

News and analysis of the international market

The global eyewear market has been growing more slowly

Global sales of ophthalmic lenses increased by 2.1 percent in volume each year during the 2015-2017 period according to the latest edition of the biennial **World Lens and Frame Demand Study** by an authoritative consultancy company, **SWV Strategy with Vision Management** (SWV). First published in 2004, the study covers a total of 67 countries representing about 95% of the world's gross domestic product. The 2.1 percent growth figure is slightly below the average 2.6 percent growth recorded by SWV for the period between 2003 and 2017. A similar

trend can be observed for sales of prescription frames.

According to the German-based research company, the main reasons for the slowdown were the low growth rates in the main European optical markets as well as in Brazil, plus a flat market in the U.S. and a decline in Russia. Other countries like Turkey and India over-performed with increases of 5 and 3 percent, respectively, but these were not sufficient to balance the general low growth. Growth in mainland China was estimated at 2 percent per year.

In value, worldwide sales of ophthalmic lenses grew by 2.5 percent annually in 2015-2017, which showed a significant slowdown from the 5.1 percent growth per year observed in the 2013-2015 period. However, sales grew faster in value than in volume in the last two years because of an increase in the share taken by progressive lenses. The category grew by 4.4 percent in volume during that same period and has come to represent 57 percent of the value of the global lens market at the wholesale level.

For all the countries covered, the World Lens and Frame Demand Study includes volume and value figures as well as net average selling prices, all broken down by lens category - such as single-vision, bifocal, conventional progressives and freeform progressives. It also features sales volumes by lens materials, and percentages of market penetration by type of ophthalmic sun protection, anti-reflection and, for the first time, blue light-cutting lenses, which emerged as the fastest-growing category.

Sales of ophthalmic frames are also featured in the report, derived from the sales of ophthalmic lenses but after factoring in breakages, returns by the opticians and reglazing. Based on this data, SWV found that unit sales of ophthalmic frames went up by 2.1 percent each year in 2015-2017 on a global basis as compared to the previous period. The fact that the growth rates for prescription frames and lenses are identical shows that

the practice of reglazing has remained stable, aside from some regional disparities. This is however, also a slowdown from the 2011-2017 period when sales of ophthalmic frames grew by an annual average of 2.9 percent.

In value, sales of ophthalmic frames grew at the same rate of 2.1 percent, two times slower than the 4.2 percent increase observed between 2013 and 2015. This tends to show an overall flat average value per frame, but the report also gives breakdowns by price categories. SWV identified a clear trend with a growth of the lower and higher-price segments, respectively under €100 and over €200 for the consumer, while the mid-price segment was squeezed down. This has been a global trend with aggregated figures for the 67 researched countries, but does not apply to all countries.

In terms of optical retailers, SWV calculated that the number of outlets for the researched countries grew by to 361,000 in 2017 from 349,000 in 2015 and 327,000 in 2013. Sales over the internet are also factored in the general results through a mix of estimates, including a combination of available statistics by Amazon's Alexa rankings for each website, based on the number of average daily visitors and number of pages viewed, later cross-checked with lens suppliers, industry associations and other industry experts.

SWV's World Lens and Frame Demand Study is available for purchase at €15,000 for the complete data. Different package options are also proposed. Send an e-mail to info@edmpublications.com for more information or visit our stand at **Silmo** in the press area (Hall 6) to pick-up an executive summary.

**The Euro
Sept. 27 rates**

Czech Koruna	25.68
Danish Krone	7.457
Hungarian Forint	323.6
Norwegian Krone	9.498
Polish Zloty	4.271
Pound Sterling	0.890
Swedish Krona	10.297
Swiss Franc	1.140
U.S. Dollar	1.167
Brazilian Real	4.672
Canadian Dollar	1.521
Chinese Yuan	8.043
Japanese Yen	132.3
Russian Ruble	76.50