

## President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

Let me start my editorial with a quotation by the late Geoffrey Barraclough (1908–1984), a British historian, a known expert on Germany and Chichele Professor of Modern History at the University of Oxford:

***Anyone who is going to make anything out of history will, sooner or later, have to do most of the work himself. He will have to read, and consider, and reconsider, and then read some more.***

During our autumn meeting on 22-24 October in Dresden, ECOO will celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of European optometry and optics. The history of ECOO goes back to the year 1960, when very motivated and future-orientated colleagues in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands established the Groupement des Opticiens du Marché Commun (GOMAC). (The six countries were the original member states of the European Economic Community.) Subsequently, the Pan European Group (PEG) of the former International Optometric and Optical League was established. And then, in 1992, GOMAC and PEG merged to create the European Council of Optometry and Optics (ECOO) of today. During the last five decades ECOO has developed into an organisation representing over 75,000 practitioners in 30 European countries.

The development of optometry and optics in Europe during the last 50 years has been strongly affected by the unification of academic education in our higher education institutions. The so called Bologna Declaration of 1999 and the introduction of a three-cycle system of academic education, together with the establishment of ECOO's European Diploma in Optometry in 1988, were *inter alia* the catalysts for this process. Seventeen member countries within ECOO have now implemented the three-cycle system of academic education. And more and more universities have incorporated, or are in the process of incorporating, the contents of ECOO's European Diploma.

Thus, for European optometry, the Bologna Declaration is the basis of the unification of Europe's higher education system; while the ECOO European Diploma in Optometry is the basis of the unification of optometric education. The Bologna Declaration, together with the ECOO European Diploma in Optometry, are the building blocks towards the recognition of the optometrist as the primary eye care provider by national authorities and by the public. They are therefore the basis of a uniform European scope of practice in optometry.

But, in parallel with the education, we have to convince the politicians in the different European countries that, for clinical and economic reasons, primary eye care has to be the optometrist's responsibility. For that reason, ECOO has initiated two important projects. The first is the research project entitled *Analysis of the Economic Aspects of Eye Care by Opticians and Optometrists in three European Countries*, a comparative study by Professor Jürgen Wasem of the Institute for Health Care Management and Research at the University of Duisburg-Essen. The second important project is the proposal for a European standard of optometric and optical standards.

Professor Wasem will give a first report about his research to our meeting in Dresden. You will be asked to approve the proposal for a European standard on optometric and optical services.

In addition, the General Assembly will hold elections.

ECOO's autumn meeting in Dresden offers participants from the different European country organisations a very interesting professional and social programme, contact with fellow professionals and colleagues, in a very attractive city.

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***Anyone who is going to make anything out of history will, sooner or later, have to do most of the work himself. He will have to read, and consider, and reconsider, and then read some more.***

Having this quotation in mind, I would like to invite you to come to Dresden, to learn more about the history of our profession and about the challenges for its future.

ECOO once again wishes all participants a successful meeting, and a pleasant and fruitful time in Dresden.

I look forward to welcoming you in beautiful Dresden.

**Wolfgang Cagnolati**

## Full Programme for ECOO in Dresden; Focus on Economic

### **Economic Committee**

Delegates representing the member organisations of thirty countries have a full programme at ECOO's next meeting on 22-24 October 2010 in Dresden. A new Economic Committee will be elected by the General Assembly, preceded by an informal meeting of the representatives who have expressed an interest in specialising in economic matters.

The agenda of the informal 'pre-meeting' of the Economic Committee includes:

- 1. Developing ECOO economic policy and input to consultations**
  - Changes in regulations and the impacts of globalisation on optics
  - Responses by ECOO to public consultations
- 2. Business opportunities and threats**
  - Single market for services
  - Internet supply
  - CEN standard for optics
  - Recognition of professional qualifications
  - Developments in the optical marketplace, market trends and statistics
- 3. Preparing the Optical Sector for Future Innovations**
- 4. Proposed Terms of Reference for Committee**
  - To understand, promote and expand the optical market in Europe
  - To bring eye health to all through choice, competition, proportionate regulation and safe and expanding clinical practice
- 5. Working Methods**
  - Building relations across the optical sector
  - Building relations with other European stakeholders
  - Horizon scanning and early warning systems

### **Market Trends**

In addition, a presentation on current trends in European optical markets will be given by Mark Mackenzie, an economic consultant, based in Germany, and having long experience of the optical sector.

