

2017 Health Manpower Survey

Summary of the Characteristics of Optometrists Enumerated

I. Optometrists Covered

1.1 The optometrists covered in the 2017 Health Manpower Survey (HMS-OPT) were optometrists registered with the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong under the Supplementary Medical Professions Ordinance (Chapter 359) as at the survey reference date – 31 March 2017.

1.2 The number of optometrists covered was 2 158.

1.3 Of the 2 158 optometrists covered, 1 286 responded to the HMS-OPT, giving an overall response rate of 59.6%. Among the respondents, 1 221 (94.9%) were economically active^{*†} (active) and 65 (5.1%) were economically inactive^{*‡} (inactive) in the local optometry profession (**Chart A**).

1.4 Of the 1 221 active optometrists enumerated, 1 216 (99.6%) were practising in the local optometry profession, four (0.3%) were seeking jobs and one (0.1%) was having temporary sickness during the 30 days before the survey. The survey results presented in paragraph 1.6 below were based on the 1 216 responding optometrists who were practising in the local optometry profession as at 31 March 2017. As certain questionnaires had missing information, percentages presented below may not add up to 100%.

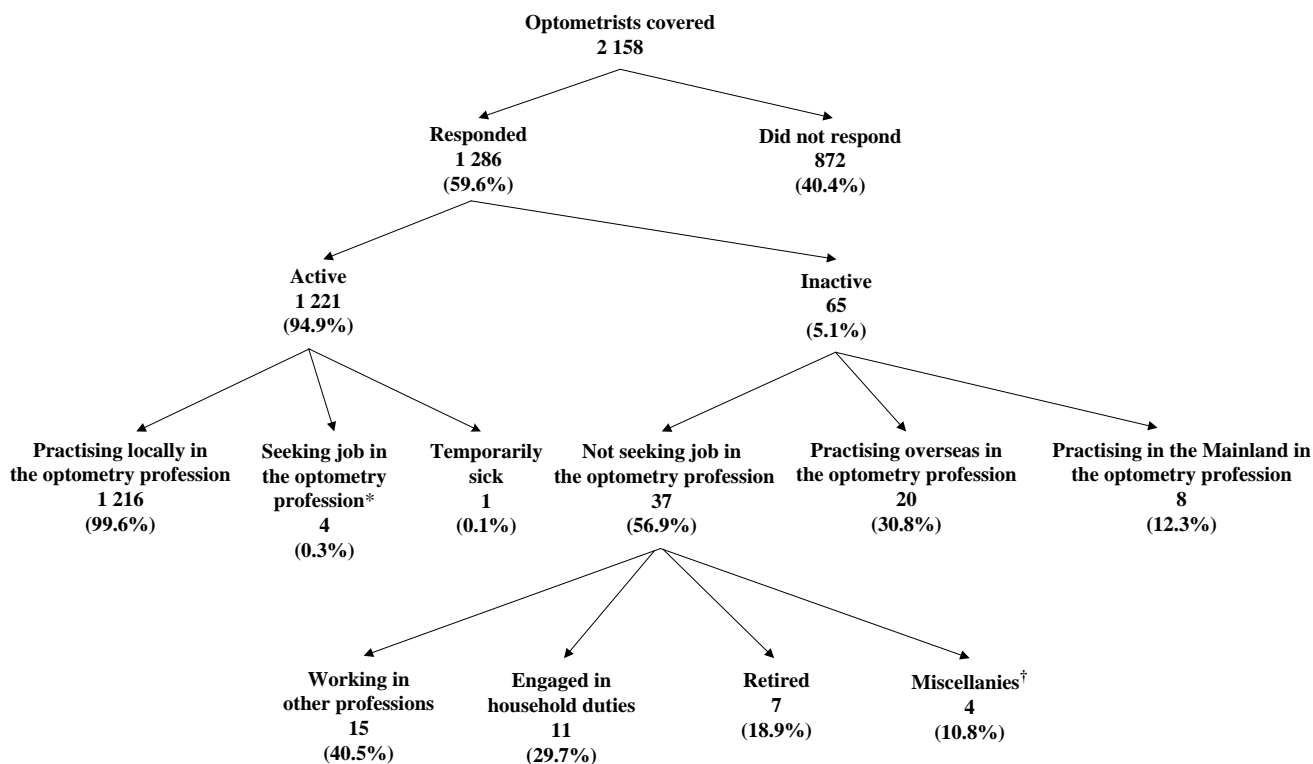
1.5 Of the 65 inactive optometrists enumerated, 20 (30.8%) optometrists reported practising overseas, eight (12.3%) optometrists reported practising in the Mainland and 37 (56.9%) optometrists reported not practising in the optometry profession in Hong Kong and not seeking jobs in the local optometry profession during the 30 days before the survey (**Chart A**). Among the 37 inactive optometrists who reported not seeking jobs in the local optometry profession, the main reasons reported for not seeking job included: 15 (40.5%) were working in other professions, 11 (29.7%) were engaged in household duties and seven (18.9%) were retired.

