

London's Economy Today



Issue 35 | July 2005

In this issue

UK economy softens...1

Latest news.....1

Economic Indicators....5

London - England's
most environmentally-
effective region?.....9

Two-speed economy
emerges.....16

UK economy softens

Christopher Lewis
Senior Economist, GLA Economics

After the capital celebrated being awarded the 2012 Olympic Games on Wednesday 6 July came the tragedy of the terrorist attacks in London the following day. Neither event is primarily economic, but like most things in this world (whether good or bad) they will have an economic impact.

This month's *London's Economy Today* considers these recent events as part of its overall economic snapshot. This month's supplement explores London's environmental effectiveness (p. 9) and the latest assessment from the London Economic Panel (a group of business leaders) is included as an appendix (p. 16).

Recent events

Hosting the Olympic Games will play a key role in the regeneration of the Lower Lea Valley and leave a lasting legacy of new sporting facilities. London's construction and tourism sectors should also benefit. Meanwhile, it is too early to be confidently predicting the full economic ramifications on London of the 7 July tragic events. However, after a sharp fall during the day itself the stock market made a complete recovery (see Figure 1) and the FTSE 100 is around a three year high. In defiance

GLAECONOMICS

Latest news...

● **Have you read** GLA Economics' latest publication: *Working Paper 13: Towards a common standard - Comparing European and American cities?* Visit: www.london.gov.uk/mayor/economic_unit.

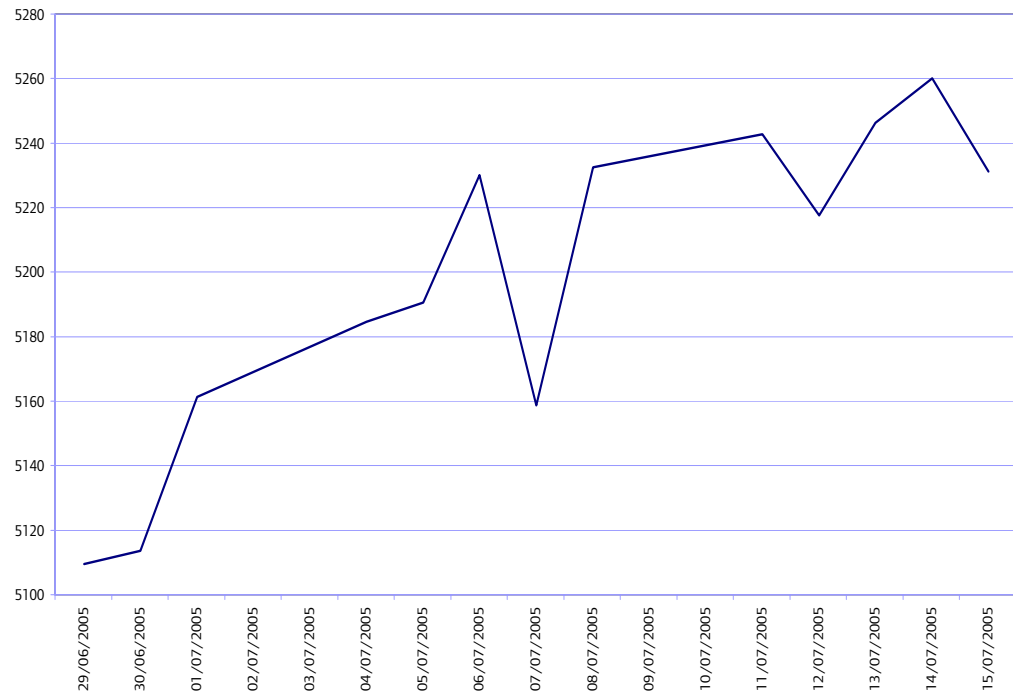
● Eye on retail

GLA Economics is publishing a series of working papers on London's retail sector. The working papers will cover a range of topics including retail planning, servicing and delivering, and small retailers. The next two retail reports will consider retail and regeneration and grocery retailing. If you're interested in finding out more or would like to receive copies of these reports, please email glaeconomics@london.gov.uk.

of the terrorists, business in general is back to normal in London. However, potential negative impacts on tourism and the retail sector (especially in central London) do exist. Shopping figures were unsurprisingly down over the first weekend after the attacks but the overall impact even in the short run seems to be less than some had initially feared. Over a sustained period of time a full recovery should be expected.

Figure 1: FTSE 100

Source: Wall Street Journal



London's financial sector has continued to perform well over the last month. The London Stock Exchange (LSE) had 15 IPOs (initial public offerings) in June, the most since November 2000. There were a further 36 IPOs on the junior AIM (Alternative Investment Market). In the first five months of 2005 the LSE also had 43 per cent of the global market in foreign equities trading. In June, the Purchasing Managers' Index measures of seasonally adjusted business activity and new orders fell slightly for London firms to 56.2 and 55.7 respectively. These are still strong readings as they are significantly above 50, which is the level consistent with no change on the previous month. However, the seasonally adjusted index level of employment showed employment contraction by falling just below the 50 mark for the first time in nearly two years.

UK economy continues to slow

UK economic growth has been revised downwards in Q1 2005 with household expenditure hardly growing at all. The retail sector remains especially weak as the housing market continues to slow. At 4.1 per cent and 3.7 per cent respectively, current annual house price growth on the Nationwide and Halifax measures are at their lowest since July 1996 and March 2001. The news regarding unemployment is now mixed. The International Labour Organisation's measure of unemployment fell slightly in the three months to May from the three months to February. However, the seasonally adjusted claimant count (people claiming Jobseekers' Allowance benefit) rose for the fifth consecutive month in June

'The economy continues to be supported by strong growth in the financial and business services sector'

but still remains well below 900,000. Overall, the economy continues to be supported by strong growth in the financial and business services sector. This compares starkly with industrial production, which only grew by 0.1 per cent between April and May. Consumer prices index (CPI) inflation in June rose to its highest level since May 1998 but it is only just at the Bank of England's target level of two per cent. Despite the rise in CPI inflation since September 2004, financial markets now expect at least one interest rate cut by the Bank of England before the end of the year to stimulate economic activity and this could come as early as August. The recent fall in Sterling to its lowest level since January 2004 on its trade weighted index should also help net export growth.

