

# Specifics of the Work of Tax Authorities in the Context of a Pandemic

Larisa Aslanbekovna Aguzarova<sup>a</sup> and Fatima Savkuevna Aguzarova<sup>b</sup>  
*North-Ossetian State University named after K.L. Khetagurov, Vladikavkaz, Russia*

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**Abstract:** Events related to the spread of a new coronavirus infection have left their negative imprint on the economy not only of Russia, but also of other foreign countries. All sectors of the economy have suffered. A kind of locomotive in this whole story can be called the work of the Federal Tax Service of Russia. The new methods of work of the tax authorities have maximally ensured the economic security of the state at the expense of taxes and fees received by the budgets of the budgetary system. The authors note that the introduction of restrictive measures during the pandemic left no other option but to work remotely. In this regard, the leadership of the Federal Tax Service of Russia has made a fair decision to improve, disseminate and apply digital technologies in the work of tax authorities. Based on the results of the study, reasonable conclusions were made that the mechanism of work of tax authorities is still imperfect and needs further improvement. It is advisable to improve the quality and efficiency of the activities of tax authorities by ensuring full and timely receipt of tax payments to the budgets of the budget system by carrying out work on automation and development of the control and analytical system, identifying illegal tax optimization schemes, continuing the development of services and digital programs.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has affected all spheres of the economy and affected every inhabitant of the planet. The sudden spread of a new viral infection has adversely affected not only the economy of Russia, but also foreign countries.

In this study, we will consider how the epidemic affected the organizational and functional work of tax authorities, as well as macroeconomic indicators. The state's tax policy is one of the most important tools for countering epidemiological threats and improving economic security.

The unfavorable economic situation forced the authorities to resort to new methods of work of all participants in tax legal relations. In particular, restrictive measures were introduced, the work of most employees was organized in a remote format (100% of the document flow was transferred to electronic form), taxpayers filed tax reports remotely through their personal account.

## 2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Thus, the organizational work in the tax authorities has changed markedly. Regional situational centers (Territorial Situational Centers) began to function in them. Such centers have been established in every subject, in every inspection. The newly created centers were engaged in explanatory work on measures to support the economy, collecting analytical and other information, monitoring at macro and micro levels, as well as analyzing the situation in the economy at all levels.

All the information received by the Regional Situation Centers was promptly processed, sorted out, analyzed by specialists and sent to the head Federal Situation Center of the Federal Tax Service of Russia. Based on the results of the assessment and analysis of the current state of the economy, grounded government decisions on support measures were taken subsequently.

It is important to note that the situation centers interacted with taxpayers, business entities, ministries and departments, and other necessary structures.

<sup>a</sup> <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2607-3932>

<sup>b</sup> <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2699-8561>

It can be said that situational centers have become a digital platform for the formation of operational and up-to-date information in order to make adequate management decisions at the state level during the pandemic, since a large amount of work is carried out remotely using digital products.

Individual enterprises were granted installments and deferrals provided for by Chapter 9 of the Tax Code of the Russian Federation, as well as tax authorities changed the rates and terms of payment of taxes, fees, insurance premiums. For example, insurance premiums were reduced for small and medium-sized businesses, and the corporate income tax rate was reduced from 20% to 3% for the IT-sector. Individual enterprises have received the right to lower corporate income tax on the amount spent on the purchase and modernization of equipment.

At the same time, not all organizations and enterprises retained their financial viability despite the fact that assistance was provided. Thus, additional tax restrictions were imposed, nevertheless, organizations were ruined, jobs were cut, etc. Consequently, this directly affected the revenue figures for taxes and fees, as well as special tax regimes.

### 3 RESEARCH RESULTS

The tax restrictions introduced during the pandemic reduced the planned tax indicators. In 2020, all revenues administered by the tax authorities amounted to 28,213 billion rubles, which is 5.3% less than the same indicator in 2019. It is important to note that due to the reduction of insurance premiums, deferrals, installments and tax write-offs, the country lost up to 1 trillion rubles. Tax revenue indicators were affected by income from the payment of mineral extraction tax. The level of collection of this tax directly depends on the price of oil.

Meanwhile, actions are envisaged according to which the tax revenues of the budgets will increase. Since 2021, the mineral extraction tax benefit for developed fields has been canceled, which, according to experts, will increase budget revenues by 260 billion rubles. The taxation system of the oil industry includes irrelevant, economically unjustified tax benefits. All over the world, companies that extract minerals pay royalties to the state from the prices of resources. In Russia, rent is paid from the cost of production costs, which is several times less than the market price for resources. The mineral extraction tax

rate for oil is 40-50% of revenue, gas - 15%, precious stones - 8%, precious metals - 6%, solid minerals - 0.5-0.6%. If compared with other countries, in a number of states the latter indicator is 2-6%.

