



Europe Regional Report November 2023 – April 2024

Objectives	Activity Status Update	Comments
<p>Identification and nomination of most qualified and motivated Co-Chairs according to identified mandate areas</p>	<p>Completed task finding a very experienced person for advocacy & equity willing to serve as Co-Chair: Therefore, the Co-Chairs till date are now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Dr. Tatjana Ghidirimschi – LV, Rehabilitation, URE ❖ Dr. Giorgi Chichua – Cataract ❖ Dr. Heiko Filipin – Research & Training ❖ Mr. Johanne Trimmel – Advocacy & Equity 	<p>Resource mobilization did not gain the intended attention. In view of the new strategic vision on advocacy within our European Region, we are now pro-actively sourcing for a motivated person to become Co-Chair for public relations</p>
<p>Assessing evidence for challenges for marginalized population groups like Sinti & Roma and, amongst other areas, to lobby and advocate at EU/UN level to bring vision and the necessity of accessible eye health high on the agenda of decision makers as per the consultancy on status quo of eye health policy landscape in Europe</p>	<p>Internal desk review revealed, that Sinti & Roma face important health inequalities in accessing public health services and treatments (including prostheses), particularly in the case of eyesight, hearing, and dental conditions, which also affect the Roma population more than the majority. Spain recommendation: Foster a more inclusive and universal health system, incl. by making services that are not free, affordable (oral/dental, hearing, eyesight) and to cover additional incurred expenses.</p>	<p>Evidence and recent reference provide a base to address this at EU level to ensure access of eye health services incl. spectacle correction. See primary link below: https://ergonetwork.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Ergo-2022-access-healthcareWEB.pdf</p>

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<p>To lobby and advocate at EU and country level (Eastern Europe) to bring vision and the necessity of accessible eye health high on the agenda of decision makers. Over 70 Mio people in Europe live with vision loss. Increasing aging pop. mean greater prev. of diabetes, cataract, presbyopia, MD, glaucoma, RE like myopia are emerging as a leading cause of VI & blindness in children. Fragmentation of current eye care systems in most European countries are building big challenges to these growing public health crises, and the problem of eye health in Europe will only get worse.</p>	<p>Eye health challenges are addressed through IAPB advocacy efforts through a 3-part approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Convene a European Advocacy Network whose members engage on eye health in Europe. A jointly agreed upon action plan based on key objectives needs to be developed. Peer support to members advocating for eye health in their own countries should be provided. ▪ Foster leadership on eye health in Europe at EU level through stronger engagement of interested and motivated European member states who are willing to provide leadership by addressing eye health challenges in the region. ▪ Awareness raising of challenges in eye health amongst European policymakers through MEPs and the public, incl. an eye screening event during WSD at the EU Parliament. 	<p>Challenges: In June 2024, a new Commission shall be elected, after which our advocacy should have the right momentum for a solid ground for political involvement</p> <p>If political involvement can be established by IAPB, adequate personnel needs to be availed at the IAPB European regional level</p> <p>Membership growth within the European region is intended to further strengthen the entire IAPB agency</p>

Key Organisational Outcomes for the reporting period

Interviews arranged by the IAPB secretariate have been held to gain a better in-sight on prevalence data and service provision for the VISION Atlas.

For Moldova the interview partners has been our Regional Co. Chair Dr. Tatiana Ghidirimschi, Ophthalmologist and Low Vision specialist

For Georgia the interview partner has been Dr. Giorgi Chichua, Ophthalmologist specialised in Cataract surgery

