



EUROPEAN COALITION FOR VISION  
*Better Eye Health For Europe*

## PRESS RELEASE

**Brussels, 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014**

On the occasion of World Sight Day, the European Coalition for Vision (ECV) set an ambitious objective to leverage vision and eye health at European level. World Sight Day is a global event that focuses on bringing attention on blindness and vision impairment. It is observed worldwide on the second Thursday of October each year.

Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2014 in Brussels, members of the European Coalition for Vision agreed to develop and promote a European vision and eye health indicator. Today, more than 80 European Core Health Indicators exist, but none of the current health indicators fully addresses the eye health issue. Health indicators are sets of data (tables, graphs, maps) on health status, determinants and care in EU Member States and play an important role in supporting policy development.

Mr Peter Ackland, Chair of the ECV stated: *'ECV's role is to alert European public authorities on the issue of vision and eye health. ECV is therefore asking for the creation and implementation of an EU-wide recognized eye health indicator – in order to collect detailed and harmonized data and consequently better shape European public policy in that respect'.*

In parallel, EFAB (European Forum Against Blindness), EGS (European Glaucoma Society), EGDF (European Guide Dog Federation) and ECV presented in the European Parliament with an information stand on preventable blindness. Numerous Members of European Parliament had the opportunity to have a digital retina photograph taken by members of ECOO (European Council of Optometry and Optics) and to learn more about vision and eye health. On 7<sup>th</sup> October, Honourable Members of European Parliament Marian Harkin, Richard Howitt and Pilar Ayuso also hosted a dinner-debate on "Vision for Europe: addressing the challenge of avoidable blindness" at the European Parliament.

*Representing professional bodies, patient groups, European and national health, and disability NGOs as well as trade associations, the ECV aims at raising the profile of eye health and vision, to prevent avoidable visual impairment and secure an equal and inclusive society for those with low vision and irreversible blindness in Europe.*

*More information on ECV can be found: <http://www.ecvision.eu/>*

*Manifesto: <http://www.ecvision.eu/manifesto/>*

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