



HORSE SPORT IRELAND

BUDGET 2020





HORSE SPORT IRELAND



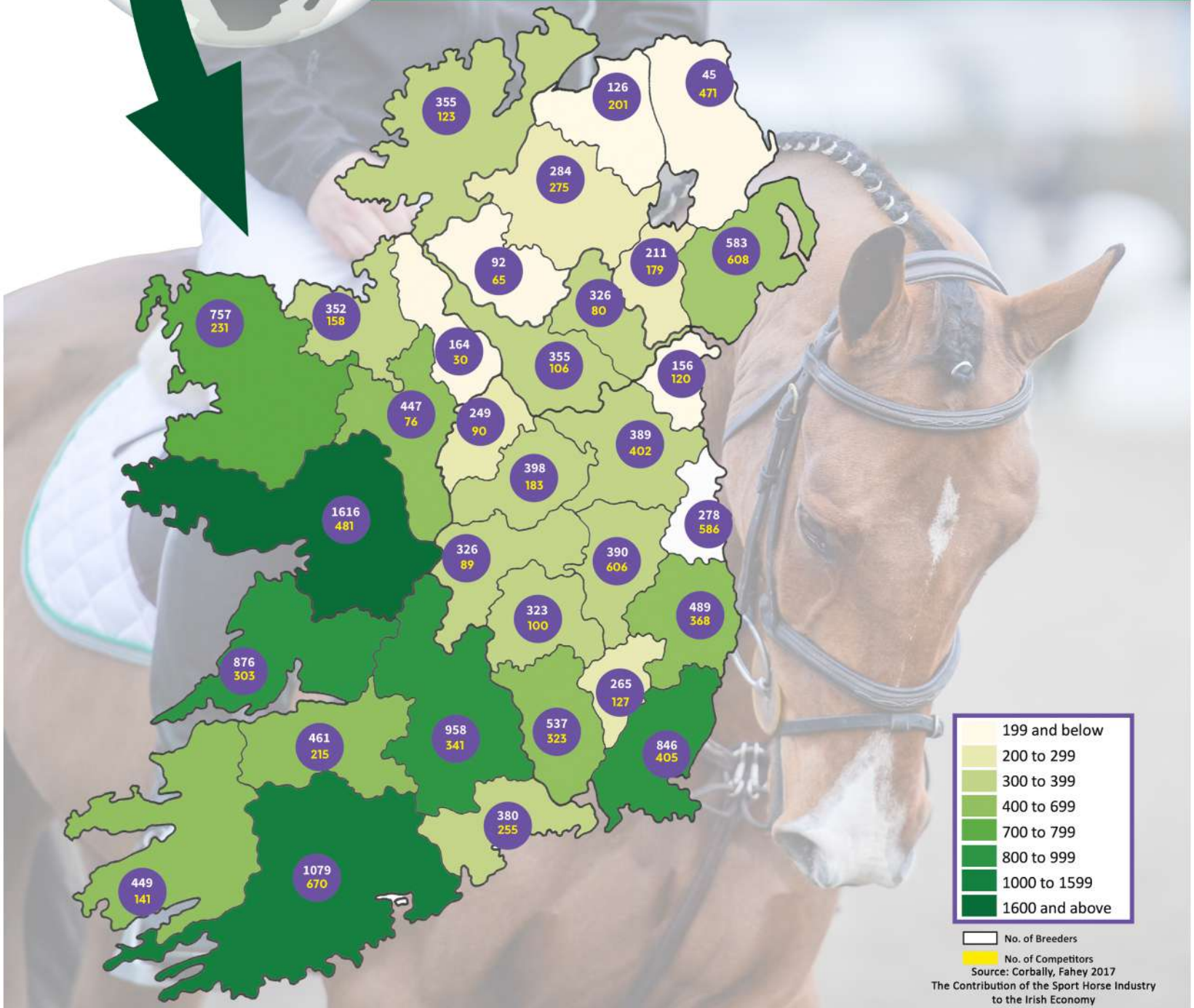
The Sport Horse Industry contributes **€816m** to the Irish Economy (Per Annum.)

