

# FPS Finance: Coperfin reforms in safe hands

Transformed into a federal public service under the Coperfin modernisation plan, which was launched in 2002 and runs until 2015, FPS Finance has been provided with the resources to match its ambition to make the public and enterprises the centre of its concerns. IT and Steria are spearheading this.

The entire organisation is benefitting from the complex applications of the integrated system, which has replaced the old information silos, and is picking its way toward e-government.

## Time for added value

The annual work cycle on IPP ('Impôt Sur Les Personnes Physiques' – Tax On Natural Persons) starts with receipt of the form, continues with data input (TaxOnWeb or digitised paper declaration) and ends with the demand being sent out. Between these two stages we have Taxi, then Calculatrix. Since 2007 all FPS's 5,000 officials have been using Taxi to manage their digital files via a portal that shows them their tasks for day, month, etc., depending on the files their heads of department have allocated to them. "So everyone has an excellent view

of the work to be done. When someone is absent, the various files can be picked up by colleagues," observes Louis Collet, CIO. By saying goodbye to the mountains of paper lurking in thousands of filing cabinets up and down the country, FPS has taken an enormous step away from paper. Louis Collet remembers in particular, that every year "we had to have every taxpayer's initial assessment out by 30 June, otherwise the assessment wasn't legal. It was difficult to monitor the progress of 6.5 million files since, before checking them, our staff had to handle the paperwork and input the information, which took up most of their time. With the paper-pushing gone, staff can devote themselves to added value tasks of benefit to the organisation. Indeed, with Taxi's data integrity checks, 70% of declarations go through the mill without human intervention, the numbers declared being compared with information from third-party databases (employers, insurance companies, banks). "The remaining 30% are looked at in detail. What is more, Taxi detects anomalies in files and, thanks to it, we are able to cope with the fact that 38% of our staff is retiring in the next 5 years."

## Tax calculation

The file is then put through Calculatrix, which replaced the antiquated tax calculation engine at the end of September. Louis Collet: "Since modernisation was essential, as much functionally as technically, we decided that the old application would be phased out in 2009. There are no let-outs: we have to stick to our working cycle. In order to ensure that the old application continued to be amended

for tax changes right to the end, we kept the old team up in parallel with the new one. The latter reviewed all the tax codes, basic work that allowed us to reanalyse and redocument the programme from the outset." This is proving essential, given that, on average, 40 new headings a year appear in the declaration. "Modularity means we can guarantee to respond in time: we can concentrate on the part in question without touching the rest." The 'integrated assessment and collection system – Single File' makes up the horizontal layer of basic information (identifier, activity code, address, ...) made available to the applications used throughout FPS Finance (assessment, collection and inheritance documentation, ...). "It involved bringing together the information from our various independent information systems. As it happened, for example, the direct contributions and VAT information systems did not use the same activity codes for the same enterprise," the CIO remembers, and goes on: "This stabilised information will allow a taxpayer to notify any change in his data sheet just once, using an e-government application."

## Reliability

As of 2009 a database of the income of Belgians in the 30 countries of the OECD has just been added, while FPS Finance is making available to other countries the information (pensions, etc.) it has on the residents of other OECD countries who have worked in Belgium. This means that all declared income is now being checked without resorting to paper or paper pushing. Result: speed and unmatched reliability.



**Louis Collet**, CIO of FPS Finance: "We and Steria have built up confidence in one another; they have acquired a very good knowledge of our business problems and our IT environments."