



Brussels, 20th October 2016

Jean Arthuis MEP, allied with the European Horse Network (EHN) to mobilize a strong Horse Group in the European Parliament.

Jean Arthuis gathered around him in the Parliament, representatives of the equine industry to lift taboos and identify measures to ensure the European horse industry a long-term development.

The place of the horse in society today is significant but remains fragile and is even declining as emphasized **Jean-Louis Gouraud**, writer, and publisher. The presence of this animal with men is directly linked to the diversity of roles and tasks that it may wish to entrust in the fields of sport, competition, leisure, education, work, mediation, therapy, shows.

Yet **Michèle George**, double para-equestrian medallist at the London Olympics and Rio is successful because the horse helped her rebuild and walk again after a serious accident, it is the horse which carries thousands of tourists in the historic centres including Bruges said **Mark Wentein**, Chairman of the European horse Network, it is also the livestock sector that creates jobs in agriculture in Spain, while the agricultural world loses every year thousands of workers as stated **Carlos Escribano Mora**, President of the Stud de la Cartuja. **Eric Andrieu**, MEP also studied employment in the European agricultural sector in a report which he initiated. It thus reaffirms the link between the equine sector and rurality.

The European horse meets the criteria for a green CAP, farming is not an intensive activity, land and landscapes are protected, maintained but **James Murphy**, Irish farmer and member of COPA, said that the implementation of agricultural rules are not done consistently, the administrative complexities hamper the breeding farms in operation, taxation is neither appropriate nor consistent. **Dominique de Bellaigue**, President of the French Trotting Authority came back on the taxation issue to denounce the serious inconsistencies in the VAT field among European countries.

Taru Haapaniemi, European Commission, DG AGRI, however, reaffirmed the eligibility of the sector in the rural development programme. In the negotiations on the future common agricultural policy, she recognizes the needs of the sector.

One way to help the industry to regain its place in agriculture is probably to put the horse back into the food chain. **Pierre Naassens**, veterinary/adviser is not afraid to lift the taboo and to assert that the life exclusion of 50% of the 7 million European horses is an aberration. This exclusion principle goes against the interests of the horse (difficulty in managing the end of life, problems of welfare) as well as those of the consumer (significant risk of fraud). The anti-waste policy is also listed among the priorities of European activities.

Finally, an important source of financing of the sector, horse betting, should be strengthened by the adoption of rules giving back to the sport and preserving the integrity of horse racing and equestrian

competitions. The Pari Mutuel model which funds the sector up to 1.2 billion euros per year in Europe, has been put forward by **Torbjorn Froysnes**, representative of the Council of Europe.

Jean Arthuis therefore wishes with the help of his colleagues in the Parliament and the European Horse Network (22 structures representing the horse in its diversity) list the weaknesses, promote best practices, preserve the necessary financing.

MEPs encourage the industry to communicate better on its diversity, contributions, successes. In 2030, the horse could become a "citizen horse" and develop new functions according to the prospective study related by **Françoise Clement** of the IFCE.

Jean Arthuis closed the session as follows: "The horse needs more Europe and could also help Europe to move forward in bringing life in rural territories, promoting healthy lives, restoring essential social and popular links."

An appointment is made within six months to study sustainable funding models for the industry.

More information about EHN: www.europeanhorsenetwork.eu

European Horse Network members:

European and International Associations linked to horses (Breeders, Sport, betting, research)

CBC - Belgian horse Confederation EFTBA - European Federation of Thoroughbred Breeders Associations, FEI - International Equestrian Federation, EEF - European Equestrian Federation, EPMA - European Pari Mutuel Association, Hippolia - Pole Filiere Equine (Normandy), FEIF - Icelandic Horses, WBFSH - World federation of Sport horses Breeders, HNS - Swedish Horse Council Foundation, EMHF - European, Mediterranean Federation of Horseracing Authorities, UET - European Trotting Union, WHW - World Horse Welfare, FECTU - European Draught Horse Federation, FNRS - Equestrian Centres in Netherlands, GESCA - French equine professionals, ETF - European Trainers Federation, FITE – Equestrian Tourism, BETA - British Equestrian Trade Association, EEN - Equestrian Educational Network, ESSA- European State Studs Association, FEEVA - Federation of European Equine Veterinary, IFCE - French Institute for equestrian sport, Hippolis - The National Equine Competence Association of Finland.

The European Horse Network has collected the numbers from different studies to give an estimate of the horse industry in Europe:

- 100 billion by the economic impact
- 400 000 full-time equivalent jobs provided by the sector
- 7 million horses in Europe
- 6 million hectares of permanent pastures devoted to pasture
- A growing sector by the number of riders

EHN Office: Square de Meeus, 40 - B-1000 BRUSSELS