

# EUROPEAN HORSE NETWORK NEWS



**MEP Horse Group in the European Parliament  
19 March 2024**

**MEP Hilde Vautmans,  
Chairwoman of the MEP Horse Group and Mark Wentein,  
Chairman of the European Horse Network**

*"Politics and Horses are my passion!" MEP Hilde Vautmans*

*"The MEP Horse Group had a huge impact on the work done on animal health and antibiotics, VAT rates and transport since 2019".*



**July 2024**

- Webinar on Communication in February 2024
- MEP Horse Group in March 2024
- Promotion of Paris Olympics in May 2024

## Welcome to European Horse Network News

Dear readers,

Congratulations to Hilde Vautmans for her re-election in the European Parliament!

EHN Team has organised meetings with elected MEPs in July to re-create the MEP Horse Group.

We need the help and advice from all our members to list MEPs that could support us in this legislature.

In the beginning of November 2024, the first MEP Horse group meeting will be organised at the same time as our General Assembly.

Enjoy summer!

**Mark Wentein, Chairman**



**EUROPEAN HORSE NETWORK**

32 organisations active in all Equine-related activities



**THE EQUINE INDUSTRY IN EUROPE**

- 100+ billion euros a year economic impact
- 400 000 full time equivalent jobs provided by the sector
- 6 million or more horses in Europe
- 4 million hectares of permanent grassland given over to horse grazing
- Global leader in hosting Equestrian competitions, in horseracing and breeding

**WHAT WE STAND FOR**

- Keeping equines is an agricultural activity and enhance its green assets
- The equine sector features rural, young and feminised employment, where jobs combine passion, female leadership and physical and mental health benefits.
- Humans enjoy an extraordinary relationship with equids, which can answer to the needs of society (health, inclusion, sport for all, including for people with disabilities).
- Equine Welfare, from breeding to end of life, is at the centre of our activities.
- Equestrianism and horses are part of the European cultural identity, with state studs and national equestrian schools across the EU
- Equestrian tourism is an exemplar of 'slow tourism' respecting biodiversity.
- In many equine sectors, such as horseracing and breeding, Europe is preeminent, leading to benefits of trade, reputation and soft power.



[www.europeanhorsenetwork.eu](http://www.europeanhorsenetwork.eu)



## EHN Events and activities

### EHN Webinar on how to communicate on the equine industry – Take the opportunity of the Olympics to present good stories - 27 February 2024

77 participants attended the Webinar and already more than 85 views of the video on EHN YouTube Channel: [Webinar EHN on Communication 27\\_02\\_2024 \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Speakers shared the public opinion surveys made by FEI and WHW showing that the majority asks for more safety and welfare when involving horses in sport. The media, the professionals and the general public should be well informed. We have to explore strategies for the maintenance of social licence to operate.



World Horse Welfare recent Webinar in January 2024 on Social Licence to operate: learn from other industries was referred: [Social licence: Learning from other industries? - World Horse Welfare](https://www.worldhorsewelfare.org/...)

### MEP Horse Group in Brussels – 19 March 2024



MEP, Hilde Vautmans invited MEPs and members of the European Horse Network to the last meeting of the legislature before European elections. For Hilde Vautmans, it was important to review the various actions undertaken inside the European Parliament to protect and increase the visibility of the European Equine industry since 2019.

Haike Blaauw, Managing Director of the Federation of Equestrian Centres in the Netherlands, presented the first results of the **EHN Prospective study on the Equine sector in 2040**. "One thing is very clear, doing nothing is not an option! We all have to work closely together to do the right things otherwise we could become irrelevant to society".

Sustainability and Social License to operate are the two elements on which to focus to create the future of the industry.

Sustainability, because climate change has a significant impact on on equine business as well. Integrating sustainability into our sector benefits both the environment as well as horse welfare. The loss of biodiversity, soil degradation and deforestation are some of the biggest issues of our planet but we could be part of the solution through responsible usage of land and working actively to develop biodiversity on our premises.

It is also important to: -create an atmosphere of transparency in which the public trusts people to do right by their horses -listen to people from inside and outside the horse world and ensure that any concerns are heard and handled constructively and openly. -ensure that rules and recommendations are evidence-based wherever possible and that those rules are fully enforced. -embrace changes which are likely to improve equine welfare, even before the evidence is indisputable



We must invest on scientific research and share best practices. We must also communicate more and focus on the new ways to interact with equines such as developing horse therapy.

Mark Wentein presented the **EHN Manifesto 2024** and our needs and support for the coming years.

The document was signed by all the participants.

### IFCE Versailles Conference and visit of Olympic site – 14 May 2024



Photo - IFCE-Brool Video

On the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024, the IFCE, Business France, Hippolia cluster and the "Filière Cheval" held an international conference in Versailles. With 25 countries represented, this conference was a unique opportunity to present the French equine industry in the context of the Olympic Games. Moreover, beyond the French model, the European high level of development of all the equine sector was highlighted with European experts on health, sport, and culture. Mark Wentein in the Conclusions, insisted on the European excellence, high level of standards, and good quality of cooperation on topics of interest.

**Next EHN events:** First MEP Horse Group of the legislature November 2024 in Brussels (Date to be defined soon).

