



Brussels, 29 January 2018

KBC provides clarification about trend in number of bank branches in Belgium

Change in number of (staffed) KBC and CBC retail bank branches in Belgium

31 December 2016	681
31 December 2017	612

These figures relate to staffed branches for retail clients of KBC and CBC. They, therefore, exclude private banking branches, corporate banking branches and fully self-service branches.

- Private individuals and SMEs also have access to KBC Live (for remote bank-insurance and with extended opening hours), a network of self-service branches and an extensive digital offering via KBC Mobile and KBC Touch.
- KBC pursues an omnichannel strategy, where clients decide how they want to contact KBC (physical branch, KBC Mobile, KBC Touch, KBC Live or the website). It has noticed that the channel being increasingly and more quickly chosen is the digital one.

Total number of branches (staffed and self-service branches) for private individuals and SMEs

	1/01/2016	1/01/2017	1/01/2018
Vlaanderen	664	619	598
Bemand	600	538	488
Automaten	64	81	110
KBC Brussels	49	44	39
Bemand	47	42	36
Automaten	2	2	3
KBC totaal	713	663	637
Bemand	647	580	524
Automaten	66	83	113

Including the 88 CBC branches in Wallonia, there were 801, 751 and 725 bank branches in Belgium in the years given in the table (CBC does not have any self-service branches).

Besides bank branches, KBC has a KBC Live branch in each Flemish province for remote bank-insurance and with extended opening hours:

- The number of advisory discussions at KBC Live is increasing systematically and is now around 4 000 per month. There were almost 50 000 remote advisory discussions between 1 June 2016 and the end of November 2017.
- The number of video chats was around 2 000 per month for 2017 and that number is increasing (it was heading towards 3 000 per month in the closing months of 2017).

- The number of **ordinary chat sessions** was around 2 500 per month in the first half of 2017, but had soared to roughly **7 500 per month** from September on.
- **More than 7 000 non-life insurance policies and almost 3 000 home loans were sold through KBC Live in 2017.**
- **KBC Live boasts extended opening hours:** it can be contacted between 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. on weekdays and between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturdays.
- A total of **345 FTEs were employed** at KBC Live at year-end 2017 (compared with 254 at the end of the second quarter), a large number of whom **(80%) have come from the branch network**. That number is still increasing and we are currently looking to engage mainly insurance experts and client advisers.

Regarding the digital evolution at CBC:

CBC's branch network has remained quite stable over the years and the company is also vigorously pursuing a digital strategy.

- Like KBC, CBC has been running a successful CBC Live facility since June 2016 and also boasts a 'virtual branch' with more than 8 000 clients.
- CBC Mobile Banking and CBC Touch (for online banking) have virtually the same functionalities as their KBC counterparts and are widely used by clients (over the past eight months, the number of clients signing up to CBC Mobile has increased by 22%, while CBC Live has dealt with roughly 5 000 advisory discussions per month, which is fully in line with the figures for KBC).
- Digital innovations and functionalities developed by KBC are usually rolled out in the Dutch-speaking region and French-speaking region (via CBC) of Belgium.

An important distinction between KBC and CBC is that CBC does not position itself as a mass retail bank, but instead targets primarily SMEs and more affluent private individuals. Even though this strategy makes CBC a little less conspicuous in the banking landscape, it does not mean that it is going through a different digital evolution than KBC. In fact, CBC pursues the same client-oriented omnichannel approach as KBC.

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