Active Participation: 47,000

Sport Horse Population: 136,000

The industry impacts every county in Ireland - see map.

Employment in the Sport Horse Industry throughout Rural Ireland is over **14,000**



The Industry has significant impact to grow given the correct financial investment



145,770 Total number of Affiliates
Equestrian Entries in
IRELAND



56,038 Total number of Affiliates
Equestrian Participants in
IRELAND



14,562 Largest number of participants
by Equestrian Activity:
Breeders

IRISH INTERNATIONAL FEI ENTRIES 2018



Individual Irish rider entries in FEI
International shows in 2018



717

Number of horses entered by
Irish riders in FEI International
shows in 2018



2,008

Total of Irish entries in FEI
International shows in 2018



7,158



HORSE SPORT IRELAND

BUDGET 2020 & THE HORSE SPORT INDUSTRY

Increased Government funding needed to maximise potential of Sports Horse Sector in Ireland

Horse Sport Ireland requests increased funding from Government in Budget 2020

HSI is seeking increased Government funding of €5m in Budget 2020 to bring the total Government allocation to Ireland's National Governing Body for Equestrian Sport to circa €10m per year.

The annual economic benefit of the sport horse industry is put at €816m. HSI has a key role to play in maximising the potential of the sector through a programme of targeted and strategic initiatives set out below.

Each of these initiatives is designed to grow and build the Sports Horse Sector in Ireland and can only be delivered by HSI if it is resourced to do so through appropriate funding on a sustainable basis.

HSI also seeks funding autonomy within the established processes of accountability which exist between Central Government and funded agency structures. The absence of autonomy for the HSI over its own allocated Budget adds significantly to cost, delay and an administrative burden in a way that is not producing any enhanced outcomes for the State or the Sports Horse Sector.

This submission by HSI has the support of a wide range of stakeholders within the sector including the Sports Horse Alliance and constituent bodies involved in HSI.





Breeding & Production

Sport Horse breeding and production is the largest driver of economic activity in rural Ireland, contributing 33% of the overall expenditure. It accounts for 46% (6,446 people) of total employment in the industry.

The **identification of horses** is of critical importance to ensuring traceability and providing the foundation for the integrity of all equine breeding programmes & sports. It also underpins the integrity of breeding, horse movements, veterinary care, welfare, protection of the human food chain, registration of ownership and whereabouts from birth to the end of life. New technologies such as DNA for all registered equines, the introduction of digital, genomic and biological passports will further enhance these processes and serve as the foundation for a vibrant equine farming sector in Ireland.

An ageing farmer breeder/producer population profile is of growing concern. The establishment of a **Sport Horse production pathway** will provide best practice in the development and production of sport horses in Ireland to the next generation. The pathway will focus on establishing breeder/producer groups and providing them with targeted knowledge transfer, training and accreditation in young horse production models, through the harvesting of national and international expertise. This is the fundamental element in the horse production division of the “National Equine Education Pathway”. This pathway will be combined with discipline specific competition routes for the Irish breeder/producer with a view to adding value in Ireland to their horses. The pathway programme will be developed by HSI with the clear objective of providing a targeted sustainable business model for Irish breeders. Through the development of this ambitious Sport Horse pathway the **added value will accrue to Irish breeders and producers and ultimately provide more jobs, opportunities and overall GDP to the economy.**

Horse Sport Ireland will establish **targeted National Breeding Initiatives**, to improve the quality, health, soundness and market impact of Sport Horses bred and produced in Ireland. These specific initiatives will ensure sport horse breed quality development, genetic diversity and gene preservation. These national breeding initiatives will be available for all studbooks approved by DAFM in Ireland. Such initiatives would comprise, national equine health trait screening schemes and monitoring, National breeding championships e.g. Foal championship, National Semen collection & storage banks, Reproductive Embryo transfer schemes to maximise national production, genomic development and other national breeding schemes based on market demands.