* In the survey, the criteria used in defining economically active / inactive followed those recommended by the International Labour Organization, which are also being used by the Census and Statistics Department in Hong Kong.

† “Economically active” optometrists comprised all “employed” and “unemployed” optometrists. “Employed” optometrists referred to those optometrists practising in the optometry profession in Hong Kong during the survey period, while “unemployed” optometrists referred to those optometrists who (a) were not practising in the local optometry profession during the survey period; (b) had been available for work during the seven days before the survey; AND (c) had sought work in the local optometry profession during the 30 days before the survey.

‡ “Economically inactive” optometrists comprised the optometrists who were not practising in the optometry profession in Hong Kong during the survey period, but excluding those who had been on leave during the survey period and who were “economically active” “unemployed”.

Chart A : Activity Status of Optometrists Covered



Note : * Figure refers to the number of responding optometrists who (a) were not practising in the optometry profession in Hong Kong during the survey period; (b) had been available for work during the seven days before the survey; AND (c) had sought work in the local optometry profession during the 30 days before the survey.

† Figure refers to the number of responding optometrists who reported emigrated or wanted to take rest / had no motive to work/ had no financial need.

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

1.6 A total of four optometrists did not indicate the gender. Among the remaining 1 212 active optometrists enumerated, 927 (76.5%) were male and 285 (23.5%) were female, giving an overall sex ratio (males per 100 females) of 325.3. Apart from 12 optometrists who did not indicate their age, the median age of the remaining 1 204 active optometrists enumerated was 52.0 years. The median age of the active female optometrists enumerated was 39.0 years and that of their male counterparts was 53.0 years.

1.7 The responding active optometrists were requested to indicate the characteristics of their main jobs*. Distribution by sector of the main job showed that the largest proportion 1 110 (91.3%) were working in the private sector, followed by 72 (5.9%) in the Government, academic and subvented sectors and 34 (2.8%) in the Hospital Authority. Among the 1 110 active optometrists enumerated who were working in the private sector, the majority 986 (88.8%) were working in optical company / shops, followed by those working in medical clinics† 58 (5.2%) and private hospitals‡ 24 (2.2%).

1.8 The median ages of the active optometrists enumerated was 52.0 years for those working in the private sector, followed by Hospital Authority (40.0 years) and Government, academic and subvented sectors (39.5 years).

1.9 Of the 1 216 active optometrists enumerated, 91.5% spent most of their working time on service of optometric care, whilst 3.9%, 1.4% and 0.9% on administration / management, research and teaching respectively.

1.10 The median number of hours of work (excluding meal breaks) per week of the 1 216 active optometrists enumerated was 52.0 hours. Among them, 111 (9.1%) were required to undertake on-call duty (excluding normal duty), with a median of 10.0 hours of on-call duty (excluding normal duty) per week.

* Main jobs referred to the jobs in which the optometrists had spent most of their working time.

† Refers to medical clinic registered under Section 5 of the Medical Clinics Ordinance (Chapter 343).

‡ Refers to private institutions licensed under the Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Maternity Homes Registration Ordinance (Chapter 165).

1.11 Of the 1 216 active optometrists enumerated, 33.6% had exemption from the examination*, 33.3% held Bachelor's Degree and 19.9% had certifications† issued by the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong as their earliest basic qualifications.

1.12 Of the 1 216 active optometrists enumerated, 507 (41.7%) had received / were receiving additional training. Of the 507 active optometrists enumerated with additional training, 18 (3.6%) had not yet completed the additional training, 341 (67.3%) held Certificate / Higher Certificate, 53 (10.5%) held Master's Degree and 27 (5.3%) held Bachelor's Degree as the highest qualification.

