



**FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE
DE TOURISME ÉQUESTRE**



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MORAL REPORT

2024

EDITORIAL

The purpose of this report is to present the activities of the Fédération Internationale de Tourisme Equestre during the 2023-2024 financial year (September 2023-August 2024).

The previous year ended with the TREC European Juniors and Young Riders Championships, from August 31 to September 2, in Spain.

This year began with the organization of the European Working Equitation Championships for Juniors, Young Riders and Seniors, from September 20 to 24, in Italy.

Sporting matters kept the various Sports Committees, international competition officials and riders busy throughout the year, taking part in meetings, training courses and international events in TREC and Working Equitation.

The FITE's actions during the year also focused on representing the interests of NETOs and equestrian tourism at European and international level, with, as in previous years, numerous meetings with international stakeholders in the horse, rural, tourism and outdoor sports sectors.

On the equestrian tourism front, the year was also intense with the follow-up of the work of the Equestrian Tourism Committees and the organization of the second edition of the International Meeting of Equestrian Tourism, on May 4 and 5, 2024. This biannual event brought together the equestrian tourism world and local stakeholders to discuss the development of travel on horseback.

Frédéric BOUIX and Frédéric PIERRESTIGER,
FITE President and Secretary General



ASSOCIATIVE LIFE

2023 General Assembly

The 2023 FITE General Assembly was held following the European Working Equitation Championships, in Arezzo (Italy) and via videoconference, on September 25, 2023. Over 40 participants attended the meeting, representing 16 out of 25 FITE members. The moral and financial reports for 2023 and the provisional budget for 2024 were approved on this occasion.

With 4 positions on the Board of Directors coming to an end, elections were held.

Frédéric BOUIX (France) and Frédéric PIERRESTIGER (Canada) were re-elected as President and Secretary General of FITE. Véronique DUYSBURGH (Belgium) was re-elected, and Raquel ANTONIO GARCIA (Spain) and Ingrid HELMES (Luxembourg) also joined the Board of Directors.

Board of Directors

During the year, the FITE Board of Directors met twice: on December 15, 2023 in person and via videoconference in Boulogne-Billancourt (France) and on June 28, 2024 via videoconference.

During these meetings, all FITE actions and projects were presented and discussed. The Board of Directors also gave guidelines regarding sports and equestrian tourism subjects of the FITE.



On June 28, 2024, the Board of Directors also approved the applications of 3 ONTE representatives, submitted within the statutory deadlines, as three positions are due to expire at the 2024 General Meeting. The applicants are Loredana FANI (Italy), Adrian FLYNN (Ireland) and Justin TSENG (China).

Members

After attending the FITE General Assembly in 2022, the Fédération Ivoirienne d'Equitation applied for membership, with the aim of developing equestrian tourism in Ivory Coast and beyond on the African continent. The FIE's membership of the FITE was unanimously approved at the 2023 General Assembly.

Due to non-payment of their 2022 and 2023 contributions, and as provided for in the Statutes, the striking off of the Madagascan, Moroccan and Russian NETOs previously approved by the Board of Directors was confirmed.

Two surveys were launched among FITE members in the summer of 2024.

The first, aimed at NETOs, was designed to gather information on their organization's work and activities. Indeed, the FITE is constantly seeking information from NETOs, in order to adapt its actions to their needs.

The second survey, aimed at trail riders, was sent to NETOs for circulation to their members. Following discussions by the Equestrian Tourism Committees and during the International Meetings 2022 and 2024, it was noted that there was a lack of field data on equestrian tourism, which would enable the NETO and FITE actions to evolve. The aim of this survey is to provide an overview of equestrian tourism activities, from the point of view of those who practice them.

EQUESTRIAN TOURISM COMMITTEE

After having prepared the first International Meeting of Equestrian Tourism and worked on follow-up actions, the Equestrian Tourism Committee met on December 15, 2023 to discuss with the organizer of the second edition of this event and the themes considered.

2024 International Meeting of Equestrian Tourism

On September 2022, FITE organized the first International Meeting of Equestrian Tourism in Silkeborg in Denmark, gathering about twenty participants from 9 different nations.

In 2024, FITE renewed the event in partnership with FITETREC-ANTE, the Italian Federation of Equestrian Tourism, a member of FITE.

The second edition of the Meeting was held on May 3 and 4, 2024, in Rome.

Hosted by the Italian National Olympic Committee, the event brought together some thirty participants from Europe and beyond: Canada, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Ivory Coast, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands and Spain.

The first day was devoted to sharing projects and initiatives from different countries, as well as two round-table discussions on the following themes:

- Equestrian tourism: local development and agritourism,
- Parks and itineraries: promoting national and international tourism.



2024 International Meeting of Equestrian Tourism

Several Danish and Italian international itineraries were presented, as well as equestrian tourism projects in the Parco della Maremma in Italy and the Xurés Park between Spain and Portugal. There were also interventions on German and Italian projects to integrate equestrian tourism into the agricultural and agri-tourism sector.

