

# EU ELECTIONS 2014:

## Some questions for your MEP candidates on Debt and Tax Justice



ON FRIDAY 23rd MAY the elections to the European Parliament will take place in Ireland. Through these elections citizens throughout Europe will have the chance to elect the 751 MEPs who represent their views in the European Parliament. Ireland has 11 seats at the Parliament, and Debt and Development Coalition Ireland believes that, in the context of the recent financial crisis, all candidates should be clear about where they stand on issues of global financial justice.

Here's a bit of background information and some questions to ask your candidates on DEBT and TAX JUSTICE when they come to your door...

On **DEBT JUSTICE** – People all around the world are paying illegitimate debts, some contracted many decades ago and not used for the benefit of citizens, or accrued by bailing out the banks as happened recently in Ireland. We want debt justice to rid nations around the world of illegitimate debts.

On **TAX JUSTICE** – We need an international tax system that is transparent and treats all countries equally. Taxes should be paid where profits are made, and not moved by companies to other countries where lower corporate taxes apply. Every year, billions of euro are lost to both European and developing country governments which could instead be used to fund much needed public services.

**SOME SUGGESTED QUESTIONS** for your MEP candidates:

As a candidate for the elections to the European Parliament, will you support global debt justice by calling for: **(please turn over for checklist)**

- Cancellation of unjust debts being paid by the people of Europe arising from the current financial crisis (*for example, those of Ireland, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Latvia*)?
- Cancellation of unpayable and unjust debts of heavily indebted developing countries (*for example, Grenada, Jamaica, Pakistan, El Salvador and Tunisia*)?
- Public audits into the debts of highly indebted countries, to determine who benefited from lending and borrowing, and to adjudicate on the legitimacy of the debts?
- Creation of new debt cancellation approaches, such as establishing formal debt-or-creditor negotiations or creating an international debt court?

### **Will you help bring about global tax justice by supporting:**

- Tax transparency, through making all multinational companies report on a country-by-country basis on the profits made, taxes paid, subsidies received, turnover and number of employees?
- An end to corporate secrecy in companies, trusts and foundations through creating a publicly available register of the real people who profit from them?
- Automatic exchange of tax information between countries to increase the flow of information and, importantly, to support developing countries to be part of these exchanges, even though they may be unable to fully participate in the system in the early stages?
- A UN tax body to guide global tax reform rather than the OECD, where only the world's richest countries' interests are represented?
- An EU-wide Financial Transaction Tax, to reduce financial speculation, to compensate people for the costs of the banks debts and other public needs?

### **And finally, given the role of the financial sector in Ireland's economic crisis**

- Will you stand up against corporate lobbying to defend people and democracy against excessive power of banks and big business?



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