

Media release

Strong first half 2009 for Helvetia Group

In the first half of 2009 Helvetia posted dynamic growth of 21.4 per cent. With strong actuarial results and investment returns that increased by more than CHF 550 million the Group achieved a profit for the period of CHF 138 million. The excellent solvency margin has risen to 213 per cent.

St. Gallen, 3 September 2009 / Helvetia Group achieved currency-adjusted growth of 21.4 per cent in the first half of 2009 and posted a profit for the period of CHF 138 million (previous year CHF 166 million). Even in such an economically challenging environment, this Europe-wide company has reinforced its solidity with a solvency margin of 213 per cent (end of previous year around 208 per cent) and an equity base of CHF 2'865.7 million (end of previous year CHF 2'773.7 million). As well as the excellent actuarial results that have led to a combined ratio of 93.8 per cent (previous year 93.2 per cent) Helvetia once again impressed the market in the first six months of this year with its robust gains on investments of CHF 515 million (previous year CHF -41 million).

Dynamic growth and strong operating result

In the first semester Helvetia Group increased its business volumes by 8.5 per cent on a comparable basis, and if the acquisitions are included, business volumes increased by as much as 21.4 per cent. In the home market of Switzerland the individual life business expanded by 0.7 per cent and the group life business by 15.4 percent. In the group life business the demand by many SMEs for a full insurance solution and the general confidence in Helvetia's ability to perform are clearly visible. In Italy, good organic growth was strengthened by the full effect of both the acquisitions made in 2008, whereby business volumes in this country market increased threefold. With the exception of Spain and France, all the country markets achieved good growth in non-life business and won further market share. The new combined ratio of 93.8 per cent net is another sign of the continued excellent quality of the portfolio. Thanks to further increases in efficiency the cost ratio improved by 0.8 percentage points and thus also contributed to the robust results of Helvetia Group.

Security for customers and shareholders

Particularly in times of financial and economic crisis Helvetia Group represents security and solidity without compromising profitability. As in the previous year, the company is one of the best capitalised companies in the market thanks to a solvency margin that has risen a further 5.7 percentage points to 213 per cent. Helvetia's investment portfolio also retained its high quality in the first half of this year. After the difficult 2008 investment year the Group posted a robust investment performance of 1.7 per cent (non-annualised; previous year -1.2 per cent) and a direct yield of 3.4 per cent (annualised;

previous year 3.5 per cent). The investments in all the assigned segments posted substantial contributions to the results. The annualised equity ratio is just about 10 per cent after sinking to 8.2 per cent at the end of 2008.

Sustainable strategy proves its worth in crisis

The good development in the first half of 2009 is due to healthy insurance business, cautious investment management and disciplined cost management. To a large degree, in the first half of 2009 Helvetia Group was able to cushion the negative consequences of the turbulent financial markets and the sliding real economy through consistent measures. Once again Helvetia has fulfilled its ambition of sustainably and profitably outperforming the market. With its purchase of L'Européenne d'Assurance Transport (CEAT) in the reporting period, the strategy of targeted acquisitions in existing markets was implemented consistently. Thanks to this acquisition the Group has been able to increase its premium volume in France by 50 per cent.

«Helvetia was able to face the financial and economic crisis from a position of strength and has weathered it well so far. This creates confidence and presents opportunities for targeted growth», says Stefan Loacker, CEO of Helvetia Group. «Even though we are taking every precaution due to the difficulty in predicting how the markets will trend, we are convinced that Helvetia is excellently equipped to continue its sustained path of growth.»

You can also access this media release on our website at www.helvetia.com/en/media. A presentation on the results can be accessed at <http://www.helvetia.com/en/investor/halbjahresergebnis/infokit.htm>

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About Helvetia Group

In the past 150 years, Helvetia Group grew from a number of Swiss and foreign insurance companies into a successful insurance group that does business everywhere in Europe. Today, Helvetia has branch offices in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Spain, Italy and France, and routes some of its investment and financing activities through subsidiaries and fund companies in Luxembourg and Jersey. The Group is headquartered in St.Gallen in Switzerland. Helvetia is active in the life, property and casualty and reinsurance segments, and almost 4,600 employees provide services to more than two million customers. With a business volume of CHF 5.7 billion, Helvetia posted a net profit of CHF 230.5 million in the 2008 financial year. The Helvetia Holding registered share is part of the Swiss Performance Index (SPI) and is traded on the SIX Swiss Exchange under the symbol HELN.

Cautionary note regarding forward-looking statements

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This document may contain projections or other forward-looking statements related to the Helvetia Group which, by their very nature, involve inherent risks and uncertainties, and risks exist that predictions, forecasts, projections and other outcomes described or implied in forward-looking statements will not be achieved. We caution you that a number of important factors could cause results to differ materially from the plans, objectives, expectations, estimates and intentions expressed in such forward-looking statements. These factors include: (1) changes in general economic conditions, in particular in the markets in which we operate; (2) the performance of financial markets; (3) changes in interest rates; (4) changes in currency exchange rates; (5) changes in laws and regulations, including accounting policies or practices; (6) risks associated with implementing our business strategies; (7) the frequency, magnitude and general development of insured events; (8) mortality and morbidity rates; and (9) policy renewal and lapse rates. We caution you that the foregoing list of important factors is not exhaustive; when evaluating forward-looking statements, you should carefully consider the foregoing factors and other uncertainties. All forward-looking statements are based on information available to the Helvetia Group on the date of its publication and the Helvetia Group assumes no obligation to update such statements unless otherwise required by applicable law.