A robust US economy despite high oil prices but the eurozone remains weak

The US economy has continued its strong performance. Consumer confidence improved in June to a three year high, boosting retail sales. There has also been faster than expected manufacturing growth and the service sector remains buoyant. In an effort to contain inflationary pressures the US Federal Reserve has once again raised interest rates by 0.25 per cent (the ninth such increase since June 2004) to 3.25 per cent. The Federal Reserve is expected to continue its policy of steadily raising interest rates over the rest of the summer and into the autumn.

Oil prices reached record nominal high levels during the month and are still above \$55 per barrel. Hurricane Dennis severely disrupted the Gulf of Mexico's oil production between 8 and 11 July causing Brent crude to rise briefly above \$60 per barrel. The oil market remains very sensitive to any type of supply disruption as strong demand shows little signs of abating despite high prices.

'Japanese businesses are gaining confidence in their economy'

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has told eurozone economies to quicken the pace of structural reforms and restore sound public finances to improve poor growth performance. Currently eurozone growth predictions for 2005 by the OECD, Internal Monetary Fund, European Central Bank (ECB) and European Commission are all well below two per cent. Despite weak growth prospects the

ECB has now kept interest rates constant for just over two years. Unemployment remains high but at least the eurozone unemployment rate fell to 8.8 per cent in May from 8.9 per cent in April. The European Commission's eurozone economic sentiment indicator also rose slightly in June for the first time in nine months. Meanwhile Japanese businesses are gaining confidence in their economy, with domestic demand improving.

Londoners defiant to continue their daily business

The terrorist attacks on 7 July have come at a time of a slowing overall UK economy and weak consumer demand but strong growth in the financial and business services sector, which is especially important for London's economy. The initial sharp fall on the stock market was reversed the following day and its

relative strength since the attacks indicates that the long-term effects on the economy are not expected to be significant. However, the tourism industry is likely to take longer to recover than the financial markets and the retail sector (especially in central London) that was already facing tough trading conditions has suffered further. The decline in shopping numbers though has been less than expected. Figures from retail analyst SPSL's Retail Traffic Index show that shopping numbers within the Congestion Charge zone were down only 15.5 per cent year-on-year by Monday 11 July. A cut in UK interest rates now seems likely, which would provide support to consumer demand and confidence.

Economic indicators

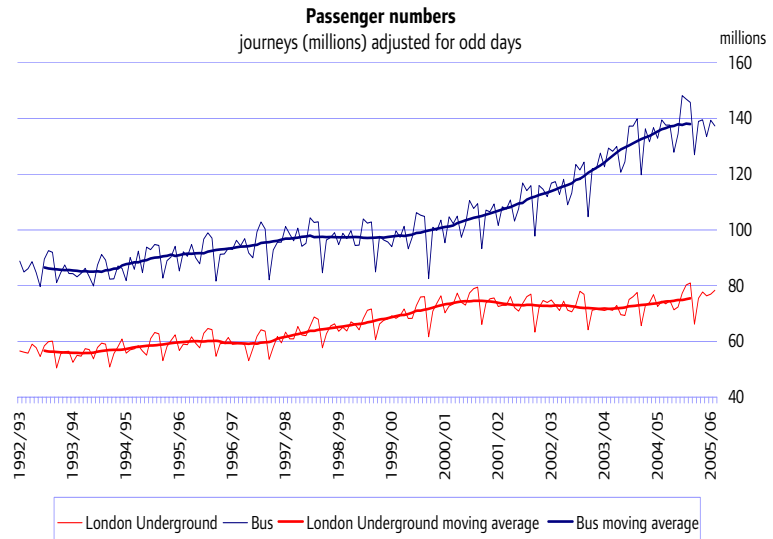
5

Moving average of passenger numbers

- The most recent 28-day period is from 1–28 May 2005. The statistics are for a period before the terror attacks of July 7.
- London's public transport had 215.7 million passenger journeys; 137.3 million by bus and 78.4 million by Underground.
- The moving average shows an increase to 213.5 million passengers every period. The average for buses was 138 million passenger journeys. The average for the Underground was 75.5 million.

Latest release: June 2005

Next release: July 2005



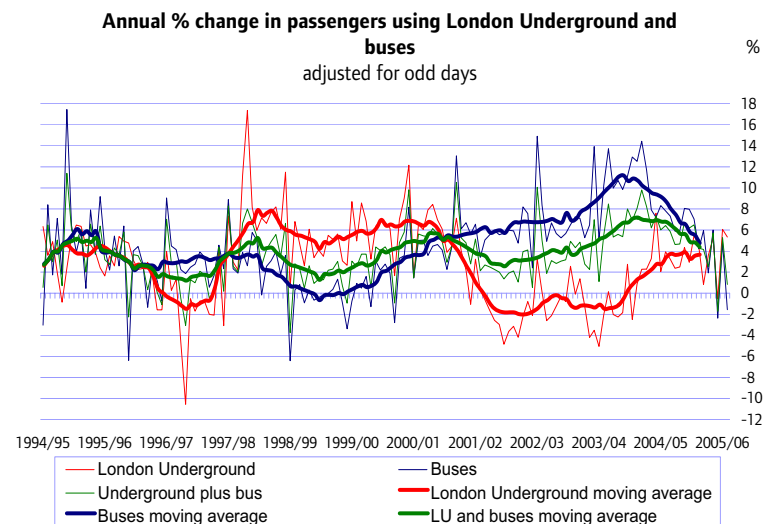
Source: Transport for London

Passenger journeys' annual growth rate slows

- The average annual rate of growth in passenger journeys is 4.2%, below the annual growth in the previous period of 4.7%.
- The average annual rate of growth in bus journey numbers slowed further to 4.6%, down from 5.4% in the previous period.
- The average annual rate of growth in Underground passenger journey numbers increased from 3.4% to 3.5%.

