

Pelin Ilbas appointed Chief Economist of KBC Group

KBC Group welcomes Pelin Ilbas as Chief Economist as of 1 June 2026. She will lead the group's team of economists and help shape the economic analyses and outlooks that support the group's strategic decision-making.

Born in 1980, Pelin Ilbas combines a strong academic background with extensive experience in economic and policy-oriented research, as well as proven leadership responsibility. She succeeds Hans Dewachter, who earlier this year joined the National Bank of Belgium.

Pelin holds a Master's degree in Applied Economic Sciences from Hasselt University, an Advanced Master of Science in Economics and a PhD in Economics from KU Leuven. Her doctoral research focused on the design of optimal monetary policy in dynamic macroeconomic models.

After completing her PhD, she worked as an advisor in the Monetary Policy Research Department of Norges Bank. In 2012, she joined the National Bank of Belgium, where she has headed the Financial Economics Unit since 2017. In that role, she's responsible for economic research and policy analysis on credit developments and financing conditions, in support of macroprudential policy.

At KBC, Pelin deliberately chooses a role that connects in-depth economic expertise with leadership and societal relevance. She strongly believes in analysis that is both well-substantiated and properly contextualised, particularly in economically challenging and uncertain times. As banks operate close to the real economy, clear and nuanced interpretation truly makes a difference for businesses, households and policymakers.

As Chief Economist, reporting directly to our Group CEO Johan Thijs, Pelin will not only coordinate economic expertise within the Group, but also contribute to the broader economic debate, always with a focus on credibility, nuance and analytical rigour.

KBC warmly welcomes Pelin and wishes her every success in her new role.

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