

Funding the Future

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The [Irish Times](#) has reported that:

Independent Ministers yesterday refused a request from Minister for Finance Michael Noonan and Taoiseach Enda Kenny to agree an appeal against the ruling.

Fine Gael Ministers now say that the split threatens the future of the Government, and that if agreement is not reached to appeal against the tax decision, then the collapse of the Government and a general election is in prospect.

At its core the Independent Alliance ministers, who are in coalition with Fine Gael, are saying that issues of tax justice have to be considered here. As the Irish Times notes:

They also demanded a motion on tax justice and confirmation of the steps that have been taken, including the ending of the so-called double Irish arrangement and a new country-by-country reporting protocol.

As far as I know this is the first time that tax justice has been at the heart of debate on the future of a government, but it's clearly right that it is. The Independents have correctly realised that the Apple ruling is about the past, that no such ruling could be offered again, that Ireland's role has to change and that being seen to be a doormat on which large corporations wipe their feet as they try to avoid their obligations to the world is not the status Ireland should any longer aspire to.

It is important to recall that the government is [a minority administration](#) that was only established after long negotiation earlier this year. Whilst Fine Gael can almost certainly rely on Fianna Fáil support on Apple the chance it could do so and survive in office is remote. Nor can it look to the other Irish minority parties to support it in coalition: they have already rejected that option, whilst the power of the Independents, who hold more than 10% of Dail seats is likely to rise if they oppose this submission of Ireland to the will of corporate greed.

Everyone took it as read that Ireland would appeal this case when its finance minister declared that to be its intention. That's no longer true. Ireland may not do so. Apple's already slim chances of winning an appeal would be shattered in that case. This issue

may be bigger than first imagined, most especially for the future of Ireland.

Other states, like the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembiurg, Malta and Cyprus that gave played similar roles as tax havens shoukd take note.

As shoukd those Brexiters who yearn to turn the UK into a tax haven.