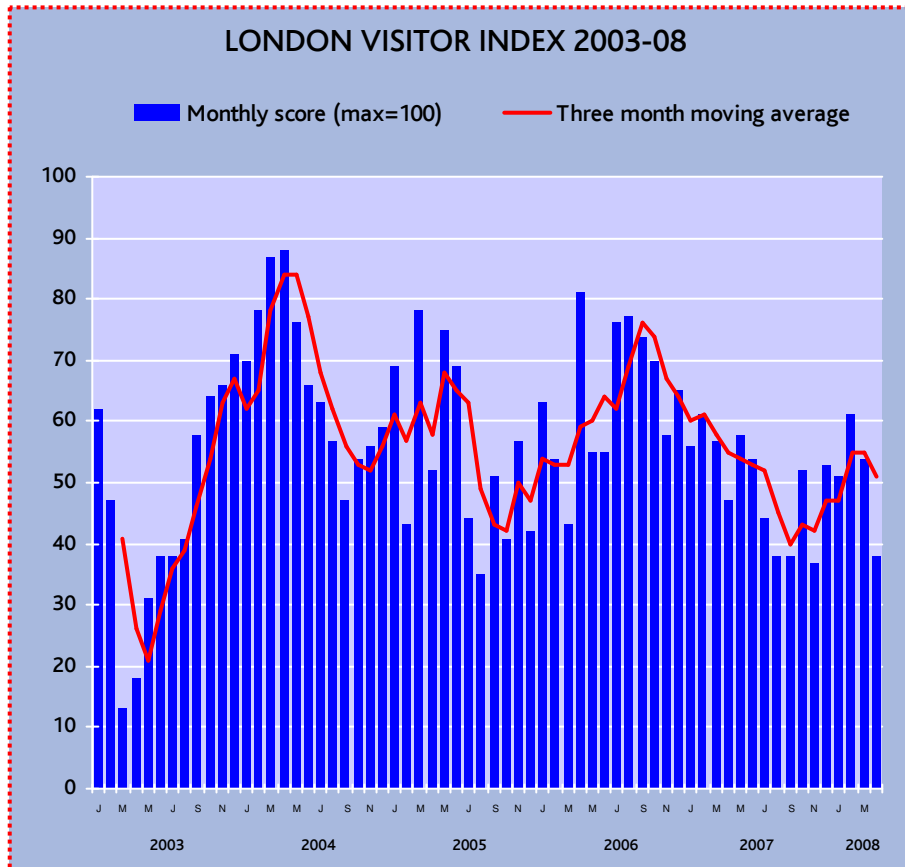


# LONDON VISITOR INDEX



## SUMMARY

- Activity across the visitor economy in London decreased significantly in April, with the London Visitor Index down -16 points compared to March.
- The early timing of Easter meant that fewer leisure trips were made to the capital in April. Additionally, unsettled weather and weak domestic consumer confidence also had a negative impact.
- Inbound visits fell steeply in April with arrivals into the UK down -9%. This decrease was felt by many attractions in the capital, which saw attendances drop by an average of -7% during the month.
- Across other sectors although hotels experienced a strong month, due to Easter falling in March instead of April, activity elsewhere was weak. Retailers reported soft trading conditions, while business venues reported lower advanced booking levels.

## OVERALL PERFORMANCE LEVELS

Apr 2008: 38/100      Mar 2008: 54/100      Feb 2008: 61/100

Average 2003-08: 56/100

Max: 88/100 (April 2004)

Min: 13/100 (March 2003)

### What is the London Visitor Index?

The London Visitor Index is a monthly composite index of leading visitor surveys. This index gives a quick indication of current trading conditions and is based upon a basket ten individual surveys.

