



HORSES IN FRANCE: A RIDE THROUGH HISTORY, REGIONS AND SCIENCE

17th International Particle Accelerator Conference (IPAC)
Entertainment session
Deauville – 21/05/2026



HISTORY



French Horse and Riding Institute

French National Studs

1715: 1st National Stud (Le Pin)

End of 20th century :

20 National Stud farms with
more than 2,000 employees,
1,200 stallions



Since 2010

Cadre Noir

National Riding School

1825: creation of the Royal
Cavalry School in Saumur

2011: UNESCO Intangible
Cultural Heritage of Humanity



Prehistory



© Ludovic Orlando / Natural History Museum of Denmark / CNRS

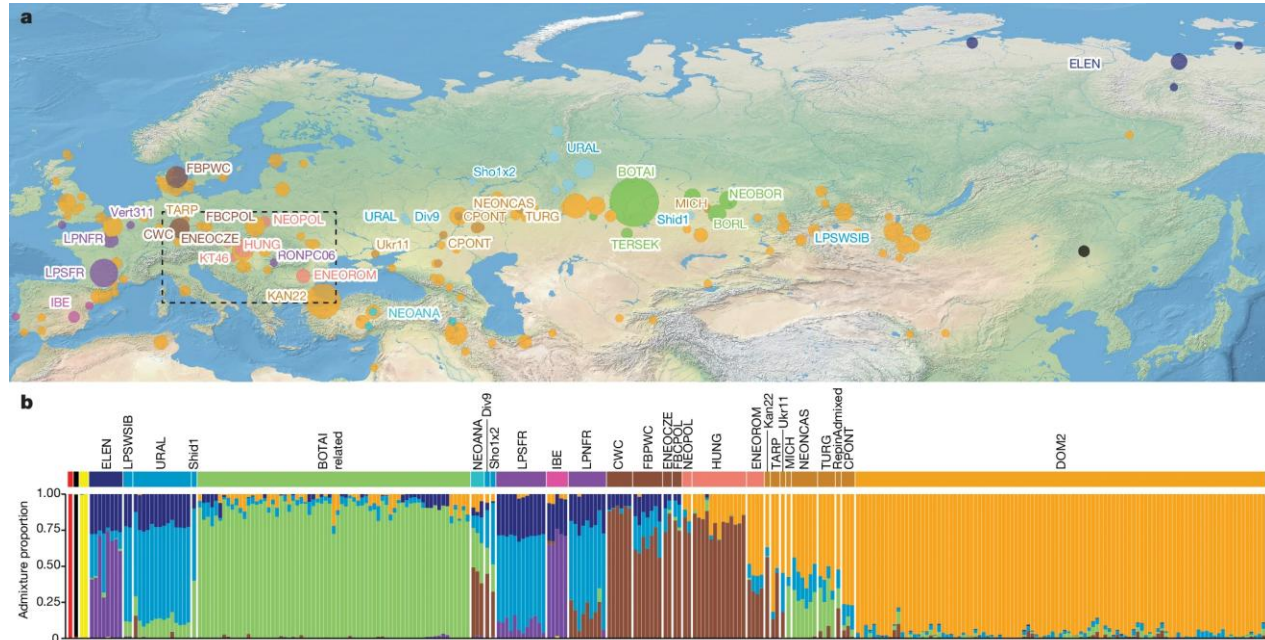
Przewalski's horses: descendants of prehistoric wild horses?

