

Trends Update – Issue 46 (9 October 2006)

Weather

- September weather across England and Wales brought exceptionally above average temperatures, well above average sunshine and close to average rainfall. The only difference for Scotland was that sunshine totals were 'above' rather than 'well above' average

Transport and tour operator news

- BA passenger traffic was 1.1% up in September 2006 compared with a year ago
- Flybe will operate four flights per week from Galway to Southampton commencing 16 December with flights from Nice to Southampton starting next March
- Jet2 to launch flights from next spring to Newcastle from Almeria, Valencia, Malaga and Palma
- BA franchise partner GB Airways will launch a Faro to Heathrow service next May
- Ryanair to operate three flights per week from Barcelona to Teesside from March 2007, along with four flights per week to both Bristol and Newcastle
- From next April easyJet will operate three flights per week to Belfast from Krakow with Wizz Air announcing that it too will fly from Poland to Belfast from next spring, with flights from both Warsaw and Katowice
- BA to withdraw its service from Tashkent to London Heathrow from end October
- From early November Norwegian will fly three times weekly from Kristiansand to Stansted
- BA will be adding a further three flights per week from Dubai to Heathrow from end October
- Ryanair announces new routes to Nottingham East Midlands to commence next February from Alghero, Bratislava, Granada, Inverness, Knock, Krakow, Milan, Pisa, Santiago and Valencia
- Long-distance rail operators carried 6.2% more passengers in the period April to June 2006 than in 2005
- Figures from consultants PKF show regional hotel room occupancy in August at 75.3%, up from 74.1% a year ago, with London occupancy at 83.5% compared with 65.7% last August
- Figures from Global Refund show the value of tax reclaims by overseas visitors to the UK rose at an annual rate of 22% in September

Domestic Economic News

- UK consumer confidence at its lowest for more than a year in September

European Economic News

- The European Commission confirms that both Bulgaria and Romania will join the EU next January
- The French economy grew at its fastest rate for five and a half years in the period April to June
- Eurozone consumer confidence at its highest for more than a year in September
- The European Central Bank increases Eurozone interest rates to 3.25%

US Economic News

- US consumer confidence picks up in September
- The Dow Jones index is now trading close to its record high set back in January 2000
- US unemployment remains steady in September, at 4.6% of the labour force

Global Economic News

- Asian stock markets and currencies lose ground following North Korea's testing of a nuclear weapon

Tourism News

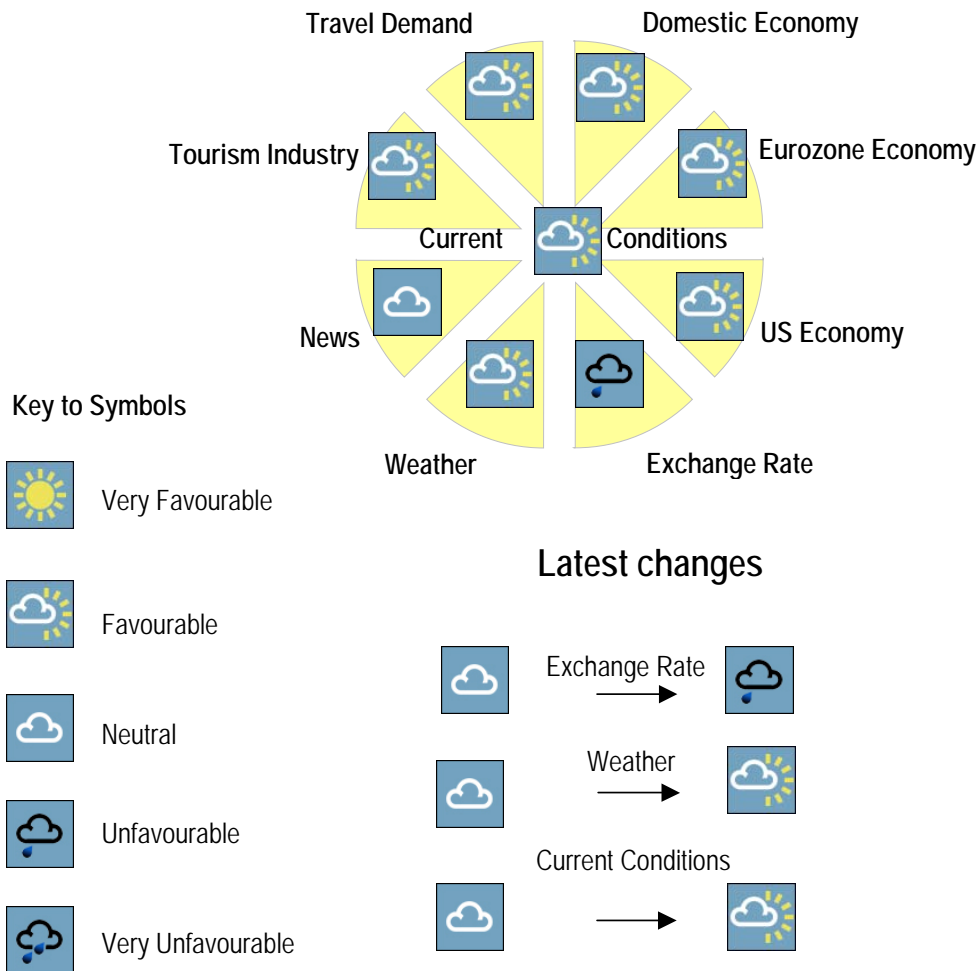
- 105 human cases of avian flu this year, of which 70 have been fatal
- EU and US authorities reach an interim agreement on air passenger data exchange
- An accommodation tax of €5 per night payable by foreign and domestic visitors alike is proposed in the Italian government's 2007 budget – it would be up to individual towns to decide whether to impose the tax
- From January 7th 2007 US citizens travelling to the Caribbean, Mexico and Canada will need a passport if travelling by air, those travelling by sea are exempt for at least a further year

About "Trends Update"

Issued bimonthly TU highlights the latest facts, figures and trends that impact on tourism. TU doesn't cover the main tourism surveys or Market Intelligence Reports – more information is available on the following topics:

Trends and Forecasts: <http://vbnet/Communications/PartnershipsPlanning/ForecastingTrends/ForecastingAndTrends.asp>
International Marketing Research: http://vbnet/BritainInternational/InternationalMarketing/international_research/default.asp
England Marketing Research: <http://vbnet/EnglandMarketing/EnglandResearch/default.asp>
Market Intelligence Reports: <http://vbnet/BritainInternational/OverseasOperations/MarketIntelligenceReports/default.asp>

Factors Contributing to Current Tourism Trends in Britain October 2006



- Overall conditions continue to be assessed as 'Favourable'
- September's weather is assessed as 'Favourable'
- With the Yen and US dollar weaker against Sterling the overall exchange rate situation is now judged to be 'Unfavourable'
- There are increased signs of weakness in both the UK and US economy, but at present both continue to be assessed as 'Favourable'
- Strong hotel occupancy figures and data on tax refunds to overseas visitors for August and September respectively have helped to keep the Tourism Industry segment in the 'Favourable' range
- Travel Demand remains in the 'Favourable' range, helped by continued strong year-on-year growth in long-distance rail journeys