Latest release: June 2005

Next release: July 2005



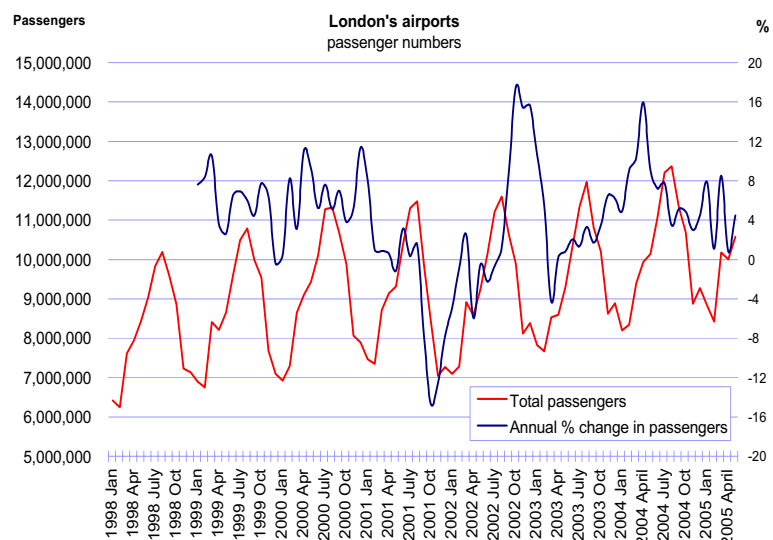
Source: Transport for London

Growth in airport passenger numbers

- 10.5 million passengers travelled through London's airports in May 2005.
- The number of passengers using London's airports increased by 4.3% from May 2004 to May 2005.
- International travel through London's airports has continued to grow throughout 2005.

Latest release: July 2005

Next release: August 2005



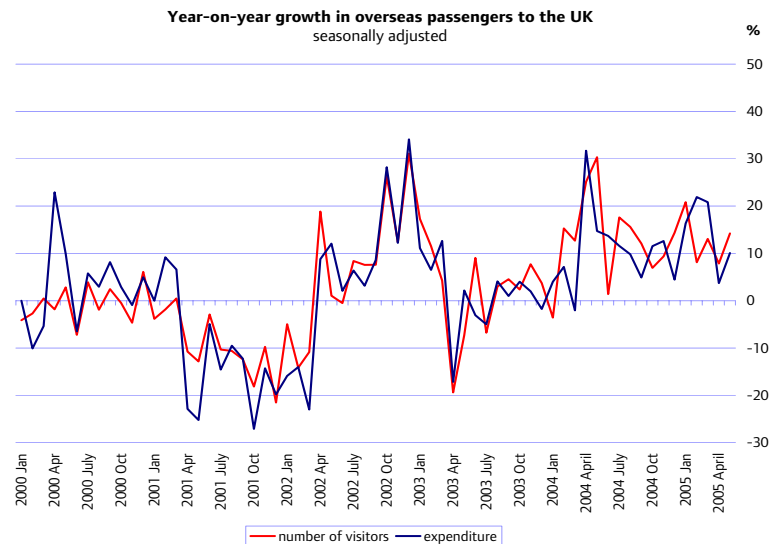
Source: Civil Aviation Authority

Growth in number of overseas visitors to the UK

- May 2005 saw growth in overseas visitor numbers to the UK and an increase in the growth of their spending. Up to half of overseas visitors spend time in London.
- The annual growth of overseas visitors to the UK was 14.2% in May 2005.
- The year-on-year growth in expenditure by overseas visitors in the UK was 10.1% in May 2005.

Latest release: July 2005

Next release: August 2005



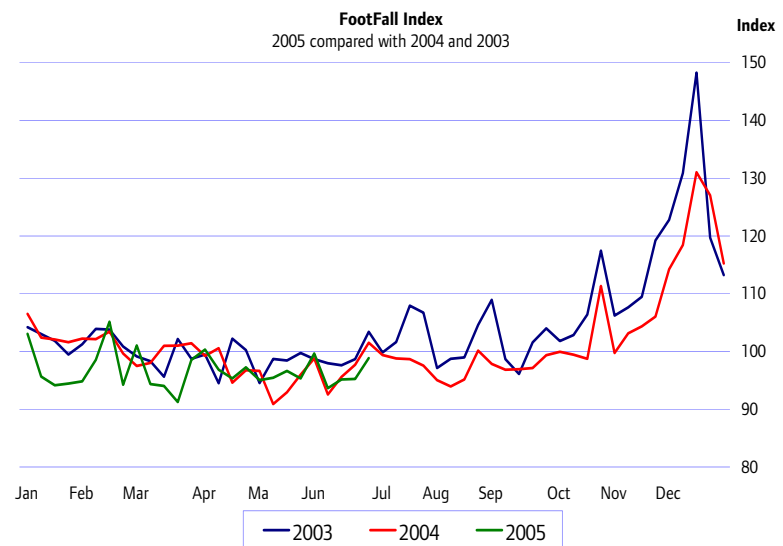
Source: Office for National Statistics

Shopping numbers continue to recover in June

- The FootFall Index of shoppers reported here is to the week ending 3 July 2005.
- The index in London reached 98.6 in June and is higher than in May.
- The level of the index in June 2005 was lower than in June 2004 or June 2003.
- The FootFall Index measures the number of shoppers and does not necessarily reflect the level of spending.

Latest release: 04/07/05

Next release: every week



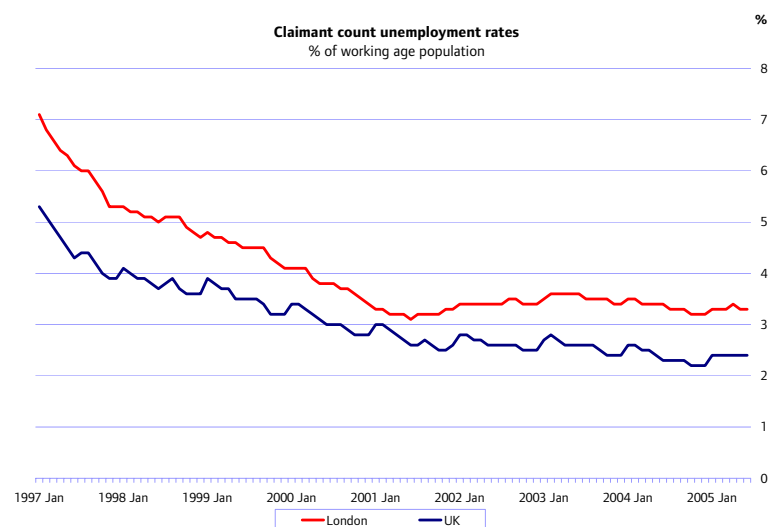
Source: FootFall Limited

Claimant count unemployment rate stable

- The rate of claimant count unemployment, people unemployed and claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, in London remained constant at 3.3% in June 2005.
- There were around 163,000 unemployment claimants in London in June 2005, compared with 164,000 in June 2004.
- The claimant count unemployment rate in the UK remains below that of London.

