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## Remarkable success of investment plans and stock market transactions continues in second half of 2021

### Volume of KBC/CBC savings accounts also sees further growth

*Continuing low interest rates combined with the fine performance of the stock markets in 2021 are increasingly attracting KBC/CBC customers to investment products and services.*

- *The number of first-time investors continues to increase thanks to the ease of access offered by digital solutions in combination with a personalised approach.*
- *KBC/CBC customers are increasingly opting to have their financial assets invested by KBC experts ('invest for me' service) in balanced and multi-signal funds (ExpertEase). It is a clear sign of the confidence they place in KBC's investment expertise. The recent decision to step up investments in shares has helped boost what already were healthy returns for 2021.*
- *The number of Bolero transactions in the second half of the year is still 115% higher than pre-Covid levels. The number of new investors also continues to grow (+119%), with 36% of new Bolero customers being under 30. The number of Matti investors has increased by 45% in the past year.*

*At the same time, many customers continue to appreciate the value of a regulated savings account. As in previous years, the upward trend is continuing. At the end of 2021, the combined volume at KBC and CBC had increased further to 53.79 billion euros. That represents an increase of 1.50 billion euros (+2.9%) on their level at 30 June 2021 and an increase of 3.75 billion euros (+7.5%) on their year-earlier figure.*

#### Number of investors continues to increase

- Digital applications in KBC/CBC Mobile are helping new investors take their first steps into investing. The ability to invest small amounts over time is making investing more and more accessible. A good example is 'Spare change investing', where payments are rounded up to the nearest euro and the difference automatically invested in an investment plan. Both the number of customers with a 'Spare change investing' plan and those with a traditional investment plan, which allows investment from as little as 25 euros per month, have continued to increase steadily.
- Two new digital processes were launched in 2021: long-term saving (through a unit-linked life insurance product) and pension saving (Pricos) with advice.
- The coronavirus pandemic has been instrumental in boosting remote banking, which has also become popular among investor customers.

- We launched a new Premium Service at the end of 2020 for the more affluent investor at KBC, a move that was well received. Customers can opt for the 'invest for me' service where, based on the customer's comfort zone, our experts make a selection of global balanced funds or multi-signal funds (ExpertEase), possibly supplemented by a trend fund. They can also opt for the traditional approach ('making investments together'), where they build their own investment portfolio together with their relationship manager.
- The investment applications and investment information in KBC/CBC Mobile and KBC/CBC Touch are being systematically expanded. Use of these digital applications also continues to rise strongly.
- Diversification of investments across different asset classes is important in view of regularly changing tax rules. This is leading to an increase in the proportion of investment-type insurance products. Customers also favour our insurance solutions that provide peace of mind (such as hospitalisation plans and life insurance).
- The low interest-rate environment means that interest in term investments has remained low.

### **Continuing keen interest in investing and the stock market: Bolero, Bolero Crowdfunding & Matti**

- Like the first six months of the year, Bolero saw a consistently solid increase in investor numbers in the second half, with their growth slightly lower than in 2020 (-12%), but still up 119% on pre-Covid levels. Since the start of 2021, **the total number of Bolero customers has again risen by almost one-third (27%)**.
- In the second half of the year, **the number of transactions was at the same high level as in 2020** and still 115% higher than in the pre-Covid period.
- In the second half of 2021, Bolero welcomed mainly young, first-time investors (**36% of new customers are under 30** and 60% under 40).
- Matti – Bolero's smart investment assistant – also continued to grow at an impressive rate, as reflected in a **45% increase in the number of investors** since the start of 2021. **Invested assets under management doubled** in the space of a year, driven by a combination of new investments and developments on the market.
- One in three Matti customers holds several investment portfolios. The flexibility of the concept allows investors to invest for different purposes, including for travel, their grandchildren and building up a financial buffer for later. The most popular motivations for building several portfolios are diversification based on term to maturity, risk profile and thematic preferences. 85% of Matti investors provide one or more preferences for their portfolio, with the most popular being sustainability, technology and Europe.
- There was also **a keen interest in crowdlending** (bonds issued by Belgian SMEs) at Bolero Crowdfunding in 2021. KBC's crowdlending platform raised **nearly 17 million euros for 18 Belgian companies**, more than double the amount raised in 2020 and 2019.
- As a thank you to all Bolero fans for the Spaargids.be award of "Best Investor Bank" that Bolero received last month, Bolero is making an extra effort at the beginning of the new year. Existing Bolero customers will be reimbursed the brokerage fee for executed purchase orders during the month of January 2022 in the form of free brokerage fee (with a maximum of 200 euros). For those who become Bolero customers between January 1, 2022 and March 31, 2022, this benefit applies to the brokerage fee for purchase orders during the first 3 months after opening their Bolero account (also with a maximum of 200 Euros).

