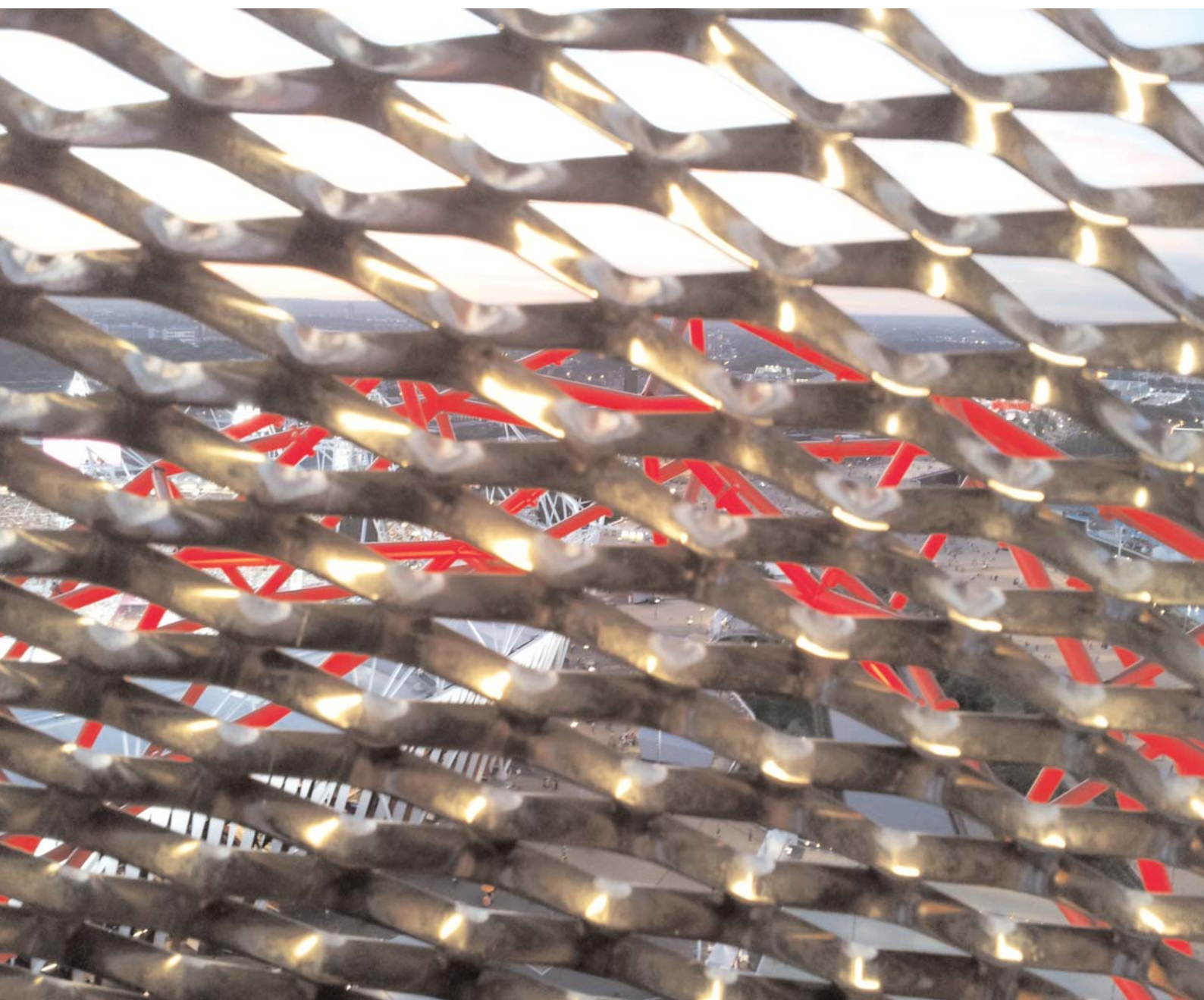


Current Issues Note 37

International tourism in London: Results for London from the International Passenger Survey 2011

By **Simon Kyte**



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International tourism in London: Executive Summary

The Office for National Statistics has released 'Travel Trends' outlining results from the International Passenger Survey 2011 and supplementary data sources. This Current Issues Note presents a brief analysis of volume and value statistics from this latest annual release on international tourism data for London covering 2011.

- The number of international tourists visiting the capital has continued to recover in 2011, building on the increase in 2010. Total annual visits to London were up on 2010 by 4.0 per cent to 15.289 million. That compares with a 3.3 per cent increase across the UK as a whole.
- In terms of spend, London received ten per cent more international visitor spend than the remainder of the UK regions put together. Total international visitor spend in the capital increased by 7.7 per cent to £9.411 billion. This compares with a 6.5 per cent increase in the comparable figure for the UK as a whole.
- For London, both visitor numbers and spend increased on 2010 from all three global regions: North America, Europe and 'other countries'. North American visitor spend was up by 7.4 per cent, European visitor spend rose by 10.5 per cent and spending from 'other countries' increased by 3.5 per cent.

Introduction

The Office for National Statistics has released 'Travel Trends' outlining results from the International Passenger Survey 2011 and supplementary data sources. This summary document presents a brief analysis of volume and value statistics from this latest annual release on international tourism data for London covering 2011. Information and data within this publication updates the more detailed analysis published in May 2012 in Working Paper 53¹.

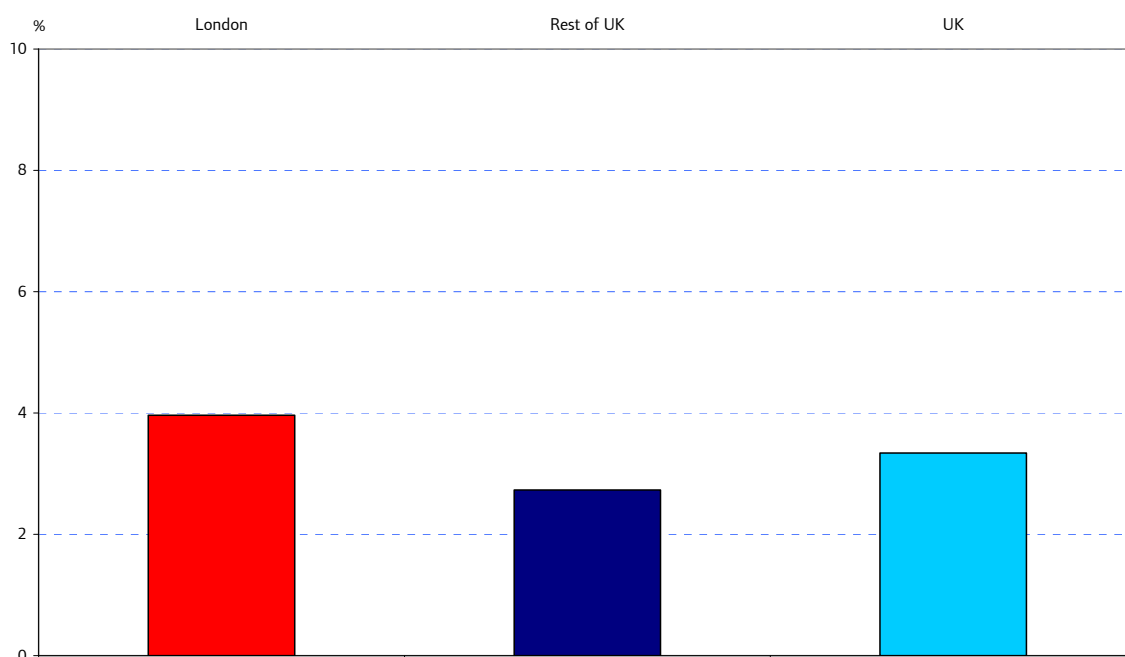
Any enquiries regarding the data should be directed to Simon Kyte (simon.kyte@london.gov.uk).

