

European Federation of Public Service Unions (EPSU)

Press Release – 22 September 2015

Finance Ministers questioned by MEPs on corporate tax avoidance

Today, 22 September, the French, Italian, German and Spanish Finance ministers will be grilled by the European Parliament's Special Committee on Tax Rulings (TAXE) on growing evidence of widespread tax avoidance by major multinational corporations.

The Committee is pushing for 14 companies that did not turn up at hearings to explain their tax dealings to be blacklisted from the European Transparency Register. These include household names such as Amazon, Google, Barclay's, HSBC, Coca-Cola and McDonald's.

McDonald's was recently found by a coalition of European and US unions to have potentially dodged over €1bn in tax across Europe between 2009-2013, see [Unhappy Meal study on McDonald's](#)

The world's largest fast-food company is currently subject to investigations both by the European Commission and the French government. Due to these investigations, McDonald's has refused to explain its aggressive tax behavior to the TAXE Committee.

"The proposal to exclude from the EU transparency registry companies that refuse to explain their tax strategy to elected members of the European Parliament makes full sense. We also hope that the French Finance minister, Mr. Sapin, will take the opportunity to clarify the current state of play of his government's own enquiry into tax avoidance at McDonald's, in what is the company's largest European market," says **Jan Willem Goudriaan**, EPSU General Secretary.

EPSU also calls on the Italian and Spanish Finance ministers to launch an investigation into McDonald's tax arrangements in their respective countries

"Tax avoiding companies such as McDonald's must be the subject of EU-wide joint corporate tax audits as a good example of European cooperation. One key tool to facilitate tax audits is compulsory, public country-by-country reporting on tax matters, as called for by Parliament and civil society," adds Mr. Goudriaan.

Another key concern that needs to be addressed at the TAXE Committee is why already-existing anti-tax-avoidance clauses in national legislation do not seem to be invoked to ensure that companies pay their fair share towards public services that all citizens rely on.

Further information:

Coverage of proposal to blacklist companies with full list:
http://www.euractiv.com/sections/euro-finance/tax-committee-threatens-blacklist-uncooperative-lobbyists-317756?utm_source=EurActiv+Newsletter&utm_campaign=7acec2f555-

[newsletter_daily_update&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_bab5f0ea4e-7acec2f555-245303373](http://www.eurobarometer.europa.eu/press_corner/newsletter_daily_update&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_bab5f0ea4e-7acec2f555-245303373)

European Parliament's Special Committee on Tax Rulings (TAXE):
<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/taxe/home.html>

Aggressive tax planning at McDonald's and the estimate of €1bn in lost revenue:
http://www.epsu.org/IMG/pdf/Unhappy_meal_joint_fin_report_EN.pdf

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*EPSU is the **European Federation of Public Service Unions**. It is the largest federation of the ETUC and comprises 8 million public service workers from over 265 trade unions; EPSU organises workers in the energy, water and waste sectors, health and social services and local, regional and central government, in all European countries including the EU's Eastern Neighborhood. EPSU is the recognized regional organization of Public Services International (PSI). For more information please go to: <http://www.epsu.org>*