

What is the CRS?

The Common Reporting Standard (CRS) is a new information-gathering and reporting requirement for financial institutions in participating countries, to help fight against tax evasion and protect the integrity of tax systems.

Who is reportable?

The CRS seeks to establish the tax residency of customers. Under the CRS, financial institutions in UAE are required to identify customers who appear to be tax resident in other countries, and report certain information to local regulatory authority. Local regulatory authority may then share that information with the regulatory authority where the customer is tax resident as per UAE government agreement with respective countries.

Why are you asking me for my jurisdiction(s) of tax residency?

Under the CRS, regulatory authorities require financial institutions such as HBL to collect and report certain information relating to their customers' tax status. If you open a new bank account, invest in new financial products or change your circumstances in some way, we will ask you to certify a number of details about yourself. This process is called "self-certification" and we are required to collect this information under the CRS.

Are all banks doing this?

All financial institutions – that includes banks, insurers and asset management businesses – in participating countries are required to be compliant with the CRS.

What information are you asking customers to provide and verify?

In line with the CRS requirements, we will be asking you for your:

- Name
- Address
- Place of birth (for Individual and Controlling Persons)
- Date of birth (for Individual and Controlling Persons)
- Country(ies) of tax residence
- Taxpayer identification number(s)
- Place of registration/incorporation (for Entities)
- Entity Type (for Entities)
- Controlling Person Type for certain Entity Types (for Controlling Persons)

How is my tax residence defined?

This will depend on where you live and your circumstances. Please contact a professional tax advisor or check the OECD website for more information on how to determine your tax residency as HBL cannot give tax advice.

The information I have been asked for on the forms is similar to the information I have been asked for under FATCA. Why is this different?

Even if you have already provided information under the US FATCA, you may still need to provide additional information for the CRS as these are different regulations with different requirements. FATCA is US Law and requires financial institutions to identify US Persons and report in line with local FATCA regulations, based on citizenship. The CRS requires financial institutions to identify the tax residency of all our customers and in most cases report information on customers who are tax resident in other countries.

I live in the same country as I pay tax so why do I need to give you these details?

Under the CRS, we are legally required to establish the tax residency status of all our customers, even if you are tax resident in UAE. However, Bank will only share information to local regulatory authority as per their specific requirements and timelines.

How often will I need to provide this information?

Once we have a valid self-certification on file, you will only be asked to complete another when you update certain information on your account or we believe your reportable status may have changed.

Why is HBL providing tax authorities with my tax details?

HBL is required to report your tax details under the legal obligations introduced by countries participating in the CRS.

Will HBL respect my data privacy?

HBL will respect your data privacy. We will only disclose your information to the relevant regulatory authorities if we are legally required to do so.

Is my information safe?

Customer information is protected by a strict code of secrecy and security which all members of the HBL, their staff and third parties are subject to.

I have provided you with my details. Why are you asking me for supporting documents?

We are required by law to verify the details you have provided as part of your self-certification. We might ask you for a copy of your passport to verify your identity or for some other evidence of your tax residency declared in your self-certification.

What information will be reported to regulatory authorities?

The information reported to regulatory authorities will have been provided in the self-certification form, and details about the accounts and products you have with us, including:

- the balance or value
- the total amounts of interest or payments credited

Which countries are participating in the CRS?

For a list of countries participating in the CRS, alongside the dates that they will start exchanging information, please see the OECD CRS portal.

Where can I find further information and advice?

For further information on your tax residency, please refer to the rules governing tax residence that have been published in OECD Automatic Exchange of Information portal.