¹ GLA Economics Working Paper 53 – Tourism in London (May 2012).
<http://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/wp-53.pdf>

1. Volume

London has performed well in terms of international visitor numbers in 2011. Visitor volumes in London rose as they did across the remainder of the UK. Total annual visits to London were up on 2010 by 4.0 per cent to 15.289 million. That compares with a 3.3 per cent increase across the UK as a whole to 30.798 million as shown in Figure 1.1 below. When London is stripped out of the UK figures, the national situation is marginally less positive, increasing by 2.7 per cent.

Figure 1.1 : Percentage change in all international visitors (2011 compared to 2010)

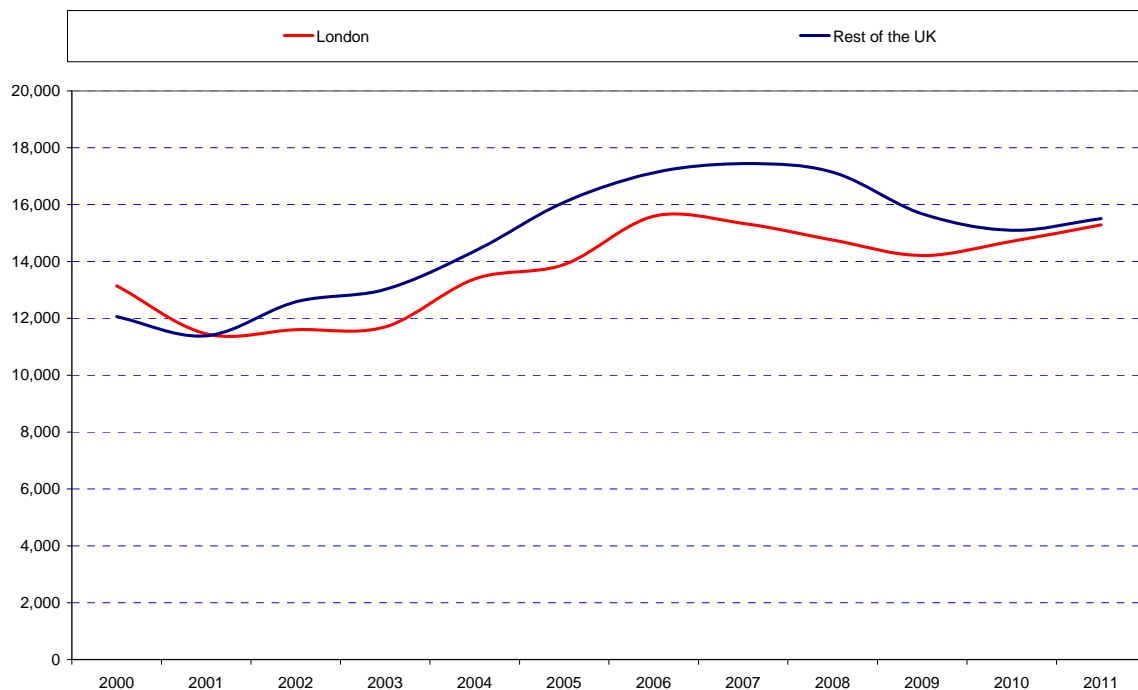


Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Put into the longer term context, this suggests that the number of international tourists visiting London has continued to recover in 2011, building on the increase in 2010 after successive falls in international tourist numbers since 2006. London is now only two per cent off its 2006 peak in visitor numbers again. The 'rest of the UK' is now showing a recovery as well as shown in Figure 1.2.

"The number of international tourists visiting London has continued to recover in 2011, building on the increase in 2010."

Figure 1.2 : All international tourists to London and the rest of the UK since 2000 (Thousands)



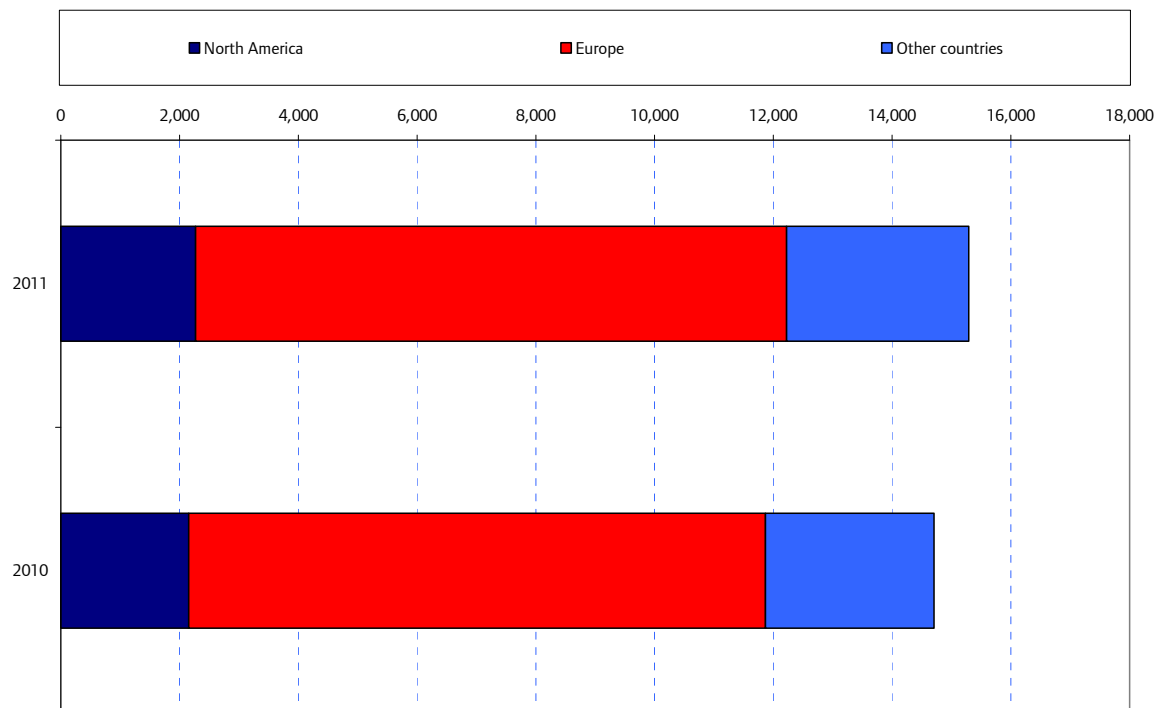
Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

North American visits account for 15 per cent of London's total international visits (the same percentage share as in 2010) whilst European visitors account for 65 per cent (down from 66 per cent in 2010)². Other countries account for 20 per cent of the capital's international visits (up from 19 per cent in 2010 and their largest share since 2002) as shown in Figure 1.3A. Figure 1.3B shows percentage shares rather than actual numbers and demonstrates longer term trends within London's international visitor origin countries³.

