

The turkeys didn't vote for Christmas

Published: January 13, 2026, 6:13 pm

I [mentioned last week](#) that the Tax Journal was holding on an line poll on the tax gap.

Well given that the Tax Journal is aimed at the very people who sell tax avoidance maybe it wasn't surprising that the turkeys didn't vote for Christmas. [The Tax Journal reports this week:](#)

The UK should not have a general anti-avoidance rule, according to two thirds of respondents to a Tax Journal online survey. More than 300 of the 400 respondents did not agree that legal tax avoidance should be regarded as part of the 'tax gap'.

Six out of ten said they believed that the government is doing enough to tackle avoidance, and a similar proportion considered that HMRC should not be given further resources, in addition to those already announced, to tackle the tax gap.

I guess it was about the same as asking the prison population if they wanted an increase in police resources.

None the less, I was not without support:

Readers were asked whose was the better estimate of the tax gap. While 166 favoured HMRC's estimate of £42 billion and 83 favoured Murphy's estimate of £120 billion, a further 151 readers said that both were 'wrong'.

I'll dismiss the 'both wrong' - since as both are estimates that is of course correct.

Two to one in such a journal is pretty good. The debate is making real progress if that was the outcome.

And in the real world where decisions are made the tax profession is seen as the problem (and rightly so) and not the solution. So unsurprising that they were defensive.