

# Figures and Impact Study of the Equine Industry in Finland

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# Facts & Figures

## •Finnish Horse Industry Overview:

- Approximately 160,000 equestrian enthusiasts in Finland.
- Adult riders: 64%; Children and young riders: 36%.

## •License and Training:

- 5,321 coaching and driving licenses issued for harness racing.
- Youth licenses: 617.

## •Economic Impact:

- Employment: Over 15,000 people.
- Generates 6,500 person-years of work.
- Economic impact comparable to Lapland tourism.

## •Demographics:

- Junior riders: 97% girls.
- Senior riders: 94% women.
- Highlights inclusivity and evolution in equestrian community.

# Regional Economic Impacts

- **Economic Contribution per Horse:**
  - Nationwide, approximately 72,000 horses contribute to 6,500 FTEs.
- **Maintenance Costs and Economic Impact:**
  - Annual cost per horse: 3,800 to 9,600 euros.
  - Total annual expenses exceed 274 million euros, excluding stable rent.
- **Equestrian Events' Economic Significance:**
  - Kuninkuusravit event: Generates 8–15 million euros for the host region.
  - Helsinki International Horse Show: Contributes 10–13 million euros to Helsinki.
- **Regional Economic Impacts:**
  - Uusimaa and Pirkanmaa: Highest absolute economic impacts.
  - Etelä-Pohjanmaa and Kanta-Häme: Largest relative impacts on regional GDP.
  - Horse industry affects every Finnish region, playing a key role in regional economies.



Helsinki International Horse Show 2023, Image: Satu Pirinen

# Goal of the Industry

- **Securing Long-Term Funding:**
  - From 2024, funding will come from general budgetary funds.
  - Need for consistent, future-proof financial support.
  - Political support crucial, especially for Finnish harness racing and Finnish horse breed.
- **Industry as a Community Unifier:**
  - Unites and revitalizes rural and urban communities.
  - Promotes nature values and overall wellbeing.
- **Impact on Mental Health:**
  - Positive effects on mental health of children and young people.
  - Potential integration of equine therapy in national wellbeing initiatives.
  - Broader use of service vouchers in wellbeing services, improving access to equine-assisted services.



# Research from Finland

- **Equestrian Entrepreneurship Trends (Saastamoinen, 2018):**
  - 68% of equestrian entrepreneurs are sole proprietors.
  - About a third employ at least one other person.
  - More full-time than part-time entrepreneurs, especially in tourism and horse care.
- **Business Scale and Diversity:**
  - Over 80% of equestrian businesses are small, often with less than two employees.
  - Industry diversity includes services like equine-assisted therapy and larger enterprises, though larger businesses are less common.
- **Widespread Impact:**
  - The industry has a wide-ranging impact, touching various sectors and community aspects.



# Broader Societal Impacts

- **Health and Social Benefits:**
  - Increases physical activity and outdoor interaction.
  - Fosters community engagement and social inclusivity.
  - Estimated 1.6 billion euros saved by the Finnish state in lifetime savings on youth at risk of social exclusion.
  - About 31 million euros annual cost savings due to reduced physical inactivity.
- **Tax Revenue Contribution:**
  - Racing sector generates significant tax revenue.
  - Estimated 30-40 million euros in value-added taxes from 200 million euro turnover.
- **Overall Impact:**
  - Demonstrates the equestrian industry's interconnectedness and wide-ranging influence on Finnish society.



# Industry's Potential

- **Growth Areas:**
  - Horse-assisted activities, health services, tourism, and stable services.
  - Horse tourism, particularly underdeveloped in Finland, has potential for expansion.
- **Shift in Service Offerings:**
  - Increase in tailored services for well-being and Green Care.
  - Growing preference for leisure and hobby-based activities.
- **Sustainability and Ethical Practices:**
  - Focus on environmental impact management in horsekeeping.
  - Investment in facilities for improved horse welfare.
  - Adoption of renewable energy sources like solar energy in equestrian facilities.
  - Contribution to cultural sustainability by maintaining the Finnish horse breed.

# Responding to Young Workers' Needs: The Equestrian Industry's Path Forward

- **Work-Related Challenges for Young Employees:**
  - Increase in stress and burnout, particularly among young employees and women.
  - Younger workers seeking additional training, considering retraining or working abroad.
  - Decrease in younger workers feeling their job is highly meaningful.
- **Values and Preferences of Young Workers:**
  - Continuous learning, innovation, and meaningful work.
  - Environments that encourage trying new things and prioritize mental well-being.
- **Equestrian Industry's Response:**
  - Fostering a culture of learning and innovation.
  - Opportunities for diverse roles and responsibilities.
  - Emphasis on work-life balance and mental health support.
  - Use of social media for engagement, training, and community building.
  - Highlighting the industry's role in societal well-being and nature conservation.





# References:

- **Impact Analysis of the Horse Industry**

- [Report: The Value of the Horse Industry to Society, Hundreds of Millions of Euros Annually – MTK](#)

- [Effective Horse Industry – HAMK](#)

- [The Horse Industry Employs Thousands of Finns - Lessons in Growth from Iceland and France? – Bioeconomy](#)

- [The Horse Industry Employs as Many as Lapland Tourism – HAMK](#)

- [Labor Barometer 2022](#)



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