b>	Erste Group Bank AG

## Dear Unit-holders,

We are pleased to present you the following annual report for the ERSTE BEST OF EUROPE jointly owned fund pursuant to the InvFG for the accounting year from 1 May 2023 to 30 April 2024.

The companies managing the sub-funds contained in the Fund that are not managed by the Investment Firm assessed management fees ranging between 0.12% and 0.90%. No front-end surcharges were charged for the purchase of the units in these funds.

## Development of the Fund

### Market review:

The reporting period got off to a volatile start on the capital markets stemming from the dire state of a number of banks in the USA and one bank in Switzerland, which led to fears of a new financial crisis and to significant price declines on the global equity markets in March. The measures taken by the supervisory authorities and central banks increased confidence among market participants and subsequently calmed the capital markets, which profited from budding expectations of less-restrictive interest rate policy. The bond classes were able to follow the positive trend being enjoyed by the equity markets. Subsequently, investors began to focus their attention on the upcoming central bank meetings, macroeconomic indicators, and corporate earnings. After a relatively calm phase in the financial markets, declining inflation and solid economic data in the USA in June boosted market sentiment and helped the global equity markets to continue their positive performance. Corporate bonds, especially high yield bonds, also posted gains. The continued restrictive interest rate rhetoric of the central banks and declining but still relatively high inflation rates had a negative impact on government bonds from industrialised countries, which were still unable to break out of their volatile sideways trend. In the following months, investors became more cautious because the robust development of the US economy combined with the high oil price caused the expected key rate cuts to be pushed far off into the future. This caused rising yields and price declines on the equity markets. In Europe, bond yields declined slightly in October due to the anticipated slowing of economic growth. Investor sentiment brightened in November on the heels of rapidly falling interest rates in the USA and Europe and solid economic data in the USA, which allowed global equities to post price increases. Expectations for interest rate cuts in 2024 rose rapidly and allowed the equity markets to close the month in positive territory. This trend continued in December and laid the groundwork for a possible economic soft landing, though the optimism about this possibility waned somewhat at the beginning of 2024 – causing risky asset classes to react with moderate price losses. The corporate reporting season was positive and was accompanied by encouraging economic data, ushering in the next upturn on the financial markets that helped equities achieve price gains at the end of the month. Asian high yield bonds were preferred over hard currency emerging market bonds. Good corporate results in the USA, especially in the tech and communication sectors, combined with solid economic data brought further price increases for equity investors in February despite inflation rates that were moderately higher than expected. Expectations for interest rate cuts in the near future took another hit, however, causing yields on government and corporate bonds to rise slightly in the investment grade segment. Overall, the reporting period saw positive price performance for European equities and most bond segments.

### Portfolio:

The investments in the respective asset classes were implemented entirely through funds.

Based on the strategic orientation of the Fund, sub-funds that invest in European equities were preferred, and funds were selected that take various factors such as quality, ESG, minimum volatility, growth, dividends, intrinsic value, and capitalisation into account in the selection of equities.

For the purpose of better risk diversification, investments were also made in funds that track a European index.

Overall, ERSTE BEST OF EUROPE generated a positive performance of 9.70% (AT0000703335) over the past accounting year.

## Method of Calculating the Global Exposure

Method of calculating the global exposure:	Commitment approach
Reference assets used:	-
Value at risk:	
Lowest value:	-
Average value:	-
Highest value:	-
Model used:	-
Leverage* when using the value-at-risk calculation method:	-
Leverage** according to § 4 of the 4 <sup>th</sup> Derivatives Risk Measurement and Reporting Regulation:	-

\* Total nominal values of derivative instruments without taking into account offsetting and hedging (item 8.5. Schedule B InvFG 2011).

\*\* Total derivative risk taking offsetting and hedging into account = total of the equivalent values of the underlying assets as a percentage of the fund assets.

## Asset Allocation

	As of 30.04.2024	
	EUR millions	%
Investment certificates		
EUR	53.0	99.56
Securities	53.0	99.56
Bank balances	0.2	0.44
Interest entitlements	0.0	0.00
Other deferred items	-0.0	-0.01
Fund assets	53.3	100.00

## Comparative Overview

Accounting year	Fund assets
2021/2022	53,401,809.87
2022/2023	51,157,845.54
2023/2024	53,271,022.37

General information about performance:

The performance of unit categories with no outstanding units at the end of the reporting period or no outstanding units during the reporting period is generally based on the dividend-adjusted performance of the overall fund. In these cases, the performance is not reported below.

When a unit category is issued during the reporting period, the performance and reinvestment are calculated from the point in time that the unit category is launched. Because of this and possible other fees and currency classes, the performance and reinvestment of this unit category differ from those of comparable unit categories.

The performance is determined assuming the reinvestment of all paid dividends and amounts at their nominal value on the day of disbursement.

