

Trends in the Economical and Socio-economical Contribution of the Sport Horse Industry to the Economy in Ireland



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Introduction

In 1996 it was estimated that the sport horse industry in Ireland contributed £80m to the economy. A further study in 2007 estimated that the industry's contribution had increased to €400m. The objective of this study was to determine recent trends in the economical and socio-economical contribution of the sport horse industry to the economy in Ireland.



Results

- The industry contributed over €708m to the Irish economy in 2012
- The Estimated sport horses population was 124,000 equines
- The industry contributed to the household incomes of 29,295 individuals
- 47,096 people were involved in industry
- Since 2005 there has been a decrease in the number of new entrants into the industry and an increase in the number of breeders aged 51 years or older

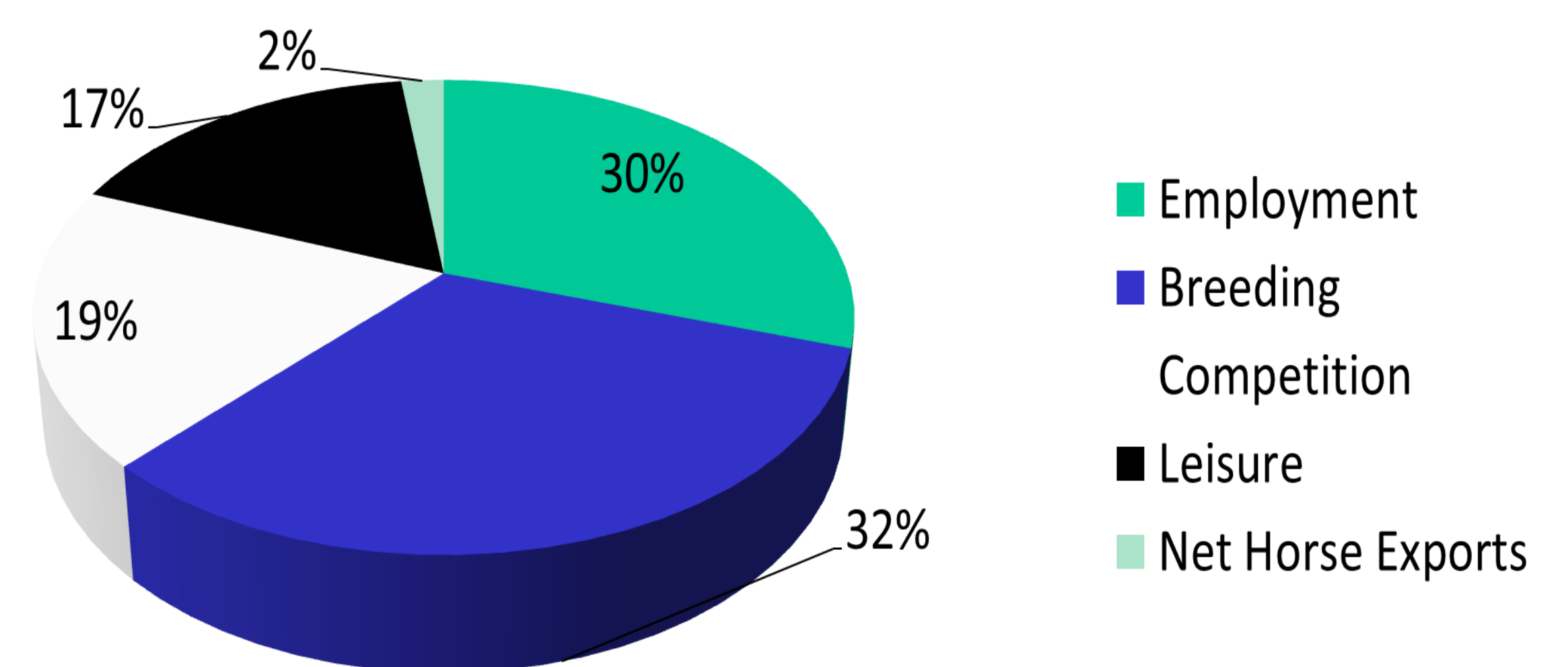


Figure 2. Distribution of expenditure in the sport horse sector 2011

Methods

A study of the structures in the sport horse industry readily identified four distinct areas: breeding, competition, leisure and employment. The main methods of data collection in these areas were postal/phone questionnaires and surveys including:

- 1,200 breeders questionnaires
- 600 competitor surveys
- 521 surveys from spectators/exhibitors at country shows

In addition to the survey data, information from a number of other sources was used: Central Statistics Office data (CSO); equine studbook registration data; Irish Horse Register data; equine competition and leisure organisation data.