² Both 'North America' and 'Europe' are defined in accordance with the ONS definitions in the 'Travel Trends 2011' publication available online: http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171776_274235.pdf

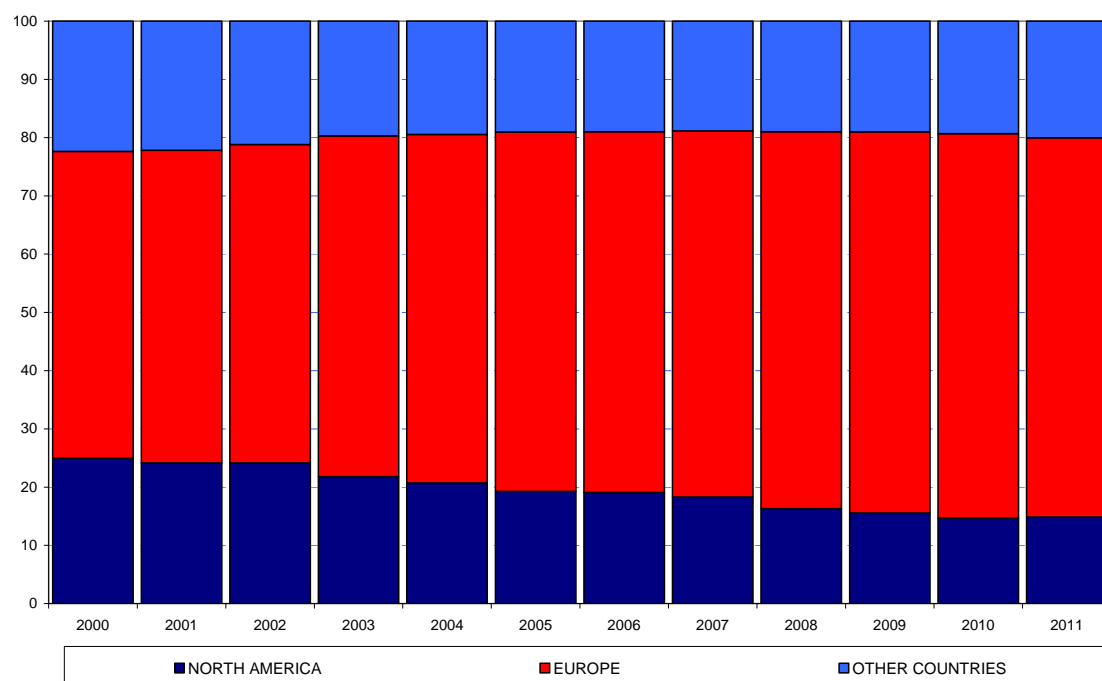
³ Note here that spend shares are very different. Since 'other countries' have a higher spend per visitor on average, their share of spend is 32 per cent. North American visitors account for nearly 18 per cent of spend. Nevertheless, European visitors still account for half of international tourist spend in the capital (51 per cent).

Figure 1.3A : Overseas visits to London by global region of origin in 2010 and 2009 (Thousands)



Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Figure 1.3B : Share of London's overseas visits by global region of origin since 2000 (Percentage shares)

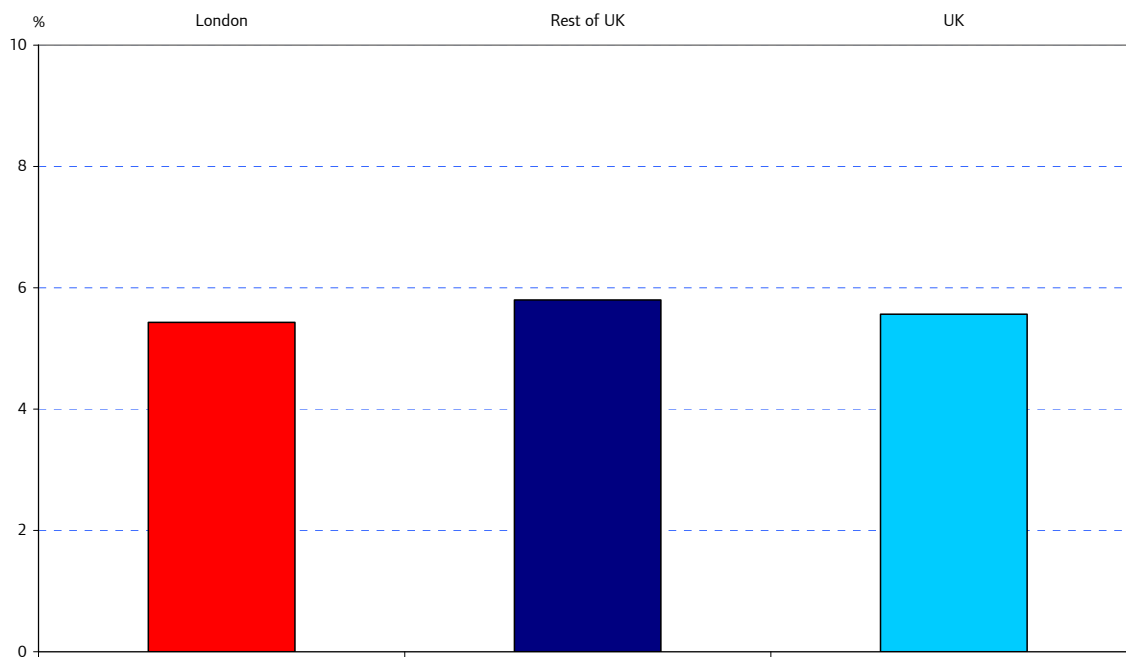


Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

North American visitor volumes

A noticeable feature of the 2011 data is a marked reversal of the trend in recent years for falling numbers of North American visitors to the capital. In 2011 North American visitors to London rose by 5.4 per cent to 2.272 million after a decline of 2.5 per cent in 2010. The increase was also reflected across the UK as a whole where there was a 5.6 per cent increase and a 5.8 per cent increase once London was stripped out of the national data as shown in Figure 1.4.

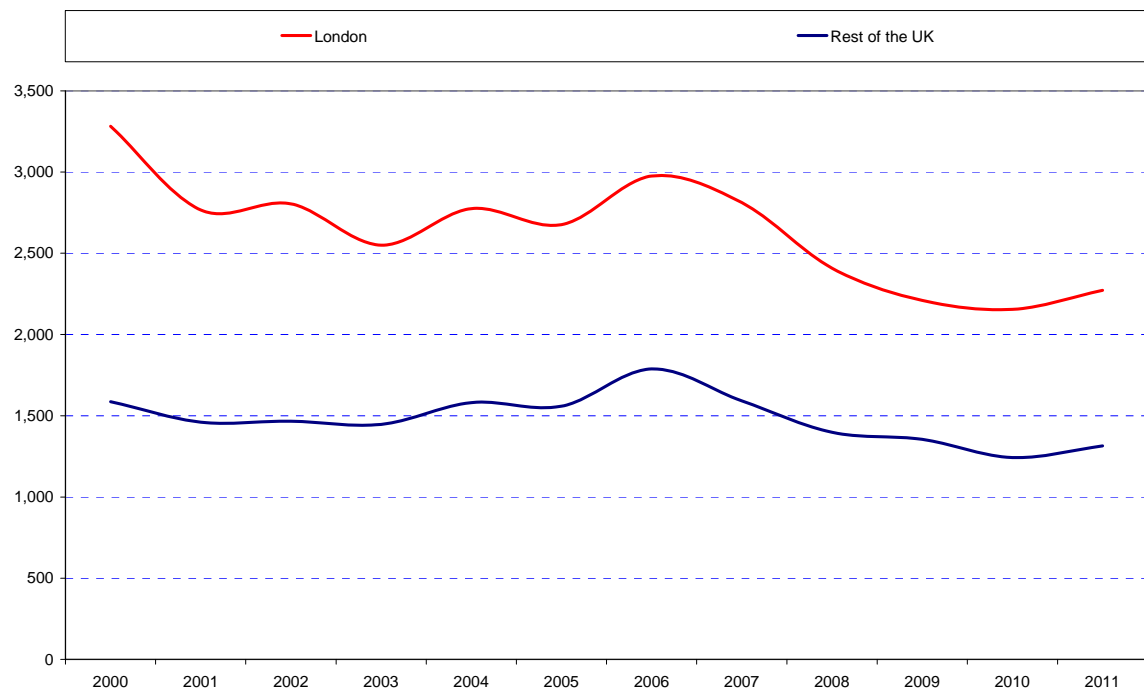
Figure 1.4 : Percentage change in North American visitors (2011 compared to 2010)



