

Market volume of cosmetic surgery in Austria

The beauty of real data is missing

Key points

- I estimate that currently about 25.000 cosmetic procedures involving surgery are performed annually. This includes mainly breast augmentation but also liposuction and rhinoplasty. Adding about an estimated 55.000 minimally invasive procedures, e.g. mainly Botolium injections yield an estimated total of 77.000 procedures in these two categories.
- These estimated 77.000 procedures performed likely generate aggregated doctors fees in the order of 61 million Euros annually for surgical procedure and about 15 million Euros for minimally invasive procedures.
- Imputing cost of personal and hospital operation yields an estimated total market turnover in the order of 370 million Euros annually. This amount comprises about 1 per cent of total expenditure of health, 5 per cent of private expenditure and 4 per cent of private spending on doctors service only
- There are practically no data available in Austria, which would allow to provide specific information about the market volume of cosmetic procedures
- Government needs to ensure monitoring of volumes and fees charged in this area to observe the real volume and importantly to better oversee performance in this area in particular quality.

Rationale

As everywhere cosmetic procedures have become popular in Austria. However information and data about the prevalence of procedures and of fees charged is not existent. Cosmetic procedures in Austria are mostly done in private practice including privately owned hospital facilities or private beds that are also available in public hospitals. Usually cosmetic procedures can be classified in a) cosmetic surgical procedures, b) cosmetic minimally invasive procedures and in c) reconstructive procedures. In the following I focus on category a) and b) as reconstructive procedures are mostly covered in the Austrian context¹.

Approach

To approximate the market volume I use volume information provided by the American Society of Plastic Surgery² and by the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ISAPS). I use ISAPS frequency data for Germany (GER), France (FRA) and The Netherlands (NL) to calculate a population-weighted average to estimate the number of procedures per category in Austria. Further I use price information from the American Society of Plastic Surgery, which records national averages of doctors' fees according to defined and commonly utilized procedures. I convert 2011 fees in US Dollar with the 2011 average Euro exchange rate and involved experts to validate fee levels. Further, I calculated the weighted average fees in both cosmetic surgical and in minimally invasive procedures by using the top 5 procedures performed in 2011 in each category. These weighted averages were applied to calculate fee volumes. To estimate total turnovers in scenarios I used average hospital cost information of 63 low-profile public hospitals ("Standard-Krankenanstalten") in Austria (47 per cent of all public hospitals). In the area of minimally invasive procedures I assumed that 50 per cent of total turnovers are cost to operate a doctors office providing these procedures.

¹ Health Insurance pays for cosmetic procedures in particular surgical procedures when patients are certified medical need approved by a head doctor („Chefarzt“) of the respective sick fund.

² <http://www.smartplasticsurgery.com>

Table 1: Volume of cosmetic procedures in Austria

Scenarios on the basis of		Estimated number of procedures	% total	Estimated fee volume, in Euro\$	% total	Estimated total turnover, in Euro&	% total
unlikely	US according to SMART PLASTIC SURGERY						
	cosmetic surgical procedures	43.255	11,6	116.329.224,24	55,9	644.288.653	77,8
	cosmetic minimally-invasive procedures	329.821	88,4	91.690.369,35	44,1	183.380.739	22,2
	Total	373.077		208.019.593,59		827.669.392	
possible	US according to ISAPS						
	cosmetic surgical procedures	29.580	35,2	79.550.722,12	84,0	440.591.158	93,6
	cosmetic minimally-invasive procedures	54.369	64,8	15.100.693,81	16,0	30.201.388	6,4
	Total	83.949		94.651.415,92		470.792.545	
conservative	the average utilization in FRA-GER-NL according to ISAPS*						
	cosmetic surgical procedures	22.946	45,3	61.710.919,72	88,9	341.785.528	95,7
	cosmetic minimally-invasive procedures	27.687	54,7	7.689.899,37	11,1	15.379.799	4,3
	Total	50.633		69.400.819,09		357.165.327	
optimistic	the average utilization in FRA-GER-NL according to ISAPS*						
	cosmetic surgical procedures	22.946	6,5	61.710.919,72	40,2	341.785.528	65,1
	cosmetic minimally-invasive procedures, US SMART PL. SURGERY	329.821	93,5	91.690.369,35	59,8	183.380.739	34,9
	Total	352.768		153.401.289,07		525.166.267	
realistic	the average utilization in FRA-GER-NL according to ISAPS*						
	cosmetic surgical procedures	22.946	29,7	61.710.919,72	80,3	341.785.528	91,9
	cosmetic minimally-invasive procedures, US ISAPS	54.369	70,3	15.100.693,81	19,7	30.201.388	8,1
	Total	77.315		76.811.613,53		371.986.916	

* population-weighted

\$ fees according to national average tariffs for the 5 most important procedures in both categories, converted with the average 2011 exchange rate, weighted & inclusive estimated personal and other cost

Sources: www.smartplasticsurgery.com, International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ISAPS), Statistik Austria, own calculation

Scenarios	Total market volume in % of		Fee volume in % of private spending on doctors services
	Total expenditure on health	Private expenditure on health	
Unlikely	2,6	11,1	11,6
Possible	1,5	6,3	5,3
Conservative	1,1	4,8	3,9
Optimistic	1,7	7,0	8,5
Realistic	1,2	5,0	4,3
<i>Quellen: www.smartplasticsurgery.com, International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons (ISAPS), Statistik Austria, own calculation</i>			