1.13 Of the 507 active optometrists enumerated who had received / were receiving additional training, 278 (54.8%) had received / were receiving training in one field only. Among them, 59.0% had received / were receiving training in optometry, 17.3% in orthokeratology, 9.0% in contact lens technology and 6.1% in optometric research.

1.14 Among the 507 active optometrists enumerated who had received / were receiving additional training, some of them selected more than one field of additional training. The total number of count of active optometrists who received / were receiving additional training was 815, in which 43.3% had received / were receiving additional training in optometry, 24.0% in contact lens technology, 14.4% in orthokeratology, 8.2% in optometric research and 5.4% in optical mechanics.

1.15 Regarding Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities, 771 (63.4%) of the active optometrists reported that they had participated in CPD activities in 2017, 405 (33.3%) reported no participation in any CPD activities, whilst 40 (3.3%) did not report whether they had participated in any CPD activities or not. Among the 771 active optometrists enumerated who had participated in CPD activities, the distribution of CPD hours attained in the past 12 months was: 1 to 10 hours (74.2%), 11 to 20 hours (19.3%) and 21 to 30 hours (3.0%), 31 to 40 hours (0.9%) and more than 40 hours (2.6%).

II. Trend Analysis

2.1 Comparison of findings of the 2017 HMS-OPT with those surveys before 2004 should be made with caution as the survey methods and reference dates had been changed.

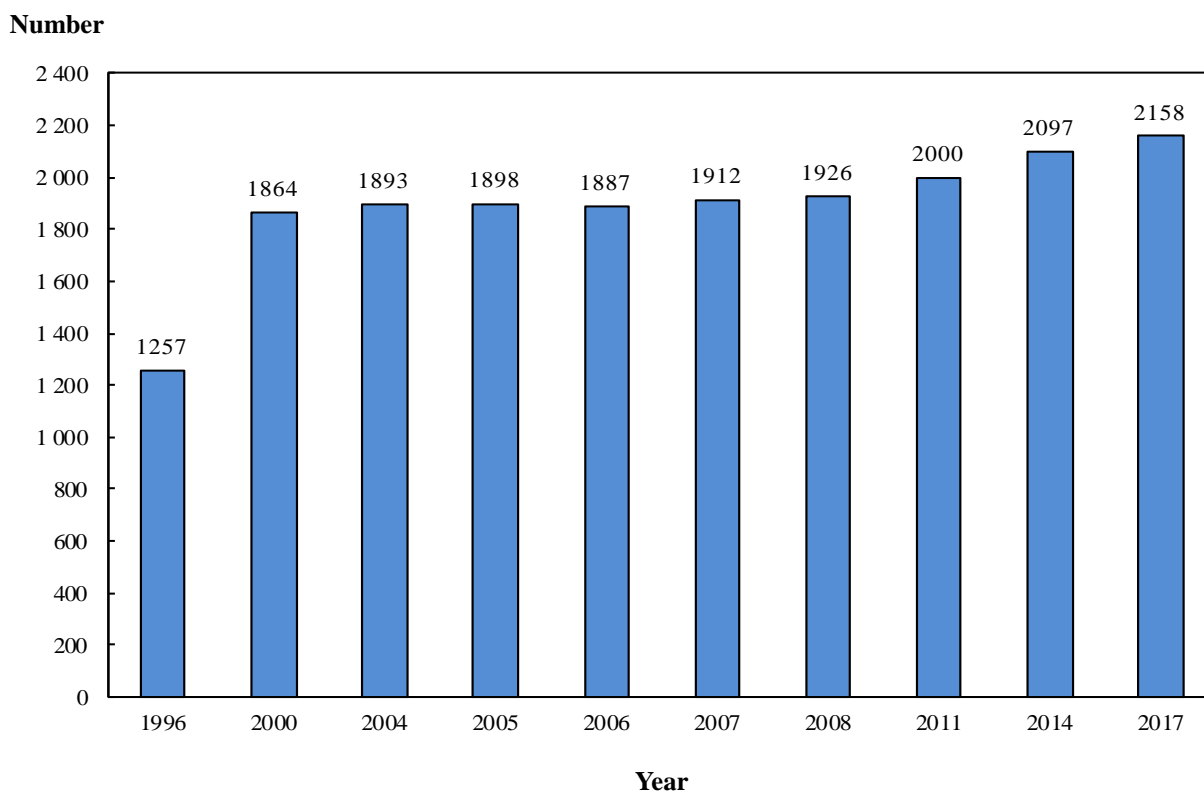
2.2 With the enactment of the Optometrists (Registration and Disciplinary Procedure) Regulation (Chapter 359F), registration of the profession of optometrists commenced on 1 December 1994 while disciplinary control of the profession was effective on 1 April 1996, it is mandatory for a person practising optometry in Hong Kong to hold a valid practising certificate. Between 1996 and 2017, the number of registered optometrists increased from 1 257 to 2 158 (**Chart B**).

