

# THE BRIEF



BY FRANCES GIBB AND JONATHAN AMES

## Juncker 'a hypocrite' for tax avoidance crackdown

A UK tax law specialist has accused Europe's top bureaucrat of hypocrisy over the EU's proposed crackdown on professionals who advise on tax avoidance schemes.

Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the European Commission, was described as "the problem" days after he told the European Parliament that he would bring forward draft legislation before the end of this month. Juncker was prime minister of Luxembourg for 20 years until 2009. The country has historically been criticised for operating a loose regulatory regime in relation to tax evasion and money laundering.

Miles Dean, the founding partner of Milestone International Tax Consultants in London, accused the EU chief of not only "wanting to nullify tax competition, but he also seems to be saying that the EU intends to abolish legal privilege". He went on to say that "the problem isn't legal privilege or lawyers. It is the individuals, such as Juncker, who presided over tax regimes that very clearly undermined the international tax system and openly abused double tax treaty arrangements for their own benefit".

"There is no such thing as fair tax competition," said Dean. "You either have tax competition or you don't. What Juncker and the EU want is a harmonised tax system and an end to tax competition, something which the Anti-Tax Avoidance Directive goes a long way to creating."