

Finnish Association of Vision and Eyecare NÄE ry | Media release 31.5.2018

Growth continued in optical retail sales

Especially in terms of quantity, sales in the first quarter of the year were higher than last year. Turnover also grew by more than one per cent. Vigorous growth in volume was measured in nearly all product groups, but the average price for spectacles continued to decrease. The sunny weather towards the end of winter accelerated sales in sunglasses.

The turnover for sales in optometry increased by 1.2 per cent to EUR 83.7 million in the first quarter of the year. Sales in spectacles account for most of the turnover. Spectacle sales amounted to a total of EUR 67.4 million in the first quarter. Most of the spectacles sold in Finland are multi-focals, sales in which accounted for nearly EUR 46 million.

Managing Director **Pasi Kohmo** of Silmäasema says, “The turnover in optometry made an upward shift after the minor dip at the end of the year. In a campaign-based field like this, fluctuations in turnover are part of the territory, and we expect the fluctuation to continue in the future as well. March was sunnier than usual and it had a positive impact on the growth in the sales of sunglasses.”

Managing Director **Panu Tast** of the Finnish Association of Vision and Eyecare NÄE ry states, “Since the end of last year, sales have revolved around price; in other words, sales volume has increased while prices have correspondingly decreased.”

Measured in volume, sales in spectacles increased as much as 6.4 per cent while the growth in turnover was less than three per cent. The average price of multi-focal spectacles increased by slightly less than one per cent, but the price of single-focal spectacles dropped 4.5 per cent.

Tast explains, “When shopping for spectacles, customers have chosen more basic products with more limited features. Customers purchase several types of spectacles for various purposes and, therefore, they do not want to pay for the best possible features in all of them.” In the first quarter of the year, single-focal spectacles cost an average of 170 euros whereas multi-focals cost slightly less than 400 euros.

The development was particularly evident in the sales of quality sunglasses. Their average price dropped more than one tenth while the sales volume increased by nearly 15 per cent. The turnover increased nearly three per cent.

Sales in contact lenses declined significantly – more than 17 per cent when measured by turnover. A total of 4.4 million pairs of contact lenses were sold at slightly less than EUR 5 million.

“Compared to other Nordic countries, people in Finland do not use contact lenses as much, even though the use of them has been on the rise in the past decade. The decrease in sales began last year and it accelerated at the beginning of this year,” states NÄE ry’s Tast.



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The Finnish Association of Vision and Eyecare (NÄE ry) represents optometry businesses, private eyecare clinics and the manufacturers, importers and wholesalers that serve them. NÄE ry is responsible for advocating field-related business, health care, education and communication, and engages in research and offers training. The member businesses make up more than 80 % of the turnover in the field. In addition to businesses, the association comprises educational institutions that train professionals in vision and eye health as well as the organisations representing those institutions. NÄE ry belongs to the Finnish Commerce Federation and the Federation of Finnish Enterprises.