Education & Coaching



To provide a National Equine Education Pathway to increase participation and retention of participants in the sector and provide skills, knowledge and expertise for those wishing to be involved in equestrian sport as a career

- Establish an HSI National rider licencing system to ensure the development of riders in a structured, fun and safe manner through levels of rider skills. The licence assessments will be conducted by Horse Sport Ireland.
- Provide an educational pathway to train and subsequently identify service providers e.g. riders, young horse producers (in horse pathway), coaches etc. by providing qualifications based on National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).
- Support the objective to increase participation and retention in sports in general and equestrian sports in particular, as part of the overall government policy.
- Provide structured education and upskilling to owners, grooms and parents on the same basis as the rider education pathway

HSI currently runs a highly regarded educational programme for equestrian coaches. The courses are oversubscribed, and the qualifications awarded have established a benchmark for excellence in the sphere.

- To meet market demand and increase professionalism within the sector HSI needs to be funded to **double the number of courses** it provides each year. The increased allocation outlined above will facilitate this expansion and support the design and delivery of additional high quality training and coaching programmes.
- Such is the regard our coaching qualifications have; our programme has the ability to **attract international candidates** to come and stay in Ireland whilst undertaking our courses.



Sport & Recreation

According to Failte Ireland, the average overseas tourist spends €546 whilst in the country of which 23% goes back to government in form of taxation. If HSI had the requisite funding, it could play a part in attracting a much greater number of equestrian tourists by raising standards in this area. The direct consequents of this would be greater economic activity regionally and an increased Government tax take. This will also facilitate participation in the sector through quality coaching, education, facilities and experiences.

- In 2017, 142,000 overseas visitors to Ireland undertook horse-riding during their visit to Ireland. HSI has identified a need to run an instructive programme to **ensure minimal acceptable standards** for equestrian activity providers exists.
- HSI is also aware of a strong market requirement to establish and monitor a **national rating system for equestrian tourism facilities** to give tourists peace of mind when deciding on destinations.
- HSI hopes to help equestrian centres upgrade their facilities through additional funding to cultivate quality coaching, education, and experiences.
- Additionally, HSI also believes that the potential for equestrian tourism in Ireland can be exploited through targeted interventions and initiatives. We believe that a study examining how Ireland can grow our equestrian tourism potential would identify targeted initiatives that can be undertaken to grow this business with truly regional benefits. Such a study will require funding and support from the State and can be addressed within the enhanced Budget submission identified above.





High Performance

Sporting success gives the country a chance to celebrate nationality in a positive way and cement our international reputation as the 'Land of the Horse'. HSI is committed to the expansion of our high performance programme to deliver success at Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024.

Our shared vision is to use allocated funding to create a supportive high performance structure which values harmony among all stakeholders and produces the best prepared squads to achieve repeatable and sustainable podium success for Team Ireland Equestrian. High Performing athletes, staff and owners working in unison will create a collaborative high performance structure which produces the best prepared squad to repeatable and sustainable podium success. However, core to delivering our plans is the necessary funding and resources to support human and equine athletes.

HSI aims to achieve this through;

- Developing and sustaining our High-Performance Programmes which deliver equestrian sport as a Tier 1 sport within the domestic system.
- Develop a programme within the 20x20 campaign of women in equestrian sport to drive increased participation of females across all national High- Performance squads.
- Create an academy programme for promising Irish riders to transition from 'junior' to 'senior' ranks.
- Create an environment to showcase Ireland's sport horses and become a leading sales and exports nation.

It is imperative that a sustainable funding model is developed for Horse Sport Ireland to finally let the sport horse sector realise its potential.





HORSE SPORT IRELAND
SUPPORTING THE IRISH SPORT HORSE INDUSTRY