Tax revenues of the budget will increase, among other things, due to excise receipts, since excise taxes on tobacco products have been increased by about 20%. In absolute terms, the increase amounted to about 70 billion rubles.

The personal income tax received by the budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation showed high dynamics in 2020. Since 01.01.2021, the basic rate of 13% has been increased to 15% for citizens with an annual income of more than 5 million rubles. This approach is considered more fair worldwide. Thanks to this, according to experts, in 2021-2023, the budget will receive an additional 190 billion rubles. This income is planned to be used for the treatment of children with severe (orphan) diseases. It should be noted that now the administration of personal income tax on incomes over 500 million rubles is carried out in a specialized interregional inspection. The new inspection is tasked with high-quality, professional administration of taxpayers, so that information on specific categories of taxpayers flows into one inspection for better administration and control. It is important to take into account that the changes will not affect the revenues of the budgets of the subjects, since the taxes transferred to the new inspection will go to the budget at the place of registration of an individual. A specialized interregional inspection will only monitor the correctness and timeliness of tax payments.

Positive dynamics has been demonstrated for property taxes, despite the fact that in some cases tax rates have been reduced and payment deadlines have been postponed to the current year.

Despite the decline in gross domestic product (GDP), value added tax receipts (VAT) receipts increased relative to a prosperous 2019. This result was obtained through the operation of an automated control system - ASK<sup>3</sup> VAT- 2.

Thus, it is planned to restore the budget losses incurred on the basis of taxes such as the mineral extraction tax, excise taxes, personal income tax, value added tax.

### 4 DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The Federal Tax Service (FTS of Russia) is an executive authority that exercises control and

<sup>3</sup> Automated control system.

supervision in the field of taxes, fees and other mandatory payments.

In the context of a pandemic (quarantine), the use of digital resources in the activities of tax authorities is becoming increasingly relevant. It was with the help of electronic programs that the uninterrupted operation of the service and its structural units was ensured in a remote format during quarantine.

Using digital technologies, the costs of administration of tax payments have been reduced, the procedure for calculating and paying taxes and fees has accelerated, it has become easier to work with big data, the workload of employees has decreased, excessive document flow has decreased, as a result, the performance indicators of control work have increased. It should be noted that the practice of using digital programs is already available, but it is not yet sufficiently developed and requires improvement (failures, non-standard situations often occur, parameters in the programs themselves are not fully reflected, etc.).

Of course, the spread of software resources has changed the principles of management and organizational work of tax authorities.

It should be noted that as a result of large-scale automation, measures are being applied to strengthen the interaction of all participants in tax legal relations through electronic databases, as well as to increase the level of collection of tax payments in the budgets of the budget system, since the use of digital technologies allows the most effective implementation of control measures of tax inspections.

The interaction of the tax authority with other structures is a single integrated system that unites the activities of the inspection. It is aimed at the functional principle of operation.

The continuous work of tax authorities during the pandemic has maintained effective indicators on the level of tax collection. Although, the number of on-site tax audits in 2020 was reduced.

At the same time, the Federal Tax Service of Russia has created an API interface (application programming interface, application programming interface), which allowed companies to use the information of receipts for bonuses to customers, interested consumers to check checks, creating a system of civil control over fiscal discipline and prices. The buyer can check the receipt through the smartphone application and make sure that he purchased the goods from a legal seller at the stated price.

In 2020, a new institute of the Unified Tax Account (UTA) was introduced, which made it

possible to provide a transparent and understandable environment for interaction with the taxpayer for comfortable and easy performance of his duties on paying taxes.

In addition, from 2021 there is no need to file tax returns on land and transport taxes for organizations, which reduces costs and time. It should be noted here that the tax authorities face the task of maintaining effective control over the receipts of these taxes.

For small and medium-sized businesses, new digital products are also provided, which are created in their favor. Namely, a Unified register of small and medium-sized enterprises (hereinafter referred to as SMB) has been formed in order to receive support. This register is posted on the website of the Federal Tax Service of Russia at the end of 2020 and reflects instant information about who and when the support was provided, what results were obtained.

Thus, for taxpayers included in the Unified Register of SMB as of 01.03.2020, whose main activity relates to the branch of the Russian economy that has suffered the most in the conditions of deterioration of the situation as a result of the spread of coronavirus infection, the terms of payment of advance payments for 2020 have been postponed as follows:

on corporate property tax:

- for the 1st quarter of 2020 - from 06.05.2020 to 30.10.2020,
- for the 2nd quarter of 2020 - from 05.08.2020 to 30.12.2020;

on transport tax:

- for the 1st quarter of 2020 - from 05.15.2020 to 10.30.2020,
- for the 2nd quarter of 2020 - from 08.17.2020 to 12.30.2020;

on land tax:

- for the 1st quarter of 2020 - on 30.10.2020,
- for the 2nd quarter of 2020 - on 30.12.2020.

