

According to HMRC over just 5 years UK small business g...

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The latest tax gap data from HMRC offers some amazing statistics. Take [this table on the dishonesty in the tax returns of self employed people in this country](#):

Staggeringly, in just four years the self employed people of this country got 31% more honest as the number putting in false tax returns fell from 53% to 37%.

I'll ask you a simple question, which is, how likely do you think that behavioural change is?

I'll ask you an alternative question, which is how likely do you think this is just not true?

And then I'll ask do you think this has anything to do with the fact that HMRC have reduced the number of employees available to chase tax cheats from 100,000 in 2004/05 to about 65,000 now with the number set to fall still further and that therefore the increase in the number of honest returns is an indication of the fact that not enough people with not enough time are available to check what's going on?

I think it's that last one. But you decide.

If, however, you agree with me that this is anthropologically exceptionally unlikely you have to come to one further conclusion, which is that they're just making this stuff up.