

Funding the Future

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Many will know the enormous loss of VAT revenue that it has been suggested might result from fraudulent traders making sales on Amazon and eBay which they claim include VAT which never reaches the coffers of the relevant revenue authority due to receive them.

As some readers are also aware, the UK has put in place decidedly half-hearted measures to supposedly tackle this issue which largely exonerate Amazon and eBay from any responsibility for addressing the [estimated £1.5 billion loss to the UK](#) a year arising from this abuse.

The EU wants to go further: what it wants to do is put in place the [Australian solution](#), which is to simply make Amazon and eBay responsible for collecting the tax owing and to pay it over. It's simple; it's easy and it's effective.

However, I hear from sources that one country is objecting most strongly in the EU. Guess who? It's the UK, of course. We want, as ever, to hinder the chances that the right amount of tax will be paid in the right place at the right time. It's as if we thought it was our national role to promote tax abuse.

You can see why some in the EU are looking forward to seeing us going.

You can also see why their greatest fear is that Brexit won't happen, which seems increasingly likely. But if so you can see why they may want to attach some conditions to our cancellation of Article 50. Quite a lot of conditions, I would imagine. Starting with some on tax abuse.