Accounting year	Fund type	ISIN	Currency	Calculated value per unit	Dividend disbursement/payment	Re-investment	Development in per cent
2021/2022	Dividend-bearing units	AT0000703335	EUR	126.98	6.0000	18.5523	-0.61
2022/2023	Dividend-bearing units	AT0000703335	EUR	123.26	3.5000	0.0000	2.11
2023/2024	Dividend-bearing units	AT0000703335	EUR	131.38	3.6000	0.0000	9.70

Accounting year	Fund type	ISIN	Currency	Calculated value per unit	Dividend disbursement/payment	Re-investment	Development in per cent
2021/2022	Non-dividend-bearing units	AT0000703343	EUR	194.39	6.2019	31.2537	-0.63
2022/2023	Non-dividend-bearing units	AT0000703343	EUR	191.89	0.0309	0.0000	2.11
2023/2024	Non-dividend-bearing units	AT0000703343	EUR	210.44	0.0062	0.0000	9.68

Accounting year	Fund type	ISIN	Currency	Calculated value per unit	Dividend disbursement/payment	Re-investment	Development in per cent
2021/2022	KESSt-exempt non-dividend-bearing units	AT0000A0QQK1	EUR	204.36	-	39.2085	-0.63
2022/2023	KESSt-exempt non-dividend-bearing units	AT0000A0QQK1	EUR	208.69	-	0.0000	2.12
2023/2024	KESSt-exempt non-dividend-bearing units	AT0000A0QQK1	EUR	228.90	-	0.0000	9.68

## Disbursement/Payment

The following disbursement or payment will be made for the accounting year from 1 May 2023 to 30 April 2024. The coupon-paying bank is obligated to withhold capital gains tax from this disbursement if the respective investor is not exempt from the payment of this tax.

The disbursement or payment will be effected on or after 1 August 2024 at

Erste Group Bank AG, Vienna,

and the respective bank managing the Unit-holder's securities account.

Fund type	ISIN	Currency	Dividend disbursement/ payment		KES <sub>t</sub> with option declaration	KES <sub>t</sub> w/o option declaration	Reinvestment
Dividend-bearing units	AT0000703335	EUR	3.6000		0.0039	0.0039	0.0000
Non-dividend-bearing units	AT0000703343	EUR	0.0062		0.0062	0.0062	0.0000
KES <sub>t</sub> -exempt non-dividend-bearing units	AT0000A0QQK1	EUR	-	*	-	-	0.0000

\* Pursuant to the penultimate sentence of § 58 (2) of the Austrian Investment Fund Act, no capital gains tax will be paid.

# Income Statement and Changes in Fund Assets

## 1. Value Development over the Accounting Year (Fund Performance)

Calculation according to the OeKB method per unit in the unit currency not accounting for a front-end surcharge

The performance of unit categories with no outstanding units at the end of the reporting period or no outstanding units during the reporting period is generally based on the dividend-adjusted performance of the overall fund. In these cases, the “performance”, the “net earnings per unit”, and the “total value including (notional) units gained through disbursement/payment” are not reported in the following.

When a unit category is issued during the reporting period, the performance is calculated from the point in time that the unit category is launched. Because of this and possible other fees and currency classes, the performance of this unit category differs from that of comparable unit categories.

<b>AT0000703335 dividend-bearing units EUR</b>	
Unit value at the beginning of the reporting period (107,581.309 units)	123.26
Disbursement/payment on 28.07.2023 (corresponds to roughly 0.0292 units at a calculated value of 119.66)	3.5000
Unit value at the end of the reporting period (101,289.349 units)	131.38
Total value including (notional) units gained through dividend disbursement/payment	135.22
Net earnings per unit	11.96
<b>Value development of one unit in the period</b>	<b>9.70%</b>

<b>AT0000703343 non-dividend-bearing units EUR</b>	
Unit value at the beginning of the reporting period (192,481.744 shares)	191.89
Disbursement/payment on 28.07.2023 (corresponds to roughly 0.0002 units at a calculated value of 191.67)	0.0309
Unit value at the end of the reporting period (185,094.938 units)	210.44
Total value including (notional) units gained through dividend disbursement/payment	210.47
Net earnings per unit	18.58
<b>Value development of one unit in the period</b>	<b>9.68%</b>

<b>AT0000A0QQK1 KEST-exempt non-dividend-bearing units EUR</b>	
Unit value at the beginning of the reporting period (4,607.039 units)	208.69
Disbursement/payment	0.0000
Unit value at the end of the reporting period (4,418.723 units)	228.90
Total value including (notional) units gained through dividend disbursement/payment	228.90
Net earnings per unit	20.21
<b>Value development of one unit in the period</b>	<b>9.68%</b>



## 2. Fund Result

### a. Realised fund result

#### Ordinary fund result

##### Income (without profit or loss from price changes)

Interest income (excluding income adjustment) 14,945.64

Dividend income 633,862.23

Other income 8) 3,927.79

Total income (without profit or loss from price changes) 652,735.66

**Interest paid** - 1,384.03

##### Expenses

Fees paid to Investment Firm - 725,978.46

Costs for the financial auditor and tax consultation - 4,694.00

Publication costs - 12,782.49

Securities account fees - 25,235.59

Depository bank fees - 58,078.31

Costs for the external consultant 0.00

Performance fee -

Fee foreign-currency unit certificates 9) 0.00

Total expenses - 826,768.85

Compensation for management costs from sub-funds 1) 0.00

**Ordinary fund result (excluding income adjustment) - 175,417.22**

#### Realised profit or loss from price changes 2) 3)

Realised gains 4) 3,015,140.01

Realised losses 5) - 910,775.82

**Realised profit or loss from price changes (excluding income adjustment) 2,104,364.19**

**Realised fund result (excluding income adjustment) 1,928,946.97**

### b. Unrealised profit or loss from price changes 2) 3)

Changes in the unrealised profit or loss from price changes 7) 2,840,392.95

**Result for the reporting period 6) 4,769,339.92**

### c. Income adjustment

Income adjustment for income in the period - 10,045.70

Income adjustment for profit carried forward from dividend-bearing units - 279,778.34