It is important to take into account that the choice of a special tax regime or the transition of taxpayers to other special tax regimes can be carried out remotely, the service "Choosing a suitable tax regime" is available on the website. The provision of this service is very convenient for entrepreneurs, it saves, first of all, time. At the same time, a number of laws were adopted to adapt the patent and simplified taxation system for the transition from the unified tax on imputed income (UTII), which was canceled from 01.01.2021. The deadline for submitting the notification of the transition to the simplified taxation system (STS) was extended until 31.03.2021.

Business support measures were actively applied in many regions of the Russian Federation during the pandemic. A positive phenomenon is the cancellation of reporting from 2022 for organizations paying the STS, applying the cash register equipment (CRT) with the "income" regime.

The online CRT (cash register equipment) project has become a serious digital product. For business, the project made it possible to eliminate 9 forms of cash reporting and significantly reduce the number of inspections.

Since 2020, entrepreneurs have the right to apply preferential treatment in the form of a tax on professional income. This tax regime has no analogues in the world and is fully implemented in the mobile application "My Tax" with the click of a button. Minimum professional income tax rates are considered attractive - 4% relationship with citizens, 6% - with organizations. Self-employed citizens can also independently form electron pension savings. So, in 2020, the number of self-employed in Russia amounted to more than 1.7 million individuals.

Dashboards (unique software for analyzing and collecting data in real time) with information about the number of self-employed in the region, including income received, amounts of checks and taxes paid, where you can observe the overall picture in real time, have been developed with the use of digital technologies for the heads of the constituent entities of the federation.

It is important to note that in 2020, a DPC-4 (data processing center) was created, the capacities of which will be used to monitor the implementation of national projects. The DPC system allows you to implement projects to create digital platforms - this is an important component of the digital Government of the future. Today, DPC - are the basis of the tax system, as they provide a clear and well-established process of working with a huge array of information about the activities of all taxpayers. The quality of the work of the tax system and the convenience of citizens who receive public services depend on this.

The right step of the Federal Tax Service of Russia should be considered the creation, together with the Ministry of Finance, of a digital platform for collecting and analyzing data on tax expenditures, which is of crucial importance for the subjects of the Russian Federation. The platform contains data on all federal and regional benefits, and also has a flexible tool for analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness of benefits in the context of regions, All-Russian classifier of types of economic activity, individual organizations.

Despite the fact that a lot has been done in terms of digitalization in the activities of tax authorities, it is planned to further develop this area.

According to the head of the Federal Tax Service of Russia, proactive development of services for businesses and citizens is seen as its first task. It is planned to solve this problem by developing a line of personal accounts for all categories of taxpayers, where all the functionality of interaction with tax authorities is collected at a single point, divided by life situations. This will allow taxpayers to independently switch to interaction with tax authorities through their personal account as much as possible.

An equally important task of the Federal Tax Service of Russia should be called the creation of a Digital analytical platform of the Federal Tax Service of Russia, which will be used for the needs of statistics and electronic services. And also for information support of regional authorities. The creation of the platform will make it possible to reduce and improve the efficiency of budget expenditures by more accurately identifying problem areas in the economy and social sphere and abolishing certain forms of statistical reporting.

Another task of the Federal Tax Service of Russia is the creation of an electronic document management system between economic entities in the economy. This task of the tax authorities is the highest priority in the near future. Its implementation will make it possible in the future to abandon traditional tax audits that are currently in practice, free taxpayers from reporting, perform all routine fiscal functions and not distract business participants from entrepreneurial activities.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the mechanism of work of the tax authorities is still imperfect and needs further improvement, since there are problems and unresolved issues in it. It is advisable to improve the quality and efficiency of the activities of tax authorities, and thereby ensure the full and timely receipt of tax payments to the budgets of the budgetary system.

The Federal Tax Service of Russia and its structural divisions should ensure the dynamics of tax receipts and insurance premiums at a level corresponding to economic indicators, carry out work on automation and development of a control and analytical subsystem (CAS) that identifies the analysis of illegal tax optimization schemes using the professional income tax regime, develop a concept

for the functioning of the Digital platform of the Federal Tax Service of Russia for providing administrative data, to continue the development of services that simplify the solution of issues in specific life situations as much as possible, including the creation of a service that allows citizens to receive the most popular tax deductions for personal income tax in a proactive mode.

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