Latest release: July 2005

Next release: August 2005



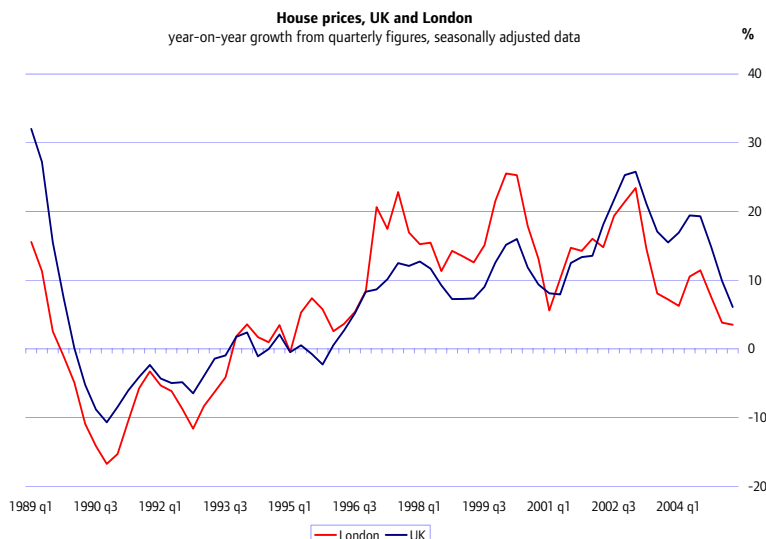
Source: Claimant Count, Nomis

Slowdown in the rate of house price growth

- Nationwide provides an index of house prices derived from their lending data. This is available up to Q2 2005 and shows a slowdown in London and across the UK.
- Annual house price growth in London slowed to 3.5% in Q2 2005 from 3.8% in Q1.
- Annual house price growth remained higher for the UK but slowed from 9.9% in Q1 2005 to 6.1% in Q2.

Latest release: July 2005

Next release: October 2005



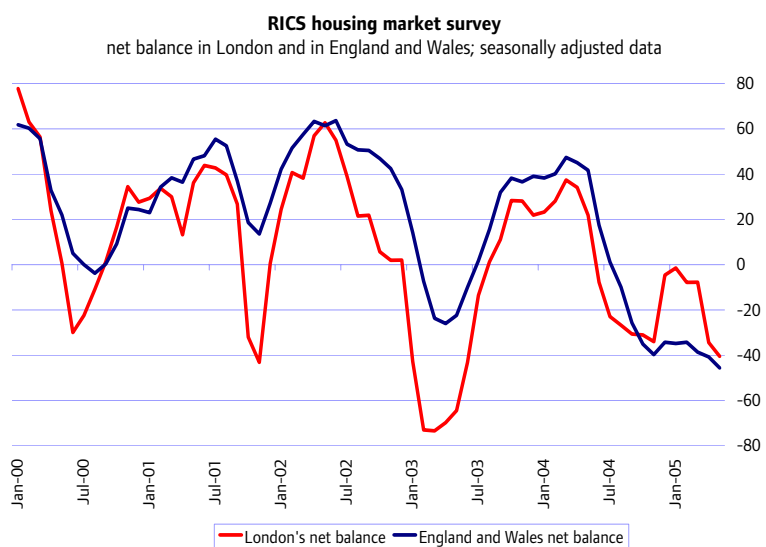
Source: Nationwide

Surveyors reporting lower London house prices

- The RICS survey showed a negative net balance for London house prices of -41 in May. This net balance is a further decline from the level of -35 in April.
- In recent months most surveyors have reported lower house prices in England and Wales. The net balance was -46 in May down from -41 in April.

Latest release: July 2005

Next release: August 2005



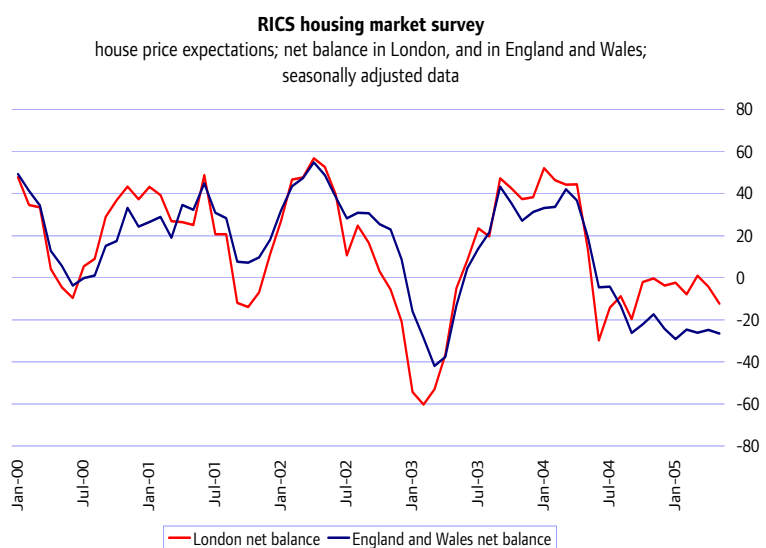
Source: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors

Surveyors expecting a fall in house prices in London

- The RICS survey shows a small majority of surveyors expect house price decreases over the next 3 months in London.
- The net expectations balance in London was -13 in May 2005, falling from a balance of -5 in April.
- For England and Wales, the net balance for house price expectations is lower than for London at -27 in May.