Source: *International Passenger Survey, ONS*

However, the number of North American visitors to London per year is still down on its 2000 level by some 31 per cent – compared to only a 17 per cent fall for the 'rest of the UK' as shown in Figure 1.5.

Figure 1.5 : North American tourists to London and the rest of the UK since 2000 (Thousands)

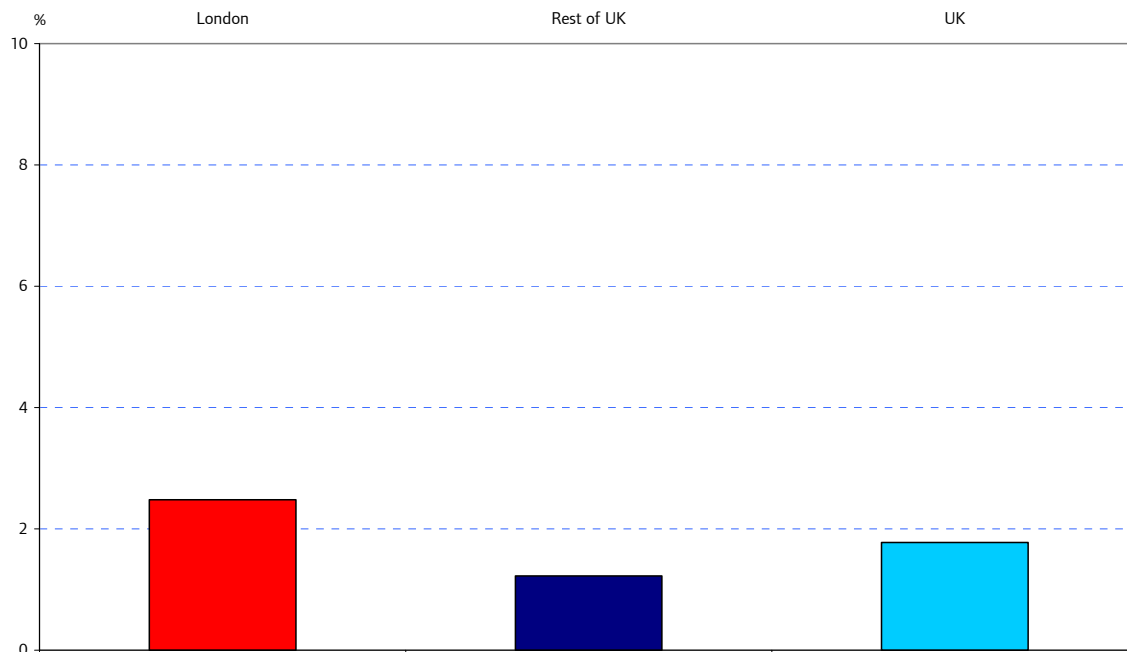


Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

European visitor volumes

In comparison to the patterns exhibited by North American tourists, there were smaller increases in visitor numbers from Europe in 2011. European visitors to London grew by 2.5 per cent in 2011 to 9.954 million. Across the UK as a whole there was an increase of 1.8 per cent to 22.438 million as shown in Figure 1.6. This implies that there was a 1.2 per cent increase in 'the rest of the UK'.

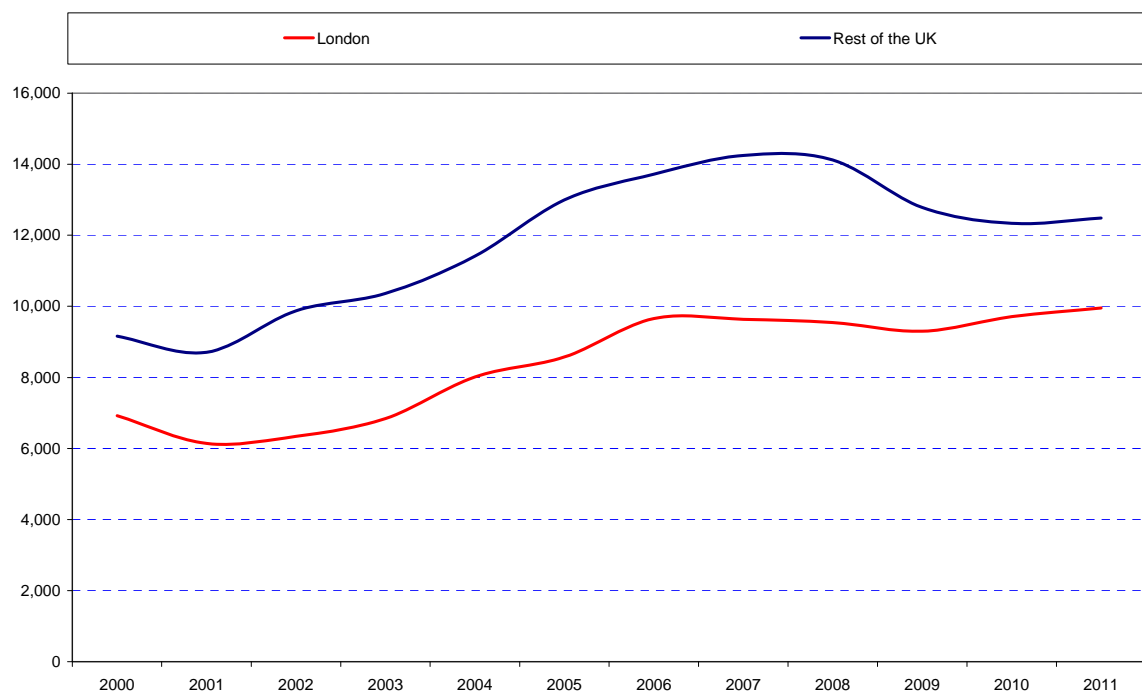
Figure 1.6 : Percentage change in European visitors (2011 compared to 2010)



Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Tourist visits from Europe have risen by 44 per cent in London and by 36 per cent in the 'rest of the UK' since 2000, although the 'rest of the UK' is still at levels seen in the mid-2000s having fallen from a 2007 peak as shown in Figure 1.7.