In this Olympic year, the President of the Italian National Olympic Committee, Giovanni MALAGO, who made an appearance at the event, was keen to emphasize the link between Olympic and non-Olympic disciplines, the shared values, and the significant growth potential of equestrian tourism in the future.

The Président, Frédéric BOUIX closed the first day's meeting by expressing the hope that all those involved in equestrian tourism would benefit from the event, reminding them that equestrian tourism activities meet society's needs for a connection with nature, culture and education. In the heart of Italy's Olympic headquarters, he reiterated his wish for equestrian tourism to be universal, European and global.

On the second day, participants had the opportunity to visit an equestrian tourism center and breeder of Maremmi horses, the breed used for traditional Italian Butteri riding.

Over the course of the two days, the participants engaged in a rich exchange of ideas. Numerous avenues for collaboration and development were opened up: a document summarizing these exchanges will be produced for all those involved in equestrian tourism.



EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATION



FITE is a member of various European and international organizations, to ensure that the interests of the equestrian itinerancy and outdoor riding sector are represented.

European Horse Network

FITE took part in around ten meetings of the EHN Bureau, as well as the Equine Transport Working Group formed to contribute to the European Commission's consultations on the proposal to amend the regulation on the protection of animals during transport.

MEP Horse group of the European Parliament

FITE took part in a meeting of the MEP Horse group chaired by Hilde VAUTMANS on March 19, 2024. This was the group's last meeting before the European elections.

European Network of Outdoor Sport

FITE takes part in meetings of the ENOS Board of Directors, which met 8 times during the year. It also took part in the ENOS General Assembly in October 2023, in Harderwijk, Netherlands.

From March 13 to 15, ONTE France hosted the ENOS Board of Directors at the Parc Equestre Fédéral. On this occasion, FITE took part in the meetings and discussions led by the organization.

European Road of D'Artagnan Association

FITE attended the General Assembly of the European Road of D'Artagnan Association on February 16, 2024, via videoconference. FITE also took part in an Executive Board meeting on July 2, 2024.

RED-MER

On March 18, 2024, FITE took part in a meeting of the R.E.D-M.E.R network (the Rurality - Environment - Development / European Countryside Movement). Discussions focused on the expectations of its members for the coming months, particularly in the context of the European elections 2024.

Erasmus + application

FITE has been asked to be a partner in an Erasmus + Sports call for applications for a cooperative partnership. The partners are: the French Ramblers Federation, the European Ramblers Federation, the European Network of Outdoor Sport, the International Mountain Bicycling Association, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency and FITE.

The project involves providing 3 "work packages" on itinerary identification; management and financing of paths and trails; and multi-activity, path sharing and promotion. Regarding this last topic, the FITE has proposed working on a guide to good practice for users and a guide for institutions on how to create, develop and promote multi-activity itineraries. The application was submitted in March 2024. A return is expected in September 2024.



Getting to know each other

On May 29, 2024, FITE held a videoconference meeting with Eurovélo. Eurovélo groups together the long-distance cycle routes in Europe. The aim of this meeting was to get to know this organization, working like FITE to develop soft mobility. There are many issues in common, such as conflicts of use, multi-practice itineraries, the promotion of slow tourism, infrastructure... This first meeting enabled us to introduce to the EuroVélo landscape, equestrian itinerancy.

A meeting with the **Europarc Federation** was also held on June 14, 2024. Europarc is the European federation of protected areas: national parks, nature parks, marine areas and peri-urban parks in Europe. The aim of the meeting was to get to know this organization, since equestrian itineraries and equestrian tourism centers pass through the parks, and to put equestrian tourism on the map of this organization.

During the meeting, it was agreed that a joint webinar would be held at the beginning of 2025: the topics have still to be defined.

Legislative and information watch

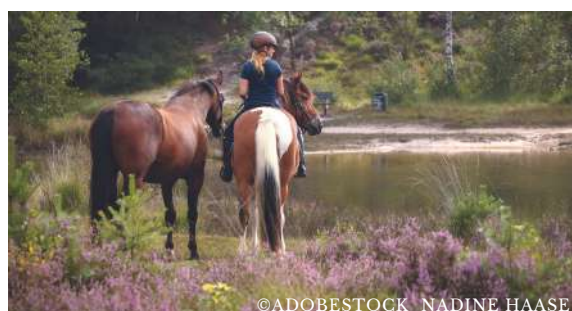
FITE has also continued its monitoring work.

Non-exhaustively, the watch on European subjects focused on:

- **Animal welfare:** in December 2023, the European Commission proposed a revised regulation on animal welfare during transport. This regulation could apply to equines. FITE is following the discussions on this subject.

- **Revision of the Package Travel Directive:** in November 2023, the European Commission presented a proposal to revise the Package Travel Directive. FITE is participating in the expert group meetings on this subject. It also expressed its concern about the application of the directive via a European Commission consultation in March 2024. Indeed, the FITE is convinced that the obligations resulting from the directive are not appropriate for riding schools and equestrian tourism centers, which are in no way organized as travel agencies but offer activities to their members. The FITE has requested a specific derogation for members of sports federations, who organize their own packages for their members in their own country. This directive creates obligations that represent costs and an administrative burden for equestrian SMEs. It will be the task of the new European Parliament and the Council of the European Union to study this revision.