### How it works

The monthly year-on-year percentage change for each indicator is given a score between 1-10 depending on the change. For example, a +10% monthly change gets 10 points, while -8% change gets 0 points. These scores are then added together to get an overall tally up to a maximum of 100. **A score over 50 indicates growth.**

### VISIT LONDON

6<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
2 MORE LONDON RIVERSIDE  
LONDON  
SE1 2RR  
TELEPHONE: 020 7234 5800  
[www.visitlondon.com/corporate](http://www.visitlondon.com/corporate)



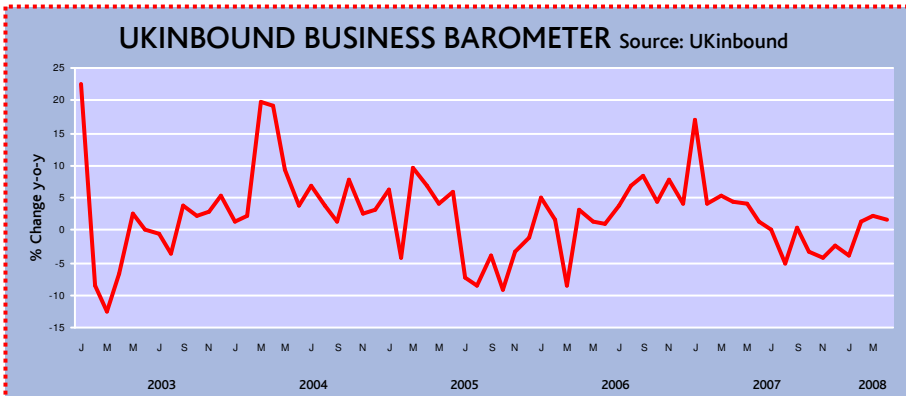
# LONDON VISITOR INDEX



## UK INTERNATIONAL VISITS

- Provisional estimates indicate that foreign arrivals into the UK decreased by -8.6% in April.
- Arrivals from all regions were lower, with European visits down -9%, North America down -4%, while visits from other regions fell by -5%.
- For the 12 month period to April visits are estimated to have declined by -2%.

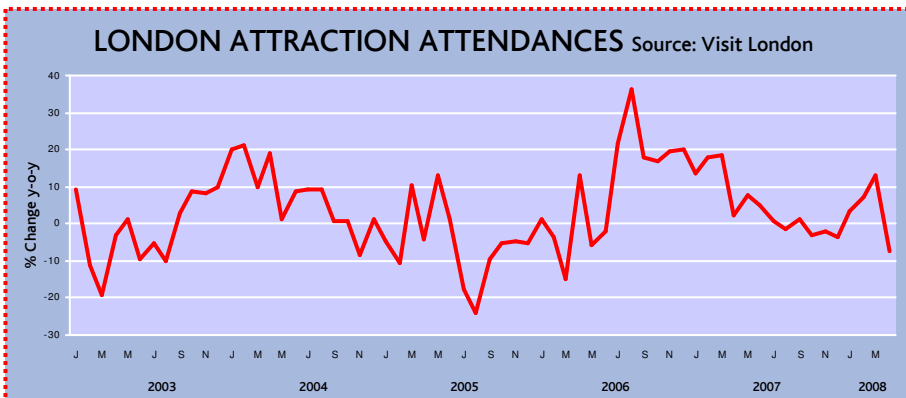
*Measures the number of visitors entering the UK through interviews with a stratified random sample of passengers on the main air, tunnel and sea routes*



## UKINBOUND BUSINESS BAROMETER

- UKinbound members reported a small increase in visitor arrivals during April, up +1.7%, with forward bookings up +1.3%.
- However, trading conditions are reported to be difficult, especially across long-haul markets, where fragile economic conditions are becoming a serious problem.
- Costs and inconvenience of applying for UK tourist visas are also reported to hindering business.

