

**Letter from the Chairman, no 13  
Stockholm September 8th 2015**  
  
Dear members and friends of the World Taxpayers Associations!  
  
The autumn will be a period of uncertainties on many issues. The economic growth in China has been slowing, but keeping good pace in India and parts of Africa – and picking up in the US. In Europe, national interest rates are near zero or even below, yet economic growth seems elusive.  
  
But the news flows are dominated by the thousands now migrating to Europe from Syria and other countries in the Middle East and from various African states. Trying to get to safety in unseaworthy boats or walking long distances over land. Refugees, many with families, have been welcomed by crowds in Munich, whereas in other countries they are fenced off by barbed wire or borders closed by police and military.  
  
Are Germany and Sweden going to accept almost 1 million refugees and the remaining 26 countries in the EU only 200,000 together? What are the long term effects? Is this a temporary need or a long term need – likely long term with estimated over 60 million refugees worldwide, about 20 million in countries like Lebanon, Turkey and Jordan and about 40 million inside their own countries? How can a more orderly process be established – without suspect middlemen making a fortune of other people’s tragedies. There are no easy answers, but autumn and winter is going to make the process all the more difficult. The difficulty in establishing a joint EU program to handle the situation shows again the large differences between the countries of the EU.  What is clear is that the German welcome might change the picture and open doors more in other countries as well.  
  
Here is the most incredible interactive graph of the movements of migrants last year to Europe, produced by the Swedish TV. It shows for instance that Germany and Sweden have received 60% of all refugees from Syria and Iraq. And Sweden alone is taking 25% of those from Somalia!  
<http://pejl.svt.se/flyktingstrommar-en/>  
  
**A Push for Higher Taxes**  
The quick transformation of and turmoil within and between our nations carries with it also a push for higher taxes. It sometimes seems that the solution to all real or imagined problems are higher taxes and special taxes to steer our behavior and priorities. Many of these increases are not very visible. Everyone wants better health care, cleaner environment, more efficient cars, better pensions, etc. But usually someone else should foot the bill! But why should a person who barely can afford a decent used car support the wealthy buyers of for instance the Tesla – a company which so far has received something like $2.5 billion of tax money in support – and last year sold only 35,000 cars, most of them again with some form of favorable tax treatment at the retail level! Many go to Norway where they are sold with no tax add on instead of around 100% tax as on other cars. And you can avoid the traffic as you can also drive in the bus lanes, park for free and re-charge the batteries for free in special parking places! Support of the wealthy for a car to drive quickly to the office by the less fortunate!  
  
**Georgia – Tax Reform Again!**  
I wrote last month of the dramatic changes and successes around the tax reform in Georgia. Bjorn Tarras Wahlberg’ s article on this was published in the Swedish daily Svenska Dagbladet. You can find an English translation on our website here: http://worldtaxpayers.org/2015/08/georgia-world-champion-in-taxes/  
  
**Preparations for Berlin, March 2016**  
The details for our 2016 WTA biennial conference in Berlin are coming together in an exciting way! We promise many high-level speakers and seminars on topics like Good Governance, Private- Public Partnerships, the Road to Growth, Interest rate policies and six detailed workshops to choose from to bring home great new and practical ideas. **The actual WTA conference will start in the evening of March 17th and end with a gala dinner Saturday March 19th**. But there will be two days of interesting preceding meetings on tax issues and a special day with economic overviews from the Austrian Economic Center, featuring the **Free Market Road Show** with a current economic picture of world developments. **So try to arrive by March 15th!** More details and program will of course follow.  
  
**Changes on the Website**  
We are updating our website with some important changes. The Members Area will now be open without a log in. We want as many as possible to benefit from advice and news in this section and this will greatly facilitate that. We are also adding a search possibility. And the opening home page will reflect the latest news as it happens. This also means we can feature news from all our members, which we hope can be supportive also for their local impact. Please add Sarah Elliott, Secretary General of the WTA, to your press release updates – [sarah.elliott@worldtaxpayers.org](mailto:sarah.elliott@worldtaxpayers.org)  
  
**Conference in Malaysia on Intellectual Property Rights and Tax Issues**  
Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) has initiated a two-day conference in Kuala Lumpur November 16th and 17th. The first day focuses on intellectual property rights, and the second day a meeting of Asian think tanks to exchange ideas on taxation and other issues. For more information contact Lorenzo Montanari at [lmontanari@atr.org](mailto:lmontanari@atr.org).  
  
**About Growing your Support and Impact - Content Marketing**  
Content marketing is the “in” approach to marketing today, especially on the web. So what is it? Here a definition: Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant and consistent information to attract and retain a clearly defined audience and ultimately to drive profitable customer action.  
  
In our case, it might mean building a blog with relevant information on taxes and on changes in the tax system and exposing flaws and problematic areas which the reader might be able to avoid with better information. This of course needs qualified information which might not be easily available.  
Remember the chain to increasing your “business:”  
Attract-Convert-Close-Delight  
  
**Suggested Reading**  
This month I have two interesting reading suggestions.  
The first is a new publication from the Cato Institute called “The State of Human Freedom in the World”. It is co-published with the Fraser Institute of Canada and the Friedrich Naumann Foundation of Germany. It ranks nations and gives details so you can compare where your nation stands. This can be a good reference in your policy work. You can download the full report for free through this link:  
<http://www.cato.org/human-freedom-index>  
  
The Human Freedom Index (HFI) is the most comprehensive freedom index so far created for a globally meaningful set of countries. The HFI covers 152 countries for 2012, the most recent year for which sufficient data is available. The index ranks countries beginning in 2008, the earliest year for which a robust enough index could be produced.  
  
The other reading suggestion is the report Foreign Policy from Washington DC.  
Their website adds new research daily to 2.4 million readers around the world. There are interesting reports and features – a current one being an evaluation of the “Obama Doctrine” regarding the Middle East in which they project, based on input from a large number of experts, that in each situation things are likely to get worse and not better as you try to look five years into the future. Here is the link:  
[www.foreignpolicy.com](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/)  
  
**David Stanley’s Passing**  
Finally, we have the sad news of our former WTA chairman’s, David Stanley, passing at the age of 86. His wife Jeanie pre-ceded him only a few weeks before. David was our chairman for 11 years, as well as, Chairman of the National Taxpayers Union in the U.S. His sharp mind formulated many of our key documents and policies and led our board and general meetings. He encouraged and contributed also generously on a personal level to the work in growing the taxpayer’s network to new countries, especially in the former Soviet nations. We remember him with much gratitude, and he will be missed as a friend and constant champion for the cause of the taxpayers around the world.  
  
Best wishes,  
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