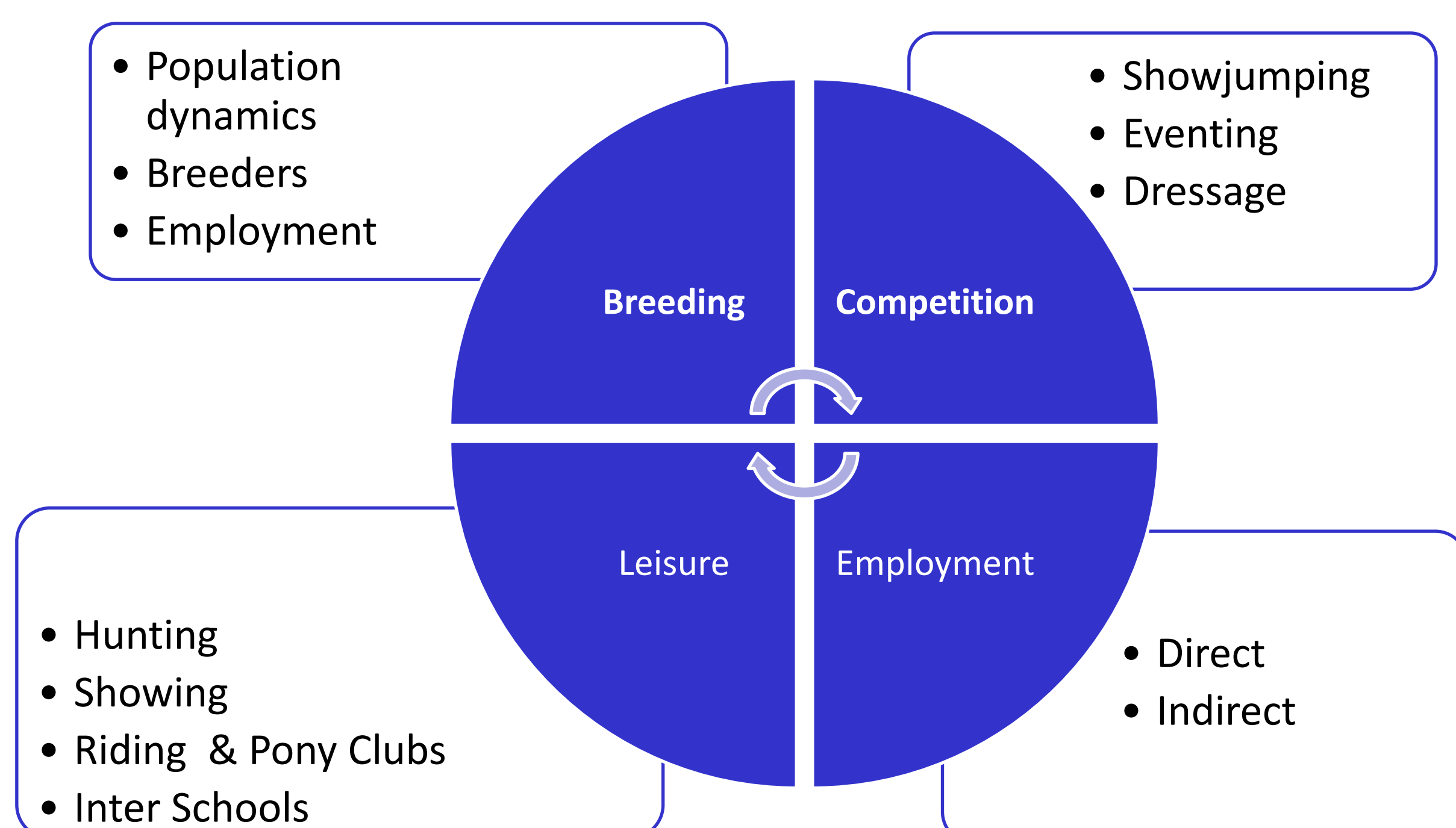


Figure 1. Structured Elements of the Irish Sport Horse Industry

Age Range	2011	2005
Under 30 Yrs	8%	10%
31 – 40 Yrs	16%	21%
41 – 50 Yrs	26%	28%
51 – 60 Yrs	50%	41%

Table 1. Age profile of sport horse breeders in 2011 and 2005

Conclusions

- The contribution of the sport horse sector to the Irish economy has increased in recent years due to changes within the sport horse industry (eg. population size, markets, developments in competition and leisure sectors)
- Between 2005 and 2011 there has been a decrease in the number of new entrants into the industry, resulting in an increase in the age profile of sport horse breeders
- Sport horses are located in every region of Ireland and are a major benefit to the communities in the less populated, rural areas

Acknowledgments

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