

## **Growth in the optics business supports development of eyecare**

***Retail sales in the field of optometry increased more than four per cent in the first half of the year. Growth in the sales of more developed lenses, which raised the average price of spectacles, contributed to the favourable result in sales. Expectations for the rest of the year are also positive. A well-functioning network of optics businesses creates a strong foundation for more effective and improved eyecare within the entire population.***

Retail sales in the field of optometry grew 4.1 per cent to nearly EUR 171 million in the first half of the year. As far as the second quarter is concerned, growth slowed down slightly – business grew 3.3 per cent to more than EUR 83 million.

Nearly 83 per cent of the turnover in the field comes from sales in spectacle lenses and frames, the turnover of which grew more than five per cent to more than EUR 128 million when reviewing the entire first part of the year.

The turnover for sales in spectacles increased favourably in the second quarter also, 4.6 per cent, but measured in volume sales decreased. Explaining this development, Managing Director **Panu Tast** of the Finnish Association of Vision and Eyecare (NÄE ry) states, “More developed lens solutions have clearly gained popularity and the appeal for 2-for-1-type discounts has declined.”

### **Consumers purchased more valuable spectacles**

The average price of all types of spectacles increased during the first part of the year. The average price of single focal spectacles increased the most, nine per cent to 182 euro in the second quarter. The average price of multi-focals also increased, five per cent to 391 euro.

NÄE ry’s Tast says, “Growth in spectacles other than those classified as single focal, multi-focal and bifocal, for example spectacles for nearsightedness in children and youth and occupational progressive lenses, was especially good.”

After last year’s record growth in sunglasses driven by the bright, sunny weather during the summer, this year was more moderate. Measured in volume, though, sales increased significantly, especially in April–June by nearly six per cent. A total of 208,000 pairs of quality sunglasses were sold in the first part of the year.

The turnover for sales in contact lenses increased slightly more than one per cent at the beginning of the year and measured in number growth was nearly six per cent. The costs for using contact lenses remained unchanged.

### **Businesses in the field continue to join chains**

Chains that have come out on top in market share changes include Silmäasema with a market share increase of 1.3 percentage points reaching 29.1 per cent and Synsam with an increase of 0.1 percentage points reaching 5.3 per cent. Still in first place, though, is Instru Optiikka with a market share of 37 per cent.

The market share of optics businesses not belonging to a chain and online optics businesses increased slightly. This increase can be explained by changes in the structures of chains. The sum total of the share of chains in the field of optometry with regard to the entire market still grew.

## Positive prospects

According to the barometer, growth during the latter part of the year is expected in the sales of multi-focal spectacles, especially. All in all, expectations in the field are rather positive.

**Jussi Salminen**, managing director of Silmäasema, says “The growing optics business carries a greater significance in the population’s healthy vision and eyecare.”

He adds, “More and more, optics businesses are the starting point of the service chain where early and hidden signs of problems with vision can be detected. Developing expertise and technology in diagnostics, diversification of eye examination services and digitalisation make it possible to offer timely, preventive service paths to customers who want to see as well as possible throughout their entire life.”

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