

ALAN ANDABAKA - EEF PRESIDENTIAL MANIFESTO 2026

EMPOWERING SPORT, RESTORING INTEGRITY, DRIVING COMMERCIAL INNOVATION, AND ELEVATING NATIONAL FEDERATIONS

A Vision for a Fair, Transparent, and United European Equestrian Community

Dear Presidents, Delegates, and Colleagues,

European equestrian sport is entering a promising era of growth, modern development, and global leadership, which calls upon the European Equestrian Federation (EEF) to serve as a beacon of transparency, fairness, and institutional integrity. True leadership is built on collaborative service rather than top-down authority. It is a leadership that serves our National Federations (NFs), protects our dedicated officials, and guarantees an absolute level playing field for every single athlete, ensuring equal dignity regardless of the size or political weight of their nation.

Having served as an elected member of the EEF Board since 2022 and having led the Balkan Equestrian Council for over a decade, I deeply understand the internal mechanics, structural demands, and political responsibilities our organization holds toward its 40 distinct member NFs. Coming from an advancing federation, I offer an objective, inclusive perspective centered on decentralized growth. My approach balances the elite sports goals of developed NFs with the rapid developmental needs of medium and smaller NFs, ensuring that every region has equal opportunities to thrive.

I am standing for the Presidency of the EEF to leverage my equestrian knowledge and competitive experience alongside my corporate background, combining them with proven institutional strategies to deliver a comprehensive governance model built on six core pillars.

1. Elevating the Sport and Championing European Excellence

Our absolute priority must always be the real sport and the welfare of the horse. The EEF must actively cultivate an environment where athletes from all 40 member nations can perform at their highest potential.

- **Proactive Global Representation:** Working productively within the FEI Board and all FEI departments to promote and lobby for common European views and equestrian know-how on the global scene, while maintaining strict respect for the needs and views of other geographical regions.
 - **Positive Public Image:** Returning the main focus of the EEF to how we celebrate our sport, taking pride in it and promoting it to the world proactively and positively.
 - **Protecting Sportsmanship:** Actively working with the FEI to sanction toxic behavior, offensive social media campaigns, and derogatory national stereotypes that actively degrade the values of sportsmanship.
 - **Implementation:** Establishing a permanent "EEF-FEI Coordination Working Group" to align European voices ahead of FEI General Assemblies, alongside launching a "Celebrating European Horsemanship" digital PR campaign to highlight grass-roots and elite equine welfare stories across all regions.
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2. Financial Sustainability and Commercial Innovation

We cannot fund the future solely on membership fees or traditional revenue streams. We must actively bridge the corporate sector with the sports arena to finance the next generation of European events.

- **New Commercial Sponsorships:** Leveraging private-sector networks to bring fresh international corporate sponsorships directly to the EEF.
 - **European Event Series:** Introducing structured series rolled out in distinct phases that attract local and regional sport interest and sponsors, upgrading modern infrastructure across emerging equestrian nations.
 - **Implementation:** Introducing a three-tiered "EEF Corporate Partners Program" targeting established companies and luxury lifestyle brands, while re-launching the "EEF Evolution League" series for Jumping and Endurance within the first 12 months to stimulate regional sponsorships. To fund our long-term integrity and technical infrastructure without increasing NF membership fees, we will fast-track the creation of an **EEF-Linked Philanthropic Foundation** and aggressively pursue **EU Erasmus+ Sport Grants** specifically designated for cross-border technical equity and integrity platforms.
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3. Transparent Governance and Elimination of Conflicts of Interest

An international sport governing body must remain institutional, transparent, and completely free from conflicts of interest. The EEF must always stand as a vehicle for the collective progress of all 40 member nations.

