



News release

## ***Essilor creates the Eye-Sun Protection Factor, a new index in protecting eyes from damaging UV rays***

*Charenton-le-Pont (France), May 2012* – Essilor, the world leader in ophthalmic optics announces the introduction of the “Eye-Sun Protection Factor” (E-SPF), the new international index certifying the overall UV protection provided by a lens. Consumers can now compare the levels of UV protection provided by all kinds of eyewear measured with E-SPF, including clear, photochromic, and sun lenses (tinted or polarized), corrective or not.

Inspired by the cosmetic industry standard of UV protection, the E-SPF rating system follows a simple pattern: the higher the E-SPF, the better the UV protection. Thanks to this new index, it is now possible for all wearers to choose easily with the Eye-Care Professional the best UV protection for their eyes and the sensitive skin around them. Developed by Essilor Research & Development and endorsed by an independent third party expert, the Eye-Sun Protection Factor follows an impartial measurement protocol.

### **The first global UV index for eyewear**

E-SPF index goes one step further than existing labels by integrating for the first time UV protection brought by both sides of a lens. Commonly used "100% UVA UVB" mention does not provide complete information on the overall UV protection of a lens. Indeed it doesn't take into account UV radiations reflected on the backside of a lens, which can represent up to 50% of all UV received into the eye.

E-SPF values vary from 2 to a maximum of 25 for clear lenses and 50+ for tinted sun lenses. E-SPF 25 means the eye is 25 times better protected than without any lens. (The E-SPF excludes direct eye exposure from around the lenses)

### **A useful index for consumers**

Not all lenses are equal in terms of UV protection and the public must be aware of the differences. A recent survey\* in Europe showed that more than two thirds of consumers were unaware that clear lenses offered any protection against UV and over 90% recognised the utility of a sun protection factor for eyewear.

Essilor is convinced that this unique evaluation system will increase consumer knowledge on UV and help improve visual health by protecting the eye from the invisible and often irreversible dangers of UV light.

## **UV Light: A Significant Threat to Healthy Vision**

UV rays have a direct and irreversible impact on eye health: UV light has been proven to accelerate eye ageing, skin cancer and the appearance of cataracts. It is estimated that around 15 million people worldwide become blind from cataracts annually, of which up to 20% may be caused or aggravated by UV exposure. In addition 5 to 10% of skin cancers, also directly linked to UV rays, appear in the eye periphery. Children are particularly vulnerable to UV rays and their annual exposure is three times higher than that of adults as they spend more time outdoors. UV rays pose a threat 365 days a year, even in cloudy weather as 40% of UV exposure occurs when people are not in full sunlight.

\* IPSOS Omnibus Survey conducted for Essilor in January 2012 in 5 European Countries (France, UK, Germany, Spain and Italy)

### *About Essilor*

*The world's leading ophthalmic optics company, Essilor designs, manufactures and markets a wide range of lenses to improve and protect eyesight. Its corporate mission is to enable everyone around the world to access lenses that meet his or her unique vision requirements. To support this mission, the Company allocates around €150 million to research and development every year, in a commitment to continuously bring new, more effective products to market. Essilor's flagship brands are Varilux®, Crizal®, Definity®, Xperio®, Optifog™ and Foster Grant®. E-SPF™ is a trademark of Essilor International. It also develops and markets equipment, instruments and services for Eyecare professionals. Essilor reported consolidated revenue of €4.2 billion in 2011 and employs nearly 48,700 people in around 100 countries. It operates 19 plants, a total of 390 prescription laboratories and edging facilities, as well as several research and development centers around the world. For more information, please visit [www.essilor.com](http://www.essilor.com)*

*The Essilor share trades on the NYSE Euronext Paris market and is included in the CAC 40 index.*

*Codes and symbols: ISIN:FR0000121667; Reuters:ESSI.PA; Bloomberg:EI:FP.*