The purpose of this document is to inform the shareholders of Helvetia Group and the public of the business performance of Helvetia Group in the first half of 2009. This document does not constitute an offer or a solicitation to exchange, buy or subscribe for securities, nor does it constitute an offering circular within the meaning of Art. 652 a of the Swiss Code of Obligations or a listing prospectus within the meaning of the listing rules of SWX Swiss Exchange. Should the Helvetia Group make one or more capital increases in the future, investors should make their decision to buy or subscribe for new shares or other securities solely on the basis of the relevant offering circular. This document is also available in German, French and Italian. The German version is binding.

Key figures at June 30, 2009

| | 30.6.09 | 31.12.08 | 30.6.08 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Key share data Helvetia Holding AG | | | |
| Group profit for the period per share in CHF | 15.8 | 26.9 | 19.4 |
| Consolidated equity per share in CHF | 332.6 | 323.2 | 310.8 |
| Price of Helvetia registered shares at the reporting date in CHF | 287.5 | 228.9 | 397.8 |
| Market capitalisation at the reporting date in CHF million | 2 487.7 | 1 980.6 | 3 441.7 |
| Number of shares issued | 8 652 875 | 8 652 875 | 8 652 875 |

in CHF million

Business volume

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Gross premiums direct life | 2 383.3 | 3 061.1 | 1 988.0 |
| Deposits received life | 212.0 | 85.0 | 1.6 |
| Gross premiums direct non-life | 1 412.1 | 2 351.1 | 1 402.8 |
| Assumed reinsurance | 118.8 | 215.0 | 96.0 |
| Business volume | 4 126.2 | 5 712.3 | 3 488.4 |

Key performance figures

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Result life | 62.3 | -19.6 | -39.0 |
| Result non-life | 69.9 | 289.3 | 194.4 |
| Result other | 6.0 | -39.2 | 11.0 |
| Group profit for the period after tax | 138.2 | 230.5 | 166.4 |
| Profit from investments | 514.6 | 72.0 | -41.4 |

Key balance sheet figures

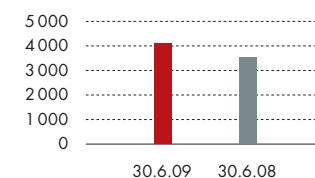
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|---|----------|----------|----------|
| Consolidated equity | 2 865.7 | 2 773.7 | 2 667.4 |
| Reserves for insurance and investment contracts (net) | 27 146.4 | 25 754.4 | 25 501.9 |
| Investments | 32 121.6 | 30 759.1 | 28 543.0 |

Ratios

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Return on equity annualised | 9.8% | 8.2% | 12.1% |
| Combined ratio (gross) | 89.7% | 87.0% | 89.8% |
| Combined ratio (net) | 93.8% | 89.1% | 93.2% |
| Direct yield annualised | 3.4% | 3.3% | 3.5% |
| Investment performance | 1.7% | 0.9% | -1.2% |
| Solvency margin | 213% | 208% | 212% |

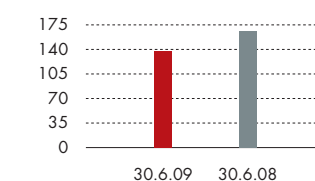
Business volume

in CHF million



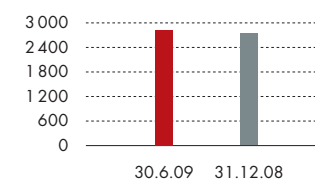
Profit

in CHF million



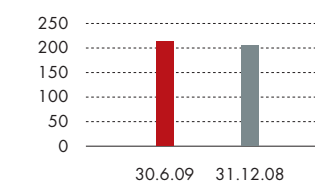
Equity

in CHF million



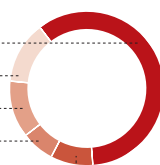
Solvency

in %



Gross premiums written 01.01. - 30.06.2009

| | Growth in % | in CHF million |
|-----------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Switzerland | 10.0 | 2 331.0 |
| Germany | 2.6 | 501.8 |
| Italy | 125.2 | 471.2 |
| Spain | -2.2 | 269.3 |
| Total other insurance units | 7.2 | 340.9 |
| Total | 15.0 | 3 914.2 |



Important dates

| | |
|---------------|---|
| 16 March 2010 | Publication of financial results for 2009 |
| 16 April 2010 | Ordinary Shareholders' Meeting in St.Gallen |
| 2 Sept 2010 | Publication of half-year financial results for 2010 |