



European Council of Optometry and Optics
Conseil Européen de l'Optométrie et de l'Optique
Europäischer Rat für Optometrie und Optik

To whom it may concern

21 August 2007

I am writing on behalf of the European Council of Optometry and Optics (ECOO). ECOO is the confederation of national professional organisations representing optometrists and opticians in 25 countries, including Italy.

ECOO is following the evolution of the optometric profession in Italy. That evolution replicates the development of optometry as an autonomous healthcare profession throughout Europe.

As evidence of that development, please find below a brief overview of the optometric/optical profession in a selected number of European countries, including the major countries of western Europe.

In the scope of practice of the profession, the reference to refraction includes subjective and objective refraction. The sectoral status of the profession is clear from the description in each case. **Unless indicated otherwise, the teaching of optometry and optics takes place neither under medical supervision nor within a faculty of medicine.** The fact that an ophthalmologist may, in some cases, give a lecture or some courses on aspects of optometry or optics does not invalidate the statement above.

Yours sincerely

Richard Carswell
Secretary General

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President: Feike Grit BSe DSc (Hons) FCOptom FAAO (Netherlands)
Vice President: Wolfgang Cagnolati MS DSc (Hons) MCOptom FAAO (Germany)
Secretary General: Richard Carswell BA MA (UK)

ECOO, 61 Southwark Street, London SE1 OHL, United Kingdom
Telephone: 44 (0)20 7261 9661 Fax: 44 (0)20 7260 1140 E-mail: richardecoo@aop.org.uk Website: www.ecoo.info

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Austria

Scope: refraction and prescribing of corrective spectacles

Status: handicraft and **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught at polytechnic college

Belgium

Scope: refraction and limited prescribing of corrective spectacles

Status: handicraft and **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught in colleges directed by the optometric/optical profession

Denmark

Scope: refraction and prescription of corrective spectacles

Status: **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught in the faculty of optometry at polytechnic college

Finland

Scope: full eye examination and prescribing of corrective spectacles

Status: **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught in the departments of optometry at polytechnic colleges

France

Scope: refraction and limited prescribing of corrective spectacles

Status: handicraft and **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught at schools of optometry

Germany

Scope: full eye examination and prescribing of corrective spectacles

Status: handicraft profession but **changing to autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught either by profession or in departments of optometry at polytechnic colleges or universities

Greece

Scope: dispensing only

Status: technical

Teaching: taught at polytechnic college

Ireland

Scope: full eye examination and prescribing of corrective spectacles (optometrists only)

Status: **autonomous healthcare professions** (optometry; dispensing optics)

Teaching: taught in department of optometry within faculty of physics at technical university

Netherlands

Scope: full eye examination (including diagnostic drugs) and prescription of corrective spectacles

Status: **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught in faculty of health sciences at university of professional education

Norway

Scope: full eye examination (including diagnostic drugs) and prescription of corrective spectacles

Status: handicraft and **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught in department of optometry at technical university

Portugal

Scope: full eye examination and prescription of corrective spectacles

Status: unregulated **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught in colleges directed by optometric/optical profession and within faculties of physics at universities

Spain

Scope: full eye examination and prescription of corrective spectacles

Status: **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught in departments of optometry/optics in schools of health sciences at universities

Sweden

Scope: full eye examination and prescription of corrective spectacles

Status: **autonomous healthcare profession**

Teaching: taught in department of optometry at higher education institute

Switzerland

Scope: full eye examination and prescription of corrective spectacles

Status: **autonomous healthcare profession** (according to canton)

Teaching: taught in department of optometry at university (from September 2007)

United Kingdom

Scope: full eye examination (including diagnostic drugs) and prescription of corrective spectacles

Status: **autonomous healthcare professions** (optometry; dispensing optics)

Teaching: taught in departments of optometry or vision sciences within universities.