- **European Parliament elections:** at the beginning of June 2024, new Members of the European Parliament were elected. Prior to these elections, the FITE had drawn up a summary of the issues relating to rurality, so that the European Countryside Movement could produce a document summarizing the problems faced by its members, which was circulated to the European candidates. The various MEPs elected will be contacted in the autumn to raise their awareness of the issues surrounding equestrian tourism. The FITE will also be closely monitoring the appointment of European Commissioners, and in particular the one responsible for tourism.



SPORT

TREC

TREC Committee and regulation changes

Following the 2023 TREC European Juniors and Young Riders Championships held from August 31 to September 2 in Riocabado (Spain), the TREC Committee met on December 13, 2023. Changes were made to the international regulations.

The TREC Committee also proposed cancelling the European Cup and replacing it with an international calendar, a proposal approved by the Board of Directors.



Training

The training course for trainers of international judges and POR course designers took place from March 8 to 10, 2024, in Schaijk, Netherlands. Over 10 countries took part, with 22 participants. The course showed that the new scoring sheets introduced a year ago make judging easier, but that there are still a few adjustments to be made to ensure that the judges fully understand them.

2024 European Championships

The Juniors and Young Riders World Championships and the Seniors European Championships will take place from September 4 to September 7, 2024 in Schaijk, the Netherlands.

Next Championships

Regarding the organization of the 2025 European Championships, the FITE is awaiting applications.



SPORT

Working Equitation

2023 European Championships

The 2023 European Championships for Juniors, Young riders and Seniors were held from September 20 to 24 in Arezzo, Italy. An unprecedented event for this discipline, the competitions attracted 56 riders and horses, and included the Juniors category for the first time.



Working Equitation Committee and regulation changes

The Working Equitation Committee, meeting on December 14, 2023, made a number of regulatory changes applicable from January 1, 2024. An important new feature for the Juniors category is the choice of riding with one or two hands, left to the riders. The grading system has also been modified to make it clearer. The rider with the fewest points wins the event. As with TREC, an international circuit has been created.

Training

The international judges' training course took place in Fleury d'Aude, France, on April 27 and 28, 2024. The course brought together 8 judges from France, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Following the course, an information note was sent to all NETOs and international judges to clarify certain points of the rules and to prepare for the 2024 competition.

2024 European Championships

The 2024 European Championships will be held from October 16 to 21, 2024 at the Haras National d'Uzès in France.



Rapprochement FITE x WAVE

A meeting was held in February with the President of WAVE. The aim of the meeting was to initiate a rapprochement between the two organizations.

Discussions took place on the possibility of studying the sporting regulations for a rapprochement. Frédéric BOUIX emphasized that the precondition for further discussions was the abandonment of the sanctions issued by WAVE against riders who had taken part in FITE international competitions, and mutual respect between our organizations.



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EVENTS

- International Meeting of Equestrian Tourism: focus on pages 4 and 5.
- The 2023 Centaure Raid took place from November 10 to 12, in Alsace, France. 60 riders took part, from Belgium, Spain, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands and Switzerland.
- The 2024 Centaure Raid took place from March 8 to 10, in Prats de Lluçanès, Spain. 47 riders from Germany, Spain, France, Great Britain and the Netherlands took part.



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PROJECTS

The year 2025 will mark the 50th anniversary of the creation of FITE.

For this year, we hope to increase the number of members to support FITE's representation at international level.

Regarding equestrian itinerancy, the FITE will be working on the recommendations emerging from the 2024 International Meeting of Equestrian Tourism, as well as continuing the work begun following the 2022 Meeting. FITE will also be working on preparations for the 2026 edition of this event, which it hopes will be a long-term event.

The mobilization of NETOs and competition organizers remains a guarantee of success in maintaining a high-quality range of TREC and Working Equitation events every year.

Discussions during the year will also be deepened to further establish the FITE in the landscape of international institutions and organizations for outdoor sports.

CONCLUSION



The 2024 financial year was marked by the organization of the second edition of the International Meeting of Equestrian Tourism and the continuation of the work begun following the first edition in 2022, in order to develop actions in favor of the development of equestrian itinerancy.

Representing the interests of NETOs on the subjects of equestrian tourism and outdoor riding has become increasingly important over the years, both from the point of view of the various legislations that could hinder practices and for which it is essential to ensure follow-up, and to establish relationships with organizations with similar issues to FITE's.

Regarding sport, the training of officials, the inclusion of discipline developments in international regulations and the organization of international championships continue to mobilize the FITE and the concerned NETOs every year.

On the eve of FITE's 50th anniversary, this work, carried out with the support of Board members, Committee members and NETOs, must continue in order to position FITE and its members as key stakeholders in the development of equestrian tourism and outdoor riding disciplines worldwide.



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