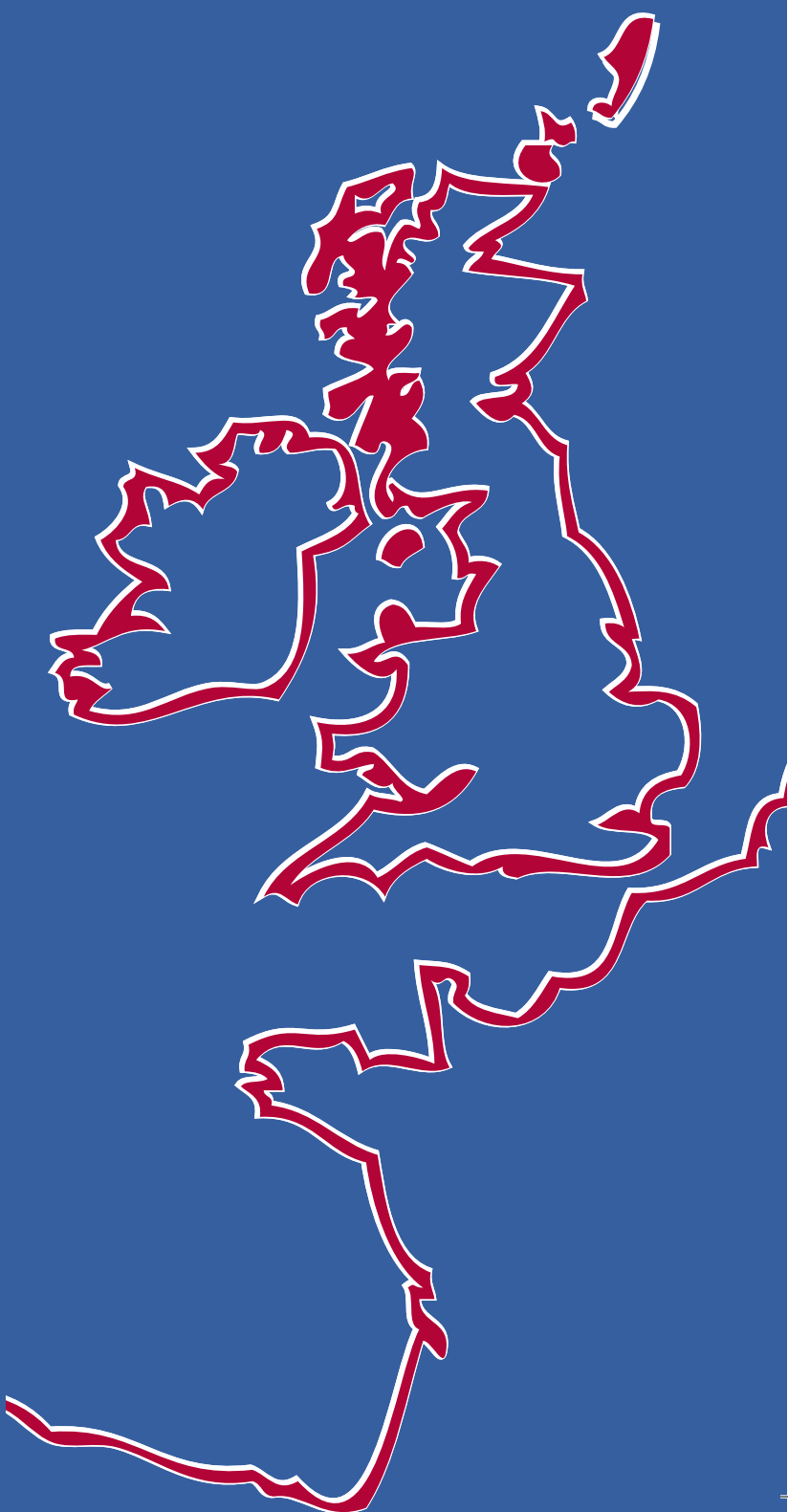
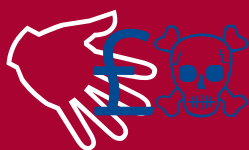


CHANGING LIVES

A HALF-DAY GUIDE TO THE UK CONSUMER.

June 16th 9:00 – 13:00, London





Borrowing ourselves to death?