Figure 1.7 : European tourists to London and the rest of the UK since 2000 (Thousands)



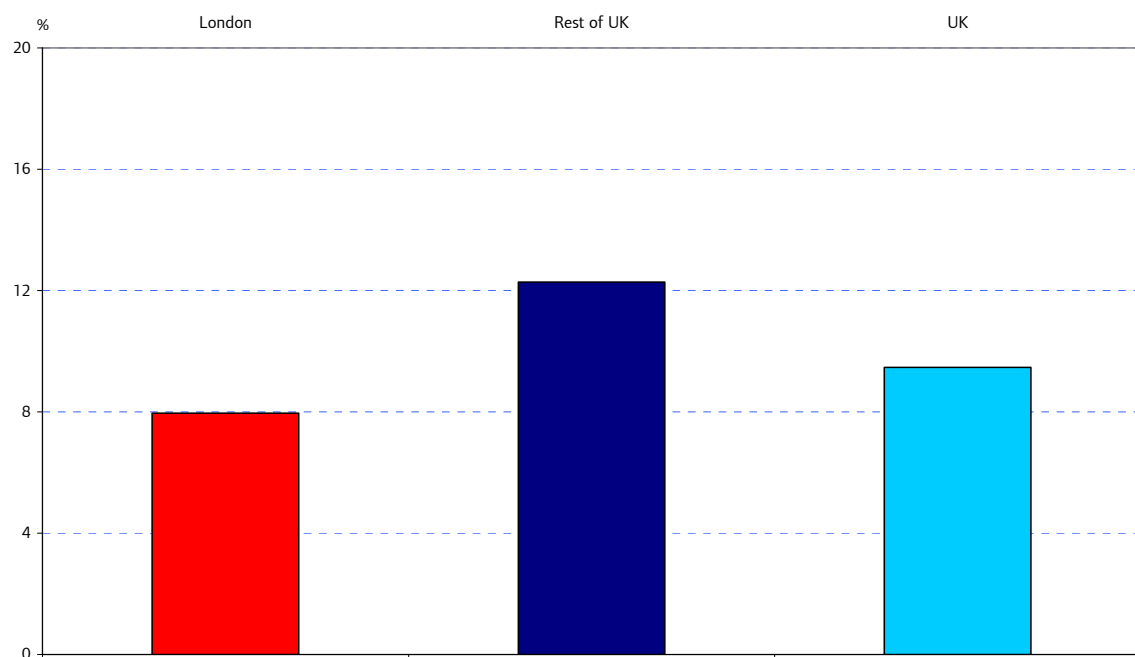
Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Visitors volumes from other countries

'Other countries' here is defined as all countries outside Europe and North America.

Visitors from other countries rose in London by 8.0 per cent to 3.064 million. For the UK as a whole, visits from 'other countries' rose by 9.5 per cent to 4.774 million as shown in Figure 1.8. This would imply that visits to 'the rest of the UK' rose by 12.3 per cent.

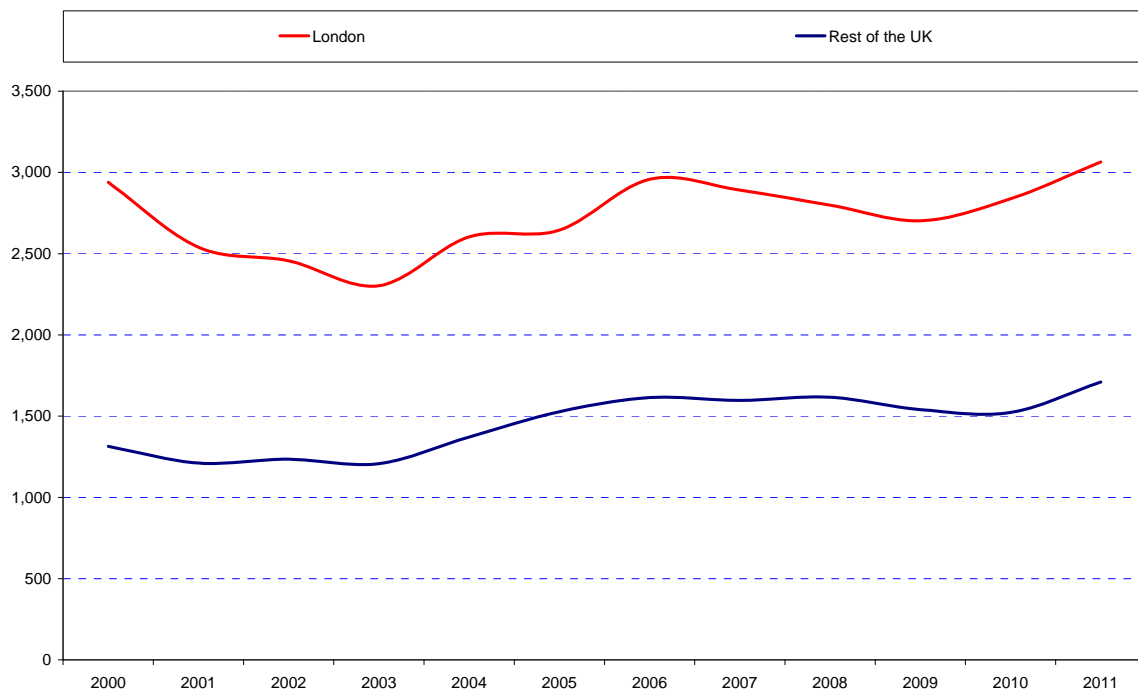
Figure 1.8 : Percentage change in visitors from 'other countries' (2011 compared to 2010)



Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Visitors to London from 'other countries' have now surpassed their 2006 peak, exceeding it by nearly 4 per cent as shown in Figure 1.9.

Figure 1.9 : International tourists from other countries to London and the rest of the UK since 2000 (Thousands)



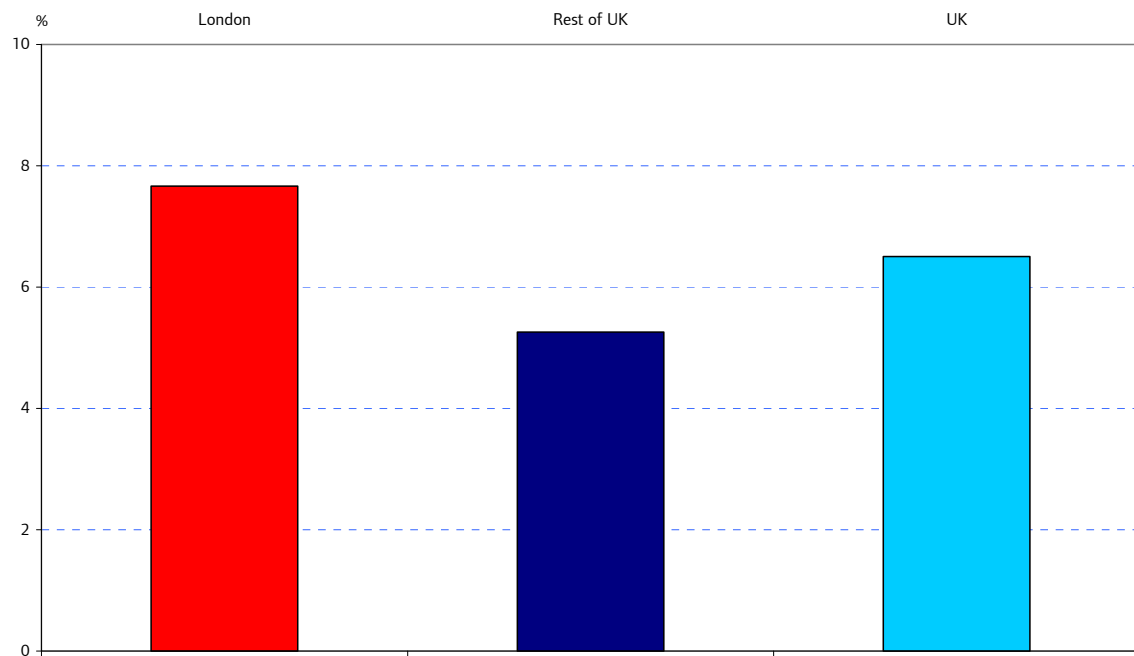
Source: *International Passenger Survey, ONS*

Therefore, visitor numbers to London rose in 2011 from all three global regions.