Prehistory

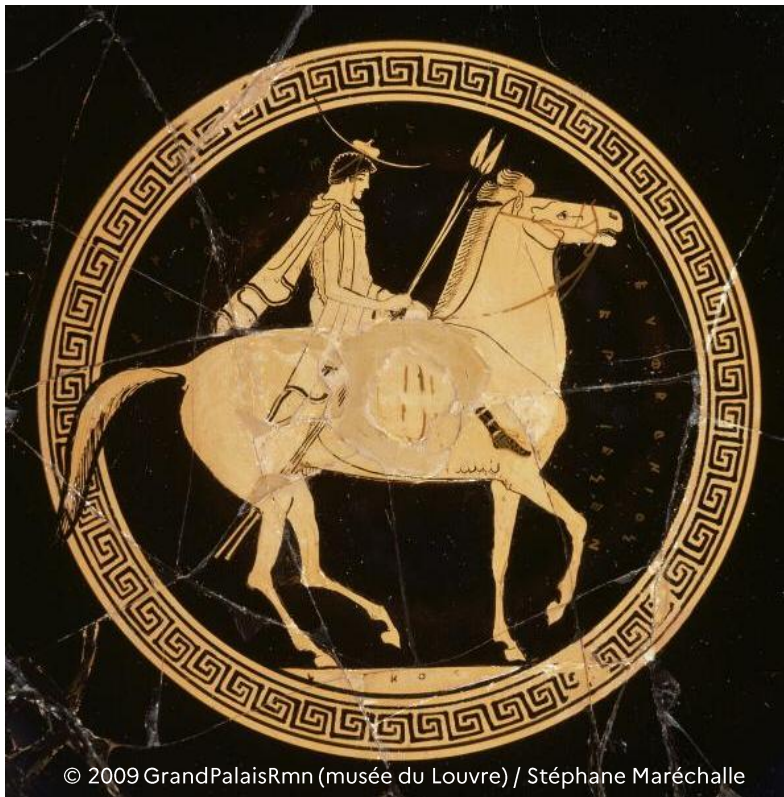
Horses were first domesticated in Botai in Central Asia, some 5,500 years ago.

The genetic make-up of the modern domestic horse emerged some 4,200 years ago on the Steppes of the North Caucasus.

- Beginning of widespread horse-based mobility
- Easier to tame
- Changes in body conformation (spinal anatomy, motor coordination, and muscular strength)



Antiquity



The Middle Ages



The *Très Riches Heures*
of the *Duc de Berry* –
15th century



From heritage to innovation: the Cadre Noir saddle



Vitrail de Charlemagne - cathédrale de Chartres



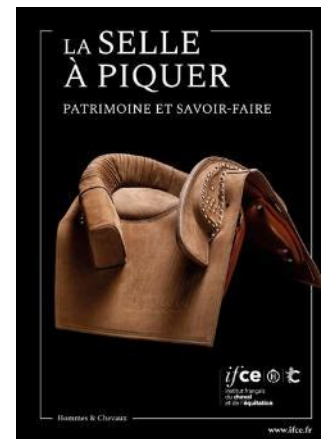
Joute entre Jehan de Saintré et le roi Jean le Bon, dans le "Roman de Jehan de Saintré" d'Antoine de la Sale (1470)
© Getty - The Print Collector/Print Collector/Getty Images



© ENE/Alain Laurieux, 2009



© Michel Charrier / IFCE

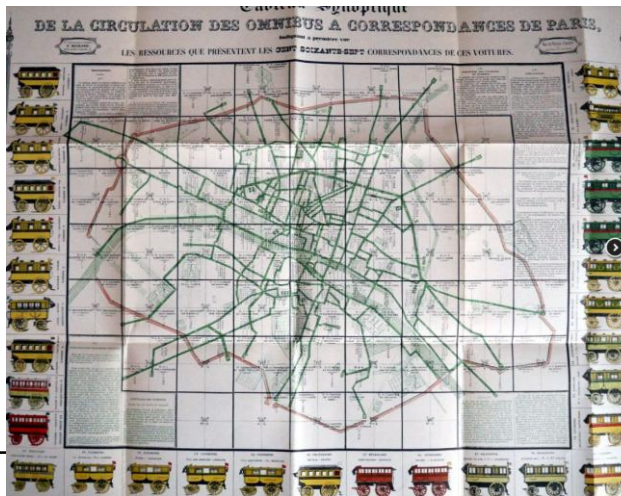


Modern times



<https://www.attelage-patrimoine.com/2019/03/la-cavalerie-commerciale-parisienne.html>
Quelques équipages de commerces parisiens en 1893

Tableau synoptique de la circulation des omnibus à correspondances de Paris. 1840.



