



## Message from the President

Greetings, ECOO members, and welcome to this issue of our ECOO Newsletter

Dear friends and colleagues,

After a long winter we are happy to see the daylight coming back up here in the North, and to see spring progressively returning. We had a productive Executive Board meeting mid-February in Brussels, where we had, among others, a preliminary discussion on ECOO's Business Plan for 2016-2018. Building on the milestones and successes achieved so far, we will work to consolidate two of our main pillars to ensure a favourable environment for optics and optometry at EU level several and to drive forward the education of opticians and optometrists and improve standard of practice across Europe.

This business plan will be presented to you at the General Assembly in Berlin on 19-22 May. Registrations for the Assembly have been open for a long time, and we look forward to meeting you all there again.

I am pleased to announce that the accreditation process for the European Diploma is well in its tracks, with the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm in the final steps to being accredited, and the Beuth University in Berlin closely following. More universities are lining up and show their interest to go through the procedure for accreditation, which is a recognition of the Diploma's growing reputation across Europe.

I had the honour of being invited as the representative for ECOO to the Mido fair in Milan on the last weekend in February, where eye care professionals gathered to discuss the latest developments in the optics sector. We were given an

excellent speaking slot at the Otticlub venue inside the fair. This provided a fantastic opportunity to speak about ECOO's work, and also present the European Diploma. Professionals and industry from Italy were represented in the audience, as well as teachers, directors and management people from universities and representatives from ophthalmology in Italy.

I felt that my presentation was well received and provided new information to the audience. I would like to encourage you all to take the microphone at a venue in your own country and inform about what ECOO does, and the importance of the European Diploma in Optometry and the Qualification in Optics whenever you get the chance. Accreditation of universities in your own country will in the long run have a positive effect for the development of your professional scope of practice.

This October will be two years since we last elected new officers for the ECOO management. I join the others in realizing that it was a quick two-year period, filled with hard work and opportunities. I invite all members to start thinking about who to propose and support for office. Our Secretary General will provide us with more information about the elections at our next meeting in Berlin, but I encourage everyone to start thinking of possible candidates.

Wishing you all a pleasant spring and hoping to see you in Berlin in May,

**Paul Folkesson**  
*President ECOO*



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## Regulatory Updates



### EU

Since our last Newsletter, there have been a number of EU regulatory and non-regulatory developments. First of all, since the beginning of the year, the Netherlands took over the six month rotating presidency of the Council of the EU. This means that they are in charge of setting the agenda and chairing the meetings in the Council. For the second half of the year, the Presidency moves to Slovakia.

Beyond seeing the emphasis that each Presidency places on different topics and broader trends in EU politics, this is also relevant for specific dossiers. The medical devices legislation, which ECOO follows for the plano-contact lenses, has been in the approval process for some time now. The discussions between the European Commission, European Parliament and the Council to

agree on the text (trilogues) are slowly but surely progressing. Although the trilogues are being held behind closed doors, it has been confirmed that plano-contact lenses are included under the scope of the regulation, which means they would benefit from the CE mark and comply with the standard any other medical device needs to fulfil. The pressure is on for the Dutch Presidency to conclude this file.

The expert group on Borderline and Classification of Medical Devices was meant to meet on 25 November 2015 to discuss, among others, the definition of the term 'medical diagnosis'. This would have an impact on the classification of visualisation products such as Fluorescein strips. The meeting was however cancelled at that time and has not been rescheduled to date.

The mutual evaluation exercise concluded with Member States sending their national action plans to the European Commission in early 2016. A stakeholder conference will be organised on 18 May to present the outcome of this process. ECOO will be there and report back to its members.

Following the successful ECOO workshop on Vision and Driving at the last General Assembly, an ECOO consensus paper is being prepared. Furthermore, ECOO is ready to input to the European Commission's assessment as to its implementation of the medical annex to the Driving License Directive (2009/113/EC). The consultation is expected to take place in the coming months.

