

KBC launches Kate Wallet this summer and makes payments in foreign currencies easy

New digital features in KBC Mobile were presented during “The Reveal”. With these extensions, KBC positions its app firmly as an everyday platform that goes beyond banking.

In brief

- KBC is launching its own digital wallet: **Kate Wallet**. It allows customers to pay contactless with their smartphone and brings together all payment cards, loyalty cards, and event and mobility tickets purchased in KBC Mobile in one place.
- KBC is also introducing a new **multicurrency feature** for international payments. Customers can add up to 29 foreign currencies to their current account and exchange euros 24/7 at real-time exchange rates. Payments abroad are processed directly via the debit card, without additional costs up to a monthly amount of €1,500.
- In addition, KBC is expanding its offering for mobile use abroad. Customers can purchase and activate an **eSIM** in KBC Mobile, allowing them to easily use mobile data while travelling.

KBC today presented a range of digital applications for housing, mobility, travel, payments, security and digital assets during its press event “The Reveal – Summer Edition”.

What if you no longer had to switch between different apps for your daily financial and practical needs?

Today, digital services are often fragmented across different providers, making things less clear for consumers—for example when planning a trip, searching for a home, managing mobility or organising payments. KBC aims to offer an answer to this with KBC Mobile and Kate.

Belgian first: Kate Wallet

With the launch of Kate Wallet this summer, KBC becomes the first Belgian bank to introduce its own digital wallet, directly integrated into KBC Mobile. Customers can make contactless payments without a physical card and bring together their essential items in one place, within the familiar environment they already know and use. KBC combines ease of use with privacy, transparency and control over personal data.

KBC payment cards are immediately available for use in Kate Wallet, with a quick overview of the balance. Paying is intuitive: simply double-click the side button on an iPhone or unlock your Android device, hold your smartphone near the payment terminal, and you’re done.

Kate Wallet goes beyond payments by bringing together what is currently often scattered across different apps or cards. Loyalty cards, ranging from large retailers to local merchants, can be stored and displayed digitally.

Parking tickets and public transport tickets from De Lijn and NMBS purchased via KBC Mobile are also automatically available in the wallet.

Additional features will follow, including meal vouchers from Monizze, Pluxee and Payflip, as well as the possibility to add other cards such as subscriptions and tickets. By bundling these functionalities, a single central place is created for everything customers need on the go. Kate, KBC's digital assistant, helps customers get started with Kate Wallet from day one.

Payments in foreign currencies without hidden costs

Foreign currency payments are also becoming simpler, more transparent and more cost-effective. Customers can manage different currencies directly within their current account, without having to open a separate account. This is an additional feature in KBC Mobile that allows them to hold and use currencies other than the euro.

This means:

- Customers can add and manage currencies themselves
- They can exchange euros 24/7 at real-time rates
- They can pay in foreign currencies with their debit card, with the amount deducted directly from the relevant currency balance

This allows customers in many cases to avoid additional costs typically associated with international payments, such as exchange fees, payment commissions and correspondent banking fees.

KBC and Firsty bring mobile data into the banking app with integrated eSIM

KBC is partnering with telecom provider Firsty to simplify access to mobile data abroad.

Customers can purchase and activate mobile data directly, without a physical SIM card or additional app. The eSIM is installed once and can be reused for future trips, with new data packages activated depending on the destination.

The solution is available in more than 180 countries and allows users to arrange connectivity even before departure, ensuring they are online upon arrival. This integration fits within KBC's broader strategy to further develop KBC Mobile into a platform for everyday applications.

Security as the backbone

Ease of use and simplicity are central in these applications, but are continuously supported by an equally important principle: trust and security.

In this context, the human and the technological go hand in hand. More than 120 people at KBC in Belgium have more than 1,000 contacts every day with customers who have doubts, are under pressure or only afterwards realise that they were manipulated. We also proactively contact our customers when our systems detect a suspicious payment.

KBC developed, with a specialised team of internal experts, a fraud engine that scans every digital transaction. Every payment is checked against more than 150 warning signals and approximately 700 fraud patterns, spread across nearly 40 types of transactions that are continuously adapted to new fraud trends. This happens automatically and 24/7, without customers noticing anything. On average, the fraud engine screens more than 2.5 million payments per day in a maximum of 4 seconds per payment.

In addition, we also strengthen the customer themselves. With 'Check your conversation', customers can verify during a phone call whether they are effectively speaking with KBC, and 'Angel on your shoulder' allows a trusted person to look along in case of suspicious transactions, so that our customers can rely on an extra pair of eyes in moments of doubt. We apply a cool-down period of 4 hours when customers want to increase their limits. And in case of suspected fraud, our customers can immediately contact our fraud service Secure4u 24/7 via the number 016 432 000. We consistently repeat: we never ask for codes, PIN codes or transfers to so-called "safe accounts".

New step in digital strategy: focus on digital assets

Finally, KBC announces that it is setting up a separate division around digital assets, as the first in Belgium. This new entity will be led by Céline Pfister, who is also head of Bolero. With this step, KBC wants to further develop its expertise and respond to the growing role of digital assets within the financial landscape. The creation of the division fits within the broader ambition to structurally anchor innovation within the organisation.

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