### **Comparative Study**

Professor Jürgen Wasem of the University of Duisburg-Essen will report on the progress being made to study the delivery of primary eye care in France, Germany and the United Kingdom. ECOO members will remember that the three countries were chosen because they were economically comparable. At the same time, they offer three distinct models of delivery: the ophthalmological/optical model, the optometric model, and a mixed ophthalmological/optometric model. The comparative study will examine the economic and public health aspects of delivery.

### **European Standard for Optometric/Optical Services**

The ECOO European Diploma of Optometry is 'one side of the coin.' The Diploma, as ECOO's President has emphasised, has created a basis, or a benchmark, for optometric education in Europe. It is a basis that is being increasingly adopted by universities and schools of optometry throughout the continent. The 'other side of the coin' is the practice of optometry and optics. As we know, the scope of practice varies between our member countries. ECOO aims for a uniform scope of practice in Europe in the long term. In the meantime, a description of optometric and optical services is a project which has been suggested to ECOO by the European standards body, CEN (Centre Européen des Normes). ECOO is close to preparing a formal proposal to CEN, subject to the approval of the General Assembly of ECOO.

## ECOO Position Papers 'in the Pipeline'

ECOO is about to publish two position papers, one on vision and driving, the other on low vision. The papers will join a series of position papers published by ECOO and available on ECOO's website.

The first paper advocates a more systematic method of testing the sight of drivers and of applicants for a driving licence. It argues that member states have the opportunity, in implementing the latest directives of the European Union on driving licences, to abolish the so called 'number/licence plate test' and replace it with an appropriate Snellen-based assessment, as used in Finland, Germany and Ireland. The paper proposes that Group 1 drivers (of private vehicles) should undergo a screening of their vision when renewing their licence, including an assessment of their visual fields.

The second position paper describes a process, by which patients with low vision are referred and assessed; and how patients can be trained in the use of low vision aids, as well as receiving the necessary attention to the emotional aspects of visual loss. As the paper concludes, "the provision of services to low vision clients is amongst the most multidisciplinary of all optometric and optical disciplines. It is very rare that a single clinician or professional holds all of the answers, or that a client can access to all necessary services to from one professional."

### World Council of Optometry Education Conference Durban, South Africa

22-24 September 2010

The World Council of Optometry (WCO) held their 6th Education conference in Durban, South Africa last week. The conference was held jointly with the 2nd World Congress for Refractive Error meeting, organised by ICEE. The conference was opened by Professor George Woo, the President of WCO, and Associate Professor Bina Patel, head of the organising committee. The event had over 40 invited presenters from around the globe bringing together optometric educators from 80 World Council of Optometry member organisations. The Conference had three main themes which were: Developing appropriate human resources; Strategies in providing quality education and curricular development; and Trends and developments in optometric education programmes.

One of the issues discussed was that of the nature of the differing scope of practice of optometry throughout the world. The ECOO president, Wolfgang Cagnolati, gave a poster presentation on bachelor and master programmes in optometry in Europe and a regional report on optometric education in western and eastern Europe.

WCO committees also met during the week, and the Legislation, Registration and Standards Committee drafted a Code of Conduct for optometrists. The committee based this on existing codes of conduct, such as ECOO's. The Education Committee discussed the issues of the content and level of optometry programmes and continuing competency for optometrists.

The next WCO general delegates meeting will be held in April 2011 in Puerto Rico.

## Essilor's Profits Hit by German Anti-Trust Fine

Essilor's first half profits for 2010 were hit by the €41.3m fine imposed by the German antitrust authority the BKA, down 1.3 per cent to €197.5m.

Without the fine, which is being appealed, the profit would have been up 19.3 per cent to €238.8m, in what Essilor described as a very good first half. Revenue sharply increased by 15.8 per cent to €1,926.8m, while there was a strong increase in free cash flow, up 72 per cent.



'In an ophthalmic optics market that is slowly but steadily improving, Essilor continued to increase its global market share by leveraging its innovative products and accelerating the deployment of its targeted acquisitions strategy. For the period, the company posted revenue growth of 5.9 per cent excluding the currency effect and strategic acquisitions, in line with its full-year objective.'

Essilor added that it had enhanced its competitiveness through ongoing programmes to optimise the product base and develop new services for eye care professionals.

It highlighted the integration of non-prescription reading glasses company FGXI and Signet Armolite, as well as new product launches of Varilux Physio, the Xperio polarised lens and lenses produced by Eyecode technology.