Latest release: July 2005

Next release: August 2005



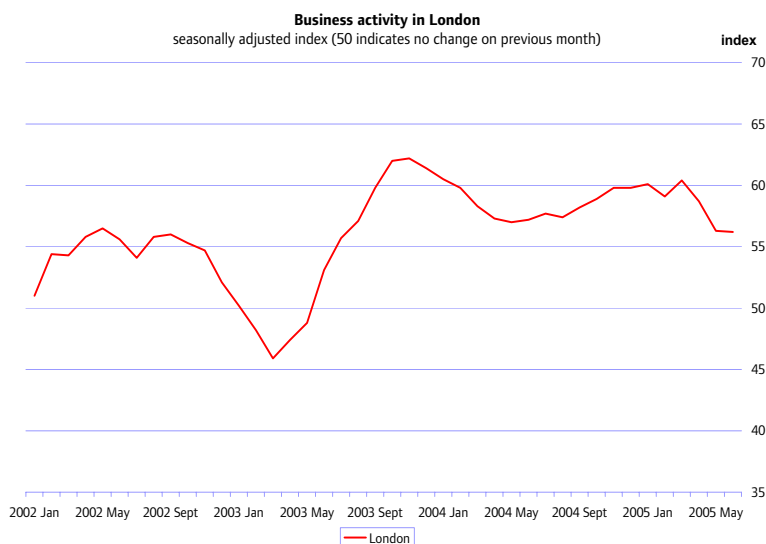
Source: Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors

Business activity in London

- London firms continued to expand their output of goods and services in June 2005.
- The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) of business activity recorded 56.2 in June compared to 56.3 in May.
- A rate above 50 on the index indicates an increase in business activity from the previous month.

Latest release: July 2005

Next release: August 2005

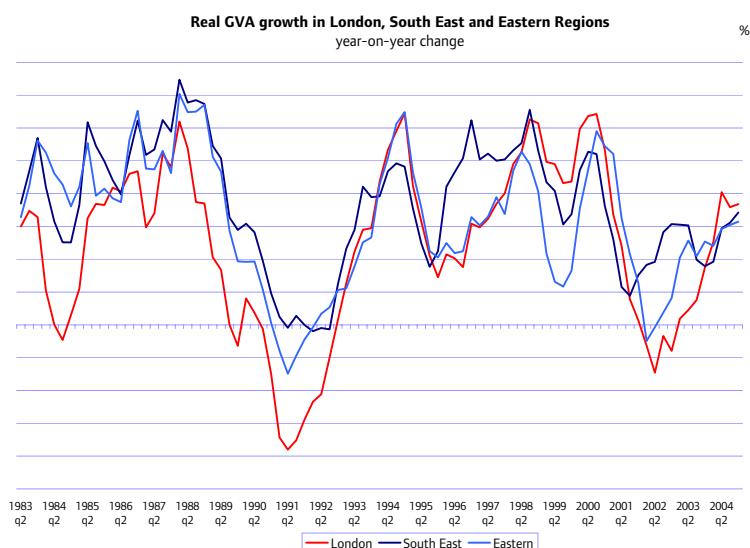


Similar growth rates across London and the wider South East

- London's annual growth in output was 3.7% in Q4 2004, up slightly from annual growth of 3.6% in Q3. This continued the robust recovery in 2004.
- The South East region's annual output growth remained strong at 3.4% in Q4 2004 and the Eastern region's output rose by an annual rate of 3.1%.
- London and its two neighbouring regions are recording similar rates of growth.

Latest release: May 2005

Next release: August 2005

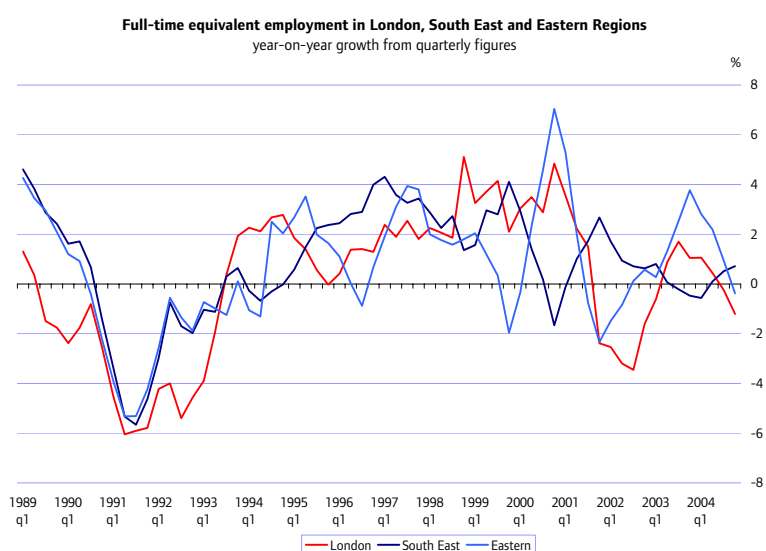


Small employment falls in London and the Eastern region

- London's year-on-year employment change was -1.2% in Q4 2004 compared to -0.2% in Q3 2004.
- The South East's year-on-year employment growth was 0.7% in Q4 2004, an increase from 0.5% in Q3.
- The Eastern region's year-on-year employment growth was -0.4% in Q4 2004 down from 0.9% in Q3.

Latest release: May 2005

Next release: August 2005



London – England’s most environmentally-effective region?

Adarsh Varma
Economist, GLA Economics

Cities are often portrayed as being polluted, dirty places where the environment takes a back seat to the demands of industry. But as a new GLA Economics’ report shows, bringing people together in cities also has clear environmental advantages. The groundbreaking report, *The environmental effectiveness of London*, compares London with the eight other English regions using a range of environmental measures. Its chief finding: London *is* environmentally effective.

Comparing regions

London uses fewer resources and degrades the environment less on average than if the same economic activity was spread throughout England. London’s high concentrations of people and economic activity allow higher environmental efficiency, whether you look at resource use per person or per unit of output. London’s high productivity and high value added economy is effective in *environmental* as well as *economic* terms.

