

France not capitalising on Islamic finance

A new special comment by Moody's Investor Services has claimed that whilst France has the largest Muslim community in the west and many of its banks have established roots in the Muslim world it is failing to tap into this market at a domestic level. The reasons cited for this are not legal as is usually the case but due to cultural and social constraints.



First UK Islamic equity product launched

Al Buraq, a brand owned by the Arab Banking Cooperation and best known for its mortgage products in the UK market, has launched a capital protected equity based savings product that is consistent with Islamic faith. Offered in partnership with the Bank of Ireland the product has minimum investment of only £500.



Sukuk market hiccups

Sukuk, or Islamicised bonds as they are sometimes referred to, have taken something of a drubbing this year. Research from Zawya.com shows an 80% decline in the value of sukuk issues in 2008. This is attributable in a large degree to the credit crunch and the growing unpopularity of debt instruments but is also in some part down to recent criticism of sukuks by prominent Muslim clerics.

House prices continue to fall

House prices have continued to fall for the past eight months and are now at levels lower than one year ago. Prices have fallen by almost 1% between May and June and fell by 2.5% between April and May. Adjusted for real terms house prices show a decline of just over 10% year on year.



Euro proves a success

The Euro currency celebrated its tenth anniversary in June. Defying its numerous critics and sceptics, the currency has gained strength over the past ten years and has grown from its original 11 members to 15, and stretches from Finland to Cyprus.