**Overall fund result 4,479,515.88**

### **3. Changes in Fund Assets**

<b>Fund assets at the beginning of the reporting period</b>	<b>51,157,845.54</b>
<b>Disbursement/payment in the accounting year</b>	<b>- 374,427.90</b>
<b>Issue and redemption of units</b>	<b>- 1,991,911.15</b>
<b>Overall fund result</b>	
(The fund result is shown in detail under item 2.)	<b>4,479,515.88</b>
<b>Fund assets at the end of the reporting period</b>	<b><u>53,271,022.37</u></b>

- 1) Reimbursements (in the sense of commissions) paid by third parties are forwarded to the Fund after deduction of appropriate costs. Erste Group Bank AG receives 25% of the calculated commissions to cover administrative costs.
- 2) Realised profits and losses are not calculated precisely for the specific periods, which means that they, as is the case for the changes in the unrealised profit or loss, are not necessarily congruent with the changes in the value of the Fund in the accounting year.
- 3) Total profit or loss from price changes without income adjustment (realised profit or loss from price changes, without income adjustment, plus changes in the unrealised profit or loss): EUR 4,944,757.14.
- 4) Thereof profits from transactions with derivative financial instruments: EUR 0.00.
- 5) Thereof losses from transactions with derivative financial instruments: EUR 0.00.
- 6) The result for the accounting year includes explicitly reported transaction costs in the amount of EUR 36,648.98.
- 7) Thereof changes in unrealised gains EUR 2,367,336.83 and unrealised losses EUR 473,056.12.
- 8) The earnings reported under this item can be attributed to lending fees from securities lending transactions conducted with Erste Group Bank AG in the amount of EUR 0.00, to earnings from real estate funds in the amount of EUR 0.00, to other earnings in the amount of EUR 3,927.79, and to earnings from back-end commissions in the amount of EUR 0.00.
- 9) The Fund is charged a monthly fee per foreign-currency unit category for the management of the foreign-currency unit certificates.

# Statement of Assets and Liabilities as of 30 April 2024

(including changes in securities assets from 1 May 2023 to 30 April 2024)

Security designation	ISIN number	Purch./ additions	Sales/ disposals	Holding Units/nominal (nom. in 1,000, rounded)	Price	Value in EUR	% share of fund assets
<b>Investment certificates</b>							
<b>Investment certificates denominated in EUR</b>							
<b>Issue country Germany</b>							
ISH.S.EUR.LARGE 200 U.ETF	DE0005933980	53,000	67,000	61,000	52.500	3,202,500.00	6.01
Total issue country Germany						3,202,500.00	6.01
<b>Issue country Ireland</b>							
COMGEST GROWTH-EUR.IA EO	IE00B5WN3467	113,000	0	113,000	48.470	5,477,110.00	10.28
ISHSIII-C.M.E.U.E.EO ACC	IE00B4K48X80	112,000	0	112,000	76.990	8,622,880.00	16.19
JPM-EUROPE REI EQ A	IE00BF4G7183	215,000	0	215,000	42.095	9,050,425.00	16.99
Total issue country Ireland						23,150,415.00	43.46
<b>Issue country Luxembourg</b>							
AIS-AI MSCI EUR.UETFDREOA	LU1437015735	44,000	0	44,000	91.066	4,006,904.00	7.52
GS EUR.SUS.EQ.ICEO	LU0991964247	0	520	220	12,157.540	2,674,658.80	5.02
M+G(L)I1-E.S.V. CI(INE)EO	LU1797811236	0	232,000	363,000	15.641	5,677,719.30	10.66
UBS(L)KEY-EU.E.V.O.EOQACC	LU0421769745	28,000	0	28,000	193.910	5,429,480.00	10.19
XTR.MSCI EUROPE 1C	LU0274209237	40,000	16,800	101,200	87.910	8,896,492.00	16.70
Total issue country Luxembourg						26,685,254.10	50.09
Total investment certificates denominated in EUR						53,038,169.10	99.56
Total investment certificates						53,038,169.10	99.56

## Breakdown of fund assets

Transferable securities	53,038,169.10	99.56
Bank balances	236,639.86	0.44
Interest entitlements	755.46	0.00
Other deferred items	-4,542.05	-0.01
Fund assets	53,271,022.37	100.00

## Investor note:

The values of assets in illiquid markets may deviate from their actual selling prices.

Dividend-bearing units outstanding	AT0000703335	units	101,289.349
Value of dividend-bearing unit	AT0000703335	EUR	131.38
Non-dividend-bearing units outstanding	AT0000703343	units	185,094.938
Value of non-dividend-bearing unit	AT0000703343	EUR	210.44
KEST-exempt non-dividend-bearing units outstanding	AT0000A0QQK1	units	4,418.723
Value of KEST-exempt non-dividend-bearing unit	AT0000A0QQK1	EUR	228.90

The Fund is not permitted to engage in repurchase agreements pursuant to Regulation (EU) No. 2015/2365 (Regulation on Transparency of Securities Financing Transactions and of Reuse). For this reason, repurchase agreements were not employed.

No total return swaps pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2015/2365 (Regulation on Transparency of Securities Financing Transactions and of Reuse) were concluded for the Fund during the reporting period.

The Fund is not permitted to engage in securities lending agreements pursuant to Regulation (EU) No. 2015/2365 (Regulation on Transparency of Securities Financing Transactions and of Reuse). For this reason, securities lending agreements were not employed.

**Explanation on disclosure pursuant to Delegated Regulation (EU) No. 2016/2251 supplementing Regulation (EU) No. 648/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on OTC derivatives, central counterparties, and trade repositories with regard to regulatory technical standards for risk-mitigation techniques for OTC derivative contracts not cleared by a central counterparty:**

All OTC derivatives are traded through Erste Group Bank AG. For foreign currency futures contracts and foreign currency swap contracts that are not physically delivered, the collateral is swapped between the Fund and Erste Group Bank AG.

