



Online General Assembly 2020

8 December 2020

Minutes

Mrs Hilde Vautmans, MEP, Chair of the MEP Horse Group welcomed members and regretted the postponement of all EHN events. She has supported and disseminated our letters and messages in October on the Covid impact on the equine industry. She will continue to support us in 2021 and hopes to see us all soon.

Mark Wentein, chair of EHN, opened the meeting and introduced the first part of the programme, the Webinar organised by the International Horse Sports Confederation's Task Force on Brexit and AHL.

- **Webinar: Equine Health and Welfare post Brexit and implications of the amended EU Animal Health Law - Consequences, solutions, and necessary actions to protect the European horse industry**

43 participants listened to the presentation of Göran Akerström, FEI Veterinary Director and Chair of the IHSC Taskforce for Brexit and EU Animal Health Law.

The task force has updated the key figures of our industry:

An economic impact of €52 billion with 500,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Representing more than double the value of the fishing industry

The Webinar was to create awareness on new rules on identification and movement of equines in 2021 and to identify and coordinate the next lobbying and communication activities at national and EU level to minimise any disruption to the European Equine Industry resulting from Brexit and the new Animal Health Law.

The industry is today living a terrible moment with no Brexit agreement, the ongoing Covid impact and a new identification regulation to comply with.

All equine movements are today affected, and breeding becomes extremely difficult, even sometimes impossible.

A minimisation of the tremendous impact is to postpone the AHL regulation

Brian Kavanagh, EMHF Chairman, insisted on the incredible figure of the industry that politicians cannot ignore and therefore should listen to our demand to minimise the impact of regulation in 2021.

Filip Vande Cappelle, Animal Transport Association Chair, detailed the planned organisation prepared in Belgium: custom corridor, one hour away from Calais. The customs are planning to cross 25 horse per day.

EHN will support a letter to EU officials, President and DG Sante's officials as well as MEPs and CVOs (sent on 17 December).

- **EU funded projects – Update on equine projects**

EHN plans to support the framing of 2 EU projects of great importance to position our industry in terms of integrity, knowledge, innovation.

Erasmus+ Sport - Horseracing Integrity

Paull Khan, representing the European Horse Racing industry, is preparing a useful and relevant project that could be presented to the next Call for proposals of the Erasmus+ programme. The project seeks to address and tackle attempts to undermine the integrity of horseracing, including through race-fixing and doping. It seeks to support good governance of horseracing, sharing best practices in the rules and sanctions to be applied and the educational resources to be provided to stakeholders and the general public. *The Call for proposals could be launched in May/June 2021*

Horizon Europe - Equine Thematic Network

Amandine Julien is responsible for the promotion and preparation of the Equine Thematic Network proposal on “roles and assets of horses for a sustainable rural development”. The project is under preparation at the French Equine Institute to reply to a future Horizon Europe call in April 2021 (could be delayed). The Thematic networks (4 years – €2M) are multi-actor projects which collect existing knowledge and best practices to make it available in easily understandable formats for end users such as farmers, foresters, breeders.

Marie Orard, Hippolia, announced a recent application for **EU project under COSME programme** to facilitate business and cooperation for equine industry worldwide (China, US).

- **Update on EU issues**

Roly Owers relates the latest decisions and announcements made by the EU Commission and EU Parliament with an impact on the health and welfare of equines:

May 2020 - Farm to Fork strategy (F2F): Stricter animal welfare standards are among the sustainable agricultural practices necessary to achieve the objectives of the Farm to Fork Strategy. This strategy, amongst other actions, anticipates to perform a Fitness Check of the EU animal welfare legislation for food producing animals. The results of this Fitness Check will be used for reviewing the animal welfare acquis. Planned start date: Q2 2020

https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/animals/docs/aw_fitness-check_roadmap.pdf

19 June 2020 – European Parliament Committee of inquiry on the protection of animals during transport – ANIT Committee: The committee will investigate a suspected lack of implementation and enforcement of EU provisions on space allowance and headroom for transported animals, on their watering, feeding and bedding, and on temperature and ventilation system during transport. 30 MEPs met on 23rd September to elect Tilly METZ (Greens/EFA) as Chairwoman. ANIT organised a public hearing on 10 December to get a comprehensive overview of the enforcement of Regulation 01/2005 to tackle the different responsibilities of the Member States and the Commission.

