



#ResponsibleTax - The Story So Far

Executive Summary

The Responsible Tax project started with a simple purpose proposition – that tax is the entry fee we pay for a civilized society – and the project has since flourished into a growing global movement with a “wise crowd” community of over 1,700 experts and voices from across the spectrum. This community started with a discussion among only fourteen (KPMG) people in the UK and has flourished as a global peer-to-peer network of expertise, influence and change. The conversation continues to expand across borders and industries, bringing a multitude of voices to the table, which otherwise would not be in the same room together. Additional poignancy and urgency has been added by the 2020 COVID-19 crisis and a world trying to understand who pays and how for some of the extraordinary measures taken.

As a result of the conversations started in mid-2014, a new global consensus is emerging on Responsible Tax and, more broadly, on the purpose of tax itself. Grounded in a set of [Global Responsible Tax principles](#) activities, a number of

countries have achieved policy-making traction at a global level. Engaged organizations include the OECD, United Nations, the IMF, World Bank, World Economic Forum and the B-Team, which in early 2018 released its own Responsible Tax principles. In the UK, the pilot market for the KPMG program, there is now an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Responsible Tax as well as a Responsible Tax Lab, run independently. Other major advisory firms, following KPMG’s lead, have recently started their own Responsible Tax initiatives.

The global program includes a [content and publishing platform](#) (articles, audio, film) and a series of convening points, including a roundtable series hosted at national, regional and global levels. The first publication "[Responsible Tax & the Developing World](#)" was released in November 2017. A second title - [What to Tax?](#) – followed in mid-2018. More recent areas of enquiry include [Tax & Trust](#) (2019) and [Digitization & Corporate Tax](#) (2020).

The Starting Point

An issue of significant public interest, the tax debate sits at the epicenter of the wider conversation on justice, fairness, globalization, digitization, (in)equality and trust.

To openly address tensions in the world of tax, KPMG recognized the need for radical, new forms of communications and engagement, substantive action and more purpose-driven approaches to policy.

Conventional approaches were no longer an option.

The Process of Change

Challenge

A number of KPMG member firm partners worked with a small group of external stakeholders and *provocateurs* to help develop the original Responsible Tax purpose proposition: that tax is the entry fee we pay for a civilized society and a new debate and consensus is required. Moreover, tax is a legal duty but does have a moral dimension. This is reflected in KPMG's tax principles - informed by the stakeholder crowd - and in the wide-ranging online and offline debates (more information below).

The Responsible Tax project is curated by London-based consultancy Jericho Chambers, working alongside KPMG.

Collaborate + Content

Collaboration runs to the heart of the Responsible Tax project. Examples include [Responsible Tax in the Developing World](#), an e-booklet promoting changes in the way tax in the developing world is approached and implemented, including contributors from organizations as diverse as

Center for Global Development, OECD, Christian Aid and Shell International.

2018 saw Responsible Tax become a theme of wider global discussions, from the World Economic Forum to the B-Team. In February 2018, Chris Morgan, KPMG's Global Head of Tax Policy, chaired a break-out session on the role of responsible tax at the launch conference of the [Platform for Collaboration on Tax](#), a coalition between OECD, World Bank, IMF and the UN. [What to Tax?](#) – a publication bringing together 15 diverse and global perspectives - appeared towards the end of the year and was the focus for an Ideas Exchange, convened in London.



The collaborative spirit continued in 2019, through a series of events, roundtables and publications. Meanwhile, the Responsible Tax web platform continues to be a rich source of ideas, challenges and inspirations from across the community. Recent subjects covered include: [should we tax wealth](#) – a question posed by former UK Government Minister, David Willets; issues surrounding land and property taxes; plus ideas on the impact and implications of [blockchain](#).

Most recently, space on the platform has been given over to understanding the immediate, mid- and longer-term tax policy implications of [the COVID crisis](#).

Convene

The Responsible Tax project is about convening diverse perspectives on the topic of tax. Since its inception, the Responsible Tax project has drawn together a community of 1,700 global and local parliamentarians, policy leaders, business leaders, activists and campaigners, NGOs, academics and experts.

It has established productive relationships with the OECD, UN, World Bank, IMF, EU Commission, EU Parliament (and others) and has a working relationship with a wide number of NGOs and development organizations, including Oxfam, Action Aid, Christian Aid, TJN, Transparency International, CAFOD, ICRICT, and CGD.



Global discussions in 2017 included *Life After BEPS* in January in Paris, led by KPMG with the OECD's Pascal Saint-Amans, among others; *Responsible Tax in the Developing World* in April in London (with Lord Rowan Williams and others); *Developing Trust* in June in Copenhagen, and a discussion on *Avoidance vs. Evasion* in Amsterdam in September. Full reports on these events are available on the Responsible Tax web platform.

2018 and 2019 saw partnerships in development with OECD and World Economic Forum, specifically on the subject of globalization, digitization and the future of corporate taxation and roundtables have been held in Paris, Rome, Cancun, Nairobi, Cape Town and London.

The future of corporate taxation was explored in further depth at a specially-convened roundtable in Brussels in June 2019. Prior to that, the issue of Tax and Trust was covered at a roundtable in Dublin in May/ June.

Much work in 2020 has been given over to exploring and understanding the purpose of tax post-COVID and the four likely phases of response: [Reaction & Resilience](#); [Recovery](#); and [The New Reality](#). Different sectors and different countries are of course moving at varying speeds. A series of expert roundtables have been taking place across April and May 2020, to solicit feedback and recommendations from the Responsible Tax community.

Outcomes

KPMG – with the support of Jericho Chambers – is now leading a critically important global debate and a different conversation around responsible tax. New voices representing actors from across the political spectrum are included in the conversation, which is open and collaborative and extends way beyond the usual echo chambers. At its heart, the Responsible Tax movement is leading to the development of new ideas and better tax policy, rooted in understanding the purpose of tax.

It remains true to new organizing principles for communications and engagement, based on activism, participation, accountability and dissent.

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