*Each month UKinbound produces a Business Barometer based on confidential survey questionnaires from UKinbound members who represent over 230 companies and organisations across UK inbound tourism*

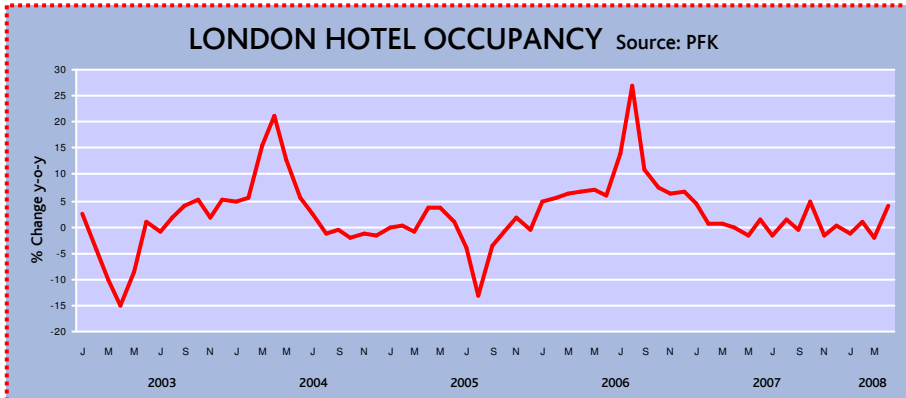


## LONDON ATTRACTION ATTENDANCES

- The number of people visiting museums, galleries and other attractions in the capital fell by -7.2% in April compared to the same month last year.
- The early Easter bank holiday, and the fact that school holidays were spread across both March and April contributed to these lower attendance levels.

*A monthly survey measuring visitor levels to 64 attractions in London, which account for around 75% of overall attraction admissions in the capital*

# LONDON VISITOR INDEX



## LONDON HOTEL OCCUPANCY

- Hotel occupancy in London rose by +4% in April reaching +82.5%. Average room rates jumped by over +10%, while room yields advanced by +15%.
- This impressive growth was mainly due to Easter – which depresses mid-week commercial demand – falling in March instead of April this year.
- During the first four months of year occupancy levels have remained flat, while average room rates have grown by +5%.

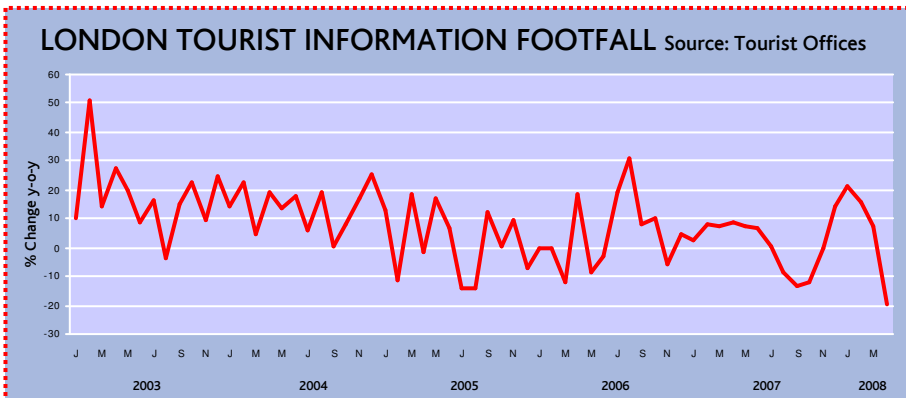
*An analysis of 42,800 London hotel rooms measuring the level of occupancy*



## LONDON AIRPORT PASSENGERS

- The number of passengers passing through London's five main airports decreased by -2.2% in April.
- Disruption at Heathrow caused by the opening T5, and cutbacks in schedules by Ryanair and Air Berlin were the main reasons for this decrease.

