



The Voice of UK Airlines

Media Comment

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Comment on PM's Speech about Economic Growth, January 2011

Simon Buck, Chief Executive of BATA, commenting on the Prime Minister's speech about economic growth, said:

"It really is quite remarkable then that, unlike the Irish Government which recently slashed their tax on flying to help promote tourism, the UK Government seems set on making Britain one of the most expensive countries in Europe for tourists to come and visit as well as penalising British families taking annual sunshine holidays. For example, it costs a Chinese family over £600 in Air Passenger Duty and visa costs alone to visit the UK compared to just over £200 to visit France. Maybe that goes some way towards explaining why in 2008, France received 688,000 Chinese tourists compared to just 108,000 visiting the UK. Tourism is a key driver of the UK economy and is credited with creating one in five new jobs over the last 10 years and the Prime Minister rightly wants to boost the numbers of tourists visiting Britain. But the UK now has the highest taxes on flying in Europe and is losing market share to other countries that are investing heavily in expanding their own airports unlike in the UK. We really need to see some joined-up thinking from the Government on this."

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Notes to Editors

- BATA is the trade body for UK-registered airlines, with members representing all sectors of the industry.
- In 2009, BATA members employed 71,000 people, operated two thirds of the UK commercial aircraft fleet and were responsible for some 80% of UK airline output, carrying 81 million passengers and 1 million tonnes of cargo.
- The ten BATA member airlines are: Air Southwest, bmi, British Airways, DHL, flybe, Jet2.com, Monarch, Thomas Cook, Thomson Airways and Virgin Atlantic.
- The Prime Minister's Speech, made on 6th January 2011, can be accessed at <http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/latest-news/2011/01/pm-unveils-strategy-for-growth-58464>

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