



European Coalition for Vision
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Dear MEP

Further to my letter of 1 January I am writing to alert you to two important publications for eye health:

- the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) [Vision Atlas](#) on 24 February – this compares vision loss and population data between regions - including Western, Central and Eastern Europe
- the Lancet Global Health Commission on Global Eye Health: vision beyond 2020 [The Lancet Global Health Commission on Global Eye Health: vision beyond 2020](#) on 16 February.

Despite significant progress made by the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness, the World Health Organization and others, the report clearly demonstrates the mountain still to climb in preventing and tackling visual impairment globally. This includes Europe where inequalities persist in health literacy about eyes and vision, access to eye care services and inclusion and life chances for visually impaired people.

Professor Rupert Bourne ECV member and co-author of the report said: “We estimate that 21 million people in Western and Central Europe are blind, severely or moderately vision impaired and that 77% of this burden is due to preventable causes such as uncorrected refractive error and cataract.”

Fellow ECV member and co-author, Professor Tunde Peto, stresses the needs of people with diabetic retinopathy, adding: “These alarming figures further support the World Health Assembly resolution to implement the recommendations of the WHO World Report on Vision for people-centred eye care in every country’s health system.”

David Hewlett ECV President added: “This report should give everyone in Europe renewed energy to press on and make avoidable visual impairment and exclusion of visually impaired people, part of history. The ECV’s ten-year campaign to eliminate inequalities between and within European countries supports this aim #Equaleyes.”

The ECV also commented on social media [here](#).

It would wonderful if you or your office could spare a minute to ‘like’ or tweet your support for eliminating eye health inequalities.

Please note that World Sight Day this year is Thursday 14 October 2021. I will write nearer the time about how you can be involved if you wish.

Thank you again for your ongoing support for eye health and equal treatment for all the citizens of Europe.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David". The lettering is cursive and fluid, with a large initial 'D'.

David Hewlett
President
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