© Calèche d'Aumont du prince Constantin Radziwill, à Paris. Photo Delton, 1906.
<https://www.attelage-patrimoine.com/2015/10/l-attelage-a-la-d-aumont-royal-jean-louis-libourel.htm>

From heritage to innovation: equine power



© Michel Charrier / IFCE

>20 kg



7 kg



© Benoît Lemaire / IFCE



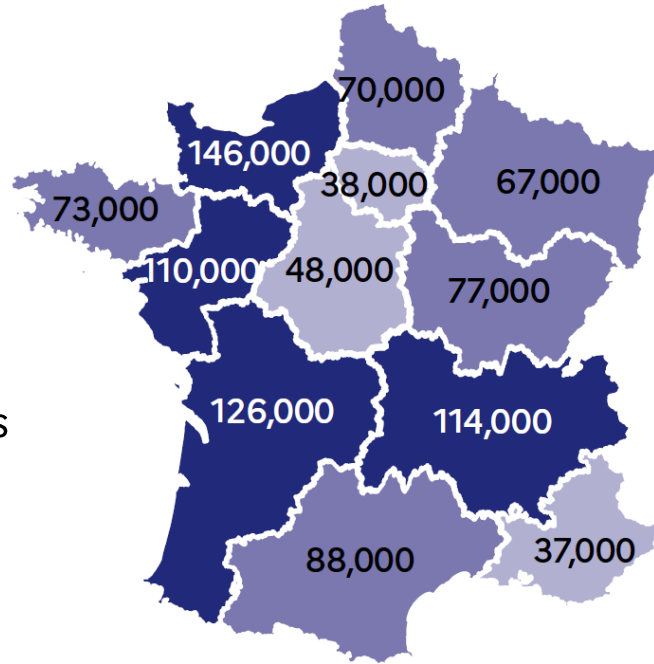
© Michel Charrier / IFCE

Number of equids



995,700

EQUIDS IN FRANCE
AT THE END OF
2024



16% draught horses and
donkeys

14% race horses,
thoroughbred and trotters

70% sport and leisure
horses and ponies

More than 1m ha (4%)
of the agricultural land
used for equine
activities

100,000 keepers

Equine breeds in France

Over 50 equine breeds
recognised in France

8 breeds
of donkey



11 pony breeds

25 warmblood breeds

10 draught horse breeds



Breeding



9,952
STALLIONS IN
2024




77,777
BROODMARES IN
2024*



55,692 registrations

France :

- leading producer of trotters in the world
- 6th thoroughbred producer in the world

The racing industry



€9.7 bn
In bets
In 2024



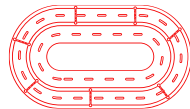
25,482
RACE HORSES IN
TRAINING



French racing system



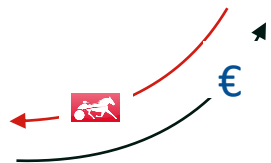
Jockeys/Trainers/Breeders / Owners/Professionals



18,000 races per year



Law of 1891:
Racing aims at improving breeding



€796 m
Back to the racing organisms to finance the prize money and race organisation costs



Racecourses all over the country

Les Hippodromes Parisiens



Les 233 hippodromes français

- PLAT
- TROT
- OBSTACLE
- Hippodrome où sont pratiquées les trois disciplines
- Hippodrome où sont pratiquées deux disciplines
- Hippodrome où est pratiquée une discipline

Fédérations Régionales

- Ouest
- Anjou-Maine-Centre-Ouest
- Basse-Normandie
- Ile-de-France et Haute-Normandie
- Sud-Ouest
- Sud-Est
- Centre-Est
- Nord
- Est
- Corse (Haute-corse, Corse du Sud)



