

MINUTES

EEBA Expert Panel public perception & relation – meeting (virtual) 20 September 2022

Participants EEBA office:

- Anna Lena Grytz
- Lene Traxel

Participants Members:

- Christine Gunia (USG United Sportproducts Germany GmbH)
- Claire Williams (British Equestrian Trade Association)
- Ina Glässer (German Horse Industry Consulting GmbH)
- Lauran Schreiber (EquisFair)
- Troels Højvig (Malgre Tout Media A/S)
- Yan Fournier (Rid'Up)
- Maike Rakebrandt (Leiber GmbH)
- Jan Tönjes (Jahr Media GmbH & Co. KG)
- Kerstin Schmidt
- Katie Clifford (Label Equures)

Summary:

- Anna Lena Grytz presents the answers to the survey (see presentation).
 - o Topics:
 - How is equestrian sport currently perceived by the public?
 - Which topics dominate image and reporting?
 - Is this your personal opinion?
 - Which aspects / topics do you miss or are not sufficiently communicated?
 - Where do you see essential common starting points for us as representatives of the industry for a positive presentation and for addressing new target groups?
 - Are there examples of successful communication / promising approaches?
- Jan Tönjes reports from the World Championships in Pratoni: this would have been the perfect opportunity to present equestrian sport in the context of gender / age equality. Despite the great sporting results from a German point of view, there was little to no news in the German daily press. From an international point of view, there are currently many role models in elite sport who would be good to report on. Thomas Bach from the IOC was there to get an overall impression. The high costs of reporting (especially in eventing) were also an issue and Sweden was the only nation to send a broadcasting team.
- The panel discusses the current reporting and the image of equestrian sport in the public.
- Unfortunately, media and public currently have an issue to convey positive stories and images and are instead increasingly focusing on finger-pointing and negative headlines. There is a fundamental problem with the mindset.

- Unfortunately, however, the gap between professional and amateur sport is widening in our industry. Too little attention is paid to sustainability issues. Positive aspects receive too little attention or are communicated too little.
- Local news is also important for the general perception and can contribute to the positive image (both of the sector as such and of the individual companies/people, e.g. as an interesting employer) in the region. Local reporting is often very grateful for good stories from the region. Unfortunately, this opportunity is still too often not sufficiently used or recognized. The predominantly medium-sized and small companies or even the associations need support in recognizing the material for a good story themselves and in publishing it.
- What can we contribute as industry experts to convey a more positive image and address new target groups?
 - o Starting points:
 - Stronger focus on the amateur and leisure sector, as this group makes up the largest part of our target group. Highlight the special relationship between humans and horses.
 - Focus on the role / advantages / positive impacts of horses as well as the stories behind the different individuals
 - Stories about 'normal' people, horse owners, breeders...
 - Emphasize the contribution of equestrian sport to health, well-being, therapeutic purposes, age and gender neutrality. The contribution of horses to character building and strengthening self-confidence in children and young people is also still not seen enough.
 - Look at the general media - What are they interested in? Which kind of content are they looking for? An exchange with media experts outside the sector is necessary to learn from them and to promote a better mutual understanding.
 - In addition, the EEBA should also aim to raise awareness of the economic contribution of the sector - supplier for jobs, turnover, economic factor
 - Examples of successful communication / promising approaches:
 - Podcast "Pferdemenschen – Reitsportfamilien in Deutschland"
 - Sweden: Did a lot reporting about Harning in television, were the only broadcaster in Pratoni
 - We should dare to look beyond our own nose more often in order to understand how other sports / industries position themselves successfully.
- **Expectation of the Expert Panel:**
 - o Improve general perception and reporting about our sport
 - o Raising awareness of the importance of the sector
 - o Everyone wants a more positive reporting and a closer picture to the reality we see!

Next steps:

- EEBA needs support in communicating on its own behalf (e.g. social media)
- Do a survey outside of our sector: Horses in society
 - Example: What do you have in mind as a good example in your country in the last two years?
 - Example: Where did no horse people get their impressions and information's from?
 - What is the channel we need to address to get in touch with people?
- Get in touch with the members from Sweden for getting their point of view (what's different?)
- Involve more experts in this panel, media professionals, trainers (first touch point for new riders)
- Bring members in touch with local media, help to distribute "the good story" and stories outside the mainstream
- Workshop for media skills (find different partners/presenters)
- International media summit at Equitana
- Next meeting end of November (Survey should be carried out before)