
'Don't wait for a blue envelope'

Large numbers of employees fail to apply for tax refunds. Also, they often forget to submit applications to the tax authorities for supplementary benefits for rent, care of childcare. As a result they are missing out on many hundreds to thousands of euros. This is alleged by Ton van den Broek, director of Fidante Belastingadviseurs, whose company is located in the TU/e grounds.

Van den Broek speaks from experience. Every year his bureau helps dozens of customers who have come from abroad to work or study in the Netherlands for a while. Regardless whether it concerns a two-month or a two year period, in most cases they do not sufficiently exercise their rights to refunds and additional benefits. "It is sheer ignorance. Which is nobody's fault. Foreign employees and students are simply unaware of the possibilities. They wait for a blue envelope to show up, but by that time it is often too late", Van den Broek thinks. He gives the example of a couple from India filing an application for a tax refund over the year 2008. With the help of Fidante a 12,000-euro refund was paid into their account.

Another explanation is that the tax authorities also send out the refund forms on the basis of the population register. As many foreigners only stay in the Netherlands temporarily, they fail to enroll in the register and stay out of sight of the tax authorities.

For the foreign target group the tax authorities have a special form, by the way; the so-called M form. It can be applied for with the Tax Authorities Foreign Office in Heerlen. It is a highly specific form, however. Van den Broek: "I suspect that nine out of ten tax consultancies are unable to complete it. This booklet is half a centimeter thick. Only a special computer program like the one used by our bureau will enable you to get through it." In order to receive a refund, a Dutch bank account number comes in handy. "Since many of our customers leave the Netherlands again, we make applications for accelerated refunds - wherever appropriate. In most cases people get the excess tax money that they have paid back within two months", Van den Broek explains. (FvO)/.

More information: www.fidante.nl.