In the event of negative exposure to derivative futures contracts and foreign currency swap contracts that are not physically delivered, collateral in the form of cash or bonds is pledged to Erste Group Bank AG in accordance with the contractually agreed threshold.

In the event of positive exposure to derivative futures contracts and foreign currency swap contracts that are not physically delivered, EUR-denominated bonds from the national governments or central banks of the countries of the Eurozone are pledged by Erste Group Bank AG to the Fund in accordance with the contractually agreed threshold. A one-time discount of 4% is agreed with the counterparty for this collateral. In the event of regulatory requirements that stipulate a different discount or the provision of alternative collateral, these requirements are met.

**Purchases and sales of transferable securities in the reporting period not listed in the statement of assets and liabilities**

<b>Security designation</b>	<b>ISIN number</b>	<b>Purch./ additions Units/nominal (nom. in 1,000, rounded)</b>	<b>Sales/ disposals</b>
<b>Investment certificates</b>			
<b>Investment certificates denominated in EUR</b>			
<b>Issue country Ireland</b>			
HEPTAGON FD-EUR.F.EQ.CEEO	IE00BPT34575	0	27,000
ISHSIV-E.MSCI EU.QU.F.EOA	IE00BQN1K562	0	310,000
METZLER II-M.EU.DIV.SU. B	IE00BY02962	0	43,500
<b>Issue country Luxembourg</b>			
AIS-AIME SRIPAB UETFDREOA	LU1861137484	93,000	93,000
AIS-AM.MSCI EU.Q.F. EOC	LU1681041890	25,000	102,000
BNPPE.-E.QU.EU.UCEEO	LU1377382103	31,000	31,000
INVESCO-PAN.EU.FOC.EQ. ZA	LU1762222716	354,000	354,000
JPM-EUSSCEQ JPMIEOA	LU2076840235	11,000	11,000
LOYS-LOYS AKTIEN EUROPA I	LU1129459035	900	5,900

Vienna, 1 July 2024

Erste Asset Management GmbH  
Electronically signed

Inspection information: The electronic signatures of this document can be inspected at the website of Rundfunk und Telekom Regulierungs-GmbH (<https://www.signatur.rtr.at/de/vd/Pruefung.html>).

Note: This document was signed with two qualified electronic signatures. A qualified electronic signature has the same legal effect as a hand-written signature (Article 25 of Regulation [EU] No 910/2014 [eIDAS Regulation]).

## Remuneration Policy

### Remuneration paid to employees of Erste Asset Management GmbH in EUR (2022 financial year of Erste Asset Management GmbH)

No investment success bonuses are paid, and no other amounts are paid directly from the investment funds.

Number of employees as of 31.12.2022	279
Number of risk bearers in 2022	144
Fixed remuneration	21,036,836
Variable remuneration (bonuses)	5,725,006
<b>Total employee remuneration</b>	<b>26,761,842</b>
Thereof remuneration for managing directors	1,223,760
Thereof remuneration for managerial risk bearers	4,144,774
Thereof remuneration for risk bearers with control functions*	1,562,971
Thereof remuneration for other risk bearers	8,576,902
Thereof remuneration for employees in the same income bracket as managers and risk bearers due to the amount of their total remuneration	0
<b>Total remuneration for risk bearers</b>	<b>15,508,407</b>

\* Managers with control functions are reported in this group

### Principles governing performance-based remuneration components

The Management Company has adopted remuneration principles to prevent possible conflicts of interest and to ensure compliance with the standard rules of conduct when awarding remuneration to relevant persons.

Fixed salary components make up a large enough share of the total remuneration of all employees of the Management Company that a variable remuneration policy can be applied on an individualised basis.

The total remuneration (fixed and variable components) is governed by the principle of balance and is linked to sustainability so that the acceptance of excessive risks is not rewarded. Therefore, the variable remuneration forms no more than a balanced portion of the total remuneration awarded to an employee.

The performance-based remuneration components serve the short-term and long-term interests of the Management Company and contribute to preventing risky behaviour. The performance-based remuneration components take into account individual performance as well as the profitability of the Management Company.

The size of the bonus pool is calculated based on the bonus potential that can be applied to the different employee categories. Bonus potential is a percentage of the fixed annual gross remuneration. The bonus potential can be no more than 100% of the fixed annual gross remuneration. The bonus pool is adjusted depending on the success of the Management Company. The personal bonus is linked to individual performance. The total of personal bonuses is limited by the size of the bonus pool after deduction of penalties.

The performance-based payments are capped at 100% of the annual gross remuneration for all employees, including the material risk bearers (according to the definition in the remuneration policy) and managing directors of the Management Company.

The remuneration system is made up of three components:

- 1) Fixed remuneration
- 2) Variable remuneration
- 3) Fringe benefits

The bonus potential is based on the fixed annual gross remuneration. The target agreements concluded with the employees contain qualitative and/or quantitative objectives. The payment of performance-based remuneration components is subject to a minimum profitability level for the Management Company and to performance targets.

Sixty per cent of the performance-based remuneration components are paid immediately; for employees who are involved directly in fund and portfolio management, 50% of this is paid immediately in cash and 50% is paid one year later in the form of non-cash instruments. The remaining 40% of the performance-based remuneration components are retained and paid out over a period of three years, with 50% of this also being paid in cash and 50% in the form of non-cash instruments for employees who are involved directly in fund and portfolio management. The non-cash instruments can consist of units in an investment fund that is administered by the Management Company, equivalent holdings or instruments linked to units, or equivalent non-cash instruments. Based on the principle of proportionality, the Management Company has set a materiality threshold below which there is no incentive to enter into inappropriate risks, for which reason there is no need to make delayed payment or payment in the form of a non-cash instrument. Other non-cash benefits are fringe benefits that are not associated with performance but with a specific position (e.g. company car) or that apply for all employees (e.g. holiday).

