

**Question for oral answer O-000074/2012  
to the Council**

Rule 115

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on behalf of the S&D Group

Subject: Call for concrete ways to combat tax fraud and tax evasion

In the conclusions of the meeting held on 1 and 2 March 2012, the European Council invited Member States to improve the efficiency of tax collection and efforts to tackle tax evasion. Moreover, the Council and the Commission were invited to rapidly develop concrete ways to improve the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion, also with respect to third countries, and to report back by June 2012.

We consider the fight against tax fraud and tax evasion to be of key importance in finding the resources needed to increase public investment aimed at strengthening Europe's international competitiveness and potential for growth.

Recent evidence shows that tax evasion costs EUR 1 trillion to Member States' budgets, severely exacerbating their budget deficit and debt problems and negatively affecting public investment, growth and employment. We therefore welcome this mandate being given to the Council and the Commission, as strong action is needed at both European and national levels.

However, we would like to clarify the following issues. Will the report address the issue of upgrading and extending the scope of the EU Savings Directive, and does the Council agree that for the commitment to tackling tax evasion to be credible, this legislation must be rapidly unblocked in the Council? Will the report make proposals for strengthening the regulation of company registries and the registration of trusts? Will the report insist on country-by-country reporting for all listed companies, which would eliminate a significant source of tax evasion?

Finally, will the report put forward a comprehensive timetable for action on each of the policy fields, and will it propose a quantitative target for the reduction of tax evasion in the EU by 2020?

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Deadline for reply: 13.4.2012