

Elections to the EMN aisbl Board of Directors October 2018

Description of the candidate organisation

[good.bee Credit](#) (nominating entity) is a microfinance company in Romania, established as non-banking financial institution in 2009, since 2013 full owned by Erste Group. Its main objective is to ensure the access to tailored financial services and advisory for excluded small entrepreneurs from rural and small urban areas.

good.bee Credit is one of the main players in the Romanian microfinance market with a country-wide coverage. It employs around 80 people and operates a branch network of 22 branches throughout Romania, covering all regions and over half of the 41 counties.

Since its inception it provided almost 10.000 microloans worth more than 70 mln EUR creating (based on the regular impact surveys) positive change on clients' business development, economic situation and life quality but also on employment and prosperity in rural communities.

In November 2017 good.bee Credit received the Award on the European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision from the European Commission as the first institution in Romania, and one of the first in Europe.

[Erste Group](#) was founded in 1819 as the first Austrian savings bank that opened the doors of banks, providing basic financial services for ordinary people. It went public in 1997 with a strategy to expand its retail business into Central and Eastern Europe and has grown to one of the largest financial services providers in the Eastern part of the EU in terms of clients (16,5 mln) and total assets (230 bn EUR).

Erste is involved in Microfinance from its very beginning; actually it was founded in today's terms as a microfinance bank. Over the last 15 years Erste has been implementing within its Social banking division multiple microfinance projects such as [Zweite Sparkasse](#), dedicated bank in Austria supporting people without access to banking services, [Mikrokredit program](#) funding & training unemployed people starting business in Austria or [good.bee Credit](#), microfinance company providing loans to small farmers in rural Romania.

[Social banking](#) programs recently implemented in all Erste network banks (Austria, Czech republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Serbia and Croatia) focus on improving financial stability and inclusion for low-income people; enabling job creation and self-employment via financing starting and micro

entrepreneurs and fostering development and enlarging impact of social entrepreneurs and non-profits.

Bio-description of the organisation's representative

Peter Surek (42) is a retail and social banker with 20 years of experience in different CEE markets. After graduation at the University of Economics in Bratislava, Slovakia, he started his career in Tatra banka (Raiffeisen Bank International subsidiary in Slovakia) from the bottom and spent 8 years going through almost all the positions in the retail branch network - from teller to regional director. Within his engagement with Raiffeisen Bank International he was managing multiple projects in Austria, Albania and Croatia and in 2009-2011 he co-founded the new direct bank, leading products and business processes development.

In 2011 he joined Erste Group as the head of the new established Retail MIS unit. After getting to know the social background of Erste, he decided to leave his retail career for developing social banking in the CEE countries. Since May 2013 he leads the new created unit Social banking development, reporting directly to Erste Group CEO. Additionally he holds CEO position in good.bee holding and chairs the Supervisory Board of good.bee credit, a microfinance institution in Romania. Within the last 6 years he has consistently implemented social banking in all Erste markets building thus Europe-wide unique platform for financial inclusion.

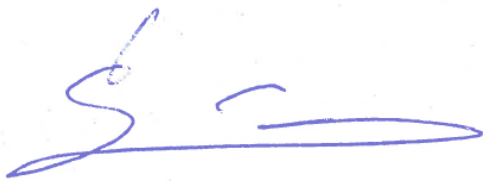
Candidature Motivation

I believe the biggest asset I can bring to EMN members and its Board is the unique cultural and business experience of working in East Europe and West Europe, different perspective of being responsible for banking operation and also MFI, running pro-profit retail banking business and also pro-impact social banking activities and lastly driving change in traditional banking group and also founding a new direct / internet bank.

My ambition is to build in EMN bridges between West and East Europe, between MFIs and banks, between social finance and microfinance and thus help to improve the overall microfinance ecosystem in Europe. I believe microfinance needs to be more connected to the social / sustainable finance and the impact investing movement not to be seen as a solution of 20th century. This can improve not only the flows of debt or equity finance for the sector but also the perception of public authorities and general public on microfinance.

The further development (actually also survival) of MFIs is inevitably connected with technological upgrade and digital innovation. Despite the competition among the members the sector needs to find ways for collaboration where EMN can play a major role. In this topic I can bring the expertise from one of the leading digital banks in CEE region and the personal experience from setting-up a direct bank.

And last but not least I can offer my genuine passion for financial inclusion, for helping people to stand financially on their feet which led me to leave the career in mainstream finance for developing social banking.



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