



Brussels, 24 October 2024, 8.00 a.m.

## **SIA Partners names KBC Mobile ‘Best Banking App in the World’**

In a comparative study<sup>1</sup> in which 140 banks from 22 countries were surveyed, independent international research agency, Sia Partners, has named KBC Mobile the best mobile banking app in the world. KBC has always been among the absolute frontrunners in the annual Sia survey in previous years.

Sia Partners’ Global Mobile Banking Benchmark is the most complete and in-depth study of banking apps on the market and provides a comprehensive assessment of the international mobile banking landscape.

KBC Mobile owes its pole position to:

- the extensive range of banking and insurance products and services it offers (both traditional and innovative solutions, including the options offered in the areas of mobility, shared mobility, housing and energy).
- the completeness and depth of the services provided (including the amount of information that can be found in the app, the help and tips provided by digital assistant Kate, and facilities in the app such as the ability to apply for and get a loan, submit claims, etc.)
- and last but not least its high degree of user-friendliness

Sia ranked the surveyed apps on the basis of 95 criteria spread across three areas, namely functionalities, user experience and app store ratings.

Sia’s conclusion is clear: *‘KBC Mobile is a high-performance and efficient banking app for everyday needs and one of the most innovative with some interesting extras. The app surprises clients with its wide range of functionalities and the virtual assistance provided by Kate.’*

The jury report specifically mentions the following strengths:

- Everyday banking, including a high-performance process to become a customer and the wide range of payment systems offered, such as Payconiq and Wero
- Personal Finance Management, such as tracking income and expenditure easily or tracking subscriptions where Kate also makes personalised proposals
- App users can ask a variety of questions directly to the digital assistant Kate, who will help customers solve their problems (for example, by providing detailed information and a map on the location of branches and ATMs)

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<sup>1</sup> Sia Partners’ 2024 Global Mobile Banking Benchmark

**Johan Thijs, KBC Group's CEO** sees this top ranking as the just reward for years of hard work and the result of a solid company culture. *'The fact that KBC Mobile heads Sia's world rankings is down to a decade of innovating, growing and above all, focusing on our customers, combined with the tireless efforts of so many Team Blue members. For me, this award not only puts Belgium in the spotlight, it also acknowledges the value of the mobile apps we offer our customers in all our core markets. Our Pearl+ company culture underpins our inspiration to continuously come up with new ideas, which we implement, adjust and adopt throughout the KBC group regardless of where they come from geographically, so that they reflect the precise expectations of the local customer. I am particularly pleased with the reference to Kate, our personal digital assistant who is at the heart of our data-driven organisation and who guides our physical and digital interactions with customers. Kate enriches our services and customer advice by providing relevant insights and enables our staff to work more efficiently and effectively by dealing with simple questions in their place. Our Digital First strategy – the backbone of our strategy from the very start – has once again demonstrated its added value in this regard and illustrates the innovative strength we can build on as a group.'*

**Karin Van Hoecke, General Manager for Digital Transformation & Data at KBC Belgium** added: *'I am immensely proud that Sia Partners recognises KBC Mobile as the best app in the world. You would be pushed to find any better reward for the boundless commitment of the teams behind KBC Mobile and the unflinching efforts of our colleagues in the network who assist and encourage customers to use the app. KBC Mobile is a pioneer in the provision of quality services not only in the financial field, but also in other areas thanks to our advanced range of additional services. The aim of these innovative solutions is to make our customers' lives easier and to save them time and money, something they clearly appreciate. The valuable feedback from our 2.3 million customers and app users makes KBC Mobile the most complete, user-friendly app around, one which, incidentally, is also used by more than 150 000 non-customers.'*

### **Transparent, sound and clear methodology used by Sia**

Sia Partners' Global Mobile Banking Benchmark is the most complete and in-depth study of banking apps in the market and provides a comprehensive assessment of the international mobile banking landscape. The objective methodology is designed to identify the leading banking apps in the world. Leading retail banking apps are assessed according to standard and advanced functionalities, user experience and app store ratings. International best practices, strengths, problem areas, trends, future expectations and informing banks about the competitive digital environment are also pinpointed.

Artificial intelligence, ESG and accessibility are major disruptive forces within the traditional banking market. The rapid digitalisation of banking services around the world is driven by many different factors, including the emergence of new technologies, higher customer expectations, newcomers, digital currencies and developments in regulatory requirements. Sia Partners therefore believes that three forces will have a significant impact on the future shape of digital banking. These are AI, ESG and accessibility.

### **About KBC Mobile and Kate's role**

KBC launched its first mobile banking app on [19 September 2011](#). Today, KBC Mobile is central to the customer approach adopted by KBC and the banking app has become the reference in the market.

In recent years, KBC Mobile has undergone a dramatic transition, changing from a simple app for performing basic transactions and checking account information to a fully-fledged, customer-centric ecosystem that proactively meets increasingly more customer needs. These needs are not limited to just banking, insurance and investment, they also include mobility, leisure, health matters, housing and energy.

Kate, the personal digital assistant in KBC Mobile, already plays an important role in this process and will interact even more with customers in the future, supported by artificial intelligence and data analysis.

### **Kate's role in KBC Mobile:**

- Currently 19 000 conversations take place each day or 0.5 million per month.

- Of the 2.3 million KBC Mobile users, over 2 million have already had at least one conversation with Kate. These are conversations initiated by the customer and not following a proactive message from Kate.
- Two out of three questions (300 000 a month) that the customer puts to Kate are handled by Kate completely independently.
- At present, there are more than 125 different situations in which Kate proactively makes personalised proposals.

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