



**Brussels, 10 April 2019**

**Hilde Vautmans, MEP, invited Members of the European Parliament that have contributed to making the equine voice count in Europe.**

Julie Girling, Jean Arthuis, Lieve Wierink attended the meeting together with Dr Alf Fussel from the European Commission, DG Sante and representatives and professionals of the European equine industry.

Mrs Vautmans recalled the work and influence of the MEP Horse Group since 2011. Before 2010, Equines had no voice in Europe to advocate the place of Equines in the economy but the European Horse Network, created in 2009, started to work closely with the European institutions and can today report on important achievements thanks to the relationship with the European Parliament.

Chaired by Julie Girling, Jean Arthuis and Hilde Vautmans, the MEP Horse Group organised 12 meetings and 4 Annual Conferences, on Equine Welfare in 2015, on End of life issues in 2017, on Innovation in Equestrian Sport and impact of Brexit in 2017 and Responsible Ownership and Care in 2018.

More topics and their impact on the equine industry were discussed inside the group, the Common Agricultural Policy reform, Research, Transport, Taxation, Education, Veterinary Products and Equine Tourism.

A strong cooperation with Parliamentarians in relevant committees (ITRE, ENVI, AGRI, IMCO) was essential to share thoughts and collectively help maximise the sector's impact in Europe.

Julie Girling, hosted the first years of the MEP Horse Group and focussed on welfare and Responsible Care thematic. Her own initiative report on responsible ownership and care of equidae adopted in March 2017 addressed clearly the sensitive issue to work on to improve the life as well as the end of life of equines. She said: owning a horse is not easy, it is intense and expensive and some responsible actions must be taken from birth to the end of a horse's life.

Jean Arthuis, chaired and hosted meetings on economic topics – Future CAP, VAT, Financial return to horse racing, the impact of Brexit on the industry and the movement of horses, growth and jobs in the equine industry. Hilde Vautmans hosted equestrian sport issues, innovation and education.