

The Treasury and Vince Cable are both backing the count...

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On [Sunday the Telegraph noted](#) :

The government is to back controversial plans to force businesses to reveal the taxes they pay in every country they operate in.

Vince Cable, the Business Secretary, said that he supported “country-by-country” proposals first put forward by the European Parliament that would mean all businesses detailing the contribution they make to the state.

He said any moves would stop companies being “tarnished” by tax rows where the detailed facts were not available.

That's the good news. Now the not so good:

The Business Secretary said any proposals should come under the control of the G8 group of industrialised nations and should not be a matter for Europe alone. He said the OECD should also play a role after Britain and Germany backed a review by the global economic body of international tax policy.

However:

The Treasury is also believed to be supportive of moves to increase what was described as a “transparency push” by one official.

And

Although the Treasury said that applying the new rules to banks first would be sensible, it is thought that the Chancellor also agrees that the ultimate target would be for all companies above a certain size to comply.

And more from Cable:

Mr Cable said that the issue had been discussed in Government and that there would be legislation if necessary.

"It is quite possible that some of those companies [Starbucks] have been traduced in a very unfair way," he said. "As it happens my staff spent quite a bit of time talking to Starbucks and going through their accounts with them and it did turn out that they hadn't made any profits here on which to pay tax.

"They actually had a good story but because you had to burrow away it didn't emerge and their reputation has been severely tarnished as a result.

"It would have been much better if the whole thing had been open."

Let's hope Vince is vaguely on message on this one.

There's much more on country-by-country reporting, a concept I created a decade ago, [here](#) and [here](#).