32 racecourses in Basse - Normandie
Some of them existing since the 19th century

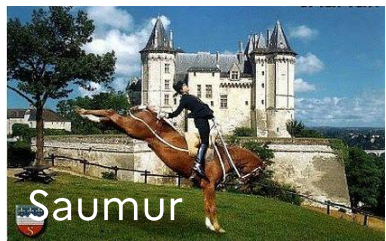


233

ACTIVE
RACECOURSES
IN 2024

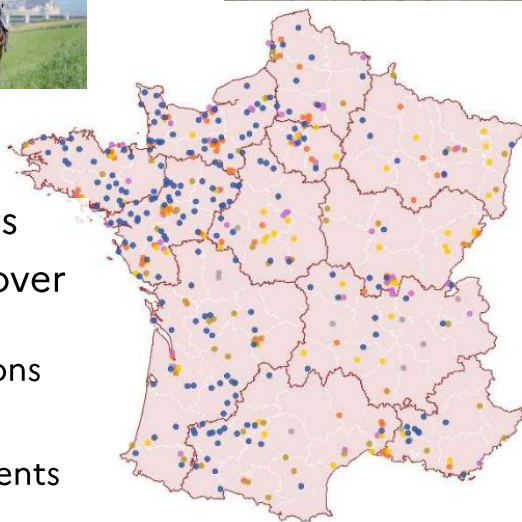


Culture and tourism



11.8 m visitors
€172 m turnover

- Competitions
- Races
- Cultural events
- Festivals
- Horse fairs
- Horse shows



Sport and leisure



FÉDÉRATION FRANÇAISE
D'ÉQUITATION

1st French federation for the
number of female
licensed members

560,052 licensed members

Over 1.5m occasional riders

31 different equestrian sports

RIDING
4TH
NATIONAL SPORT
IN 2024

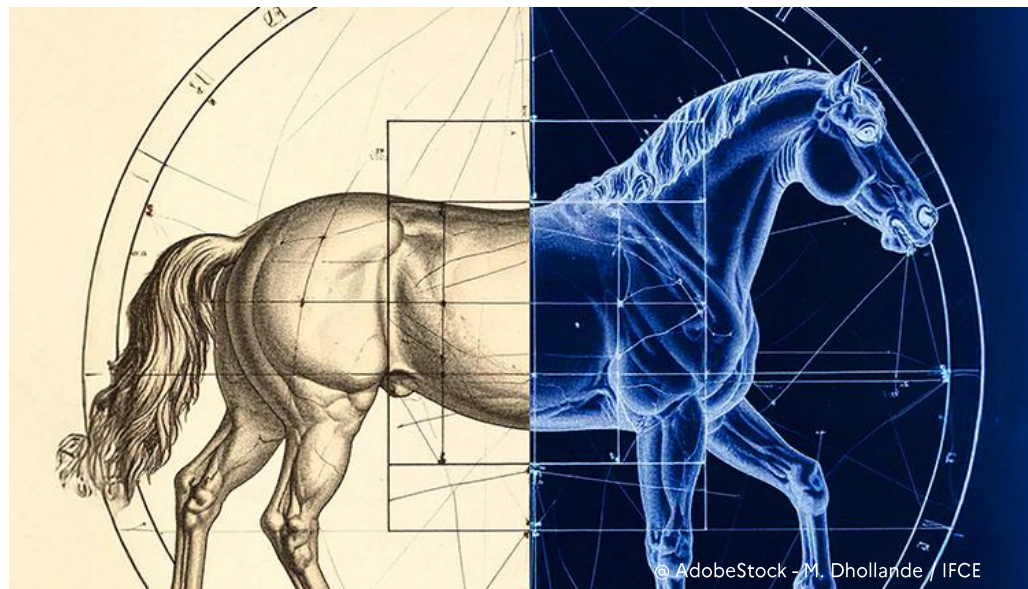



RÉPUBLIQUE
FRANÇAISE

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

*if*ce |  | 
institut français
du **cheval**
et de l'**équitation**

EQUINE HEALTH SCIENCE



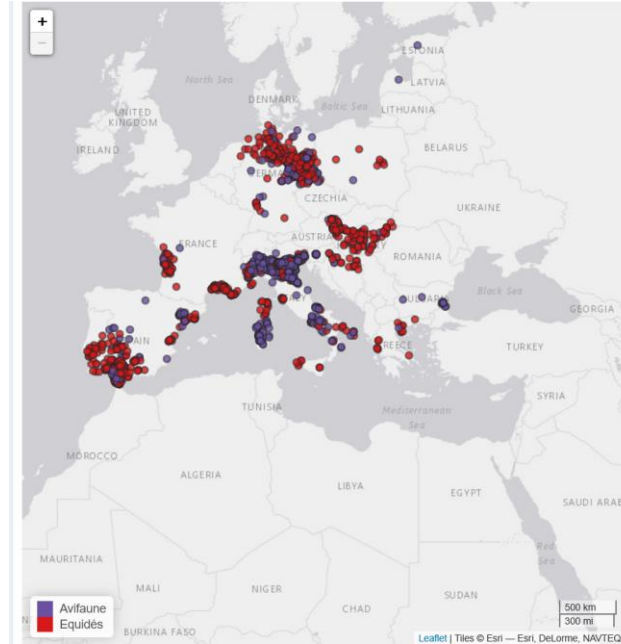
Schrödinger horses



One health



© World Health Organization



West Nile 2020 – 2024
<https://shiny-public.anses.fr/shiny-vsi/>



ECONOMY



Horses as an industry

Production → Education and training → Commercialisation → Uses



Uses of equines



Work

Products
of the horse
industry

Food products



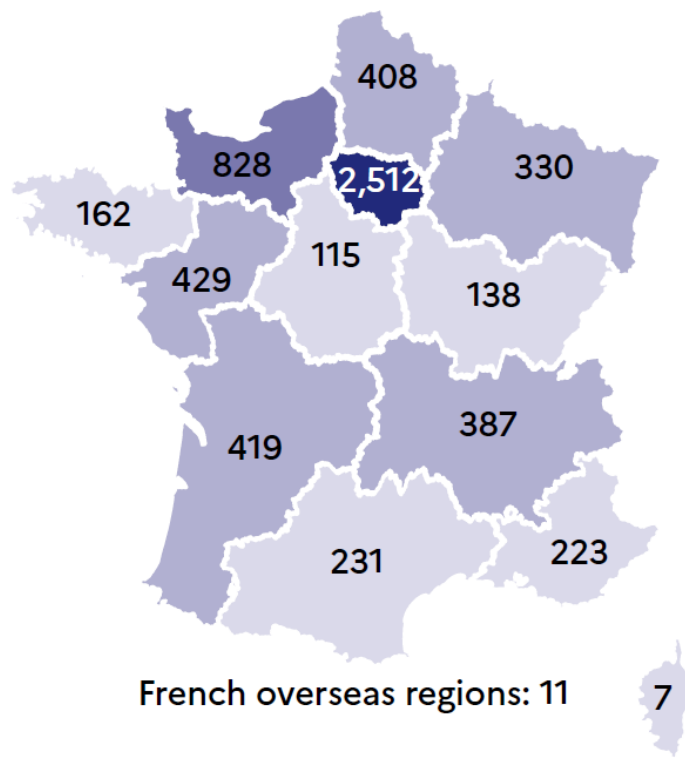
Leisure and
sport



Racing



Equine companies



€6.2 bn
turnover for equine
companies



Horse industry economic cluster
develops links between research
and companies
150 members
more than 200 projects



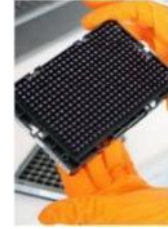
120,400 EMPLOYEES AND SELF-EMPLOYED PEOPLE*
INCLUDING **54,328** PEOPLE INVOLVED IN HORSE PRODUCTION
AND USAGE**

GENETICS & PERFORMANCE



SNP genotyping technologies

Single nucleotide polymorphism
60,000 points of characterisation with one blood test



cheval_1	SNP_3	G	T
cheval_1	SNP_4	C	G
cheval_1	SNP_5	A	A
cheval_1	SNP_6	T	T
cheval_1	SNP_7	G	G
cheval_1	SNP_8	G	G
cheval_1	SNP_9	T	C
cheval_1	SNP_10	T	A
cheval_1	SNP_11	C	C
cheval_1	SNP_12	A	G



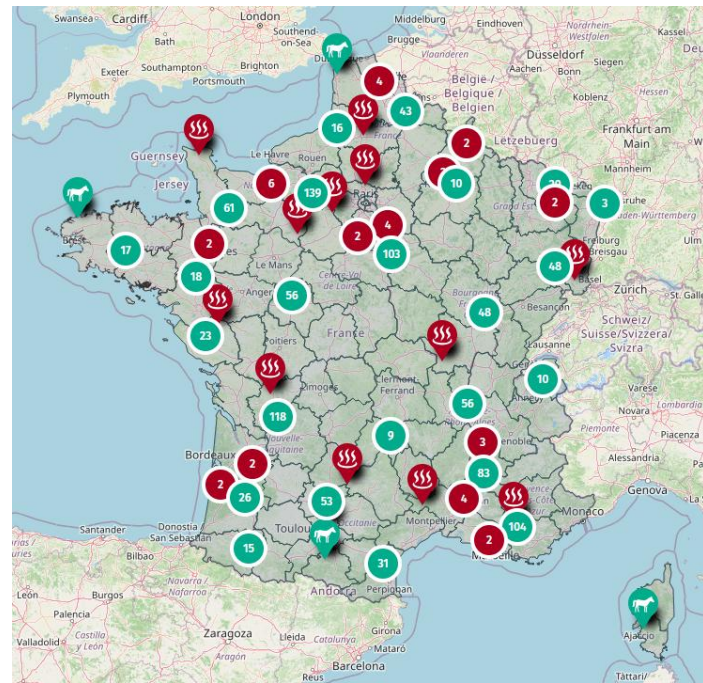
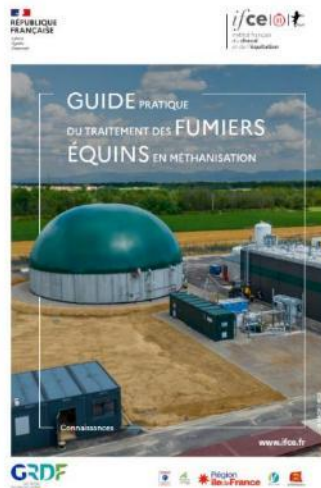
Sport performance



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SCIENCE, TECHNIQUES AND KNOWLEDGE



Manure as a resource



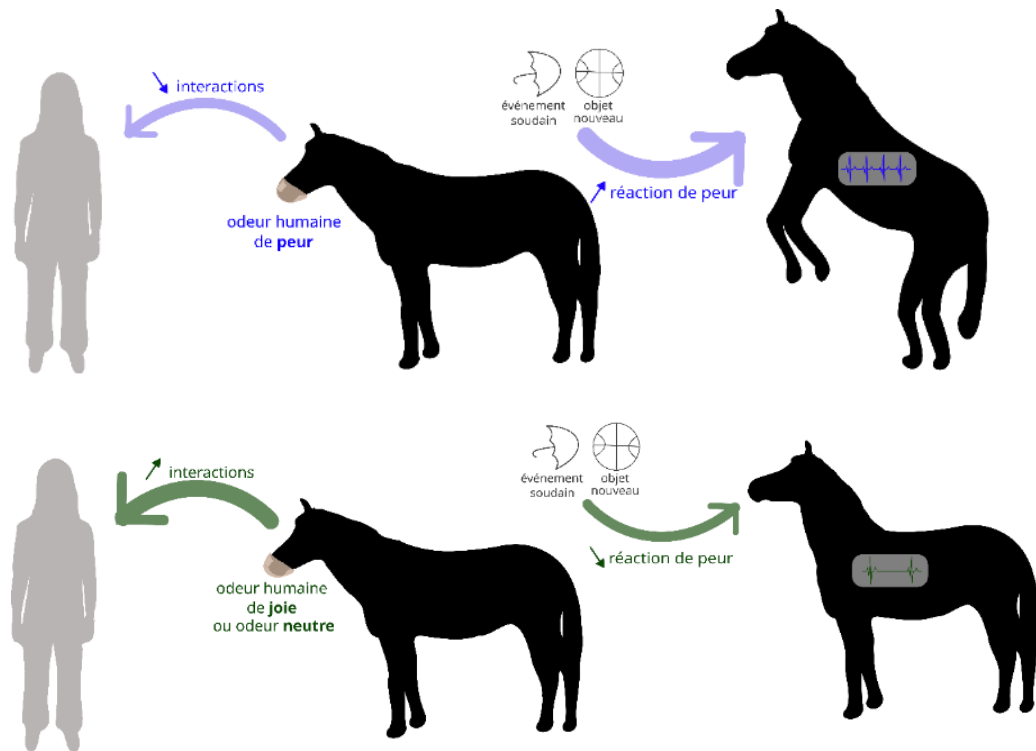
Animal welfare



Emotions and behaviour



© Benoît Lemaire / IFCE



© Plotine Jardat / IFCE

Equine-assisted activities and therapies

Equine-assisted therapies

Equine-assisted
mental health
therapy

Equine-assisted physical
therapy

Equitherapy

Hippotherapy

Equine-assisted activities

Adaptative
riding

Social care

Equine-assisted
learning



L'IFCE est toujours à vos côtés.
IFCE is always by your side



www.ifce.fr