## Update from Brussels

### Facts, fiction and myopic myths

To mark the publication of the latest version of the [Your Eyes manual](#), the European Forum Against Blindness (EFAB), the European Coalition for Vision (ECV) and EU-EYE are organising a networking dinner in support of early diagnosis, better preventative management and better vision. The dinner is organised under the patronage of Irish MEP Marian Harkin in the European Parliament on April 20th and is expected to welcome stakeholders from the European

Institutions, NGOs, medical professionals and other interested parties.

During the dinner, participants will have the opportunity to test their knowledge about the facts, fiction and myths around eye prevention and treatment during an interactive quiz.

ECOO has been a longstanding partner of EFAB and ECV, and is looking forward to attending the event.



# Update from the Academy



**Berlin 2016 – Register NOW, Latest Program online [www.Berlin2016.info](http://www.Berlin2016.info)**

There is still time to book your ticket to Berlin2016, the European Academy of Optometry and Optics' eighth annual conference. The latest Berlin2016 programme highlights can be found on [www.berlin2016.info](http://www.berlin2016.info). The Academy Conference features over 30 inspiring conference sessions, including 2 fantastic keynote lectures from Professor James Wolffsohn and Dr Pearce Keane, 14 clinical skills workshops, over 60 poster presentations and an exhibition featuring industry partners and sponsors.

Academy President, Dr Mireia Pacheco-Cutillas, said: "Our conference programme consists of engaging and innovative clinical presentations, research sessions and discussion workshops focused on providing valuable profes-

sional development opportunities. This year, dedicated poster sessions within the program allow even more opportunity for delegates to meet some of the finest researchers in Europe and beyond, spend time discussing latest technology and product innovation with our sponsors, and join us for networking events throughout the conference. The Academy is unique within the EU, bringing together clinicians, educators, researchers and policy makers at one event, offering networking opportunities that just can't be found elsewhere."

Alongside a busy conference schedule delegates can opt to see the wonderful city of Berlin from the river during the Academy's Annual Dinner.

With a great selection of hotels for delegates to choose from, booking early is advised to avoid disappointment. Delegates can choose from city centre hotels or those located closer to the Conference venue - Beuth University Campus - transport links in Berlin are excellent and enable those attending to select hotel accommodation based on their plans and preferences.

Take a look at accommodation pages and event map [www.berlin2016.info](http://www.berlin2016.info) to guide your selection!

**ECOO members** can book Berlin2016 for €230 (excluding Evening Dinners €65 each).

**Booking Code – ECOO2016**



# Update from the World Council of Optometry



## World Council of Optometry – New Beginnings

The WCO has been around for longer than most care to remember and has benefited from strong leadership, particularly from its European members. Recently, the WCO has undergone something of a transformation: new President and Board, new Executive Director and even a new location. We're now based at the headquarters of the American Optometric Association in Saint Louis, USA. The transition has, at times, been turbulent, but the landing was smooth and we're excited for the future. You'll see many changes in the coming months, including more frequent communication, a new website and a new logo.

Please connect with the WCO through Facebook or sign up for a mailing list. Consider becoming an individual mem-

ber and please think about joining us in Hyderabad for the Second World Congress. You'll be glad you participated.



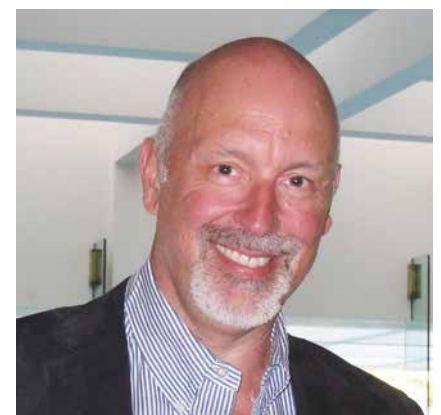
Our new President, Uduak Udom, is Nigerian and brings an optometric and public health perspective to our leadership. She has already visited the US for SECO and looks forward to meeting many European colleagues in Berlin this May.



Our new Executive Director, Mark Bullimore, is a US-based British-trained. He's busy reaching out to leaders and members and discovering the unique challenges that exist and persist in some countries. We've welcomed new members including the Somalian Optometric Association and firmly believe that greater membership and representation helps optometry, optometrists and our patients everywhere.