### **Robust growth in sustainable and socially responsible investment funds continues**

- KBC and CBC are seeing a further acceleration in the shift towards sustainable and socially responsible investment funds. Investors are increasingly attaching importance to ecological and social criteria in the management of their assets. Today, more than half of our Belgian investors opt for a sustainable and

socially responsible investment fund, and the amount invested in such funds has trebled in the space of two years (the figure for the third quarter of 2021 was 22.2 billion euros).

- For several years now, KBC Asset Management has pursued a strict policy for sustainable and socially responsible investment funds, with a zero-tolerance approach to funds that invest in fossil fuels. In addition to thermal coal, our sustainable and socially responsible investment funds also exclude other fossil fuels such as oil and gas, as well as nuclear energy. Only renewable and safe energy sources are admitted to sustainable and socially responsible investment funds.
- We are also taking steps to mitigate the impact on the climate of our conventional investment funds. On 1 January 2021, KBC and CBC introduced a strict investment policy for both the investment funds operated by KBC Asset Management and for its own investment portfolio. From that date, mining companies which extract coal\* have been excluded from all investment funds, along with utility companies which generate more than 25% of their electricity using coal. The final threshold was removed on 1 July 2021 and a zero-tolerance policy was also introduced for utility companies.
  - \* Excluding coal for steel-making, as no viable alternative is currently available for that production process.
- In another move, KBC and CBC changed the investment policy of Pricos and Pricos Defensive (KBC's pension savings funds) on 11 November 2021. They invest only in socially responsible assets and take a zero-tolerance approach to fossil fuels. Here again, KBC and CBC made a deliberate choice for the long-term future of the climate.

### **Savings accounts nonetheless remained popular in 2021**

- The volume of regulated savings accounts also continued to grow in 2021 and by the end of the year, a total of 53.79 billion euros was being held in KBC and CBC savings accounts.
- That represents an increase of 1.50 billion euros (+2.9%) on their level at 30 June 2021 and an increase of 3.75 billion euros (+7.5%) on their year-earlier figure.

### **Total deposits in regulated savings accounts at KBC and CBC in Belgium:**

*(To compare the figures for KBC accurately with those of other financial institutions operating throughout Belgium, the figures for KBC and CBC have to be combined)*

### **Aggregate volume of funds in regulated savings accounts held at KBC and CBC:**

- **31/12/2021: 53.79 billion euros**
- 30/06/2021: 52.29 billion euros
- 31/12/2020: 50.04 billion euros

#### **Regional breakdown**

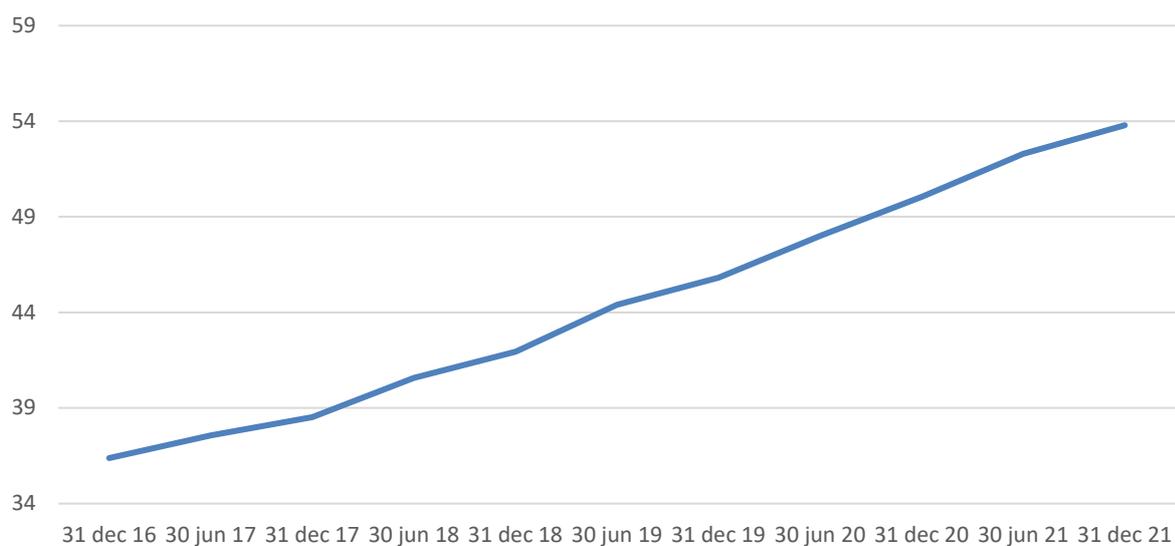
Volume of funds in regulated savings accounts held at KBC and KBC Brussels (active in Flanders and Brussels):

- **31/12/2021: 49.08 billion euros**
- 30/06/2021: 47.75 billion euros
- 31/12/2020: 45.73 billion euros

Volume of funds in regulated savings accounts held at CBC (active in Wallonia):

- **31/12/2021: 4.71 billion euros**
- 30/06/2021: 4.54 billion euros
- 31/12/2020: 4.31 billion euros

## Savings deposits at KBC/CBC (billions of euros)



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