Regions of England used in the report:

- East
- East Midlands
- **London**
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire & Humber

Households

Londoners consume the third highest amount of electricity (per household) of all English regions. This is largely because London has a high proportion of private rented households which consume more electricity (per household)

Fact: *London, a city of around 7.4 million people, consumes more energy than Ireland and about the same as Greece or Portugal.*

than owner-occupied or socially rented households¹. However, when electricity consumption is compared to output generated, the average London household consumes about 30 per cent less than the average

household of all the other regions². In terms of household gas, Londoners use less gas per consumer than the average consumer of the other English regions³.

(Footnotes)

¹ As private landlords rarely pay electricity bills, they are less likely than house owners to worry about energy efficiency.

² Per £1 million of Gross Valued Added (GVA) in 2002: the average London household consumed 90 megawatts per hour (MWh) while the average household of all other regions consumed 130 MWh. The average of all other regions is a simple non-weighted average and does not take into consideration the relative size of GVA or population in each region.

³ 2002 household gas sales were 19,500 KWh per consumer in London whereas the average for all other English regions was 20,000 KWh per consumer.

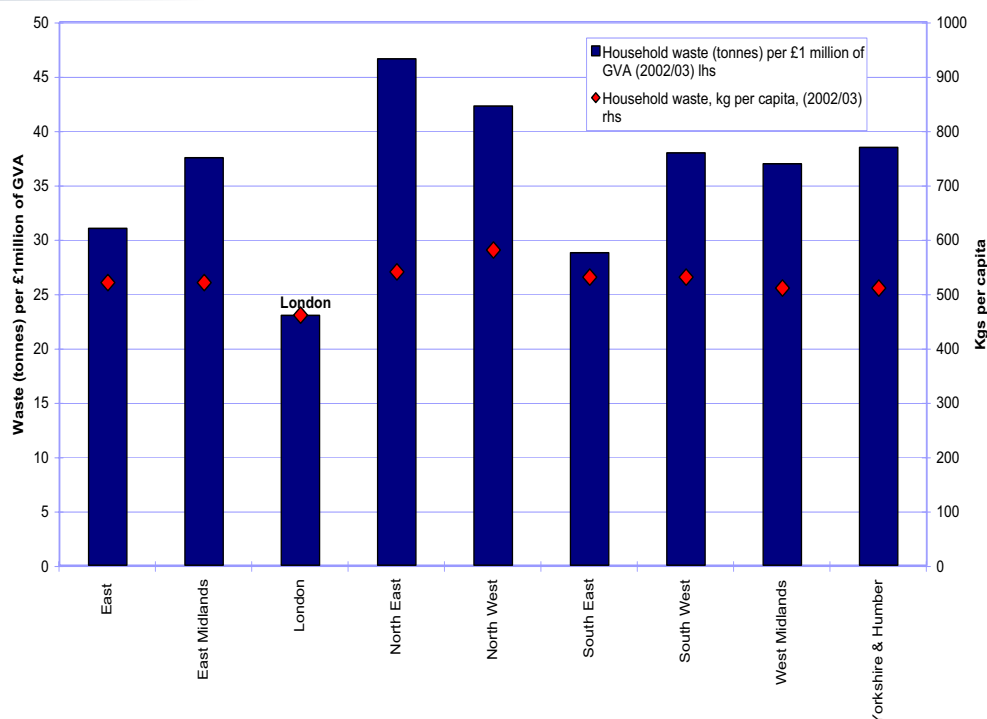
London also performs well in the amount of household waste produced per person. In 2002/03, the average Londoner produced 460 kilograms (kgs) of household waste compared to England's average of 530kgs per person. Furthermore, for every £1 million of Gross Value Added (a measure of output), London households produced roughly 23 tonnes of household waste while the average of the other English regions was around 37 tonnes (see Figure 2).

Fact:

London produces about 17 million tonnes of municipal, commercial, industrial, and construction and demolition waste each year.

Figure 2: Household waste per capita and per £1 million of GVA (2002/03)

Source: DEFRA and ONS



Transport

When travelling around their city, Londoners are more likely to use public transport than the average English person. This leads to lower transport emissions (per person and per output) than in other English regions. The higher income levels in London could also mean Londoners drive newer cars which are generally more fuel efficient. Moreover, London has the third lowest total of vehicle kilometres driven in England, which increased by only seven per cent between 1993-2003 compared to an average increase of 20 per cent for all other regions.

When the amount of transport carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions are compared against output (see Table 1), London produced less than half the amount of the average of all other regions⁴. Similarly, if transport CO₂ emissions per person are compared, London produced 1.1 tonnes per person, while the average of all other regions was around two tonnes.

(Footnote)

⁴ In 2003, London produced 50.6 tonnes of transport CO₂ emissions per £1 million of GVA. The average for all other English regions was 134.1 tonnes.

Table 1: Total road transport and London Underground CO₂ emissions per GVA and per capita (2003)

Source: GLA Economics and ONS

Region	Total road transport and London Underground CO ₂ emissions	Tonnes CO ₂ / £1 million GVA	Tonnes CO ₂ / capita
East	12,374,481	129.8	2.3
East Midlands	9,296,072	150.7	2.2
London	7,839,216	50.6	1.1
North East	4,457,187	137.8	1.8
North West	10,844,679	111.1	1.6
South East	19,126,932	128.6	2.4
South West	10,507,650	139.8	2.1
West Midland	11,013,175	142.4	2.1
Yorkshire & Humber	9,455,128	132.7	1.9

In London, average CO₂ emissions per kilometre travelled by cars has improved by 12 per cent between 1990-2003. Over the same period, car and taxi vehicle kilometres increased by three per cent indicating fuel efficiency improvements are outstripping car and taxi trip demand.

Commercial activity

London had approximately 65,000 commercial and industrial gas users in 2002, the largest number of all the regions. However per commercial and industrial consumer gas usage was lowest in London compared to the average for other English regions. Furthermore, commercial and industrial gas sales per output in London were less than half of the average for the other English regions⁵. London's related usage is low because the capital has fewer energy intensive industries than other regions.

Fact:

London has around 18 per cent of England's commercial and industrial gas customers.

Electricity consumption by London's commercial and industrial sector was around nine per cent of the total electricity usage by the sector in England for 2002. However, London had the lowest electricity consumption per commercial and industrial consumer at 43,000 kilowatt per hour (KWh), while the average for all other regions was approximately 113,000 KWh.

