



Press release

Sympany: 2009 annual result marked by the difficult environment

In spite of the challenging conditions, the Sympany Group has attracted new policyholders. Sympany, like the industry in general, has been affected by inadequate premiums, and its 2009 annual report shows a reduction in reserves of CHF 28.3 million. The company nevertheless enjoys a solid capital position; none of the brands of the Sympany Group will need to increase premiums during the year.

Basel, 11 May 2010 – The acquisition of Xundheit and the transfer of the supplementary insurance portfolio from ÖKK to Sympany Versicherungen AG significantly change the picture both on the balance sheet and in the profit and loss account.

Well financed; no premium increases during the year

Including intermediated business, gross premium volume of the Sympany Group grew by around 14 per cent to CHF 894 million. The increase was partly attributable to the integration of Xundheit. The insurance benefits across all lines grew by 15 per cent to CHF 812 million. The unsatisfactory annual result of CHF -28.3 million is mainly attributable to the negative underwriting result, which itself was primarily caused by high inflation in healthcare and inadequate premiums in basic insurance. CEO Beat Ochsner comments on the annual result: "Despite the loss, the Sympany Group still has a strong level of reserves and is well financed. The reserves held by our biggest brand, Vivao Sympany, are around 15 per cent. Relative to the sector, Vivao Sympany has retained its strong position. The reserves for the Sympany Group as a whole are around 20 per cent. None of the brands of the Sympany Group will need to increase premiums during the year."

Ralph Lewin, Chairman of the Foundation Board, on the annual result: "The hope that the government would soon implement stringent measures to contain these cost rises was unfortunately dashed in both of the last two years. We hope that appropriate measures are now moving in the right direction. The industry could not endure a further sustained period of drawing down reserves."

More than 10,000 new private customers

Awareness of the Sympany brand increased significantly and measurably last year. The number of private customers also increased, growing from 196,330 to 231,114 (up 17.7 per cent). As of 2010 and without taking Xundheit into account, Sympany had gained more than 10,000 net new private customers. "This shows us that the Sympany Group is perceived as an attractive and interesting partner," says Beat Ochsner.

Growth in corporate customer business

The number of corporate customers also increased, rising from 7,462 to 9,991 (up 33.9 per cent). The growth in the number of customers and in premium volume is a result of both internal growth and the integration of Xundheit. Premium volume grew by 21 per cent to CHF 417 million in 2009; excluding Xundheit the increase was approximately 5 per cent. Sympany corporate customer business profited from good loss experience in comparison with the rest of the sector – thanks not least to its well-structured case management system.

Positive financial result

Sympany achieved a very positive financial result in 2009, registering a performance of around 10 percent. This positive result is only partially reflected in the financial statements due to the use of the lower of cost or market value principle in the accounts in accordance with the Swiss Code of Obligations.

Sympany expects effective systems of control from the government

Ralph Lewin, Chairman of the Foundation Board, on the 2009 financial year: "With costs set to rise further and political debate still under way, the health insurance environment remains uncertain. Nevertheless, the Sympany Group takes responsibility towards policyholders very seriously, and we are continually working to optimise our costs. This sometimes requires investment, however. We are taking active steps to reduce the costs of medical care, such as by expanding the range of managed-care products we offer. In return, we expect the government to demonstrate openness to new product ideas and effective systems of control which offer the right incentives for the different players in the healthcare sector."

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About the Sympany Group

Sympany is the "refreshingly different" insurance group that provides made-to-measure protection and assistance, with no red tape. Sympany offers health and accident insurance for individuals and companies, and in May 2009 added property and liability insurance to its product range.

Sympany caters for different customer groups in the market with the sub-brands Vivao Sympany, Moove Sympany and Trust Sympany. Since 1 July 2009 Lucerne-based health insurer Xundheit has also been part of the Sympany Group. The Thurgau-based health insurer Carena will be integrated into the Vivao Sympany sub-brand at the beginning of 2011.

The Sympany Group grew out of the ÖKK Basel and other health insurance companies. Sympany has its head office in Basel. Total premium volume in 2009 was CHF 894 million. Employing around 650 people, the company caters to the needs of more than 230,000 private customers, of which around 208,000 have basic insurance cover. Sympany has some 10,000 companies in its corporate customer portfolio.

Sympany Group key figures

	2009	2008
Benefits and premium		
Total group premium volume	CHF 894 million	CHF 781 million
Premium volumes (own account)	CHF 894 million	CHF 634 million
thereof KVG compulsory health insurance	CHF 585 million	CHF 506 million
Premium volumes (intermediated) *	---	CHF 147 million
Net benefits paid (own account)	CHF 812 million	CHF 611 million
Net benefits paid (intermediated) *	---	CHF 95 million
Clients		
Private customers	231 114	196 330
with basic insurance KVG	207 972	181 253
Corporate customers	9991	7462
Result		
Actuarial provisions	CHF 300 million	CHF 238 million
Actuarial provision ratio	36.9 %	39.0 %
Reserves as per KVG	CHF 116 million	CHF 136 million
Reserve ratio as per KVG	18.7 %	25.2 %
Group equity	CHF 192 million	CHF 223 million
Equity as a percentage of premium volumes (own account)	21.4 %	35.2 %
Net profit of operating subsidiaries	CHF -9.9 million	CHF -7.4 million
Business result	CHF -28.3 million	CHF 2.2 million
Sympany		
Employees	644	511
Full-time equivalents	564	443
Customer service centres	12	12

* The figures for 2008 are still shown for the legal entity ÖKK Versicherungen AG, which does not belong to the Sympany Group. This was transferred to the Sympany Group on 1 January 2009 by means of a portfolio transfer.