

In 2013, bloodstock sales were once again the star performer of the Irish thoroughbred industry. Racecourse attendances returned to growth and the Tote also showed increases across racecourse and off-course operations. The number of horses in training has stabilised but ownership in Ireland is still under pressure.

2013 Sales, Training, Ownership:

- Bloodstock Sales up 43% from €93.5m to €133.4m
- Export Sales up 17.8% from €174.3m to €205.4m
- Horses in Training down 0.4% from 9,238 to 9,199
- Number of Owners down 5.7% from 4,207 to 3,966

Commenting on these figures **HRI Chief Executive Brian Kavanagh** said: “This is the third consecutive year of double-digit growth in bloodstock sales at public auction in Ireland, which at €133.4 million is now worth more than twice the 2009 figure. This is an accelerating trend which is very good news for the industry as a whole and confirms that the reputation of Irish bloodstock is creating vibrant demand internationally. The horses in training figures have stabilised and are virtually on a par with 2012, after several years of decline, but it remains a challenge to retain and attract new owners.”

The total value of Irish-bred horses exported from this country, through sale at public auction (worldwide) amounted to €205.4m, up 17.8% on the previous year. In 2013 Irish horses were exported to 37 different countries.

Brian Kavanagh continued: “In 2013 Irish-bred and trained horses have once again enjoyed tremendous global success. Irish-bred horses won 9 of the 10 Classics run in Britain and Ireland, two of the Breeders’ Cup races and for the second successive year, Australia’s premier race, the Melbourne Cup. Irish-trained horses captured a record haul of 14 of the 27 races at the Cheltenham Festival, equalled the record of 8 wins at Royal Ascot and achieved a notable first ever triumph in Japan’s most important jumps race.”

2013 Betting:

- Total Tote Betting up 6.5% from €52.2m to €55.6m
- On-Course Bookmakers down 6.9% from €76m to €70.8m
- On-Course SP Shops up 4.9% from €8.3m to €8.7m
- On-Course Tote Betting up 2.2% from €13.9m to €14.2m
- Total On-Course Betting down 4.6% from €98.2m to €93.7m

The Tote’s on-course performance improved, with turnover up by 2.2%, augmented by growth in its off-course performance which saw an overall increase in Tote betting of 6.5%. Bookmaker betting on-course continued to decline, with a fall of 6.9% adding to a cumulative drop in turnover of €134.5m since 2007.

Brian Kavanagh said: “Tote betting showed a return to growth following re-structuring and it is particularly encouraging to see on-course Tote gains in a very challenging market. The bookmakers’ on-

course decline continued and is a real concern for the future of the sector. It must be hoped that new betting legislation will create a more level playing field in the betting market.”

2013 Attendances and Fixtures:

- Total Attendances up 4% from 1.19m to 1.24m
- Average Attendances up 4% from 3,413 to 3,548
- Fixtures down 0.3% from 350 to 349

Attendance growth of 4% was recorded for total attendances and average attendance per meeting. On a five-year trend, racing is up marginally over 2009 although 18% behind the peak 2007 figure.

Brian Kavanagh commented: “The return to growth in racecourse attendances is very encouraging and is a tribute to the racecourses who have worked hard to retain their customers in difficult times. Throughout the recession they have innovated to hold on to the loyalty of racegoers and HRI will continue to support them in those efforts.”

2013 Prize-money and sponsorship:

- Prize-money Up 2.5% from €44.871m to €45.986m
- Commercial Sponsorship Up 1.6% from €3.665m to €3.723m

Prize-money showed a modest increase for the second year in succession. HRI has identified improvement in this area as a priority for 2014, in order to stay competitive internationally, retain horses in training and attract new owners. Prize-money in Irish racing will increase by a further 5.6% in 2014, from €45.9m to €48.5m, including an increase in the minimum race value from €7,000 to €7,500.

Brian Kavanagh concluded: “There are many positives in the 2013 figures but we remain acutely aware of the underlying threats to the future of the industry. With overall funding cuts of almost 30% since 2008, we are constrained in our ability to capitalise on the potential for growth in domestic and international markets. Competing racing nations are better resourced and challenging our position. Bloodstock is highly mobile and if we are to attract foreign owners to breed, train and race in Ireland, we must have a racing infrastructure that will stand up to international comparison. Thankfully, the new betting legislation, set to progress early in 2014, represents the first step to a sustainable funding system, which will ensure that racing continues to produce an economic return to the country and that we can re-build employment levels in an industry in which Ireland has great national advantages.”

2013 Irish Thoroughbred Racing Industry Statistics

Number of Fixtures	Down 0.3% from 350 to 349
Number of Races	Up 0.6% from 2,516 to 2,530
Number of Entries	Down 0.8% from 64,033 to 63,524
Eliminations	Down 17% from 5,880 to 4,878
Total Number of Runners	Up 1.8% from 28,882 to 29,399
Number of Individual Runners	Down 0.9% from 7,176 to 7,114
Number of Individual Winners	Up 2.7% from 1,749 to 1,796
Number of Individual Placed Horses	Up 0.2 % from 3,893 to 3,902
Total Prize-Money	Up 2.5% from €44.871m to €45.986m
Commercial Sponsorship	Up 1.6% from €3.665m to €3.723m
EBF Sponsorship	Down 11.9% from €1.786m to €1.573m
Total Attendances	Up 4% from 1,194,509 to 1,238,355
Average Attendance	Up 4% from 3,413 to 3,548
Total On-Course Betting (incl. Tote)	Down 4.6% from €98.2m to €93.7m
On-Course Bookmaker Betting	Down 5.8% from €84.3m to €79.5m
> Betting Ring	Down 6.9% from €76m to €70.8m
> On-Course SP Shops	Up 4.9% from €8.3m to €8.7m
Total Tote Betting	Up 6.5% from €52.2m to €55.6m
> On-Course Tote	Up 2.2% from €13.9m to €14.2m
> Off-Course Tote (Irish pools)	Up 8.5% from €33.1m to €35.9m
> Off-Course Tote (International pools)	Up 5.8% from €5.2m to €5.5m
Total Number of Owners	Down 5.7% from 4,207 to 3,966
Number of New Owners	Down 8.7% from 696 to 635
Total Number of Horses in Training	Down 0.4% from 9,238 to 9,199
Average Number of Horses in Training	Down 6% from 4846 to 4556
Bloodstock Sales at Public Auction	Up 43% from €93.5m to €133.4m
Value of Irish Foaled Exported Horses Sold Through Auction	Up 17.8% from €174.3m to €205.4m
Number of countries to which Irish Foaled Horses Sold Through Auction were exported	No change from 37 to 37
Prize-Money Won in UK by Irish-trained horses	Up 38.1% from £6,944m to £9,592m
Prize-Money Won in Rest of World by Irish-trained horses	Up 49.2% from €5.571m to €8.311m