The Supervisory Board of the Management Company has set up a Remuneration Committee to ensure that the remuneration policy and its application are independently assessed. This committee consists of the following persons: Rudolf Sagmeister, Harald Gasser (remuneration expert), and Heinrich Hubert Reiner.

The complete remuneration policy of the Management Company can be viewed at [http://www.erste-am.at/de/private\\_anleger/wer-sind-wir/investmentprozess](http://www.erste-am.at/de/private_anleger/wer-sind-wir/investmentprozess).

The last audit of compliance with the requirements of the remuneration policy by the Supervisory Board in March 2023 revealed no deviations. There were also no material findings during the last audit by the Internal Auditing department.

No material changes were made to the remuneration policy during the past accounting year.

# Audit Report\*

## Statement on the annual report

### Audit opinion

We have audited the annual report prepared by Erste Asset Management GmbH, Vienna, for the fund under its management

ERSTE BEST OF EUROPE  
Jointly owned fund pursuant to the InvFG

consisting of the statement of assets and liabilities as of 30 April 2024, the income statement for the accounting year ending on this date, and the other information specified in Annex I Schedule B of the Austrian Investment Fund Act 2011 (InvFG 2011).

Based on the findings of our audit, we believe that the annual report satisfies the legal requirements and provides a true and fair view of the assets and financial position as of 30 April 2024 and of the earnings position of the fund for the accounting year ending on this date in accordance with Austrian commercial law and the provisions of the InvFG 2011.

### Basis for the audit opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with § 49 (5) InvFG 2011 and in accordance with the Austrian principles of good auditing. These principles require the application of the International Standards on Auditing (ISA). Our responsibilities under these regulations and standards are described in the section “Responsibilities of the auditor in auditing the annual report” of our audit report. We are independent from the company as specified by the Austrian commercial and industry regulations and fulfilled our other professional obligations in accordance with these requirements. We feel that the audit evidence that we obtained up to the date of the audit certificate is sufficient and suitable to serve as a basis for our audit opinion as of that date.

### Other information

The legal representatives are responsible for the other information. The other information includes all information in the annual report except for the statement of assets and liabilities, the income statement, the other information specified in Annex I Schedule B of the InvFG 2011, and the audit report.

Our audit opinion does not cover this other information, and we provide no assurance whatsoever for this other information.

In the context of our review of the annual report, we are responsible for reading this other information and assessing whether the other information contains material inconsistencies with the annual report or with the information gathered by us during our audit, or appears to contain other manners of material misstatements.

Should we come to the conclusion on the basis of the work completed with the other information received before the date of the audit report that this other information contains a material misstatement, we are required to report about this fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.



### **Management and supervisory board responsibilities relating to the annual report**

The legal representatives are responsible for preparing the annual report and for ensuring that this report provides a true and fair view of the assets and financial and earnings position of the fund in accordance with Austrian commercial law and the provisions of the InvFG 2011. The legal representatives are also responsible for implementing the internal controls that they deem necessary to facilitate the preparation of an annual report that is free from material misstatements due to error or fraud.

The supervisory board is responsible for monitoring the accounting process of the company as it applies to the fund under its management.

### **Responsibilities of the auditor in auditing the annual report**

Our goals are to ascertain with sufficient certainty whether the annual report contains material misstatements due to error or fraud and to issue an audit certificate that includes our audit opinion. Sufficient certainty is a high degree of certainty but no guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Austrian standards on good auditing, which require the application of the ISA, will always discover material misstatements that may be present. Misstatements can result from fraud or errors and are considered to be material when it can be reasonably expected that individual misstatements or a combination of misstatements can influence economic decisions made by readers on the basis of this annual report.

As part of an audit conducted in accordance with the Austrian standards on good auditing, which require the application of the ISA, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism during the entire audit process.

In addition:

- We identify and assess the risks of material misstatements in the annual report due to error or fraud, plan audit steps in response to these risks, perform the planned audit steps, and collect audit evidence that is sufficient and suitable to form a basis for our audit opinion. The risk that a material misstatement resulting from fraud will remain undiscovered is greater than for misstatements resulting from error because fraudulent activity can include collusion, the falsification of documents, intentional incomplete or misleading representations, and the circumvention of internal controls.
- We familiarise ourselves with the internal control systems that are relevant for the audit to plan audit steps that are appropriate under the specific circumstances, but not so as to state an opinion on the effectiveness of the company's internal control system.

- We assess the appropriateness of the accounting methods applied by the legal representatives and the reasonableness of the estimates made by the legal representatives in the accounts and of the associated information.
- We assess the overall presentation, the structure, and the content of the annual report including the figures as well as whether the annual report depicts the underlying transactions and events in a manner that provides a true and fair view.
- We discuss the planned scope and scheduling of the audit and any material audit findings, including material defects that we discover in the internal control system during our audit, with the supervisory board, among other issues.

Vienna, 12 July 2024

**Ernst & Young**

Wirtschaftsprüfungsgesellschaft m.b.H.

**Mag. Andrea Stippl m.p.**  
(Certified Public Accountant)

**MMag. Roland Unterweger m.p.**  
(Certified Public Accountant)

- \* In the case of the publication or dissemination of the annual report in a form that deviates from the confirmed (unabridged German) version (e.g. an abridged version or translation), reference may not be made to the audit report or our audit without our approval.