**Uduak Udom,  
President, WCO**



**Mark Bullimore,  
Executive Director, WCO**

We host our **2nd World Congress of Optometry in Hyderabad on September 11-13 2017**. In addition to the best in education and workshops, we are planning leadership and advocacy workshops. We welcomed 2500 optometrists to the first congress in Colombia and would love to host even more in India.

# The loyalty factor in contact lenses

## Euromcontact

Euromcontact, the European Association representing the Contact Lens and Lens Care products industry in the EU, in partnership with Gino Von Ossel, an expert on consumer behavior at Vlerick's Retail & Trade Marketing Research Center in Brussels- Belgium, developed over the last two years, a 'loyalty simulation tool'.

The "Loyalty simulation application" is a tool, made available free of charge by Euromcontact, which allows the specialist in contact lenses to simulate different scenarios and to assess, by implementing certain strategies, how to significantly improve the sales results and therefore the profitability of the optical center.

It is divided into macro-sections, analyzing:

- customer loyalty initiatives
- scheduled supply agreements for lenses and solutions
- strategies for the enhancement of services offered
- proactive steps toward contact lenses and related activities
- cumulative impact of actions and strategies
- effect over a five-year period on the profitability of the optical center.

The tool enables European eye care professionals to simulate changes in how and what they charge for contact lenses and services, to see how their business could develop over time, for example, if they began to actively promote contact lenses, strengthening their efforts to recall customers, stay in contact with them, or applying a reasonable cost for their professional performance (fitting and after care) and not only focusing on the final price of the product, the lenses. At a certain point, they could consider whether to implement or increase scheduled supply agreements or subscriptions. They may decide to charge

the amount due for the professional service given in order to obtain excellent results. The software helps with numbers, but of course the choices remain absolutely personal.

The beta version of the tool was presented during a seminar in Amsterdam in November 2014. Based on comments received, the beta version was improved, and translated into an application available on-line, on tablet and soon on smart phone, in English and in Italian end 2015. The tool, which has again been further improved, will be presented in many fora in 2016, such as at the NCC Congress in March 2016 in Amsterdam.

Helmer Schweizer, President of Euromcontact, comments: "Never before, as in these years, have there been so many changes of scenario involving the contact lens sector. We have developed an easy to use, flexible, and adaptable tool, which is useful for identifying winning strategies in daily professional practice. The tool was designed to illustrate certain principles, it does not aim to teach how to do the job."

The software "Loyalty Factor in Contact lens" can be downloaded free of charge by scanning the QR code below or [here](#).





## ECOO upcoming meeting

### ECOO Autumn 2016, Ljubljana (Slovenia)

Following Berlin, we travel to Ljubljana for the next meeting!

The ECOO Autumn General Assembly will take place on **14-16 October 2016 in Ljubljana**, Slovenia and is kindly organised by ECOO's member the Optical Association of Slovenia (Društvo očesnih optikov Slovenije - DOOS).

Please save the date in your calendars. More information will be shared shortly.



## ECOO on social media



### We're excited to announce that ECOO is now on Twitter and LinkedIn!

We will be using these social media channels to engage in discussions with key stakeholders and to increase awareness regarding our profession with the general public and policymakers. It will be an opportunity for us to share updates on ECOO activities, position papers on various topics, or other key publications, such as the Blue Book.

It will also be an opportunity for us to communicate to a wider audience around specific projects, such as Vision and Driving, or key milestones on eye health at global or national level.

We look forward to interacting with all of you!

Follow us on Twitter: [@ecoo\\_news](https://twitter.com/ecoo_news)

Join our LinkedIn page: [European Council of Optometry and Optics](https://www.linkedin.com/company/european-council-of-optometry-and-optics)

#### ECOO

@ecoo\_news

The European Council of Optometry and Optics (ECOO) represents the interests of optometrists & opticians from 25 countries.

## Newsletter

The Newsletters are sent to ECOO's members and contacts via e-mail. Please inform us of any additions to the mailing list or of staff changes in your respective organisations. Should you have any news or updates which may be of interest to

ECOO members, please contact Fabienne Eckert at the ECOO Secretariat: [secretariat@ecoo.info](mailto:secretariat@ecoo.info).  
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## Special thanks to our supporters