CO₂ emissions attributed to electricity consumed by the commercial and industrial sectors in London was 53 kilo tonnes per £1 billion of GVA in 2002. The average in all other regions excluding London was 193 kilo tonnes per £1 billion of GVA.

(Footnotes)

⁵ Commercial and industrial gas sales were 238 GWh per £1 billion of GVA in London in 2002. In all other regions excluding London the average was 557 GWh per £1 billion of GVA in 2002.

The way forward

The estimates used in the GLA Economics' report are a first attempt to compare the environmental effectiveness of economic and social activity in London with other regions. Examination at a more local level of the environmental costs and benefits of economic activity would also be beneficial.

To read the full report:

Please visit www.london.gov.uk/mayor/economic_unit, select *GLA Economics publications* down the right hand side and click on the following:

- The environmental effectiveness of London: Comparing London with other English regions

Related reports also available at the above website include:

- Valuing Greenness: Green spaces, house prices and Londoners' priorities
- Working Paper 3: Valuing Greenness – Is there a segmented preference for housing attributes in London?
- London's Ecological Footprint: A Review

Data sources

Tube and bus ridership	Transport for London on 020 7941 4500
GDP/GVA growth	Experian Business Strategies on 020 7355 8200
Tourism – overseas visitors	www.statistics.gov.uk
Tourism – domestic visitors	www.visitlondon.com
London airports	www.caa.co.uk
Business activity	www.rbs.co.uk/pmireports
Employment	www.rbs.co.uk/pmireports
London FootFall	www.footfall.com
Office space demand	www.cbhillierparker.com
House prices	www.nationwide.co.uk/hpi/
Unemployment rates	www.statistics.gov.uk

Glossary

Civilian workforce jobs

Measures jobs at the workplace rather than where workers live. This indicator captures total employment in the London economy, including commuters.

Claimant count rate

Unemployment rate based on the number of people claiming unemployment benefits.

Employee jobs

Civilian jobs, including employees paid by employers running a PAYE scheme. Government employees and people on training schemes are included if they have a contract of employment. Armed forces are excluded.

FootFall Index

Measures the average number of people passing through London shopping centres on a weekly basis. This index is positively correlated with UK retail spending so it can provide an indication of consumer spending in London.

Gross domestic product (GDP)

A measure of the total economic activity in the economy.

Gross value added (GVA)

Used in the estimation of GDP. The link between GVA and GDP is that GVA plus taxes on products minus subsidies on products is equal to GDP.

ILO unemployment rate

The International Labour Organisation's calculation of the number of people out of work.

Tube ridership

Transport for London's measure of the number of passengers using London Underground in a given period. There are 13 periods in a year – twelve 28-day periods and one 29-day period. Period 1 starts at the beginning of the financial year rather than the calendar year.

Acronyms

ABI	Annual Business Inquiry	IMF	International Monetary Fund
BAA	British Airports Authority	LCCI	London Chamber of Commerce and Industry
BCC	British Chamber of Commerce	LET	London's Economy Today
BITOA	British Incoming Tour Operators Association	MPC	Monetary Policy Committee
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority	ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
CBI	Confederation of British Industry	ONS	Office for National Statistics
EBS	Experian Business Strategies	PMI	Purchasing Managers' Index
GDP	Gross domestic product	PWC	PricewaterhouseCoopers
GVA	Gross value added	RICS	Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors
ILO	International Labour Organisation		

Past features

Issue

- 1-14 Topics available on request
- 15 Retail employment in London
- 16 A Londoner's Guide to the Pre-Budget Report
- 17 London employee jobs – the latest trends
- 18 Congestion charging and retail – one year on
New tourism and employment indicators
- 19 Budget 2004: An initial analysis
Where do you live? London's housing submarkets
- 20 A focus on cities
- 21 World City, World Knowledge: The economic contribution of London's higher education sector
- 22 Looking ahead: Gender, construction and retail
- 23 The Spending Review reviewed
- 24 How well do cities perform? The answer - it depends?
Buses: Bringing benefit to town centres - Challenging the myths to bring business and people together
- 25 Casino Royale - Economic effects of casino development in London following the proposed gambling bill
- 26 Atoms and DNA: Revising London's Economy - Changes to estimated GVA and employment growth in London
- 27 They're coming back! The recovery in London's tourism industry
Nappies and 'power suits': Childcare issues for London employers
- 28 The 2004 Pre-Budget Report reviewed
- 29 London at work: Trends in London's employee jobs
- 30 London's Economic Development Strategy Launched
- 31 Skilled labour availability and crime are top concerns in London Annual Business Survey
- 32 Laying foundations: Introducing research into London's construction industry
- 33 A snapshot of GLA Economics' work
- 34 A Time to Skill: Skills in London's economy

GLA Economics

City Hall
The Queen's Walk
London SE1 2AA

Tel 020 7983 4922

Fax 020 7983 4137

Email glaeconomics@london.gov.uk

Internet www.london.gov.uk

© Greater London Authority
July 2005

ISSN 1740-9136 (print)

ISSN 1740-9195 (online)

ISSN 1740-9144 (email)

London's Economy Today is published by email and on www.london.gov.uk towards the end of every month. It provides an overview of the current state of the London economy, and a changing selection of the most up-to-date data available. It tracks cyclical economic conditions to ensure they are not moving outside the parameters of the underlying assumptions of the GLA group and central government.

Subscribe

Subscribe online at http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/economic_unit

Disclaimer

GLA Economics uses a wide range of information and data sourced from third party suppliers within its analysis and reports. GLA Economics cannot be held responsible for the accuracy or timeliness of this information and data.

GLA Economics, Transport for London, the London Development Agency and the Greater London Authority will not be liable for any losses suffered or liabilities incurred by a party as a result of that party relying in any way on the information contained in this publication.

Other formats

For a summary of this document in your language, or a large print, Braille, disc, sign language video or audio tape version, please contact us at the address below:

Public Liaison Unit

Greater London Authority

City Hall

The Queen's Walk

London SE1 2AA

Tel 020 7983 4100

Minicom 020 7983 4458

www.london.gov.uk

Please provide your name, postal address and state the publication and format you require.

