

UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS SPÉCIALISTES
EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

20, Av. de la Couronne
B-1050 BRUSSELS
www.uems.net

tel: +32-2-649.5164
fax: +32-2-640.3730
e-mail: uems@skynet.be

OPHTHALMOLOGY

The Plenary Assembly of the UEMS Section of Ophthalmology was held on June 12, 2004 at Budapest (Hungary), whereas the Executive Committee met at Brussels on March 6 and November 6, 2004. Moreover some members of the Executive Committee participated in various meetings, e.g. (1) an informal meeting with the representatives of the European Optometry at London in May 2004; (2) the meeting of the Presidents/Secretaries of Sections and Boards at Brussels in May 15, 2004 and (3) a meeting with the Hungarian Minister of Public Health in June 2004.

The topics treated in 2004 by the Section of Ophthalmology concern more especially :

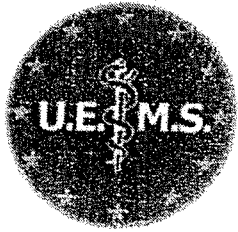
1. **Optometry in European Union.**

It appears that optometrists are very active to put forward their projects :

- **at the world level :** the Section of Ophthalmology has received information from the International Council of Ophthalmology concerning an « International Fundraising Program » in order to collect money.
- **at the European level :** the European optometrists are in discussion with the European Commission in order to be officially recognized.
- **at the Belgian level :** the « opticians-optometrists » are studying the possibility to be reimbursed for certain acts by the Social Security.

Concerning the Irish-Dutch project of agreement with the European optometrists, it has been decided during the Plenary Assembly of Budapest that all delegations would submit the project to their national ophthalmological association and that their advices would be thereafter transmitted to the Section. Until now about ten delegations have sent a written response. Belgium, France, Italy, Poland and Spain are determinedly against an agreement with the optometrists. On the other hand, Finland, Ireland, Norway, the Netherlands, Switzerland and United Kingdom are in favour of the signature of an agreement with, however, the important restriction for 4 of these countries that the optometrists must work under the direction and the responsibility of a Medicine Doctor specialized in ophthalmology.

After long discussion during the Executive Committee meeting where each member has been able to present his arguments, a agreement has been found. It has been estimated that strategically it was not advisable to sign an agreement with the European optometrists because of the following reasons: (1) optometrists would use this agreement in their discussions with the European Commission; (2) the project of definition of the "Medical Act", already established by the Section of Ophthalmology and approved by UEMS some years ago, is presently put forward by the Highest Authorities of UEMS.



UNION EUROPÉENNE DES MÉDECINS SPÉCIALISTES
EUROPEAN UNION OF MEDICAL SPECIALISTS

20, Av. de la Couronne
B-1050 BRUSSELS
www.uems.net

tel: +32-2-649 5164
fax: +32-2-640 3730
e-mail: uems@skynet.be

2. Medical Act.

After multiple interventions of the Section of Ophthalmology to the Secretary General of UEMS, the UEMS Authorities have been convinced of the necessity of a definition of the « Medical Act » that could be officially recognized by the European Parliament and/or Commission. Actually the process is in progress and a definition of the « Medical Act » will allow to determine the field of activities of Medicine Doctors and will protect patients against activities of non medical professionals performing actually what can be considered as « Medical Act ».

3. Enlargement of European Union.

Today all new EU countries have nominated their delegates at the Section of Ophthalmology with the exception of Malta. The delegates of the new EU countries will be invited to participate at Potsdam in June 2005 in an information meeting where they will receive all information useful for a good integration in the Section of Ophthalmology.

4. Internet.

A Website has been created by the UEMS Section of Ophthalmology:

www.uems-ophtalmology.org

In the same way, UEMS has opened a new Website: www.uems.net

Jean-Paul DERNOUCHAMPS
Secretary General of the UEMS Section of Ophthalmology