2. Value

Overall total international visitor spend in the capital increased by 7.7 per cent on its 2010 level to £9.411 billion. This compares with a 6.5 per cent increase in the comparable figure for the UK as a whole to £17.998 billion. However, when London is stripped out from the UK data, 'the rest of the UK' actually experienced a smaller increase of 5.3 per cent as shown in Figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1 : Percentage change in international spend (2011 compared to 2010)

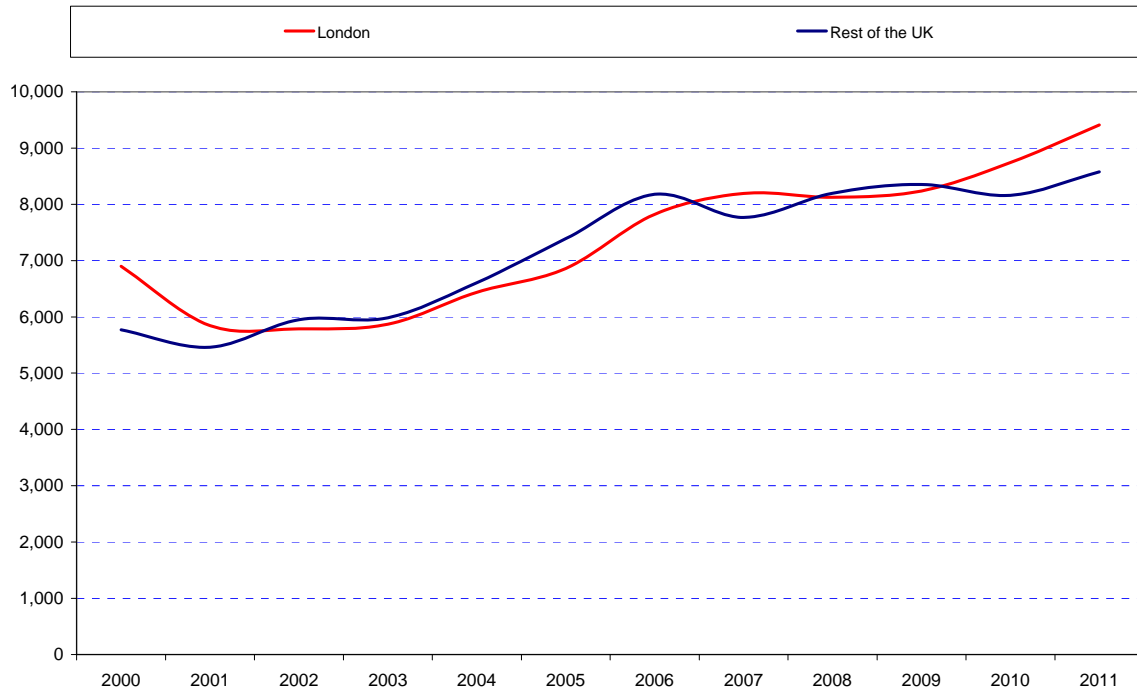


Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

“In 2011 London received ten per cent more international visitor spend than the remainder of the UK regions put together.”

Figure 2.2 shows that total international tourist spend in the capital continued to increase in 2011 building on growth in 2010 after very little net growth between 2007 and 2009. In 2011 London received ten per cent more international visitor spend than the remainder of the UK regions put together.

Figure 2.2 : Total international tourist spend in London and 'the rest of the UK' since 2000 (£ millions)

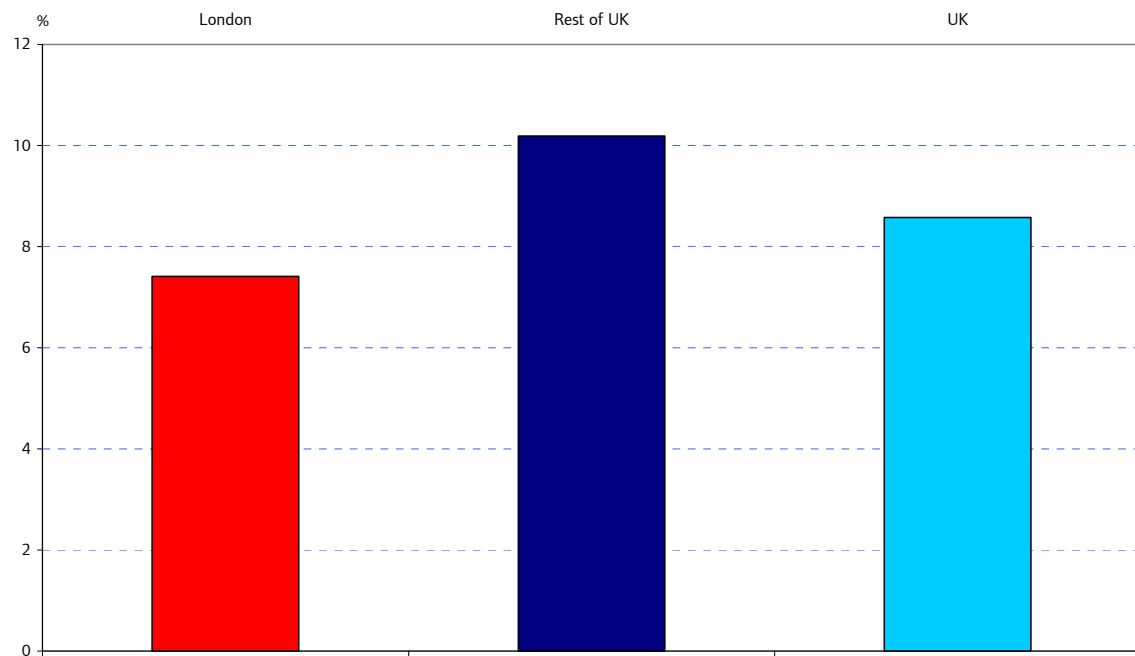


Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

North American visitor spend

In London spend by North American tourists increased by 7.4 per cent in 2011 to £1.652 billion. Comparable figures for the UK as a whole show a larger increase in spend of 8.6 per cent to £2.874 billion. This implies that spend by North American visitors increased by 10.2 per cent in the 'rest of the UK' as shown in Figure 2.3 below.