2024 Work plan for European Advocacy Network



Key Objective	Key Actions	Key Outcomes
<p>Elevate eye health as a cross-cutting development issue, ensuring its inclusion in major EU policy developments and institutions leading to improved policy and country level action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a European Leadership Group convened by a HoS at Ministerial Level to champion political prioritisation, commitment and action on eye health. Elevate and awareness raising on eye health at the EU and amongst MEPs with a view to getting eye health included in EU policies and initiatives. Improve workplace standards on eye health and call for businesses to commit to support the eye health of their employees. <p>Integrate eye health as part of European national health strategic plans and UHC frameworks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a strategic partnership with WHO Europe ensuring increased prioritisation and country technical support. Advocate for the inclusion of eye health in regional and national WHO health strategies <p>Strengthen European surveillance and reporting on eye health and hold governments to account</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for the inclusion of the eye health targets in regional indicator frameworks Incentivise and provide a platform for research bodies to share data and evidence on eye health in Europe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene and host first European Leadership Group meeting at MoH level to discuss priorities, identify opportunities and agree workplace Develop and send engaging MEP Welcome Pack and follow up with lobbying/engagement meetings with a view to identifying champions or a leadership group on vision Hold a Vision Screening and Photo Exhibition on Eye Health at the EU Parliament Develop partnership with EU-OSHA and other similar bodies to run joint campaigns on eye health and the world of work Engage relevant networks in business, trade unions etc., to discuss commitment and action on eye health and the workplace. Activate the network and leadership group on World Sight Day – joint letter, press release, OpEd etc Hold a side event at the WHO Regional Meeting Develop a WHO Regional Action Plan on Eye Health Identify relevant WHO policies and strategies and advocate for the inclusion of eye health Identify relevant indicator frameworks (such as WHO, EU Commission HSPA (Health Systems Performance Assessment and others) and advocate for the inclusion of the eye health targets Develop partnerships with relevant research bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Friends of Eye Health for Europe Group established, providing a key vehicle for advocacy and awareness raising, and membership grows. Greater awareness of the issue of eye health at EU and establishment of MEP Inclusion of eye health in relevant EU policies Businesses in Europe take greater responsibility for the eye health of their employees and actively promote good eye health WHO Regional Action Plan on Eye Health Launched Eye Health included in WHO policies, strategies and resolutions Increased reporting in Europe on Eye Health Targets Release of new data and evidence on eye health

Objective 1: ELEVATE



Objective	Elevate eye health as a fundamental, economic, social and development issue in order to unlock political will, leadership and enable cross-sector action
Potential Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocacy for eye health with European Institutions• Advocacy for Myopia and school eye health• Cross-sectoral working• Sustainability
Who are we influencing/advocating to	EU / European Commission, MEPs National Governments Educational authorities, networks and organisations
Potential Activities	Establishment of a Member State leadership group for Europe (similar to UN Friends of Vision) Targeted Advocacy and Awareness Raising with MEPs (i.e. send Welcome Pack following elections) Vision Screening at EU Parliament Partnership building with other related development sectors High-level events on eye health as it relates to sustainability, education, workforce etc with new partners Events targeted at schools to educate children on the link between screen time and myopia.

Objective 1: INTEGRATE



Objective	Integrate eye health into national health systems across Europe
Potential Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advocate and support governments to integrate eye health into national health systems• Tackle specific barriers to access in Europe• Equity
Who are we influencing/ advocating to	Ministries of Health WHO National health professionals/ groups Research bodies
Potential Activities	Targeted advocacy on specific barriers (i.e. Restrictive professional regulation) Targeted advocacy on inequity issues in eye health access and outcomes both across countries in Europe (with a focus on eastern European countries) and within countries (marginalised and vulnerable groups)

Objective 1: ACTIVATE



Objective	Activate consumer demand
Potential Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Awareness and demand• Addressing Stigma: Reframe messaging to emphasize a positive angle and steer clear of a blame-oriented messaging.
Who are we influencing/advocating to	General Public National Governments
Potential Activities	Develop and implement public awareness campaigns/initiatives (possibly screenings, photo exhibitions etc.) Advocate for the inclusion of eye health in national health promotion schemes to promote care-seeking behaviours World Sight Day campaign

Objective 4: Enhancing Reporting: eREC and eCSC Targets



Objective	Increase reporting of eREC and eCSC targets
Potential Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data and Evidence (advocate for monitoring and reporting on WHO Targets and calling for greater evidence generation in Europe)• Inclusion of indicators in EU framework• Incentivise research bodies to share data
Who are we influencing/advocating to	WHO EU Research Bodies
Potential Activities	Establish partnership with WHO and develop joint plan to support the implementation of integrated people-centred eye care High-level side event at the WHO Europe Regional Meeting Opportunities for the inclusion of indicators in EU framework. Encourage research bodies to submit data by offering potential incentives, including the provision of a platform for showcasing their research data.