*Measures the number of passengers through London airports (Gatwick, Heathrow, London City, Luton, Stansted)*

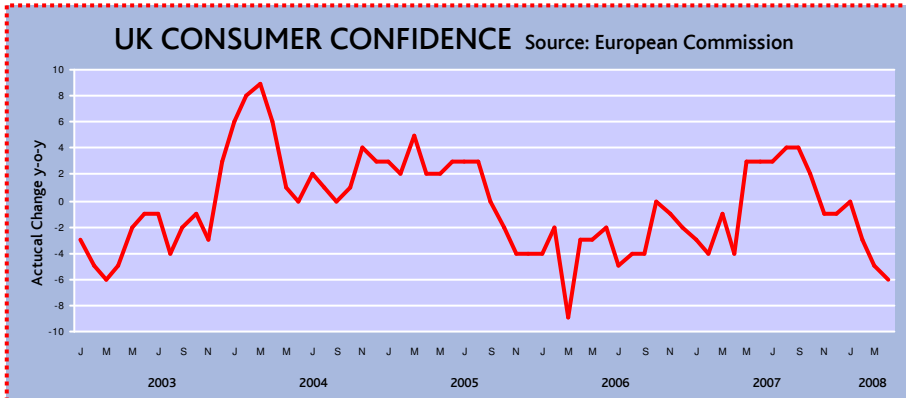


## LONDON TOURIST INFORMATION FOOTFALL

- The number of people visiting London's main tourism information centres dropped by -19.8% in April.
- The early timing of Easter and unsettled weather was mainly responsible for this decrease.

*Number of visitors to the Britain & London Visitor Centre, Greenwich, Croydon and Lewisham Tourist Information Centres*

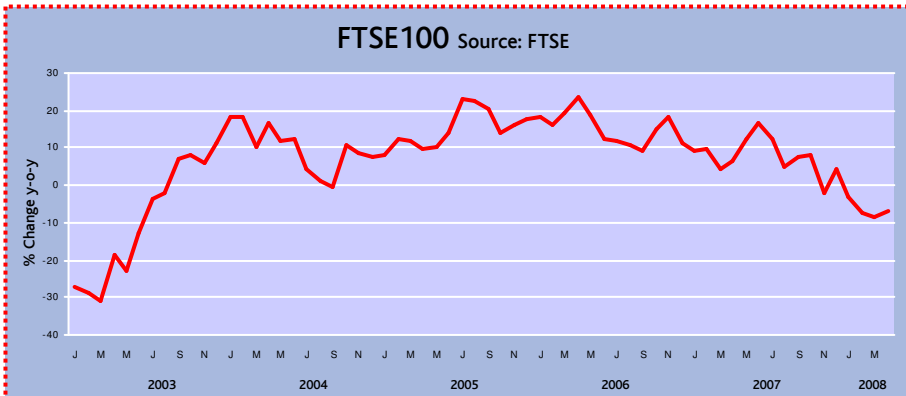
# LONDON VISITOR INDEX



## UK CONSUMER CONFIDENCE

- Compared to April last year, consumer confidence decreased by -6 points during the month.
- The cut in interest rates did little to lift consumer spirits during the month, with general confidence now at its lowest level since 2003.

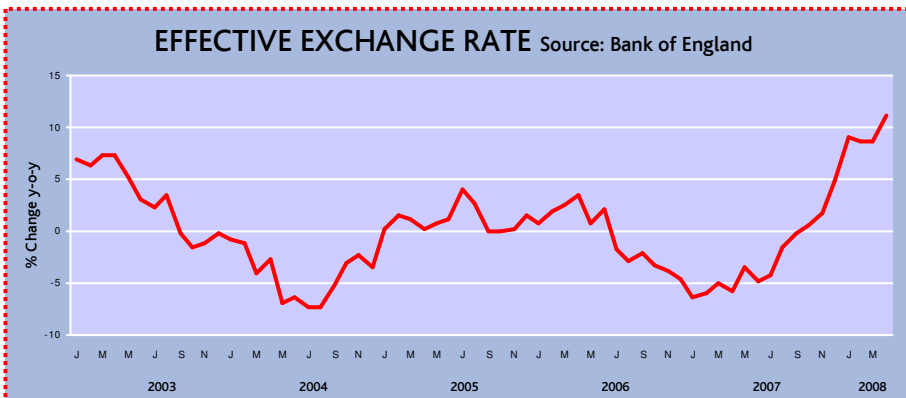
Arithmetic average of the balances of answers to questions on the financial situation of households, general economic situation, employment expectations and savings, over the next 12 months



## FTSE100

- UK equities endured another volatile month during April on the back of ongoing worries about a possible US recession.
- The FTSE 100 dropped -6.9% falling to below the 6,000 point mark.

