

Secure funding for the benefit of all

Competing horses is a way to measure and select to improve an equine breed. At the same time, breeding is a part of agriculture revenues. The racing sector is largely financed by horse betting revenues. The return from betting benefits the wider equestrian sector in certain countries.

In Europe in 2010, Horse betting totalled €30 billion. €1.2 billion coming mainly from the Tote operators was reinvested in the European horse industry and racing, a considerable investment often at the crux of regional development (Normandy, County Kildare, Newmarket,...)

The contribution to horseracing has an impact on the equestrian sports in general as it establishes a benchmark for equestrian excellence at all level – competition level, health and quality of the professional involved.

More examples of direct funding to equestrian sport:

- More than €2 million from pari mutuel betting revenues directly support each year the Olympic Equestrian teams of 3 Nordic countries (Sweden, Finland and Norway).
- More specific partnerships of the pari mutuel operators with the national Equestrian Federations drives revenues directly to education and training of riding schools instructors, anti-doping measures in equestrian competitions and for research and development in animal health.
- In France, the "Fonds Eperon" (revenues from the PMU) gives each year around €10million to innovative regional and national projects linked to horses
- In UK, £ 6 million/year from Lottery income support the equestrian institutions.

These examples underline the importance of ensuring that a fair return from betting revenues is returned to equestrian sport to enable it to continue.



Horses and Sport

- 6 million horses in Europe – millions of which are involved in some kind of sport
- Millions of leisure riders throughout Europe, a growing sport for all ages and genders
- More than 20 000 sporting events gathering all ages
- An essential source of revenue for many European rural areas
- Promoting values of integration, volunteering, mentoring
- An important part of our European traditional heritage

Horse Sport within current European Policymaking

2012 has started with strong developments around European sports. The European Parliament voted on 2nd February on the future of sport policy, Erasmus for all was launched with €38 million from 2014 that could be dedicated to future sport projects, Expert groups on sport governance, statistics, financing have met and will continue to set up discussions of common interest at EU level in order to adopt the best possible approach to promote and develop sport at EU level.

The European Horse Network intends to participate actively in the debate. Equestrian sport is one of the most dynamic sport disciplines in Europe, but to date it has not had the exposure it deserves in the European policy making arena. Therefore, the document aims to highlight the growing importance of the sport.

Contact details:

Chairman:
Stefan Johanson,
Hästnäringens Nationella Stiftelse (HNS),
Hästsportens Hus, SE-161 89 Stockholm,
Sweden
e: info@europeanhorsenetwork.eu
w: www.europeanhorsenetwork.eu



Equestrian and racing sport – A dynamic European economic sector

Equestrian sport is a unique case of a sport that involves animal and human athletes working together as a team. Equestrian Sport has 2 main sectors, racing and equestrian. In each, various disciplines (show jumping, dressage, flat and trotting racing...) organise a considerable number of competitions. Europe is the location of more than 70% of the equestrian events (more than 15 000 organised in Europe) each year worldwide. .

These horses create more than one million direct or related jobs – vets, farriers, saddlers, the food and agricultural sectors (fodder, oats), the pharmaceutical, clothing and transport industries, just to name a few. The sector is a global creator of jobs, especially in rural areas, and are more and more female employment. In Sweden, for example, girls and women active in the horse sector for their own leisure have developed from this important managing skills, according to a recent study.

In comparison to other sports, the equestrian sector is the 1st sport employer in France with more than 13 % of the direct sport employment (rapport RUNOPES, 1999).

The gross output of the equestrian sector in 2011 in UK is valued at £3.8 billion a year, an extremely large figure considering the economic crisis, boosted significantly when other equine-related activities such as racing (an estimated £3.7 billion) and major equestrian events (an estimated £6 million) are factored in.

Tens of millions of people, from all social backgrounds, ride or have ridden in Europe within a sporting and educational context.