## **Annex Sustainability-Related Information**

### **Information pursuant to Article 7 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852 (Taxonomy Regulation):**

The investments underlying this financial product do not take into account the EU criteria for environmentally sustainable economic activities.

## Fund Rules

### ERSTE BEST OF EUROPE

The Fund Rules for **ERSTE BEST OF EUROPE**, jointly owned fund pursuant to the **Austrian Investment Fund Act (Investmentfondsgesetz; InvFG) 2011 as amended**, were approved by the Austrian Financial Market Authority (FMA).

The Fund is an undertaking for collective investment in transferable securities (UCITS) and is managed by Erste Asset Management GmbH (the “Management Company” in the following), which has its registered office in Vienna.

#### Article 1 Fund Units

The joint ownership of the fund assets is evidenced by certificates having the characteristics of a bearer unit.

The unit certificates are depicted in separate global certificates for each unit category. For this reason, individual unit certificates cannot be issued.

#### Article 2 Depositary Bank (Depositary)

The depositary bank (depositary) appointed for the Fund is Erste Group Bank AG, Vienna.

The payment offices for unit certificates are the depositary bank (depositary) and any other payment offices named in the prospectus.

#### Article 3 Investment Instruments and Principles

**The following assets may be selected for the Fund in accordance with the InvFG.**

**The Fund invests predominantly, in other words at least 51% of its assets, in units in investment funds that, according to their rules, predominantly purchase equities or comparable assets or that are categorised as an equity fund or as comparable to an equity fund by at least one internationally recognised organisation, regardless of the country in which the respective management company is registered.**

**The instruments that are selected must predominantly be investment funds that invest primarily in**

- **Equities from issuers registered in Europe,**
- **Equities listed on a securities exchange in Europe or traded on a regularly operating securities market in Europe.**

**In addition, the Fund may also purchase a limited volume of individual securities.**

**The fund assets are invested in the following instruments in accordance with the investment focus described above.**

**The Fund may invest in units in investment funds with investment restrictions that deviate from those of the Fund in terms of the investment focus described above and the restrictions regarding investment instruments defined below. This will not impair compliance with the investment focus described above at any time.**

##### a) **Transferable securities**

Transferable securities (including securities with embedded derivative financial instruments) may comprise **up to 49%** of the fund assets.

##### b) **Money market instruments**

Money market instruments may comprise **up to 49%** of the fund assets.

##### c) **Transferable securities and money market instruments**

The Fund may purchase transferable securities and money market instruments that are not fully paid up as well as subscription rights for these types of instruments and other financial instruments that are not fully paid up amounting to a **maximum of 10%** of the fund assets.

Transferable securities and money market instruments may be purchased for the Fund when they meet the criteria regarding listing or trading on a regulated market or a securities exchange pursuant to the InvFG.

Transferable securities and money market instruments that do not meet the criteria described in the previous paragraph may comprise **up to 10%** of the fund assets **in total**.

**d) Units in investment funds**

Units in investment funds (UCITS, UCI) may comprise **up to 20%** of the fund assets per individual issue and may comprise **up to 100% in aggregate total**, provided that the target funds themselves (UCITS, UCI) **do not invest more than 10%** of their fund assets in units of other investment funds.

Units in UCIs may make up **no more than 30%** of the fund assets.

**e) Derivative financial instruments**

Derivative financial instruments can be used as part of the investment strategy and for hedging purposes, and may comprise **up to 49%** of the fund assets.

**f) Risk measurement method(s) of the Fund**

The Fund applies the following risk measurement method: **commitment approach**

The commitment value is determined according to § 3 of the 4th FMA Regulation on Risk Calculation and Reporting of Derivative Instruments (4. Derivate-Risikoberechnungs- und MeldeV) as amended.

**g) Demand deposits or deposits with the right to be withdrawn**

Demand deposits and deposits with the right to be withdrawn with a maximum term of 12 months may comprise **up to 49%** of the fund assets.

There are no minimum bank balance requirements.

However, in the course of the restructuring of the fund portfolio and/or in the case of the justified expectation of impending losses experienced by units in investment funds, the Fund can hold a proportion of units in investment funds below the specified limit and a higher proportion of demand deposits or deposits with the right to be withdrawn with a maximum term of 12 months.

**h) Acceptance of short-term loans**

The Management Company may accept short-term loans for the account of the Fund **up to an amount of 10%** of the total fund assets.

**i) Repurchase agreements**

Does not apply.

**j) Securities lending**

Does not apply.

Investment instruments may only be purchased for the entire Fund and not for individual unit categories or groups of unit categories.

This does not apply to currency hedging transactions, however. Such transactions can also be concluded solely for a single unit category. Expenses and income resulting from currency hedging transactions shall be allocated solely to the respective unit category.

#### **Article 4 Issue and Redemption Procedure**

The unit value shall be calculated in the currency of the respective unit category.

The unit value is calculated at the same time as the issue and redemption price.

#### **Issue of units and front-end surcharge**

The issue price will be calculated and units issued on each Austrian exchange trading day with the exception of bank holidays.

The issue price shall be made up of the unit value plus a surcharge per unit amounting to **up to 4.0%** to cover the costs incurred by the Management Company in issuing the unit, rounded up to the next equivalent sub-unit of the currency unit specified for the respective unit category in the prospectus.

The Management Company shall be entitled to apply a sliding front-end surcharge scale at its own discretion.

There is no limit on the issue of units in principle. However, the Management Company reserves the right to temporarily or permanently suspend the issue of unit certificates.

### **Redemption of units and back-end commission**

The redemption price will be calculated and units redeemed on each Austrian exchange trading day with the exception of bank holidays.

