UITDAGINGEN EN KANSEN VOOR DE BELGISCHE
FINANCIËLE INSTELLINGEN

Frank Lierman
Chief Economist
Dexia Bank

Abstract

The Belgian financial institutions are facing following major challenges: internet technology, ageing of the population, globalisation of the economy, fierce competition, European legislation, European Monetary Union. The impact on the cost-to-income ratio is huge. Financial institutions have to look for new revenues and must manage more carefully their costs. They can rely on some important strengths: a nice profitability thanks to an already international oriented activity, a sustainable solvency, an underdeveloped credit business compared to an already strong focus on asset gathering and the attractiveness of Brussels as multicultural European capital.

To be successful in the future, strong developed retail banking activity is needed in which a major role is given to internet banking as a part of a multi distribution channel. A profound straight through process combining front and back offices is necessary in order to realise an operational efficiency. Finally a transparent and creative offer of products and services is essential for a fruitful competitive environment.

KEYWORDS: financial aspects of economic integration, banks, economic integration and globalisation