

Overview & Background

The Global Summit for Eye Health (2 November 2026, Antigua and Barbuda) will convene Heads of Government, ministers, international organisations, civil society, and private sector leaders. Five years on from the UN Resolution, Vision for Everyone, the Summit will catalyse a new wave of ambitious, measurable commitments to reach the one billion people currently living with avoidable sight loss.

The Summit will deliver:

- A new wave of government commitments
- Catalytic financing and partnerships
- A Global Eye Health Compact, embedding eye health within global development frameworks and ensuring long-term accountability

The Case for Action: Vision as an Economic Multiplier

Global vision impairment is a solvable crisis. Currently, 2.2 billion people are living with poor sight; for over 1 billion of these people, this sight loss could have been avoided or treated.

In a climate of global fiscal constraint, eye health offers an unparalleled economic proposition:

- **ROI:** Every \$1 invested generates a \$28 return in low- and middle-income countries.
- **Cost-Effective:** Interventions like glasses and cataract surgeries are among the most cost-effective and scalable healthcare solutions available today.
- **Transformational Impact:** Expanding access creates millions of jobs and unlocks gains in education, productivity and well-being.

The Commitment Framework

Governments are encouraged to demonstrate leadership by submitting national commitments aligned with the following pillars:

- **ACT:** Embed eye health into Universal Health Coverage and Primary Health Care. Launch nationally owned plans which deliver transformative change and a whole-of-government approach to eye health.
- **ALLOCATE:** Dedicate specific budget lines for eye health and include vision in national health insurance schemes.
- **ACCELERATE:** Implement [6 low-cost, simple accelerators](#) identified in the *Value of Vision Investment Case* and showcase and scale the use of innovation and technology.

France

France demonstrates strong leadership in eye health through high levels of population coverage, robust health financing systems, and a long-standing commitment to prevention and equity.

- **Health Financing & Access:** The 100% Santé reform has significantly reduced financial barriers to refractive correction, enabling access to prescription glasses with no or minimal out of pocket costs for all French people who benefit from a responsible complementary health insurance. Cataract surgery is fully integrated within national insurance pathways,

contributing to one of the highest cataract surgical rates in the EU with one of the highest cataract surgical rates in the EU (1,417 per 100,000 population in 2021)¹.

- **Prevention & Early Detection:** France's Priority Prevention Plan strengthens compulsory vision examinations for young children and introduces fully covered eye health consultations at key stages of childhood and adolescence. Eye health intersects with broader policy areas, including diabetes management and healthy ageing.
- **System Capacity & Innovation:** Telemedicine pilots and improved care coordination are expanding access to specialist expertise, particularly for screening and follow up care. France leads in rare disease policy, with national plans supporting early diagnosis and specialised ophthalmic care. France was the first country in Europe to develop and implement a national plan on rare diseases.

France Commitments at the Global Summit for Eye Health

The areas outlined below are intended to illustrate possible pathways for national commitment that align with France's priorities. They are indicative rather than prescriptive and are provided to support discussion and refinement with government counterparts.

Proactive Detection & Prevention

France commits to reinforcing eye health as a core component of its national prevention strategy, with an increased focus on early detection and population-level impact. To achieve this, we will pursue the following actions:

- **Expanding proactive eye health screening**, particularly for children, people living with diabetes, and older adults, building on existing compulsory examinations and prevention pathways.
- **Improving uptake and follow-through** from screening to treatment through clearer referral pathways, patient navigation, and digital reminder systems.
- **Strengthening public awareness** of preventable sight loss, refractive error, and age-related conditions, ensuring prevention messages reach underserved and high-risk populations.

Improving Timelines & Equity of Access to Eye Care

France commits to addressing disparities in access, waiting times, and regional service availability, particularly in the context of workforce shortages. To achieve this, we will pursue the following actions:

- **Reducing geographic disparities** in access to ophthalmic services through targeted incentives, coordinated regional planning, and service redesign in underserved areas.
- **Improve the distribution of ophthalmologists** outside of major urban areas to improve waiting times and access to care in more rural areas.

Accountability and Monitoring

France commits to strengthening national oversight of eye health performance and outcomes, aligned with its Universal Health Coverage objectives. To achieve this, we will pursue the following actions:

- **Developing clearer national indicators** for eye health coverage, access, outcomes, and waiting times.
- **Maintaining high standards of quality and outcomes**, supported by routine monitoring and continuous improvement.
- **Routine reporting and use of data** to identify gaps, monitor progress, and inform policy decisions at national and regional levels and contribute to global accountability efforts.

¹ Eurostat (2023). *Cataract surgeries down 4% in 2021*. [online] @EU_Eurostat. Available at:

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/w/ddn-20230912-1>