- **Total Separation of Roles:** Maintaining strict neutrality and non-conflict status, representing all 40 member nations equally through a non-compensated, volunteer presidency strictly focused on serving the NFs.
 - **Accountability in Disciplinary Matters:** Ensuring that when protests occur between European nations, the EEF stands as a beacon of strict procedural correctness, ensuring transparency and accountability of the EEF Board directly to its member NFs.
 - **Institutional Improvements:** Pursuing targeted institutional improvements in the EEF organization and rules following open and honest consultation with the NFs and all EEF stakeholders.
 - **Implementation:** Deploying an independent, secure digital Whistleblowing Portal for all NFs to report governance concerns, combined with a strict mandate to publish official EEF Board meeting minutes and voting outcomes to member NFs within 48 hours.
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4. Horse Welfare, Environmental Sustainability and Technical Infrastructure

We must protect our sport's social license by turning our public commitments into practical, ground-level realities that safeguard the environment and optimize operations.

- **Proactive Advocating:** Taking a front stand to advocate for our horses, our sport, and for our community's ethical principles, shaping a positive public narrative regarding our position in society.
 - **Green-Certified Venues:** Turning the EEF Sustainability Framework into practical, green-certified venues that lower operational overhead for grassroots organizers by working alongside universities and outsourced experts.
 - **Championship Infrastructure:** Investing heavily in upgrading the quality and reliability of championship infrastructure—including timing systems, electrical safety, and clean water compliance.
 - **European Regulatory Advocacy:** Working closely with the European Union, national governments, and competent European authorities to streamline the bureaucratic, practical, and tax matters impacting horse transport.
 - **Implementation:** Developing a standardized, low-cost "EEF Green Venue Certification" checklist in partnership with academic agricultural institutions, coupled with creating a central EEF Technical Equipment Pool to subsidize high-quality timing and data systems for emerging event organizers. Simultaneously, we will expand our ethical mandate to guarantee that **human safeguarding and groom welfare protocols** are integrated directly into our venue criteria, ensuring safe environments for both horses and the humans who care for them.
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5. Absolute Independence of Officials and Field of Play

Our judges, stewards, and technical officials are the backbone of clean sport. They must be allowed to make difficult decisions on the Field of Play with complete autonomy, free from political interference, and without fear of retaliation or pressure.

- **Zero-Tolerance Policy on Interference:** Instituting a strict, independent reporting mechanism within the EEF where any attempt to influence, coerce, or contact an active judge regarding a live protest will result in immediate suspension.
- **Protection of Officials' Welfare:** Enforcing strict communication protocols, ensuring officials are never subjected to inappropriate, unprocedural pressure or late-night coercion during active championships.
- **Implementation:** Appointing an independent, non-Board "EEF Sports Ombudsman" to handle confidential complaints from officials, alongside a mandatory "Communication Vacuum" rule prohibiting non-essential contact with the ground jury from two hours before a competition until the official results are signed. Furthermore, we will incorporate the **EEF Academy framework** to provide mandatory, standardized certification modules for judges and stewards, explicitly teaching them how to navigate and report political pressure under the protection of the Ombudsman.

6. Open-Door Diplomacy and Active Listening

Fostering a close and continuous connection between executive leadership and the real-world challenges faced by organizing committees, athletes, and officials on the ground is essential.

- **Structured Consultation:** Replacing closed-door decision-making with a transparent, open-door policy, hosting regular roundtables with Chefs d'Equipe, Officials, and NF Presidents throughout the year.
 - **Mutual Respect and Unity:** Fostering an environment where every National Federation - large or small - can compete with the absolute certainty that the rules apply to everyone equally.
 - **Implementation:** Mandating quarterly virtual "EEF Open Door" meetings open to all NF Presidents, and scheduling regional in-person forums on the margins of continental championships to address localized grassroots operational challenges.
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Conclusion: A Choice for the Future of European Sport

Equestrian sport is under global observation regarding ethics, integrity, and its social license to operate. European equestrianism deserves a President who leads by example, commands respect through flawless ethical conduct, and treats the position as a sacred trust. We are in the EEF to contribute, build bridges, and unite our community. Let us build an inclusive, integrated, and commercially powerful future where sport and horses always come first.

I kindly ask for your vote and your trust this September to restore integrity, protect our officials, and build a truly prosperous EEF together.

Sincerely,

Alan Andabaka