

Labour needs to talk straight on tax avoidance

Published: January 16, 2026, 6:45 am

The [Guardian's editorial today says](#):

Labour — a party that pussyfooted around with avoidance for 13 years — needs to convince the country it will do better next time

But as it then notes:

That will have to involve hard and specific commitments to act.

Mr Miliband is making the right noises, talking up comprehensive country-by-country reporting of corporate finances, and also signalling a willingness to act unilaterally if the PM's vaunted efforts at the G8 do not succeed.

Sadly, Ed Balls's policy papers remain overly cautious [on the smallprint](#), replete with talk of "intelligent transparency", which can surely only be something more slippery than transparency plain and simple.

The endless questions on a tax return are tiresome, but — Labour take note — in the end the thing to do is declare on every detail.

I could not agree more.

In fact [I said something similar here](#).

On this one Labour has to be unequivocal, and has nothing to lose from being so.