

Foreign bank accounts: what should be reported to the Central Point of Contact?

Tax payers are obliged to report the existence of foreign bank accounts to the tax authorities. Next to this, it is the aim that tax payers provide more information about these bank accounts to the Central Point of Contact (CPC) the National Bank of Belgium. The tax authorities will invite tax payers as from this autumn to communicate the required information. More specifically it concerns the bank accounts reported by the tax payer in the personal tax return for the tax years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

Reporting obligation already exists longer

For some time already (since 1997), tax payers should report that they have a foreign bank account. Previously, crossing the box to confirm the existence of such bank account was sufficient.

Since tax year 2012 the reporting obligation is larger: the tax payer should report in his tax return the existence of every foreign bank account for which he or one of the members (spouse, legal partner, or one of the minor children) of his family are titular.

The obligation only applies to foreign bank accounts. It applies to different kinds of accounts: current accounts, deposit accounts, term accounts and securities accounts.

The obligation exists as soon as one of the family members held such account during the taxable period (even if it was only for one day). Both 'owner' as 'usufructuary' are considered as holder/titular. Also a 'co-holder' of a bank account falls within the scope of this obligation.

Should be reported: the name of the holder of the account and the country where the account was opened.

Also to report to the Central Point of Contact

The information about the bank account should also be reported to the Central Point of Contact with the National Bank. The following information should be reported:

- the bank account number of these foreign bank accounts;
- the name of the financial institution where the bank account was opened;
- the country where the bank account was opened.

The reporting should be done at the latest together with the filing of the tax return in which the existence of these foreign bank accounts is reported. If the information was reported in the previous tax year, new reporting is not necessary. The obligation applies to foreign bank accounts reported by the tax payer in his tax returns for tax years 2012, 2013 and 2014.

As from November the tax authorities will invite the tax payers with foreign bank accounts to report more information about these accounts towards the Central Point of Contact.

The tax payer should communicate the information to the Central Point of Contact within two months counting from the third day following the tax authorities' invitation and the soonest within two month as from 1 November 2014. Hence, you should communicate the information at the soonest as from 1 January 2015, even if you receive the invitation to report the information in September or October.

Confirmation of reporting in the tax return

In principle the tax payer will have to indicate in its personal tax return that he had made the obliged communication to the Central Point of Contact. In the tax return for this year (tax year 2014) this is not yet the case: there is no box foreseen that can be ticked since the reporting will only be done as from next year (two months counting from 1 November).

The invitation which will be distributed by the tax authorities as from November will replace for this tax year the obligation to confirm the communication to the Central Point of Contact.

Belgian bank accounts are reported by the banks themselves

Also for the banks a reporting obligation exists. Since this obligation cannot be imposed to foreign financial institutions, it only applies to Belgian banks. Each Belgian bank or financial institution is obliged to communicate the identity of its clients, the numbers of their bank accounts and their contracts to the Central Point of Contact.

COMPTAFID-Benelux NV SA Brussels

Bld. Edmond Machtensl. 180/100
B-1080 Brussels
Tel: +32 (0)2 410 75 75
www.comptafid.be

COMPTAFID-Benelux NV SA Antwerp

Schijnparklaan 45
B-2900 Antwerp (Schooten)
Tel: +32 (0)3 658 89 02
www.comptafid.be

COMPTAFID (Schweiz) AG Zürich

Seefeldstrasse 19 – Postfach
CH-8032 Zürich
Tel.: +41 44 250 2929
www.comptafid.ch