2.3 The sex ratio (males per 100 females) of active optometrists enumerated increased from 524 in 1992 to 580 in 2000 and then decreased to 325 in 2017 (**Table A**).

* Figure refers to those optometrists who had exemption from the examination conducted by the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong.

† Figure refers to those optometrists who had certifications issued by the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong.

Chart B : Number of Registered Optometrists Covered by Year (1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017)



Note : Figures of the year 2000 and before refer to the number of optometrists registered with the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong as at the 1 July of the respective years, whereas the figures of 2004 to 2017 refer to that as at the 31 March of the respective years.

2.4 The mean age of the active optometrists enumerated increased from 33.5 years in 1992 to 49.6 years in 2017.

2.5 The proportion of the active optometrists enumerated working in the private sector decreased from 97.2% in 1992 to 91.3% in 2017. On the other hand, the proportion of active optometrists enumerated working in the Government, academic and subvented sectors increased from 1.6% in 1996 to 5.9% in 2017 (Table A).

Table A : Selected Characteristics of Active Optometrists Enumerated (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017)

Characteristics	Year										
	1992	1996	2000	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2011	2014	2017
A. Registered Optometrists Covered*	N.A.	1 257	1 864	1 893	1 898	1 887	1 912	1 926	2 000	2 097	2 158
B. Active Optometrists Enumerated											
Number Enumerated	674	1 054	1 359	1 084	1 294	1 321	1 198	1 034	1 297	1 144	1 216
Sex											
Male	566	890	1 159	890	1 059	1 081	967	820	1 018	890	927
Female	108	164	200	194	231	239	231	214	275	252	285
Unknown	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	4	1	N.A.	N.A.	4	2	4
Sex Ratio (males per 100 females)	524	543	580	459	458	452	419	383	370	353	325
Mean Age	33.5	39.9	40.0	42.8	42.3	43.7	44.7	44.4	46.7	48.0	49.6
Median Age	-	-	38.0	42.0	41.0	43.0	44.0	44.0	47.0	49.0	52.0
Sector of Work†											
Hospital Authority	7 (1.0%)	19 (1.8%)	25 (1.8%)	18 (1.7%)	25 (1.9%)	25 (1.9%)	18 (1.5%)	19 (1.8%)	34 (2.6%)	37 (3.2%)	34 (2.8%)
Private	655 (97.2%)	1 018 (96.6%)	1 308 (96.2%)	1 005 (92.7%)	1 209 (93.4%)	1 235 (93.5%)	1 123 (93.7%)	963 (93.1%)	1 193 (92.0%)	1 037 (90.6%)	1 110 (91.3%)
Government, Academic & Subvented	12 (1.8%)	17 (1.6%)	26 (1.9%)	52 (4.8%)	53 (4.1%)	55 (4.2%)	57 (4.8%)	52 (5.0%)	64 (4.9%)	61 (5.3%)	72 (5.9%)
Unknown	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	9 (0.8%)	7 (0.5%)	6 (0.5%)	N.A.	N.A.	6 (0.5%)	9 (0.8%)	N.A.

Notes : * Figures of the year 2000 and before refer to the number of optometrists registered with the Optometrists Board of Hong Kong as at the 1 July of the respective years, whereas the figures of 2004 to 2017 refer to that as at the 31 March of the respective years.

† In 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, 2014 and 2017, the sector refers to the sector for the main job.

There may be slight discrepancy between the sum of individual items and the total due to rounding.

N.A. Not applicable

' - ' Not available