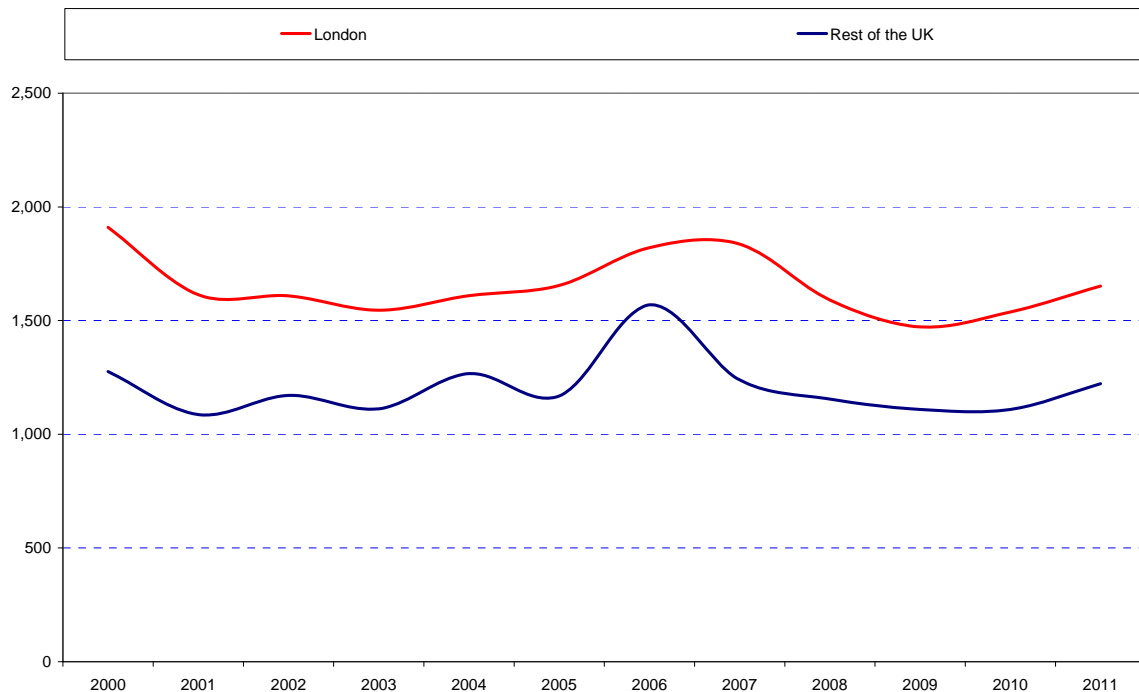
Figure 2.3 : Percentage change in North American tourist spend (2011 compared to 2010)



Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Figure 2.4 shows that the decline in North American visitor spend which occurred in recent years in the capital was reversed again in 2011 as it was in 2010. However, in 2011, this pattern was also reflected across the 'rest of the UK'.

Figure 2.4 : North American international tourist spend in London and 'the rest of the UK' since 2000 (£ millions)

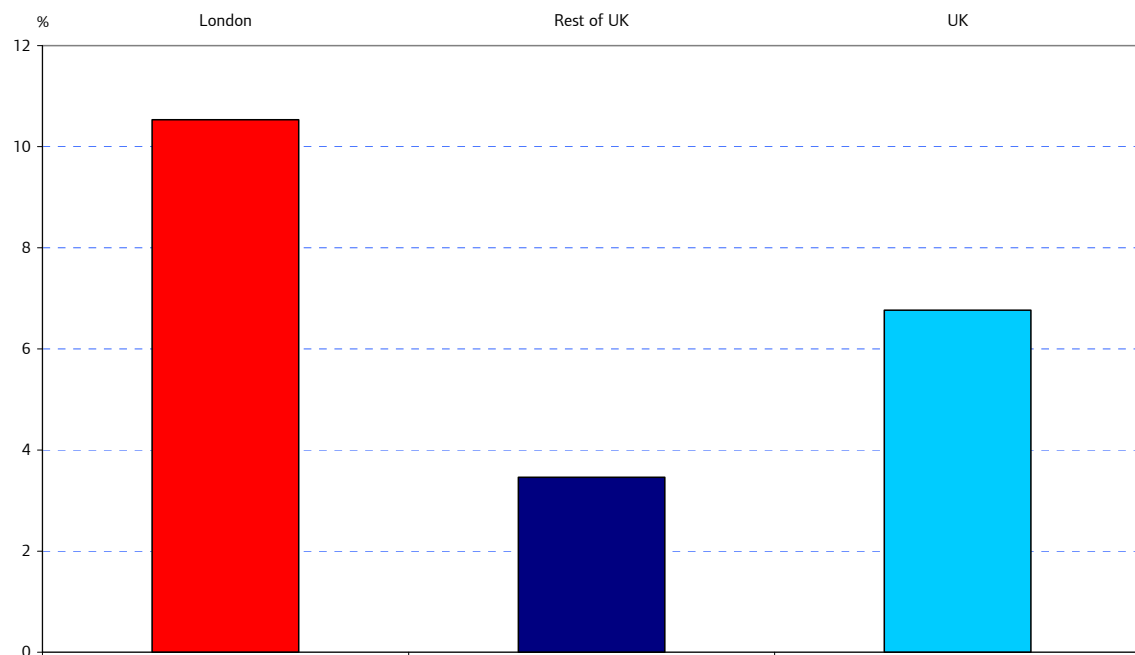


Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

European visitor spend

Figure 2.5 shows that, in spite of relatively low visitor volume growth, there has been strong growth since 2010 in European tourist expenditure in London. Spend rose by 10.5 per cent to £4.754 billion. Spend also rose nationally across the UK by 6.8 per cent to £9.832 billion. However, once London's spend growth was stripped out, expenditure growth in 'the rest of the UK' was rather weaker at 3.5 per cent.

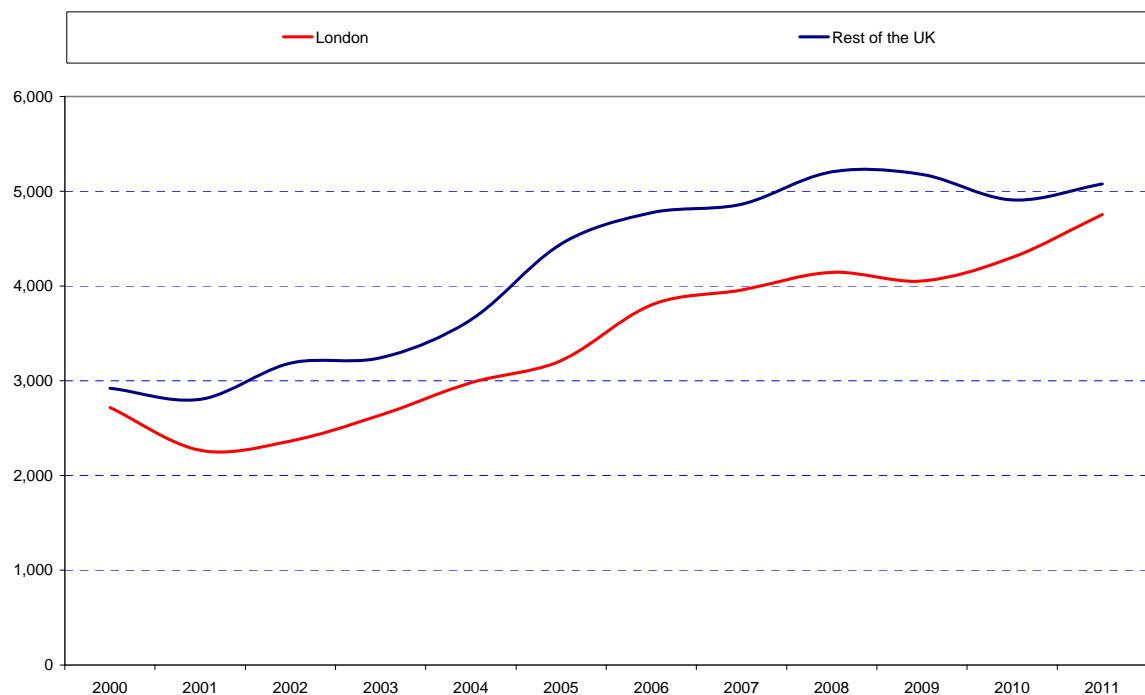
Figure 2.5 : Percentage change in European tourist spend (2011 compared to 2010)



Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Figure 2.6 shows that European visitor spend in the capital continued to increase strongly in 2011. The decline in spend in 'the rest of the UK' since the 2008 peak is also beginning to be reversed.

Figure 2.6 : European tourist spend in London and 'the rest of the UK' since 2000 (£ millions)

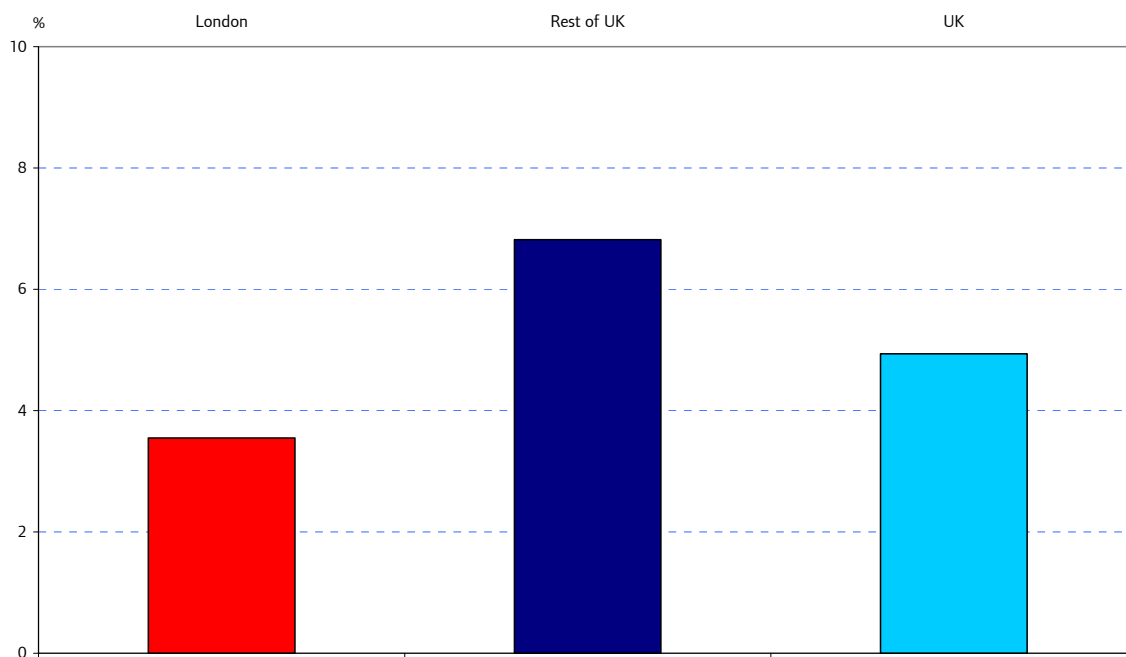


Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Visitor spend from other countries

Spend from visitors from 'other countries' in London increased by 3.5 per cent to £3.005 billion. Across the UK as a whole there was a larger increase of 4.9 per cent to £5.292 billion. This would imply that there was 6.8 per cent growth in spend from these countries in the 'rest of the UK' as shown in Figure 2.7.

Figure 2.7 : Percentage change in other countries' tourist spend (2010 compared to 2009)

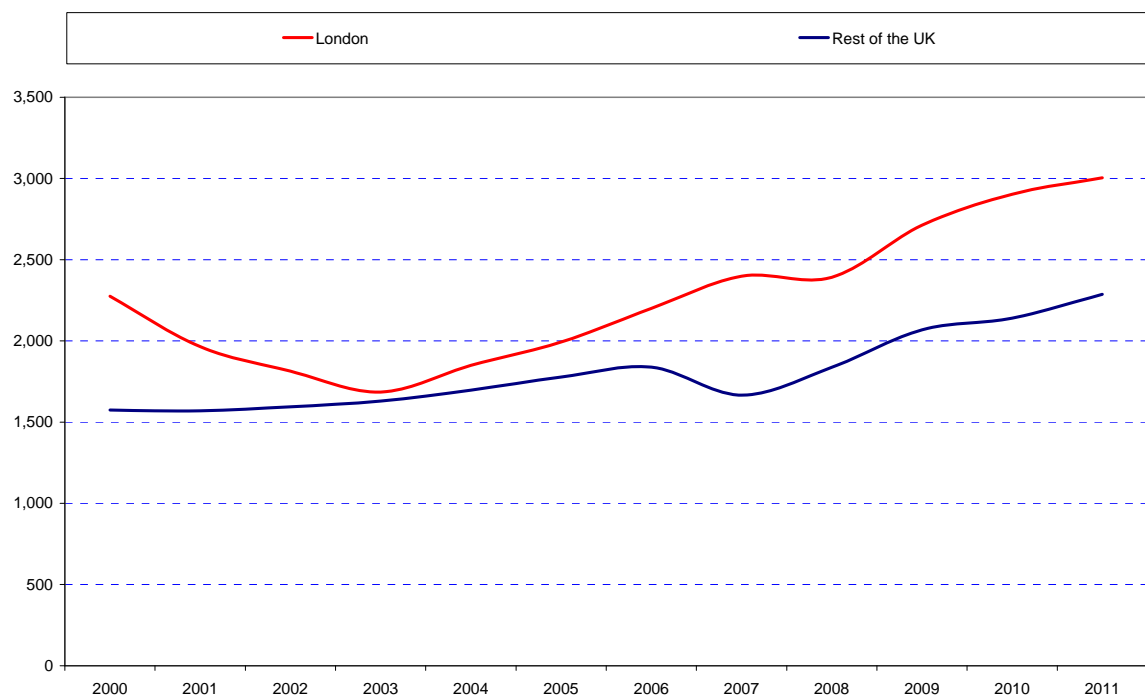


Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Figure 2.8 shows that spend from 'other countries' has continued to rise in the capital but at a slower rate than in recent years. Obviously, the aggregate grouping, 'other countries', masks conflicting trends within that. The fact that spend growth from 'other countries' is not as high as the growth in their visitor numbers to the capital may suggest less of a concentration of high spend countries in the mix.

“As with visitor numbers, spend in the capital from all three global regions increased in 2011.”

Figure 2.8 : Tourist spend from ‘other countries’ in London and ‘the rest of the UK’ since 2000 (£ millions)



Source: International Passenger Survey, ONS

Therefore, as with visitor numbers, spend in the capital from all three global regions increased in 2011.

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