Five experts and representatives had been invited to provide Members with information on the evolution and differences in compliance rates, the sanctions mechanisms in Member States, cross-border cooperation between Member States, as well as infringement procedures and other possible actions by the Commission to ensure proper implementation and compliance.

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/anit-public-hearing-on-enforcement-of-re/product-details/20201201CHE07921>

Report by June 2021.

15 June 2020 – New EU Reference Centre on welfare of ruminants and equines

Reference centres act as initiatives aiming at improving the enforcement of the EU animal welfare legislation. Location and first activities to be decided by Q1 2021.

Animal Welfare Labelling Scheme - In the framework of the Farm to Fork Strategy, the Commission will consider options for animal welfare labelling to better transmit value through the food chain.

To this end, the Commission will conduct an external study foreseen to start first half 2021. The topic was a priority of the German Presidency which adopted on 15 December: decision of the AGRI Council: <https://www.eu2020.de/eu2020-en/news/pressemitteilungen/animal-welfare-kloekner-eu/2427904>

In parallel, the Commission has established, under the EU Platform on Animal Welfare, a sub-group on animal welfare labelling. The sub-group will assist the Commission in collecting data on previous experiences on animal welfare labelling.

The EU Platform on Animal Welfare has finalised the Horse factsheets and the EU Commission will publish them. Documents are under translation. The Equine sub-group could develop further initiatives such as guidelines on working equids in the EU in order to fill legislation gaps on the issue.

Nancy De Bryine looks at the latest developments of EFSA and FEEVA:

The European Food Safety Authority's mandate for 2020-2023 is to conduct:

- Evaluation of animal welfare legislation on the framework of the F2F Strategy
- Support the EC by providing scientific opinion on the protection of terrestrial animals during transport which include equids.

FEEVA launched in November a consultation to establish a protocol of best practices for euthanasia on horses.

Claire Scicluna completed the information by an update on essential substances and food chain exclusion.

12.00 - Official Annual General Meeting

35 attendees

All Members represented except HIPPOLIS, BETA

1. Approval of the agenda and minutes from last General Assembly 16/10/2019

Decision: Members approved the minutes without any comments.

2. Report on activities 2020 from the Chairman and the Board

Mark Wenten related the few past events:

A physically Board in March and a virtual Board meeting on 28 July 2020 (to prepare the October Conference) as well as a more global meeting on 13 October to replace the Conference that was postponed because of stricter measures decided by the Belgian government.

A Legal Group meeting in March 2020 but it was difficult to maintain an update on EU topics since March on AHL, Brexit, Welfare, Transport.

An EU Projects Sub-group was created in March and could meet online in June and November: 2 relevant EU projects with EHN support are being prepared and could be presented for EU Commission Financial support in 2021.

EHN managed thanks to your involvement and our trainees to publish a set of valuable documents (sent to MEPs and available on our Position Statements' page on the website)

- Position Statement on the impact of Covid-19 on the European Equine industry
- Green Assets of the European Equine industry
- Equine and the Green Deal

We could not deliver our messages on 13th October to MEPs and EU Commission but have asked for a meeting with Ursula von der Leyen to discuss the impact of Covid, Brexit, AHL – we hope to confirm the meeting before the end of the year.

3. EHN New organisation – Head office and Secretariat

New Headquarters in Zaventem – Equine House (Belgian Equestrian Federation, EEF, CBC)

Belgicastraat 9 B 2 – 1930 Zaventem

Secretariat:

Amandine Julien, IFCE (20% of her time)

Florence Gras, WoTA (10% of her time)

Both will share the various tasks: Communication, lobbying and event organization
EHN could also request a Trainee if needed like the 2 previous years.