'During the second half, in a still fragile business recovery, Essilor will continue to implement its growth strategy, based on new products, geographic expansion, bolt-on acquisitions and the mid segment,' it added.

Essilor confirmed projected revenue growth of 5 per cent to 7 per cent, excluding the currency effect and strategic acquisitions

(Source: *opticians online* 10 September 2010)

## Mydriasis and glaucoma: exploding the myth: a systematic review

PANDIT R J, TAYLOR R

Department of Ophthalmology, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK.

### AIMS:

To investigate the risk of inducing acute glaucoma following mydriasis.

### METHODS:

Systematic review of published research 1933-1999.

### RESULTS:

The risk of inducing acute glaucoma following mydriasis with tropicamide alone is close to zero, no case being identified. The risk with long-acting or combined agents is between 1 in 3,380 and 1 in 20,000. The presence of chronic glaucoma constitutes no additional risk.



Mydriasis cat

### CONCLUSIONS:

Mydriasis with tropicamide alone is safe even in people with chronic glaucoma. It should be advised in all patients when thorough retinal examination is indicated.

### PMID: 1

1110501 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

Diabet Med. 2000 Oct;17(10):693-9.

## Irish Optometrists Focus on Screening School Children

The Association of Optometrists Ireland (AOI) has run a 'back-to-school' eye screening campaign, to encourage parents and teachers across the country to take their children for a special six-point eye examination.



The *Bright Eyes for School* campaign which ran this week was based around a six-point vision assessment developed by a group of independent practitioners with a special interest in paediatric optometry.

Click [here](#) to read the full story

(Source: opticians online)

## Myopia gene breakthrough

Scientists at King's College London (KCL) have pin-pointed one of the genes which is responsible for myopia, according to study results released this week.

In a study of 4,000 twins by the Department of Twin Research, scientists identified the myopia susceptibility gene RASGRF1 – which has been validated in other studies comprising over 13,000 people in the UK, Netherlands and Australia.

Lead author of the study, Dr Pirro Hysi said: "We have known for many years that the most important risk factor for being short-sighted is having parents who are short-sighted, and for the first time we are identifying genes that may be involved in passing on this susceptibility. By identifying biological pathways causing myopia, we hope to be able to develop treatments in the future that will prevent, or stop myopia progressing."

However, development of an eye drop or tablet to treat the condition may prove more problematic than national press reports proclaiming 'spectacles could be consigned to history' (*Daily Telegraph*) have suggested. Senior author from the Department of Twin Research, KCL, Christopher Hammond, told *OT*: "The hope is that once we understand the biological pathways involved in regulation of eye growth, we might develop a treatment that blocked a crucial pathway and therefore prevent myopia or halt its progression."

"However, we would have to tread very carefully – given that the myopes who end up highly myopic, and therefore at risk of the blinding complications of high myopia, tend to be of early onset (before the age of eight). We would have to be careful not to interfere with pathways involved in normal brain development if we are considering treatments for children and adolescents."

"We are certainly only at the stage of starting to discover the pathways, and our results suggest there are probably many genes each of small effect in the population – so there is no single myopia gene. Rather like a deck of cards, we are dealt many variants which may increase or decrease our risk, and if you are dealt a lot of high numbers, so to speak, you are more likely to end up myopic."

The full findings have been published in this week's edition of *Nature Genetics*.

(Source: *optometrytoday online*, 13 September 2010)





## Spotlight on Finland

### by Bernd Schwenson

#### Pro auctore prescription: the right for optometrists to use diagnostic drugs

Optometrists' right to obtain and use diagnostic drugs necessary to make examinations was confirmed in April when Parliament approved, in its plenary session, the government's proposals to make amendments to the existing law. The reasons behind the amendments are the changes in the profession in Europe where the emphasis in clinical optometry is increasingly being placed on screening eyes to determine their condition in addition to performing eye tests and prescribing eyeglasses and contact lenses.

Optometrists in Europe have begun to use diagnostic drugs in their examinations more prevalently in the 2000s. The purpose has been to increase optometrists' capacity to assess whether the condition of a client's eyes is normal and, if necessary, to ensure the client has quick access to further examinations and treatments with a specialist. Indeed, beginning the treatment of progressive eye diseases soon after a diagnosis has been given is an extremely important part of patient safety and prognosis.