About GLA Economics

GLA Economics provides expert advice and analysis on London's economy and the economic issues facing the capital. Data and analysis from GLA Economics provide a sound basis for the policy and investment decisions facing the Mayor of London and the GLA group. The unit was set up in May 2002.

GLA Economics is funded by



MAYOR OF LONDON

Article submitted by the London Economic Panel



The views expressed in this article are those of the London Economic Panel. They are not necessarily the views of the Greater London Authority, the Mayor of London, the London Assembly or GLA Economics.

The London Economic Panel is a group of senior business leaders who meet twice a year to discuss London's economy. They represent a range of London's business sectors and provide up-to-date assessments of London's overall economic performance and make forecasts for the year ahead. Below is a summary of their July findings.

The London Economic Panel met on 13 July to assess the current state of the London economy and to identify any short to medium-term trends. Overall the picture was mixed and seemed to highlight the emergence of a 'two-speed' economy, with the consumer economy demonstrating a very obvious slow-down and the corporate economy remaining far more robust. Higher housing costs meant that interest rates had a disproportionate effect on Londoners, and the panel called for the Bank of England to reduce interest rates by 0.25 per cent in order to counter this dip in consumer confidence.

The panel also discussed the impact of the terrorist attacks of 7 July on London's economy as a whole and on some sectors in particular. In general panel members felt that following the immediate shock and transport disruption, the majority of businesses were operating normally and that at this early stage the effect on London's economy did not appear to have been especially adverse. This was put down, to a large degree, to the fact that London had portrayed itself extremely well in the immediate aftermath of the incidents.

The impact on retailers had, quite clearly, been the most immediate, but even this sector had recovered to some degree and it was too early to say what the longer-term impact might be. London hotels had not seen a significant decline in numbers since 7 July, but the summer period would be crucial. There was particular concern for the domestic leisure market, with potentially less inclination for people to visit London spontaneously for short-stay trips. The higher education sector did not believe that there would be a decline in international students as the USA is the main competitive market, which has to deal with similar issues.

The group expressed great admiration for the emergency services, police and Underground staff and felt that the capital had coped extremely well.

London's victory in securing the Olympics in 2012 was met with enthusiasm and the panel congratulated Lord Coe and the Bid Team with a message that London business is firmly behind the games.

The **advertising** sector is feeling the effects of the consumer-driven slowdown with clients pulling back their marketing budgets. Publicis Group's Zenith Optimedia has revised their forecast for advertising growth in 2005 downwards from 4.9 per cent to 2.9 per cent.

This slowdown is further reflected by the **retail** sector across London, where stores are operating below the UK average. Consumers in London are deferring expenditure on larger scale purchases to balance a flattening of house prices and uncertainties over job security. It was noted that this concern over job security was perhaps based more in perception than in reality but is borne out of the fact that sectoral imbalance referred to above meant that the increase in economic activity is not being matched by an increase in jobs.

In contrast, the **business and financial services** sector is extremely strong, reflecting the two-speed economy. Although, as the **financial services** market has seen a turndown since March, panel members were unsure as to how sustainable this growth might be. While investment banking business remains firm, trading activity in financial markets slowed noticeably after a strong start to the year. Business banking started the year quietly but has seen an increase over the last quarter which picked up, in particular, after the general election. However, new customers entering the business banking market are of diminishing quality.

The **construction industry** continues to be buoyant, partly due to the election result, enabling large government contracts in education, housing and health to continue. The industry welcomes the news of London's Olympic bid victory, but warns of some challenges – particularly in terms of capacity of the workforce, possible increase in costs and the tight timescales in which much of the construction will have to take place. Phasing will be essential and, if the industry is to benefit, it must find ways to deliver more cheaply and adopt new ways of working.

The **property sector** is experiencing a stable take up of office space, with the City of London currently better than the West End in terms of take-up. Rents are beginning to 'trickle up' for Grade A space, while rents on other properties remain flat and activity is steady.

The **higher education** sector is less susceptible to economic cycles and is 'comfortable', with high levels of investment being channelled, in particular, into research.

The **energy** sector is currently facing three main challenges; security of supply, prices and climate change. Oil and gas reserves are low and because of higher summer temperatures risk is now spread across the year rather than diminishing or increasing according to the season. Oil and gas prices, and carbon prices in the new emissions trading market, are far higher than anticipated.

Notes:

For further information, contact Clare Convey on 020 7665 1572 or Charlotte Grant on 020 7665 1504.

The full membership of the **London Economic Panel** is:

Sir Stuart Hampson, Chairman, John Lewis Partnership (Chair)
 Ms Helen Alexander, Chief Executive Officer, The Economist Group
 Sir Michael Bichard, Rector, University of the Arts London
 Sir Win Bischoff, Chairman, Citigroup Europe
 Ms Amanda Burton, Regional Chief Operating Officer, Clifford Chance
 Sir William Castell, President and CEO, GE Healthcare
 Mr Colin Cohen, Director of Sales Operations, IBM UK Ltd
 Professor Sir Graeme Davies, Vice Chancellor, University of London
 Mr Vincent de Rivaz, Chief Executive, EDF Energy
 Mr Paul Donovan, Managing Director, Economic Research, UBS
 Mr Grant Duncan, Chief Executive, Publicis
 Mr Robert Evans, UK Deputy Chairman, CB Richard Ellis
 Mr Gareth Goodier, Chief Executive, North West London StHA
 Ms Claudia John, Regional Director - Medium Business, Barclays Bank Plc
 Mr George Kessler CBE, Managing Director, Kesslers International
 Mr Ian Krieger, Senior Client Service Partner, Deloitte
 Mr Richard Lyon, General Manager, the Renaissance Chancery Court
 Mr Bob Macnaughton, Chief Executive Officer, NCP
 Mr Harvey McGrath, Chairman, MAN Group Plc
 Sir Jonathan Michael, Chief Executive, Guys & St Thomas' Hospital Trust
 Mr Francis Salway, Chief Executive Development, Land Securities
 Mr Robert White, Chairman, Mace