

The Telegraph needs to pick its tax experts with care

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The [Telegraph](#) noted yesterday:

The Chancellor will have no choice but to raise taxes in the autumn to cover the huge amount of state aid spending for families and businesses struggling during the coronavirus outbreak, experts have said.

They added:

Rishi Sunak could be forced to break Conservative manifesto pledges not to increase rates on income tax, National Insurance and VAT to balance the books and make up for lost revenue.

Tax advisers are also warning of a strong-handed crackdown on tax evasion and avoidance, with HM Revenue & Customs handed additional powers to close the tax gap, which currently costs the Government around £30bn a year in lost duties.

I readily admit I did not see who the noted experts were: I won't pay for the Telegraph.

But let me assure them and their readers that the experts in question are not experts at all on this issue.

The question of whether we need tax increases is not one for those with a micro-accounting or legal knowledge of tax. It is one for macroeconomics. And no sane macroeconomics is going to suggest that money be drawn out of the economy any time soon (by which I mean red years, not months) unless the aim is to tip us into deeper recession.

That does not mean that tax reform is not required. The whole Tax After Coronavirus (TACs) project is about that.

And it does not mean that the wealthy need not pay much more: they should, as I will explain soon (the data is being worked on, now).

But to suggest most people - including all those key workers the Telegraph's readers clap each week - should be made to pay for this crisis is not just socially hideous, it's also economically profoundly wrong.

I suggest that the Telegraph cannot spot expertise on this issue. Those asked were clearly not in that category, whoever they were.