The redemption price is the unit value rounded down to the next equivalent sub-unit of the currency unit specified for the respective unit category in the prospectus. No back-end commission will be charged.

Upon request by the Unit-holder, his units shall be redeemed at the current redemption price in return for the unit certificate.

### **Article 5 Accounting Year**

The accounting year of the Fund is from 1 May to 30 April.

### **Article 6 Unit Categories and Use of Earnings**

The Fund features three different unit categories and the corresponding certificates: dividend-bearing units, non-dividend-bearing units with capital gains tax payment, and non-dividend-bearing units without capital gains tax payment, with certificates being issued for one unit each and also for fractional units.

Various unit categories may be issued for this Fund. The creation of unit categories and the issue of units of a specific category shall be decided at the discretion of the Management Company.

#### **Use of earnings for dividend-bearing units**

The earnings generated during the accounting year (interest and dividends) less all costs can be distributed as deemed appropriate by the Management Company. Dividend disbursement may be omitted in the interests of the Unit-holders. Dividends may also be disbursed at the discretion of the Management Company from earnings generated by the sale of fund assets, including subscription rights. Disbursements of fund assets and interim dividends may be paid. The fund assets may in no case fall below the legally stipulated minimum volume for termination as a result of dividend disbursements.

The amounts shall be paid to the holders of dividend-bearing units **on or after 1 August** of the following accounting year. The remaining amount shall be carried forward.

An amount calculated in accordance with the InvFG must also be paid out **on or after 1 August** to cover the capital gains tax assessed by the tax authorities on the dividend-equivalent earnings from the fund units unless the Management Company provides suitable proof from the banks managing the corresponding securities accounts that the unit certificates can only be held by Unit-holders who are not subject to Austrian personal income tax or corporation tax or who meet the conditions for exemption from capital gains tax according to § 94 of the Austrian Income Tax Act (Einkommensteuergesetz) at the time of payment.

#### **Use of earnings for non-dividend-bearing units with capital gains tax payment (non-dividend-bearing units)**

The earnings generated by the Fund during the accounting year less all costs will not be paid out. In the case of non-dividend-bearing units, an amount calculated in accordance with the InvFG must be paid out **on or after 1 August** to cover the capital gains tax assessed by the tax authorities on the dividend-equivalent earnings from the fund units unless the Management Company provides suitable proof from the banks managing the corresponding securities accounts that the unit certificates can only be held by Unit-holders who are not subject to Austrian personal income tax or corporation tax or who meet the conditions for exemption from capital gains tax according to § 94 of the Austrian Income Tax Act (Einkommensteuergesetz) at the time of payment.

**Use of earnings for non-dividend-bearing units without capital gains tax payment (KESt-exempt non-dividend-bearing units)**

The earnings generated by the Fund during the accounting year less all costs will not be paid out. No payment pursuant to the InvFG will be made. The reference date for the exemption from KESt payment for the profit for the year for the purposes of the InvFG shall be **1 August** of the following accounting year.

The Management Company shall provide suitable proof from the banks managing the corresponding securities accounts that the unit certificates could only be held by Unit-holders who are not subject to Austrian personal income tax or corporation tax or who met the conditions for exemption from capital gains tax according to § 94 of the Austrian Income Tax Act (Einkommensteuergesetz) at the time of payment.

If these requirements are not met at the time of payment, the amount calculated pursuant to the InvFG must be paid out by the credit institution managing the respective securities account.

**Article 7**  
**Management Fee, Compensation for Expenses, Liquidation Fee**

The Management Company shall receive an **annual** fee for its administrative activities amounting to **up to 1.44%** of the fund assets as calculated and accrued on the basis of the daily fund volume. The fee will be charged to the fund assets once per month.

The Management Company shall be entitled to compensation for all expenses incurred in the administration of the Fund.

The Management Company shall be entitled to apply a sliding management fee scale at its own discretion.

The costs for the introduction of new unit categories for existing investment funds shall be assessed against the unit price of the new unit categories.

Upon liquidation of the Fund, the party processing the liquidation shall receive a fee in the amount of **0.5%** of the fund assets.

**Further information and details about this Fund can be found in the prospectus.**

**Annex to the Fund Rules**

**List of exchanges with official trading and organised markets**

(As of October 2021)

**1. Exchanges with official trading and organised markets in the Member States of the EEA as well as exchanges in European countries outside of the EEA considered to be equivalent to regulated markets**

Every Member State must maintain a current list of the authorised markets within its territory. This list must be submitted to the other Member States and the Commission.

According to this provision, the Commission is required to publish a list of the regulated markets registered with it by the Member States once per year.

Because of lower entry barriers and specialisation in different trading segments, the list of “regulated markets” is subject to significant changes. For this reason, the Commission will publish an up-to-date version of the list on its official website in addition to the annual publication of a list in the Official Journal of the European Union.

**1.1. The currently valid list of regulated markets can be found at**

[https://registers.esma.europa.eu/publication/searchRegister?core=esma\\_registers\\_upreg \\*](https://registers.esma.europa.eu/publication/searchRegister?core=esma_registers_upreg)

**1.2. The following exchanges are included in the list of regulated markets:**

1.2.1. Luxembourg: Euro MTF Luxembourg

**1.3. Recognised markets in the EEA according to § 67 (2) 2 InvFG:**

Markets in the EEA that have been classified as recognised markets by the competent supervisory authorities.

