

The EU says we need a proper General Anti-Tax Avoidance..

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The FT reports this morning that it has seen [draft measures being considered by the EU](#) designed to tackle tax avoidance. So have I. And amongst them is a demand for a general anti-avoidance rule to be built into all EU countries tax law. Since it is something I have been demanding for many years I am delighted to see it.

What is also welcome is that their draft makes clear that they are looking at a general rule. It reads like this:

Now it so happens that there is a rule that does something very like this before parliament right now: it is [Michael Meacher's General Anti-Tax Avoidance Principle Bill](#), which, as is widely known, I wrote.

There is also the [proposal for a general anti-abuse rule being promoted by the government](#), which does no such thing and which is intended only to stop the most absurd of pre-packaged schemes largely targeted at people like Jimmy Carr.

The EU rule is aimed at the likes of Google and Amazon: it could be used against them. So could Meacher's Bill. That's what I intended.

The government's Bill would go nowhere near such abuse. That says two things. First, the government is not serious about tax avoidance. Second, and more worryingly, it is the abuser's friend as a result, providing them with cover for their behaviour by letting them say, yet again, it falls within the law.

There is a fault line here, and one which the public need to know about.