#### Proposal for amendment last year

Just over a year ago the Association of Optical Retail Outlets in Finland made a proposal to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health to make an amendment in the existing laws, which would allow optometrists to use diagnostic drugs in their clinics. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health joined the proposal for a broader series of laws, concerning the drug prescription rights of nurses. During preparations for the amendments, there were several occasions where various interest groups were given the opportunity to voice their opinions about the impact of the amendments to the laws. The bill was presented to the Finnish Government by Minister Paula Risikko in January and in February it was presented by the Government to Parliament. After the preliminary debate, the bill was referred to the Social Affairs and Health Committee where it was discussed thoroughly and a few revisions were made based on committee hearings.

Final approval for the amendments was given in Parliament's plenary session on 8 April 2010 with ballots amounting to 101 (in favour), 61 (against) and 37 (abstentions). The members of Parliament who opposed the amendments did not agree on the limited rights of nurses to prescribe drugs to patients, and some opposed the fee to be charged for appointments with nurses, which was part of the Government's proposal. None of the statements made by members of Parliament objected to optometrists' pro auctore prescriptions. For the most part, the outcome of the vote corresponded to the Government vs. the Opposition distribution.

This decision means that optometrists are now allowed to purchase drugs from pharmacists to use in their optical clinics (pro auctore prescriptions). The drugs intended for optometrists to use are associated with local anesthetics and short-acting mydriatic drugs used in ophthalmoscope examinations. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will be passing a separate decree, which will contain an itemised list of drugs optometrists can use and prescribe.

#### Additional training required

Only optometrists who have completed training pertaining to drug prescription will be granted the right to purchase and use drugs. The right to provide training in drug prescription is limited to those universities of applied sciences, which offer education in optometry. Negotiations to begin the necessary training are on-going, and the course contents and solutions for teaching the course will be ready during the autumn. The training will begin at the beginning of next year at the latest and, upon approved completion of the course, participating optometrists will receive certification from Valvira - the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health. Optometrists will then be able to put an insignia indicating their certification on the prescriptions they write and the pharmacy can then sell the drug in question to them.

Optometrists are not obliged to participate in the course. However, in the future the contents of the course will be included in the degree program for new optometrists. Optometrists working in the field will be given a sufficiently long transition period of about 10 years, after which they will have the opportunity to complete the additional training to acquire certification.

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### More information at Optometria 2010

The greatest event of the year, *Optometria 2010*, will gather a hall full of optometrists in the autumn. The program also includes detailed information about the impact of the amendment on working in the profession, as well as information about training and certification.

### Master's degree at the university of applied sciences level

In Finland, working as an optometrist requires a bachelor's degree. The training lasts 3.5 years and the extent of the studies is 210 credits. After a year optometrists may continue their studies for another 1.5 years and 90 credits worth of coursework to obtain a degree, which grants the title "Clinical Specialist, MSc". The degree is therefore a master's degree. The contents of the degree program reflect ECOO's policies and the objectives of the European Diploma.

The degree grants the following additional rights: the right to fit and prescribe contact lenses, the right to fit and prescribe optical implements for the visually impaired, the right to work as an expert of work vision in occupational healthcare centres, the right to use diagnostic drug substances, and the qualifications needed to work as an expert in orthoptics and gerontological optometry. Furthermore, the degree provides optometrists with qualifications to work as educators after having completed pedagogical studies.

### Bachelor of Optometry: revision of the basic degree

The teaching program for the basic degree in optometry will be revised in 2011. The contents of the revised program reflect the structure and terminology as recommended by ECOO. The proportion of clinical optometry in the program will increase significantly when the extent of the studies in medicine doubles compared to what it is at present. The Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki is preparing a new teaching program together with Sweden, Norway and the Netherlands.

### BSc in Clinical Optometry at Salus University

The Salus University in the United States has offered Finnish optometrists the opportunity to complete the international BSc in Clinical Optometry degree program in Finland. Approximately 30 optometrists have tentatively applied to the program. The program lasts one year and it will begin next autumn. The program abides by the established model at Salus University, and it renders qualifications to continue on to the master's degree program. The academic level of the training corresponds to the Finnish degree in optometry and the intention is to enhance students' expertise in optometry through this program. The decision to begin the course will be made at the end of spring when the binding applications have been received. The program costs approximately €10,000, which participants pay themselves. The costs can be deducted from taxes.

