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E-Invoicing

E-invoicing in France also for B2B e-bills by early 2025

Gerrit Onken |January 27, 2020

Has the race for compulsory electronic billing between companies (B2B) in Europe just started? Following the new Italian B2B mandate, France is now planning to expand the existing e-invoicing mandate for business-to-government (B2G) to B2B e-bills by early 2025.

Electronic B2B invoicing is becoming mandatory in France

While every government in Europe is certainly still watching the introduction of the B2B e-invoicing mandate in Italy, France has already set the course for the mandatory checking, registration and approval (so-called clearance procedure) of B2B e-invoices by the State posed in the next few years. In September 2019, the French government published the *draft financial law for 2020* .

Article 56 *of the 2020 Draft Finance Law* provides *for* mandatory B2B e-invoicing to be introduced between January 1, 2023 and January 1, 2025. Until then, B2B invoices must be created electronically and, more importantly, the invoice data must be submitted to the administration for timely sales tax monitoring and improved sales tax control.

The details of the mandatory electronic billing system for B2B invoices in France have not yet been determined. By September 1, 2020, the government must submit a report defining the best way to consolidate technical, legal, and operational solutions that will not overburden businesses while effectively and efficiently preventing VAT fraud.

This makes France one of the frontrunners of an increasing number of governments that have recently decided or at least have planned mandatory electronic invoicing in the B2G and even in the B2B sector.

France was also one of the first European countries to implement Directive 2014/55 / EC , which was converted into French law by Regulation No. 2014-697 of June 26, 2014.

In Europe, Directive 2014/55 / EU justifies the need - and often also the obligation - for suppliers to send invoices to public administration in an EU-compliant, structured electronic format (B2G E-Invoicing). Governmental booking systems, which most European countries have now implemented, enable suppliers to send e-bills to public institutions.

Success factors of B2G e-invoicing are the basis for B2B e-invoicing

These exchange systems offer at least three main advantages for the respective government:

1. The digitization of invoices and often other e-procurement processes, such as the tendering and ordering processes, make the administrative processes more efficient. This aspect is an important part of the digital agenda of the European member states and also in non-EU countries.
2. Tax authorities receive real-time information and control over invoices including VAT. In times when European countries expected an annual VAT gap of more than 147 billion euros in 2016, the financing of the state budget through more VAT revenues became a clear goal - the faster, the better.
3. As soon as the binding B2G-E-bill has been largely implemented by the suppliers of public administration, many suppliers will be able to send electronic bills, also for B2B transactions. The existing technical infrastructure thus facilitates the digitalization of the economy.

Suppliers capable of e-invoicing, on the one hand, and existing governmental e-invoicing systems, on the other hand, are important success factors for making the use of e-invoicing compulsory for B2B transactions.

The mandatory B2B e-invoicing through a government booking system will simplify real-time monitoring and control of VAT information for the government. VAT fraud can thus be countered more easily and VAT revenue can be significantly increased.

Summary

Among the EU member states, France is a pioneer in the implementation of a government B2B e-invoicing mandate for the timely monitoring and control of VAT information. We see a trend towards mandatory B2B e-invoicing in Europe, led by Italy, followed by France and, for example, Greece. Other EU countries will probably follow - just as electronic invoicing in Latin America started about ten years ago and has spread from there.

The challenge is to implement and operate all different EU mandates,

a. without having to manage and monitor many different local providers from all participating countries individually,
b. be able to meet all requirements for handling electronic incoming and outgoing invoices and other data formats and communication channels,
c. and at the same time to guarantee a simple and reliable connection to the respective ERP systems.

The SEEBURGER BIS E-Invoicing Solution offers control over the processing of incoming and outgoing invoices as well as extensions for deep process integration with any ERP system. We are your experienced cloud partner who understands and fulfills the different requirements of the different countries in the EU and elsewhere with a solution from a single source.

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Gerrit Onken has been a product manager at SEEBURGER AG for software applications and services for electronic business data exchange since 2010. His focus is on solutions for SAP, electronic invoicing (e-invoicing) and innovations for the digitization of technical and technical business processes for international customers. Gerrit Onken is a banker and business graduate with a focus on industrial management and business informatics. After working in the financial sector, he worked from 2004 to 2010 as a manager and project manager for one of the top five management consultancies for international BPOs in the banking and automotive environment.

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