Press release | 30.08.2016

Apple state aid ruling

EU decision on Apple's tax arrangements a welcome step forwards on tax justice

The EU Commissioner for Competition, Margrethe Vestager, today presented the results of the proceedings against Ireland for infringements of EU competition law. The ruling has major implications for Apple, who operate a significant portion of their global business through subsidiaries in Ireland, resulting in an effective tax rate of less than 1% on their foreign profits. The Commissioner has ruled that these special conditions are in breach of state aid. As a result of the ruling, the firm will now be required to pay up to €13bn of unpaid tax plus interest. Welcoming the decision, Green economic and finance spokesperson **Molly Scott Cato** said:

"This is an important victory and a powerful example of how the EU can deliver international tax justice where individual states cannot. While the US has attacked the EU's efforts to secure transparency and fairness in the tax dealings of one of their biggest names, the Commission has held strong to protect citizens against excessive corporate power. As Britain prepares to leave the EU, it is vital that it does not move backwards on tax transparency. Whatever Brexit is to mean, it must not mean becoming a tax haven.

"Apple is not alone, however. The EU Commission has already declared the tax arrangements of Starbucks in the Netherlands and Fiat Finance and Trade in Luxembourg to be illegal. The Special Committee of the European Parliament against tax dumping has revealed special arrangements between companies and tax administrations in many EU Member States. The EU Commission must investigate more companies."

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