

Weather

- Met Office figures show that February brought exceptionally below average temperatures across the UK (coldest since 1991), close to average amounts of sunshine and below average rainfall (though England had well above average rainfall and Scotland and Wales well below average)

Transport news

- IATA figures show that global demand for air travel in January was 6.4% up on a year ago (but European carriers experienced demand growth of only 3.1%)
- British Airways carried 1.5% more passengers in February than a year earlier, with increases on all route sectors except Asia Pacific
- KLM will operate a fourth daily service from Amsterdam to Liverpool from May
- From end March SAS will operate an additional rotation from Stockholm to Heathrow, taking the daily schedule to seven return flights
- Virgin Atlantic to operate three flights per week from Accra in Ghana to Heathrow from the end of May
- The Port of Dover handled 8.2% fewer passengers in February than in the same month of 2009

Domestic Economic News

- UK consumer confidence improves in February
- UK consumer credit was 0.2% lower in January than a year ago

European Economic News

- Eurozone unemployment increased to 10.5% of the workforce in January
- Eurozone consumer confidence declines in February
- Portugal becomes the latest country to announce austerity plans designed to cut its deficit

US Economic News

- US unemployment remained stable in February at 9.7% of the workforce
- US consumer confidence fell sharply in February to its lowest level since April of last year
- US consumer credit increased at an annual rate of 2.4% in January after a number of months during which credit declined

Global Economic News

- The Reserve Bank of Australia again increase base rates by 0.25% to 4.0% on the back of strong economic growth

Tourism News

- The UK Boarder Agency announces that from 6 April the cost of a short-term visitor visa will increase from £67 to £68
- Latest figures from TRI Hospitality Consulting reveal that in January hotel occupancy in the provinces was at a similar level to a year before (54%) but average room rates more than £4 lower, while by contrast London occupancy was up from 67% to 71% and room rates nearly £3 higher than at the start of 2009
- The Shambles in York wins the Google Street View Award as Britain's most picturesque street, with The Royal Crescent in Bath and Grey Street in Newcastle in second and third spot respectively
- Sterling trades weaker against most major currencies as speculators worry about the possibility of a hung parliament

Factors contributing to tourism trends in Britain, March 2010