With the £1 trillion mark passed just over a year ago, the UK is surely drowning under the burden of consumer debt. Or is it? Household assets are at an all time high as are net assets (that take account of that mountain of debt). The Treasury and the Bank of England seem relatively relaxed too – with interest rates staying at historically low levels, the majority of consumers report that the burden of debt is manageable. Yet it remains the case that in Britain the level of consumer saving is low and the use of credit cards for short-term borrowing high compared to other European countries (and many other areas of the world). In this session we try to unravel the consumer mindset and understand what the threats (or not) are to consumer activity by analysing our recent research on this issue. This has been conducted not just in the UK but also across the whole of Europe and repeats work from three years ago; allowing us to measure and compare the path the UK is following in this critically important area.



Ethical or cynical; environmental or instrumental? Does the ethical consumer really exist?

After years of being talked about but not acted upon, the ethical consumer is finally being recognised in the boardroom - and at the highest level. Even those last bastions of resistance – Chief Executives, Finance Directors and hard-nosed city analysts – are starting to wilt under the relentless pressure. Companies with an ethical position are being acquired by big consumer businesses. First it was Unilever with its purchase of Ben and Jerry's, then Cadbury with Green and Black's, followed by Starbucks and Ethos Water and recently L'Oreal and The Body Shop. Are ethics now mainstream? Are 'good causes fashionable', as Financial Times consumer columnist Richard Tomkins asserts? To assess this we have repeated questions we have asked previously in 1997 and 2001. Are we finding growing levels of consumer concern? If so, does it represent true ethics and altruism or merely fashion?



Globalisation, culture and politics – opportunity or threat?

Everyone is talking about the opportunities (and threats) of China, India, Brazil and Russia but do we really know enough about the real direction and impact of the globalisation of trade and culture; of the enticements and pitfalls that the new world order offers? To help us understand these issues, we draw upon not only our pan-European research programme but also some of the pan-global project work we have been conducting over the past year. To illustrate some of the critical global trends and the challenges that need to be faced we will look specifically at travel and tourism, including issues of cultural provenance and authenticity and the role that global politics might play in future developments.

Economics €+£=?

2005-06 was a difficult year. Not only did the UK suffer its first major terrorist attack for years (directly affecting some sectors like tourism) but the long expected slow-down in retail sales and the housing market finally happened. With, external factors (the rise in oil prices) having direct impacts on household finances, it is not surprising that it has seemed to be a challenging time. Yet, company profits remain high and the European economy (our main export market) seems to be reviving. Against this, government spending – which has provided a big boost to the economy over recent years – is under pressure. So what does all this mean for the UK economy in the year ahead and over the medium term? What are the key indicators to look out for and which sectors might struggle and which might thrive?



Technology – what's next?

In our regular slot on technology, we provide an update on the take-up and usage of a range of technology platforms and assess their importance not only for consumer research and direct sales but also for customer interactions with companies. Finally, we report back on what our survey respondents thought of a range of hypothetical technology innovations. All are potentially feasible but some are nearer fruition than others. The results provide not only a guide into underlying consumer needs and future opportunities but should be entertaining and perhaps surprising too!

Interested in pan-European consumer trends?

For the first time this year we are running our pan-European conference on the same day. You can choose UK or pan-European economics and technology sessions as part of this conference. For a small additional fee (£50+ VAT) you are also invited to stay for two additional pan-European presentations, 'Understanding Consumer Psychology across Europe - a new perspective', and 'From have-it-all to had enough - are consumers about to abandon consumption'?

For full descriptions of these presentations please contact us or visit our website www.futurefoundation.net/events.php

Booking information

To book please contact Gretchyn Agnew on 020 7250 3343 / gretchyna@futurefoundation.net.

Visit our website www.futurefoundation.net/events.php and click on Changing Lives UK for the booking form.

The cost is £250 + VAT per delegate
This event is free for nVision subscribers
(a limited number of places)

There is a fee of £50 + VAT per delegate to attend the additional pan-European sessions.

We can accept credit card payments, cheques or payment through invoice. Please contact us for details.

Terms and Conditions

The Future Foundation reserves the right to make alterations to the programme without advance notice. No refunds are available within 30 days of the event unless the event is cancelled. If the cancellation is made more than 30 days in advance of the conference a 50% reduction will be offered. Delegates may be substituted at any time.



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