**2. Exchanges in European countries outside of the EEA**

2.1.	Bosnia and Herzegovina:	Sarajevo, Banja Luka
2.2.	Montenegro:	Podgorica
2.3.	Russia:	Moscow Exchange
2.4.	Switzerland:	SIX Swiss Exchange AG, BX Swiss AG
2.5.	Serbia:	Belgrade
2.6.	Turkey:	Istanbul (only “National Market” on the stock market)
2.7.	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:	Cboe Europe Equities Regulated Market – Integrated Book Segment, London Metal Exchange, Cboe Europe Equities Regulated Market – Reference Price Book Segment, Cboe Europe Equities Regulated Market – Off-Book Segment, London Stock Exchange Regulated Market (derivatives), NEX Exchange Main Board (non-equity), London Stock Exchange Regulated Market, NEX Exchange Main Board (equity), Euronext London Regulated Market, ICE FUTURES EUROPE, ICE FUTURES EUROPE – AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS DIVISION, ICE FUTURES EUROPE – FINANCIAL PRODUCTS DIVISION, ICE FUTURES EUROPE – EQUITY PRODUCTS DIVISION, and Gibraltar Stock Exchange

**3. Exchanges in non-European countries**

3.1.	Australia:	Sydney, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth
3.2.	Argentina:	Buenos Aires
3.3.	Brazil:	Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo

\*) To open the list, select “Regulated market” under “Entity type” in the column on the left side of the page and then click “Search” (or “Show table columns” and “Update”). The link can be changed by the ESMA.



3.4.	Chile:	Santiago
3.5.	China:	Shanghai Stock Exchange, Shenzhen Stock Exchange
3.6.	Hongkong:	Hongkong Stock Exchange
3.7.	India:	Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal
3.8.	Indonesia:	Jakarta
3.9.	Israel:	Tel Aviv
3.10.	Japan:	Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, Fukuoka, Sapporo
3.11.	Canada:	Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal
3.12.	Colombia:	Bolsa de Valores de Colombia
3.13.	Korea:	Korea Exchange (Seoul, Busan)
3.14.	Malaysia:	Kuala Lumpur, Bursa Malaysia Berhad
3.15.	Mexiko:	Mexiko City
3.16.	New Zealand:	Wellington, Auckland
3.17.	Peru:	Bolsa de Valores de Lima
3.18.	Philippines:	Philippine Stock Exchange
3.19.	Singapore:	Singapore Stock Exchange
3.20.	South Africa:	Johannesburg
3.21.	Taiwan:	Taipei
3.22.	Thailand:	Bangkok
3.23.	USA:	New York, NYCE American, New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, Cincinnati, Nasdaq
3.24.	Venezuela:	Caracas
3.25.	Vereingte Arab Emirates:	Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange (ADX)

#### **4. Organised markets in countries outside of the European Union**

4.1.	Japan:	over the counter market
4.2.	Canada:	over the counter market
4.3.	Korea:	over the counter market
4.4.	Switzerland:	over the counter market of the members of the International Capital Market Association (ICMA), Zurich
4.5.	USA:	over the counter market (under the supervision of an authority such as the SEC, FINRA, etc.)

#### **5. Exchanges with futures and options markets**

5.1.	Argentina:	Bolsa de Comercio de Buenos Aires
5.2.	Australia:	Australian Options Market, Australian Securities Exchange (ASX)
5.3.	Brazil:	Bolsa Brasileira de Futuros, Bolsa de Mercadorias & Futuros, Rio de Janeiro Stock Exchange, Sao Paulo Stock Exchange
5.4.	Hong Kong:	Hong Kong Futures Exchange Ltd.
5.5.	Japan:	Osaka Securities Exchange, Tokyo International Financial Futures Exchange, Tokyo Stock Exchange
5.6.	Canada:	Montreal Exchange, Toronto Futures Exchange
5.7.	Korea:	Korea Exchange (KRX)
5.8.	Mexiko:	Mercado Mexicano de Derivados
5.9.	New Zealand:	New Zealand Futures & Options Exchange
5.10.	Philippines:	Manila International Futures Exchange
5.11.	Singapore:	The Singapore Exchange Limited (SGX)

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## ERSTE BEST OF EUROPE

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- |       |               |   |
|-------|---------------|---|
| 5.12. | South Africa: | Johannesburg Stock Exchange (JSE), South African Futures Exchange (SAFEX)   |
| 5.13. | Turkey:       | TurkDEX   |
| 5.14. | USA:          | NYCE American, Chicago Board Options Exchange, Chicago Board of Trade, Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Comex, FINEX, ICE Future US Inc. New York, Nasdaq, New York Stock Exchange, Boston Options Exchange (BOX) |

**Note regarding the data used**

The sections Income Statement and Changes in Fund Assets, Statement of Assets and Liabilities and Details and Explanation of Tax Treatment in this annual report were prepared on the basis of data from the depositary bank for the Fund.

**The data and information provided by the depositary bank were collected with the greatest possible care and were checked solely for plausibility.**

**Note for retail funds:**

Unless indicated otherwise, source: Erste Asset Management GmbH. Our languages of communication are German and English. The full prospectus as well as the complete Information for Investors pursuant to § 21 AIFMG (and any amendments to these documents) were published in accordance with the provisions of the InvFG 2011 and AIFMG in conjunction with the InvFG 2011, and the current versions can be accessed in the “Mandatory Publications” section of the website [www.erste-am.com](http://www.erste-am.com) and are available free of charge at the registered office of the Investment Firm and at the head office of the depositary bank. The exact date of most recent publication of the prospectus and Information for Investors pursuant to § 21 AIFMG, the languages in which the key information documents are available, and any additional locations where the documents can be obtained can be viewed on the website [www.erste-am.at](http://www.erste-am.at).

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