Measures the stock market performance of the 100 most highly capitalised blue chip companies listed on the London Stock Exchange

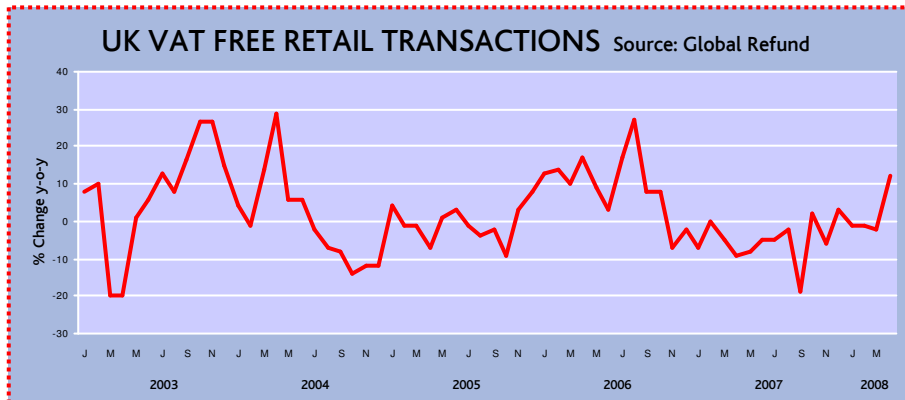


## EFFECTIVE EXCHANGE RATE

- Sterling weakened further compared against most other major currencies during April, with the pound falling to its lowest ever level against the Euro.
- Historically, a prolonged period of exchange rate weakness for the pound helps encourage UK inbound tourism, and discourages some outbound activity.

Measures the weighted average exchange rate movements of sterling against a basket of other currencies (60% Europe, 18% US, 8% Japan, 14% Others). Movements have been reserved to reflect the positive nature of weakening sterling for London tourism

# LONDON VISITOR INDEX



## UK VAT FREE RETAIL TRANSACTIONS

- Tourism retail spending – as measured by VAT-free shopping transactions claimed back by non-EU nationals – rose strongly in April with the number of transactions undertaken up +12%.
- The Middle East market displayed the strongest growth trends during the month, helped by strong local currencies.
- Retail sales as a whole in central London rose by +2.7% on a like-for-like basis during the month.

*Measures the number of VAT free shopping transactions made by non-EU nationals*

## NOTES

SURVEY	SOURCE	WHAT IT MEASURES	PROXY INDICATOR FOR
UK International Passenger Survey	National Statistics	International visitors to the UK	London international visits
UKinbound Business Barometer	UKinbound	International travel via UKinbound members	London international visits
London Attraction Monitor	Visit London	Attendances at London attractions	London attraction visits
London Hotel Trends	PKF	London hotel occupancy	London hotel performance
London Airport Passengers	CAA	London airport throughput	London international visits
London Tourist Information Footfall	Tourist Offices	Visits to London tourist offices	London tourist footfall
UK Consumer Confidence	European Commission	UK consumer confidence	London domestic visits
FTSE 100	FTSE	Level of FTSE 100	London business tourism
Effective Exchange Rate	Bank of England	Strength of sterling	Relative cost of holiday in the UK
UK VAT Free Retail Transactions	Global Refund	VAT free shopping activity	London tourism retail activity

The London Visitor Index is published during the second week of each month. It provides an overview of the current state of London's visitor economy. Further information at [http://corporate.visitlondon.com/facts\\_figures/latest\\_statistics/](http://corporate.visitlondon.com/facts_figures/latest_statistics/)

### Disclaimer

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### Visit London

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