The world of the horse and associated activities (breeding, racing, equine and related activities etc.) part of the treasure of our heritage, culture and traditions. As well as the cultural attachment felt by many Europeans for equine

activities, the high competitive standard of European equine sports at an international level represents a socio-economical asset for our continent. *The inscription of Equestrian sport in the French tradition on the UNESCO list of Intangible Heritage at the end of November 2011 is a sign for the growing awareness of equestrian heritage as an important part of our culture.*

The equestrian organisations, FEI, the EEF and NFs are part of the Olympic movement, and hence are not there to serve the interests only of the professionals and the insiders but of everyone. They are there to create an environment to help the sport grow and allow space and opportunity for all constituents to breathe and develop. It is interesting to note that tickets sales for Paralympic Games is at record levels; and equestrianism is one of the few sports which shows such integration of teams and athletes from both Olympic and Para-equestrian.

Normandy will hold the World Equestrian Games in 2014: a new opportunity to enhance furthermore the development of this industry in Europe, but also to boost all the economic activity of the region. It is estimated that this will bring in significant regional revenue. There are also important European Championships held every other year in different European countries.

Considering the 400 million USD economic impact of the last World Equestrian Games for the state of Kentucky, the preparation for 2014 means important revenues for Normandy, the first breeding region of France and renowned for its high quality horse racing and a dynamic economic and research equine cluster (Hippolia).

Thus, the World Equestrian Games in 2014 is a good example of the territorial impact a sport can have on social cohesion and economic dynamism. More than 500 000 persons should come to see this event.

The role of volunteering and mentoring is also very important in equestrianism, including a dynamic and well-developed paralympic and riding and carriage driving framework for the disabled sector in many countries.

A sport with many benefits: Health, Education and Training

Horseback riding is a healthy activity for improving body awareness, strength and coordination. Furthermore the experience of working with a living animal contributes to the mental health of the rider. More than many other leisure activities, this holistic approach corresponds with the WHO definition of health.

The well known health effects of contacts with a horse as well as riding itself have enhanced the establishment of equine therapy concepts such as Hippotherapy (complementary to physiotherapy), Riding for Disabled (sport riding as well as leisure riding) and Curative Education (i.e. therapy for people with behavioural disorders or psychological disabilities).

The positive effects have also been discovered by management training seminar coaches who increasingly use horses for development of leadership and behavioural training of business executives as well as for motivation and improving social competence.

Leisure riders practise simple riding (i.e. horseback riding) and/or low-level performance sport. Their motivation is basically relaxation, enjoyment, experience of nature and the animal. It is an activity which can be practised life-long. Therefore the age pyramid of riders shows a non proportional progress especially in the age groups above 50 years.

In most European countries leisure riders belong to a riding club or a particular school. This is a community asset and offers a place for socialising with others.

Not only have local opportunities for leisure riding developed, but equestrian tourism has also been established. Leisure riding with an adventurous character is offered through Europe to a worldwide audience (see the International Federation for Equestrian Tourism FITE) - again Europe is at the forefront of much of this. This again shows how sport can sustain rural economy and employment as well as contribute to the overall health of Europeans.

A clean sport

Equestrian sport is a unique case of a sport that involves animal and human athletes working together as a team. The FEI's Clean Sport Campaign is a coordinated effort at many levels to provide all stakeholders with the information and tools necessary to address the issue of doping and inappropriate medication. FEI Clean Sport has been developed in close cooperation with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA). The Equestrian Community Integrity Unit (ECIU) represents a clear and determined effort to ensure the integrity of equestrian sport.

Elsewhere, such as in horseracing and trotting, testing of both horses and riders has been long-established.

The Sporting Success of European bred horses

European bred horses – a business which is an important part of the agricultural sector – are exported worldwide. The number one racehorse in the world is British bred, and European bred racehorses and trotters enjoy success worldwide, and provide significant European export revenue. In the World Breeding Federation for Sports Horses 2011 Studbook rankings European studbooks fill the first 23 top places in Dressage, Eventing, and Showjumping.