### Market overview of the optometry field in 2009

The year 2009 exceeded all forecasts, which were based on the global economic recession and Finland's increasing unemployment. The total turnover for specialty business decreased by 6.6 % last year, and at the same time retail business in optometry skyrocketed by 8.7 % compared to the previous year. Growth in January and February was cautious at a level of one percent, but in March sales really took flight. The turnover in the field increased by an outstanding 28 % compared to March 2008. One reason for the growth was the especially slow March as regards sales in 2008, and the few extra days of commerce also helped. At the same time, the successful campaigns of the larger companies in the field created the best seasonal growth of all time, however this decreased the level of growth in April to zero. By May, there was a drop to -4 %, which caused a relapse of the previous bleak expectations. However, from June onward, the field was able to increase turnover each month by 6-16 %, and by the end of the year the cumulative +8.7 % increase was registered as a 308 million euro turnover. The turnover in the field increased by 25 million euros in a year.

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### Only small changes in the number of optical retail outlets

The total number of optical retail outlets increased by one percent, which is equivalent to an increase of 12 stores. There were 824 optical retail outlets in Finland at the end of 2009. At the same time, the number of companies in the field decreased by 2 %, making 435 optical companies at the end of the year. Similar development is expected to continue in the upcoming years. Approximately 97 % of all companies in the field are micro-companies that employ less than 10 people. The difference in turnover between the largest company in the field and the smallest one was a 1,000 times more.

### Changes in the chain activities continued

New chain outlets and changes in existing chains have hampered comparison between different years for several years now. There were also significant changes in the chains in 2009. Eyen, a chain of approximately 40 optical retail outlets filed for bankruptcy in the summer and is no longer included in the statistics. On the other hand, Fenno Optiikka, which began operations at the end of 2008, entered the market with a stronghold of 60 outlets. Synsam and Cazze, which were previously separate companies, appeared under one name in the 2009 statistics, representing a coalition of 75 outlets altogether. At the same time, about half of the Cazze group is no longer collaborating with Synsam; these stores have primarily been moved to the group "Others", i.e. outlets that do not belong to a chain. Optical retail outlets in the Opti+ chain, established in the summer of 2009, are also in the "Others" group because statistics for the chain are not yet available. Indeed, the "Others" group grew in 2009; at the end of the year there were 309 optical retail outlets in the group, i.e. the most extensive network of optical retail outlets by far.

The number of outlets for the third largest chain, Specsavers, increased last year by 7 % making a total of 92 outlets by the end of December. A significant number of outlets owned by the chain became private enterprises in 2009. Silmäasema, the second largest chain in the field, is the only chain that remained unchanged as regards the number of 123 outlets. The top chain in the field, Instru optiikka Oy, increased its number of outlets by 10 % primarily due to new franchising units. The total number of outlets increased to 165 outlets, which comprise the company's own Instrumentarium outlets, franchising Instrumentarium outlets run by entrepreneurs, the company's own Nissen chain and Keops outlets.

### Changes in the market share in 2009

The 308 million euro turnover from optical retail trade in 2009 was divided between the old and some of the new businesses. Fenno Optiikka is a new chain in the statistics, which took a 5 % slice out of the market share with a turnover of 16 million euros. The united Synsam Cazze gathered up 22 million euros, which is 7 % of the market share. The number of optical retail outlets in the chain and their turnover decreased more than one-third compared to the total for the year 2008.

Last year, for the first time, Specsavers was able to combine the turnover of nearly all of its outlets for the entire year. and this reflected strong growth. The chain took a 13 % market share with a turnover of 40 million euros. Silmäasema, the second largest chain for some time, was able to retain its market share of 20 % with a turnover of exactly 60 million euros.

Optical retail outlets not part of a chain, i.e. "Others", increased their turnover along with an increase in the number of outlets, keeping their 26 % market share. The top chain, Instru optiikka Oy, was more successful than the previous two years and once again increased its market share to 29 % with a turnover of 89 million euros last year.

### Great differences in the sizes of the optical retail outlets

In 2009, the average turnover for each optical retail outlet was 374,000 euros. However, every Instru optiikka chain was able to reach a turnover of nearly 540,000, while the average turnover for the outlets in the "Others" group was less than half of that. Indeed, Instru optiikka Oy, Silmäasema and Specsavers make up their own group where the average turnover for an outlet is much higher than the norm.

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## Conclusion

The magnificent growth in 2009 and the new record high for the total turnover were a success for the field; however, the growth was distributed very unevenly. A type of polarisation is intensifying, i.e. the good are becoming better and some are worse off than before. The first months of 2010 are behind us, and the obtained preliminary information is positive for January–March.

