
Robin Hood Tax Campaign
Global Day of Action
17 February 2011

Robin all over the world

Thursday 17 February 2011 was the second global day of action for Financial Transaction Taxes, and there was a lot more activity than the first day in May 2010. Action was taken in 25 countries around the world, including more than half of the G20 countries whose Finance Ministers are meeting in Paris on Friday and Saturday.

We launched a global e-petition (sign it [now!](#)) calling on world leaders “to implement a Financial Transaction Tax in 2011 that will help regulate financial markets and raise revenue for global and domestic public goods such as health, education and water, and to tackle the challenge of climate change.” You can embed the petition in your own website.

Action was taken in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Brazil, Canada, the Democratic Republic of Congo, France, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, Malawi, Mali, Mexico, Nepal, the Netherlands, Norway, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Spain, the UK and the USA.

In many countries, the British, French and German embassies were lobbied – urging the French and German governments to turn their support for FTTs into reality through the 2011 French G20, and urging the British Government to change course and support a Financial Transactions Tax.

And many countries also ran a media stunt based on the fact that FTTs are often known simply as the Robin Hood Tax – the name of the UK campaign and also the French campaign which was launched today as [Robin des Bois!](#) So there were people in green Robin Hood hats, masks and carrying green arrows all over the world. Here are the Nepalese campaigners meeting French Ambassador Jean-Charles Demarquis.



The day of action was aimed at persuading G20 Finance Ministers to take concrete action to introduce a Financial Transactions Tax covering at least those countries willing to commit, even if the whole G20 is not yet ready. Such a Tax would help

combat poverty at home and abroad, and tackle climate change. If the whole G20 introduced such a tax, it could raise \$400bn a year.

Argentinian campaigners not only lobbied the three embassies, they wrote to their President, saying:

“Madam President, various studies and proposals developed in recent months have shown that the FTT is a realistic, viable and beyond doubt necessary initiative to counter the runaway dynamic of international financial flows which in turn create recurrent crises with seriously destructive impacts on the economy of countries and the living conditions of their population. Madam President, we trust that you and your government will strongly support the initiative with President Sarkozy at the next meeting of the G20. With this resolve, we request your good offices and those of the Foreign Ministry to secure the support of the other Latin American countries (Mexico and Brazil) who also participate in this strategic international forum.”

Socialist and Green Members of the European Parliament supported the Global Day of Action, and [called](#) for an EU financial transactions tax even if no action was achievable at G20 level, and there are some [great pictures](#) of Labour MEPs in Strasbourg with Robin Hood Tax arrows.

In the UK and the US, whose governments have been least helpful among developed economies, campaigners demonstrated as part of the global day. US [protesters](#) were outside the White House demanding that the President “make speculators pay”, and in the UK, the Robin Hood Tax campaign got in a day early with [protests](#) outside high street banks in London, Glasgow, Cardiff, Portsmouth, Bristol, Hereford and Wilmslow (George Osborne's constituency)

Here's the campaign's global release on the day:

Worldwide campaign for higher taxes on finance sector targets British, French and German finance ministers

As finance ministers from the G20 nations prepare to gather in Paris at the end of the week, supporters in 25 countries backing a financial transactions tax are planning a global day of action today (Thursday) to increase pressure on governments around the world to sign up for a tax on the banks.

Campaigners from several thousand unions, environmental and development organisations across all five continents will be bidding to make a global financial transactions tax a reality to meet the costs of the global financial crisis and tackle poverty and climate change at home and abroad by targeting the embassies of the French, German and UK governments.

ITUC General Secretary Sharan Burrow said: "With France running the G20, we have our best chance yet to persuade governments that the time has finally come to tax the banks more fairly.

"Public pressure around the world has put the financial transactions tax on the G20 agenda. The finance ministers gathering in Paris this week must make serious progress.

"Governments must show they're serious about making the banks – the sector most responsible for the damage caused to the world's economy – pay its fair share. A tax on the banks could raise \$400 billion globally – money which could prevent the need for such devastating cuts to public spending, generate resources to combat the worst effects of climate change, and help in the fight against poverty."

Jeremy Hobbs, Oxfam International Executive Director, said: "Banks bear a huge responsibility for the economic crisis so it is only fair that they pay their share of the clean-up costs. An FTT is a practical and popular way of helping the millions of people forced into poverty by mistakes made by some of the richest people on the planet."

Highlights of the global day include:

- Activists dressed in Robin Hood outfits (representing the fact that the tax is called the Robin Hood Tax in many countries) will be gathering outside the French, German and UK embassies in Malawi and Nepal, and in Strasbourg, a group of 13 MEPs will be gathering outside the Parliament to pose with a giant green arrow.
- In London, pensioners, public sector workers, students, and unemployed people affected by the UK government's spending cuts joined campaigners dressed as Robin Hood to hand a giant 'final demand' notice into a number of banks with branches in Victoria Street, Westminster. Similar stunts simultaneously took place in Glasgow, Cardiff, Portsmouth, Bristol, Hereford and Wilmslow.
- Campaigners in Spain are bringing out Robin Hoods in 18 cities across the country including Madrid, Barcelona, Bilbao, Valencia, Granada, Cordoba, Pamplona, Palma de Mallorca, and Toledo. At the French Embassy in Madrid, a band of merry men wearing t-shirts with the logo of the campaign delivered a large 1.5 metre arrow to the French ambassador with a message to the G20 that a Robin Hood Tax of just 0.05 per cent could change the world.
- In Germany, the band of merry men and women will visit the Spanish, Italian, British and South African embassies in stereotype national outfits and drop a letter to the ambassador. In the afternoon, they will approach the Berlinale Film Palace in a stretch limo and attempt to strut down the red carpet and calling for a Robin Hood Tax.
- In Senegal, campaigners are delivering three giant arrows signed by hundreds of people who attended the recent World Social Forum in Dakar calling for immediate action on the banks.

- French Robin Hoods are putting on a theatrical performance outside the old stock exchange building in Paris, which will include a band of musical merry men. In Italy another theatre-style production will see ordinary workers struggling to free themselves from the grip of a banker before Robin Hood arrives to save them.