

Italian tax agency takes to YouTube in anti-evasion drive

ROME, ITALY: Italy's tax agency on Monday launched its own channel on YouTube to tell Italians how to pay their taxes, as the government pursues a sweeping crackdown against evasion aimed at boosting public finances.



Videos lasting one or two minutes inform viewers fed up with bureaucracy in clear and simple language on questions like how to obtain a card for health services, how to register a house rental contract or how to pay taxes online.

Eight videos were visible on the website www.youtube.com/entrateinvideo on Monday but the tax agency said that new videos would be posted soon. The agency specified that the clips had been produced at no extra cost.

Italy's tax authorities have long been criticised for using overly complex bureaucratic language and methods, making it hard to fulfil all requirements.

Since coming to power last year, Prime Minister Mario Monti has stressed Italians must see paying taxes as a sign of civility. Tax evasion is estimated at between €120bn and €150bn (US\$150-194bn) a year.

With high-profile raids on luxury resorts and bars, tax authorities managed to recover €12.7bn in unpaid taxes last year, a 15.5 percentage point increase from 2010, and are intending to claw back even more this year.

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge