



## Equestrian practitioners: essential services to support self-organization

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# Equestrian practitioners: essential services to support self-organization

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# Equestrian context in France

3<sup>rd</sup> sport in France and 1<sup>st</sup> women's sport  
≈ 690 000 federation (FFE) memberships

Organized around professional centers

Classic offer orientated towards Olympic disciplines

Around 1 million horses in France with  
30% kept in self-organization



Increasing



© FFE

# What is self-organization in sport ?



## **Definition:**

To not delegate to others what you can do or learn how to do yourself

## **Issues:**

Growing phenomena: 68% of sport practitioners

Institutional detachment

Lack of trust with professionals

Risks concerning security or welfare



# Equestrian self-organized users' definition

Riders, owners or guardians of equines who self-organize to manage their equine independently of any professional equestrian structure

- Grouped together or not
- Individuals or families
- Keeping horses for no economic gain



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# Research aim

This research aims to:

- Characterize self-organized equestrian users
- Analyze the factors leading to self-organization
- Identify needs of self-organized users
- Propose an adapted service offering



# A mixed methodology

« Self-organized users »

## **Deep qualitative survey (2020)**

30 respondents, various profiles  
France  
Organisations and motivations  
Thematic content analysis

## **Online quantitative survey (2021)**

660 respondents  
France  
Organizational drivers and values  
Statistic analysis with R software

Professionals

## **Qualitative survey (2020)**

16 respondents (riding centers, livery yards, service providers)  
France  
Relations with self-organized users (representations, services offered)  
Thematic content analysis





# Results

Photo credit : M.Guillamot



# Main motivations

***Practice lover:*** dissatisfied with the activities offered by professional structures



***Animal lover:*** want to experience their relationship with their equine daily





# Resources: facilitators or obstacles to self-organization

**Temporal:** dedicated time for practice, animal care, husbandry

**Material:** land, infrastructure, financial aspects

**Skills:** Equestrian for practice, agricultural for husbandry, veterinarian





# Important values

**Ethical:** good living conditions & wellbeing for equines



**Error risk:** fear of making mistakes

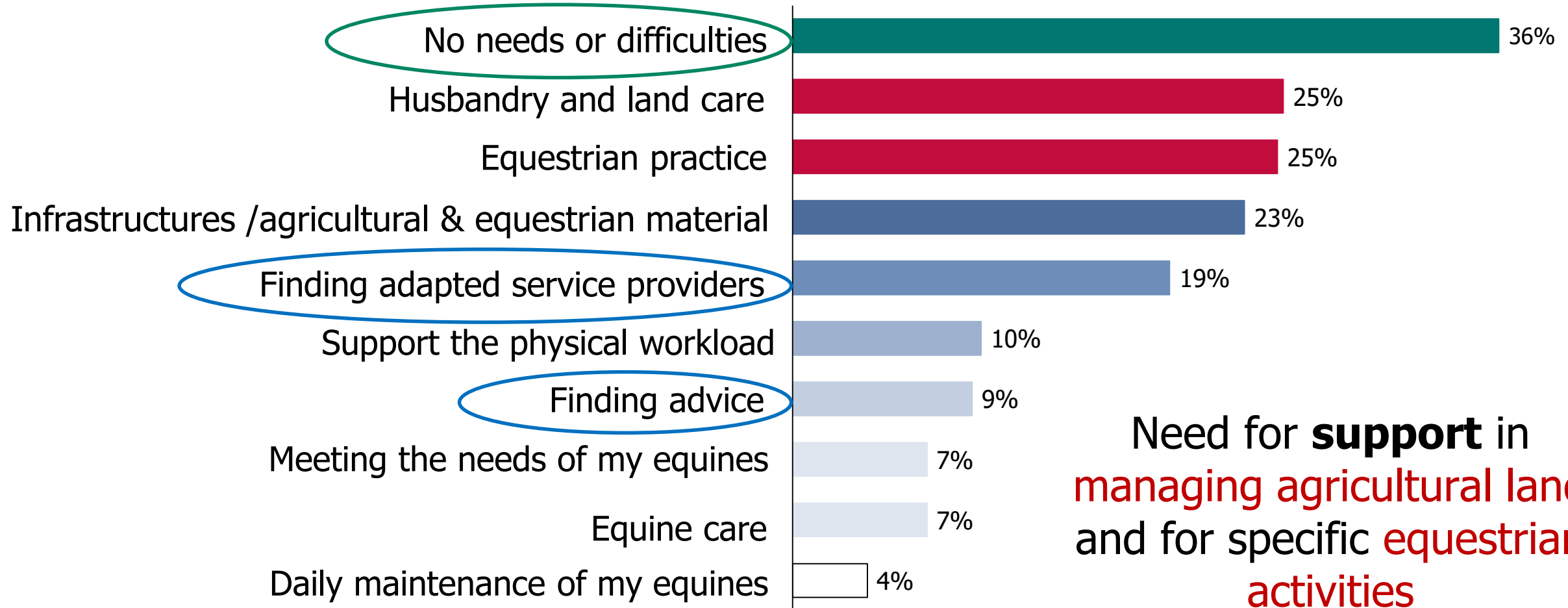


**Transmission:** wish to transmit and share knowledge with others





# Needs and difficulties of self-organized users





# Services and providers used

95% of self-organized users went through professional structures in the past (mean of 10 years)

35% currently use professional services:

- Basic care: vets, osteopaths, farriers & dentists
- Local farmers: an important support
- Little use of riding-related services

Few users turn to professionals for help

⇒ alone, family or other self-organized



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# Self-organized seen by professionals

«Random riders»

«Unstable & irregular customers»

Outdoor and leisure riders

Some may be regular customers,  
practicing sporting activities or  
competing

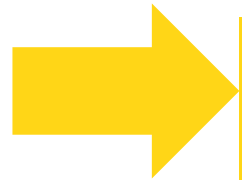




# Conclusion

Dissatisfaction of self-organized users towards the professional offer: living conditions for horses, activities

Specific, partly unsatisfied needs: agricultural services, equestrian activities, infrastructure...



Supporting self-organized users rather than reintegrating them  
Communicating with appropriate tools

Proposing an adapted offer that considers:

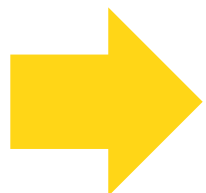
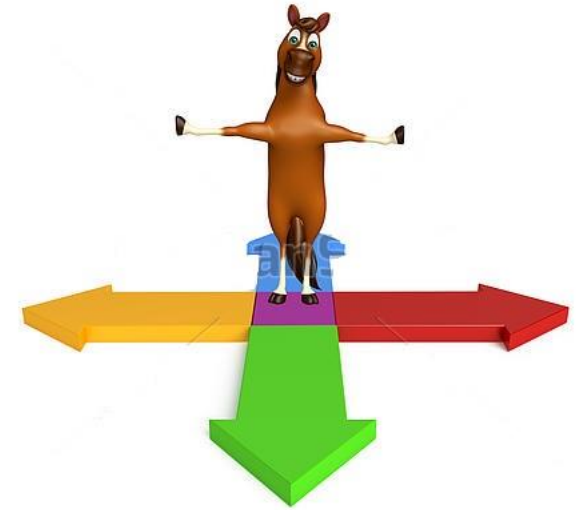
- initial motivations
- the values sought
- resource constraints

In the form of access to networks, training and services

# Perspectives

Work still in progress:

- Promotion and dissemination of results (publications, tools, web conferences, ...)
- Production of key figures about self-organized users
- 2 two online surveys :
  - 1) Self-organized users & 2) Equestrian facility managers=> Test of services (content, price & frequency of use)



Development strategies for the service market intended self-organized users



# Thank you for your attention

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