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Greens call for stronger recommendations to fight corporate tax avoidance in Europe

Meeting of the Special Committee on Tax rulings and other measures similar in nature or effect (TAXE)

On September 7th, the [European Parliament's Special Committee on Tax rulings and other measures similar in nature or effect](#) (TAXE) met for a first discussion on its draft report. After the Luxleaks scandal in November 2014, the [Greens called for the creation of an inquiry committee](#) in order to investigate who was responsible for granting sweet-heart tax deals, resulting in close to zero corporate tax being paid by these multinationals.

Philippe Lamberts, co-President of the Greens/EFA group and shadow rapporteur in TAXE welcomed the draft report but called for stronger recommendations from the European Parliament. He highlighted that the scale of tax dodging in Europe - €1 trillion per year – is the equivalent of the health budgets from the 28 countries, showing how serious the fight against tax evasion and tax dumping should be.

To help solve this issue, the Greens are calling for public disclosure of several kinds of tax information by big companies, such as the tax rulings they are granted, but also where they have subsidiaries and employ people as well as where they declare profits and pay taxes. It is time to lift the veil of secrecy on companies' tax business to reveal those receiving privileged tax treatment. We simply cannot only rely on leaks from whistle-blowers, who are facing severe jail penalties for their courageous actions.

In addition, the Greens are calling for greater cooperation at European level on tax matters and for the rapid adoption of a common consolidated corporate tax base in Europe with a minimum tax rate for all countries. Unfair tax competition between European Member States leads to a race to the bottom and some big businesses being granted special treatments while most citizens have to pay the price for it and endure austerity measures.

Sven Giegold, Green coordinator of the TAXE committee also highlighted how important it is for the European Parliament to think ahead and tackle upcoming harmful tax measures prepared by many Member States such as the new patent boxes regime of free tax zones.

Process wise, the Greens have expressed concerns that several Member States have not replied or barely answered the TAXE requests for information and that the Council and the Commission didn't provide all

necessary information for the TAXE committee to fully fulfil its mandate, which ends in November. This is precisely why we argued for the creation of an inquiry committee in the first place, with more authority to request and receive documents. The Greens will raise this with Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Commissioner for taxation Pierre Moscovici when they appear in front of the TAXE committee next week.

The TAXE committee is due to finalise its investigations and adopt its report by 15th of October in committee and in plenary in November 2015. An additional hearing is scheduled on Thursday 17th of September with President of the Commission Jean-Claude Juncker. Commissioner for taxation Pierre Moscovici. Commissioner for competition Margrete Vestager will also be present.

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