

ACLM market report 2014: technical summary

Contact lenses in 2014

The size of the United Kingdom and Ireland contact lens market in 2014 was £226 million as reported by the data contributing members of the Association of Contact Lens Manufacturers (ACLM). The apparent reduction can be attributed to redistributions of inventory product as well as parts of the market shifting to non-contributing companies – in reality, the overall market is more or less stable (see last paragraph – Change to Reporting Method)..

The market was made up of the sale of over 600 million contact lenses. Market value comprised daily disposables (59%), soft frequent replacement lenses (36%), traditional soft lenses (1%) and rigid lenses (4%). In total there are approximately 3.5 million contact lens wearers in the UK which represents 9.0% of adults aged 15-64 years. Of this group, 1.5 million people use daily disposables and 1.6 million people use frequent replacement lenses.

Parameter	Lens type	2013	2014	Proportion	Change
Market value	Daily disposable	£ 141,063,036	£ 134,465,545	59.4%	-5%
	Frequent replacement	£ 88,165,440	£ 82,016,318	36.2%	-7%
	Traditional soft	£ 2,089,428	£ 1,830,688	0.8%	-12%
	Rigid	£ 8,682,114	£ 8,194,406	3.6%	-6%
	Overall	£ 240,000,018	£ 226,486,245		-6%
Wearers	Daily disposable	1,569,187	1,519,055	43.4%	-3%
	Frequent replacement	1,783,107	1,640,524	46.8%	-8%
	Traditional soft	38,117	31,660	0.9%	-17%
	Rigid	326,116	307,021	8.8%	-6%
	Overall	3,715,850	3,498,277		-6%

Table 1: Market value and number of contact lens wearers.

Contact lens wearers 1992-2014

The number of lens wearers has risen from 1.6 million in 1992 to 3.5 million in 2014.

Year	Market value	Number of wearers
1992	£ 33,373,617	1,569,373
1993	£ 45,467,478	1,998,834
1994	£ 50,681,645	2,193,689
1995	£ 57,820,346	2,635,214
1996	£ 69,581,783	2,926,331
1997	£ 78,716,968	3,097,978
1998	£ 87,682,437	2,745,420
1999	£ 94,123,096	2,807,169
2000	£ 101,949,988	2,765,286
2001	£ 113,188,188	3,041,515
2002	£ 133,260,777	3,215,082
2003	£ 145,125,488	3,159,090
2004	£ 160,942,838	3,483,858
2005	£ 167,011,243	3,547,641
2006	£ 178,667,418	3,638,700
2007	£ 186,055,737	3,561,113
2008	£ 194,385,081	3,686,803
2009	£ 204,650,894	3,601,026
2010	£ 219,524,505	3,699,006
2011	£ 231,064,350	3,772,626
2012	£ 234,386,082	3,713,966
2013	£ 240,000,018	3,714,656
2014	£226,486,245	3,498,277

Table 2: Market value and number of contact lens wearers 1992-2014.

Definition of lens types

For the purposes of the ACLM survey, contact lenses are divided into various lens 'types':

Daily disposables:	lenses designed to be worn once per day and discarded daily
Soft frequent replacement:	lenses replaced between weekly and monthly, inclusive
Soft traditional:	other soft lenses not included above
Rigid:	rigid or hard contact lenses

For the first time in 2012, information were captured by lens types and materials (hydrogel or silicone hydrogel). As part of this expansion, small differences in the assumptions of lens consumption were employed and applied retrospectively.

Change to Reporting Method

For the past two years the figures have been taken from UK data coordinated by Euromcontact, so some discontinuity may occur. Also, the number of wearers is derived from the number of contact lenses sold, combined with the estimated wearing schedules, not from surveying the wearers themselves. Year to year variations are therefore bound to occur.