**Appendices:** Total turnover of optical outlets 2009

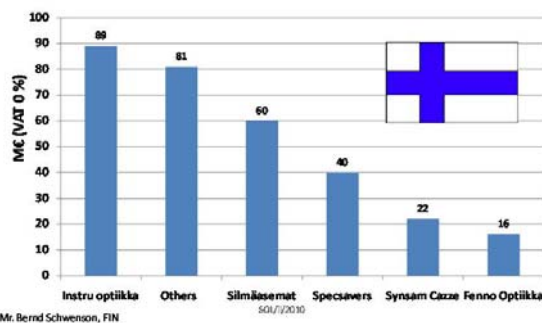
Distribution of market share 2009

Turnover per optical outlet 2009

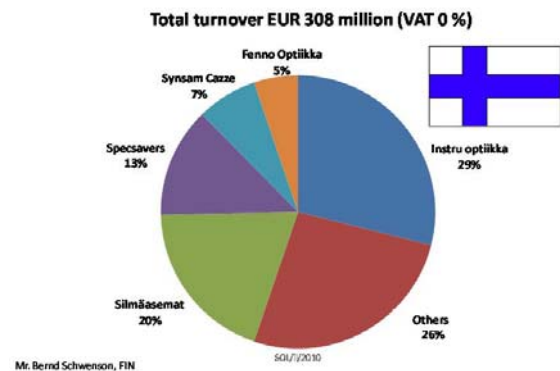
Number of optical outlets 31.12.2009

**Source:** **SUOMEN OPTIKKOLIIKKEIDEN LIITTO RY**  
Association of Optical Retail Outlets in Finland

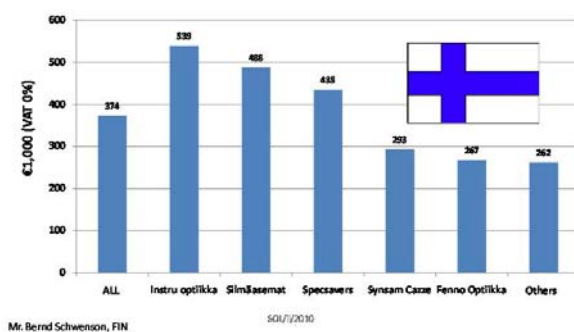
### TOTAL TURNOVER OF OPTICAL OUTLETS 2009: EUR 308 million



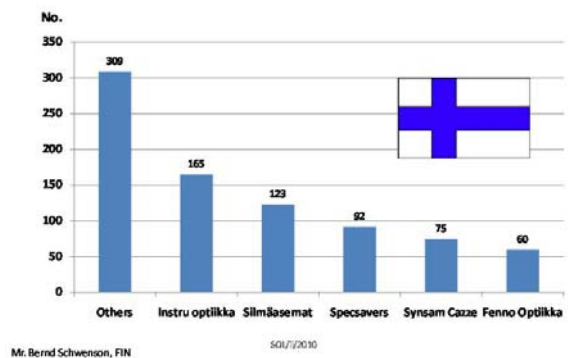
### DISTRIBUTION OF MARKET SHARE 2009



### TURNOVER PER OPTICAL OUTLET 2009



### NUMBER OF OPTICAL OUTLETS 31.12.2009: 824





## Death of Turkish colleague, Mr Ertekin Aksak



*Statement by Pinar Bedirli-Schwarz*

*Coordinator for External Relations, Turkish Association of Optical and Optometric Professions(TAOOP)*

I must inform you with deep sadness that Mr. Ertekin Aksak, Chair of the Education Committee of T.A.O.O.P. and Senior Lecturer for Dispensing Optics at the Fatih University Further Education Centre, Istanbul, passed away unexpectedly in the morning June 26, 2010. Mr. Aksak had been suffering from heart failure in recent years.

Being a dispensing optician himself, he was a great supporter of the development towards optometry in Turkey. Before his works and lectures for the Further Education Courses of T.A.O.O.P. & Fatih University, Mr. Aksak was a senior lecturer at the Course for Dispensing Optics of Eskisehir University. His most recent important project was the Turkish National Standards for optometry and optics. The Turkish optical profession has lost a good friend and one of its mentors and Ertekin Aksak will be in our hearts forever.

## U.S. Optometrist and Aid Workers Killed during Mission to Afghanistan

An American optometrist and nine of his colleagues were gunned down on 5 August 2010 during an eye care mission in northern Afghanistan, according to press releases from the International Assistance Mission.

Tom Little, OD, 62, of New York State, was leader of the International Assistance Mission's (IAM's) Nuristan Eye Camp. Dr Little and his civilian medical team had just finished navigating their three vehicles across a rain-swollen river when they were attacked by a group of armed men, according to a press release.

"Our own research suggests that the murders were not a robbery as initially reported in the press," Dirk R. Frans, IAM executive director, said in an Aug. 12 press release. "We are now working on the assumption that the attack was an opportunistic ambush by a group of non-local fighters."

The insurgent group killed all but one of the aid workers during the attack. Along with Dr Little, the deceased include two Afghans: watchman Mahram Ali, 50, and cook Jawed, 24; German translator, Daniela Beyer, 35; British surgeon, Karen Woo, 36; and five Americans: translator Cheryl Beckett, 32; videographer Brian Carderelli, 25; nurse Glen Lapp, 40; government liaison Dan Terry, 63; and Dr Little's personal friend, dentist Tom Grams, 51.

After arriving in Afghanistan with his family in 1976, Dr Little became the manager of the IAM's National Organization for Ophthalmic Rehabilitation (NOOR) program, setting up eye clinics and ophthalmic workshops throughout Afghanistan, a press release said.

"Tom ... was the driving force behind much of what has been achieved in eye care in Afghanistan. He is irreplaceable," Mr Frans said in a release.

Since 1966, an estimated 5 million Afghans have benefited from the eye care work of IAM, a registered Christian organization. However, in one press release, Mr Frans addressed speculation about the motives of the Nuristan Eye Care team.

"Our faith motivates and inspires us, but we do not proelytize. We abide by the laws of Afghanistan," Mr Frans said. "IAM would not be invited back to villages if we were using aid as a cover for preaching."

Mr Frans also added that, despite the recent killings, the group will continue to serve the Afghan people. - Courtney Preston

· **The International Assistance Mission can be reached at [www.iam-afghanistan.org](http://www.iam-afghanistan.org).**

(Source: Primary Care Optometry News, 1 September 2010)



**Tom Little**

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## Newsletter

The newsletter will be sent to members by e-mail or fax and we want to make sure it is received by every member:

Are your details up to date?

Telephone or email Charlotte at:  
+44 (0)20 7202 8169

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ECOO member state organisations should send relevant news and information which is of interest to all ECOO members to the ECOO office. Please email to: [charlotteverity@aop.org.uk](mailto:charlotteverity@aop.org.uk)

## Editorial Board member inducted into hall of fame

The National Optometry Hall of Fame welcomed its 2010 inductees during a reception at Optometry's Meeting, according to a press release from Optometry Cares, the AOA Foundation.

*Primary Care Optometry News* Editorial Board member Alfred A. Rosenbloom, OD, and James R. Gregg, OD, DOS, DOL, joined an elite group of 51 optometrists inducted into the Hall of Fame since its 1998 inception.



*Alfred A Rosenbloom*

"The National Optometry Hall of Fame highlights the luminaries within the profession of optometry — men and women who have made a significant and long-lasting impact on the profession," Martha Rosemore Greenberg, OD, president of Optometry Cares, said in the release.

Dr. Rosenbloom's 50-year career includes accomplishments as a teacher, writer, lecturer and administrator. He served as dean of the Illinois College of Optometry from 1955 to 1971, and then as president from 1972 to 1982. He has also established low vision clinics in New Zealand, Hong Kong and Singapore.



*James R Gregg*

Dr. Gregg, honoured posthumously, wrote more than 500 articles, 900 newspaper columns, 100 vision brochures and 15 books. He was also a faculty member at Southern California College of Optometry from 1947 to 1984, serving as interim dean of academic affairs from 1975 to 1976 and then grants administrator from 1976 to 1984. He died Sept. 29, 2009, at the age of 94.

*(Source: Primary Care Optometry News  
1 September 2010)*

Tom Nosch, former treasurer of ECOO and president of the Zentralverband der Augenoptiker (ZVA), has been awarded Germany's prestigious civilian honour, the federal merit cross (Verdienstkreuz am Bande des Verdienstordens der Bundesrepublik Deutschland). The award was made on 4 October 2010 in his home town of Freiburg. Present also was ECOO's President, Wolfgang Cagnolati.

