

France votes for public country-by-country reporting

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On Friday the French parliament voted for public country-by-country reporting. The [Tax Justice Network has covered the issue, here](#). I will not repeat their blog.

What I will say is that even though this decision is not final as yet, and could be reversed as a result, the demand is powerful, and the move is important. Many think country-by-country reporting is just a tax issue. It is not, as I [explained quite a number of years ago here](#). Country-by-country reporting is about accountability, stewardship, governance, transparency, ethical trading and much more, as well as paying the right amount of tax at the right time, in the right place and at the right rate.

For all these reasons France has taken a logical step forward that will, I hope, see its way onto its statute book. And there is now no good reason why not: every major multinational corporation will now have to prepare country-by-country reporting data and there is no auditor on earth who could not now properly appraise and audit the risk in that report if they are to be sure that the tax charge in that entities accounts is truthfully and fairly stated for audit purposes. As such very soon the entire cost of publishing country-by-country reporting data will be the expenditure involved in uploading a PDF to the web.

The time for excuses on country-by-country reporting is over. The time for publication is now. If France is leading the way, good for it.