Headquarters has been changed in the by-laws officially approved at the last General Assembly in October 2019 in Bruges.

By-laws in English will be translated in Flemish and deposited at the Belgium administration for publication.

At least 3 Belgium members (or resident in Belgium) of EHN will be considered as founding members and will send their official documents for publication. Members will be informed of the date of publication.

Decision: Members approved the new organisation

4. Financial report for 2020

Expenses in 2020 should be around €2300 as we could not organise planned events. Therefore, the EHN Bank Account presents a balance of € 35 603,02 on 5th December.

The newly elected Board will review the future events and support to project that could be financed by the reserve.

Decision: Members agree on the 2020 Financial Statement.

5. Election of the Board

Decision: the 12 candidates are elected at unanimity for a 3-year mandate.

Asbl Brugse Koetsiers	Mark WENTEIN
EFTBA Thoroughbred Breeders Federation	Nick ELSSAS
Equine Health & Nutrition Association	Peter BOLLEN
EMHF EUROPEAN and MEDITERREAN HORSERACING FEDERATION	Paul KHAN
EEF European Equestrian Federation	Ronan MURPHY
FEEVA (EQUINE VETERINARIAN)	Julius PETERS
FITE Equestrian Tourism	Frédéric BOUIX
HIPPOLIA French Equine industry cluster	Laurence MEUNIER
UET - European Trotting Union	Guillaume MAUPAS
WBFWSH WORLD BREEDING FEDERATION FOR SPORT HORSES	Nadine BRANDTNER
WHW WORLD HORSE WELFARE	Roly OWERS
IFCE French Equine Institute	Amandine JULIEN

6. Membership Applications

Equ'Institute - Claire Scicluna presented the activities of the Institute.

Equ'Institut was founded in 2011. It is an association dedicated to information and education in equine health for all kind of people working or living with horses.

The referenced educational centre managed by veterinarians and horse's lovers, is based in Chamant (France) and provides initial and continuous education by recognized speakers.

Supporting the idea of telemedicine as part of tomorrow's equine health, Equ'Institut develops connected tools for prevention and monitoring of horse diseases.

Decision: EHN Members accept Equ'Institut as new member.

European HunterJumper Equitation Foundation (EHJEF) - Patricia Bade van Motman, President, Hunter-Jumper Equitation Holland BV should have attended our meeting to present the Foundation.

Decision: In her absence, EHN members postponed the application to the next General Assembly meeting.

7. Priorities of Actions and budget proposal for 2021

The budget not used in 2020 could be redirected towards useful expenses:

- Develop the Green Assets documents and figures to support a better integration of equines in the CAP and rural developments
- Coordinate and support EU projects
- MEP Horse Group to be organised online in the beginning of the year on hot topics (transport, end of life) and hopefully in the European Parliament when it re-opens.

- Organise online meeting in January/February to prepare EU projects (integrity + Equine Thematic Network projects)
- February – Board meeting
- March/April - online MEP Horse Group on transport/welfare
- June – Board meeting
- June - online MEP Horse Group on End of life
- October – EHN Conference + AGM

Decision: The first Board meeting in 2021 will discuss the Work Programme and prepare future events.

A questionnaire/survey will be sent to all members to collect their priorities and concerns for 2021.

8. Setting the annual membership fee for 2021

Decision: Members agreed to keep the same membership fees in 2021.

9. Others

ECAHO concerns about AHL implementing regulation and transponder on foals. WBFSH will look into it.

TO DO LIST:

- Translate by-laws and prepare the publication (MW)
- Precise 2021 Work Programme and Budget (Board members)
- Send a questionnaire/survey to all members to collect their priorities and concerns for 2021 (EHN Secretariat)
- Report on meeting with Mrs Ursula von der Leyen, President of the EU Commission (EHN Secretariat – beginning January)