



# FEI™ SPORTS FORUM

31 March – 1 April 2025, IMD Lausanne

Dressage Strategic Action Plan  
Monday 31 March

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Moderator



Ronan Murphy



George Williams



Klaus Roeser



Monica Theodorescu



Kyra Kyrklund



Lise Berg



Raphael Saleh



## Dressage Stakeholders Meeting October 2024

- International Dressage Riders Club (IDRC)
- International Dressage Trainers Club (IDTC)
- International Dressage Officials Club (IDOC)
- Dressage Organisers (DO)
- European Equestrian Federation (EEF)
- Pan American Equestrian Federation (PAEC)
- FEI Dressage Technical Committee (DTC)
- FEI Para Dressage Committee (PETC)
- FEI Veterinary Technical Committee (VTC)
- FEI Dressage Steward General
- FEI Team





## What is the Dressage we aspire to?

The object of Dressage is the development of the horse as a **happy athlete in a positive mental & physical state** through **harmonious** education. **Allowing** the horse to be **calm, supple, loose and flexible**, but also confident, attentive and keen, thus achieving perfect understanding with the rider.

These qualities are revealed by:

- The **freedom and regularity** of the paces.
- The **harmony, lightness and ease of the movements**.
- The **lightness of the forehand** and the engagement of the hindquarters, originating from a lively impulsion.
- The **acceptance of the bridle, with throughness without any tension or resistance**.





# Dressage Excellence

A roadmap to vision 2027 onwards

## Dressage Strategic Action Planning Working Group





# Dressage Strategic Action Plan Working Group

## Purpose / Task:

To review, coordinate and propose the Strategic Action Plan for Dressage, aligned with the agreed Object of the sport.

## Term:

Initial Term 2 years (until 01 Jan 2027)

## Membership:

- **George Williams (USA)**, CHAIR, Former President of the United States Dressage Federation, US Equestrian Dressage Youth Coach and High Performance & Pathway Development Advisor.
- **Monica Theodorescu (GER)**, the first woman appointed German National Dressage Coach.
- **Raphael Saleh (FRA)**, President of the Dressage Ground Jury for the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.
- **Gareth Hughes (GBR)**, renowned British Dressage rider with more than 60 national and international titles to his name.
- **Kyra Kyrklund (FIN)** who is a six-time Olympian and FEI World Cup™ champion.
- **Klaus Roeser (GER)**, Chairman of the German National Federation Dressage Committee and Secretary General of the International Dressage Riders Club (IDRC).
- **Lise Berg (DEN)**, DVM PhD. Associate Professor at University of Copenhagen's Department of Veterinary Clinical Sciences.



## Operating Framework

- Dressage Technical Committee.
- FEI Rules Revision Process (Partial Rules Revision 2025, Full Rules Revision 2026).
- Equine Ethics and Wellbeing Action Plan.
- Ethical Training Working Group.
- Relevant Research & Development Projects.





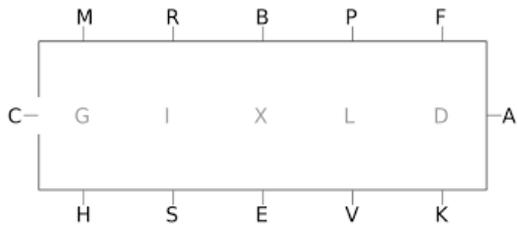
## Key Dates / Timeline

Event	Date	
Dressage Stakeholders Meeting	01 October 2024	Green
IDRC/IDTC/IDOC Meeting Ermelo	04-05 November 2024	Green
FEI General Assembly Abu Dhabi	10-13 November 2024	Green
2024 FEI Rules Revision Effective	01 January 2025	Green
FEI Rule Revision Proposals 2026	01 March 2025	Green
FEI Sports Forum Lausanne	31 March – 01 April 2025	Yellow
FEI General Assembly Hong Kong	05-07 November 2025	Red
FEI Full Rule Revision Proposals 2027	01 March 2026	Red
FEI Sports Forum 2027	TBC	Red
FEI General Assembly 2027	TBC	Red
FEI Full Rule Revision Effective 2027	01 January 2027	Red



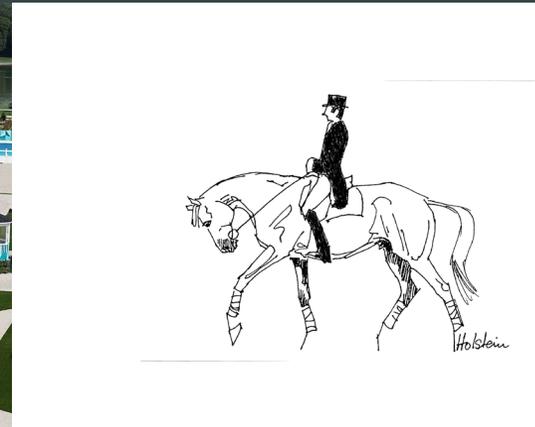
  
**Dressage  
Excellence**  
A roadmap to vision 2027 onwards

# Situational Analysis



**'Dressage is in trouble': where is the line between horse abuse and training?**  
*Sophie Kevany*

Charlotte Dujardin's Olympic exit and ban has turned the spotlight on training techniques in the sport





# Dressage & Animal Welfare

1

**General  
Sentiment**

2

**Key Areas of  
Criticism**

- Training Methods
- Judging and Scoring
- Specific Incidents

3

**Focus on  
Individual  
Athletes**

4

**Content  
Sensitivity**

5

**Public  
Perception  
and  
Transparency**

6

**Request for  
more Decisive  
Actions**



## Petitions to the IOC – ahead of Paris24

**83,510**

PETA  
(approximately  
30K week before  
the Games)

**40,264**

Change.org

**1,459**

Petition  
Shaunak All That  
Breathes

**59,693**

Care2petitions

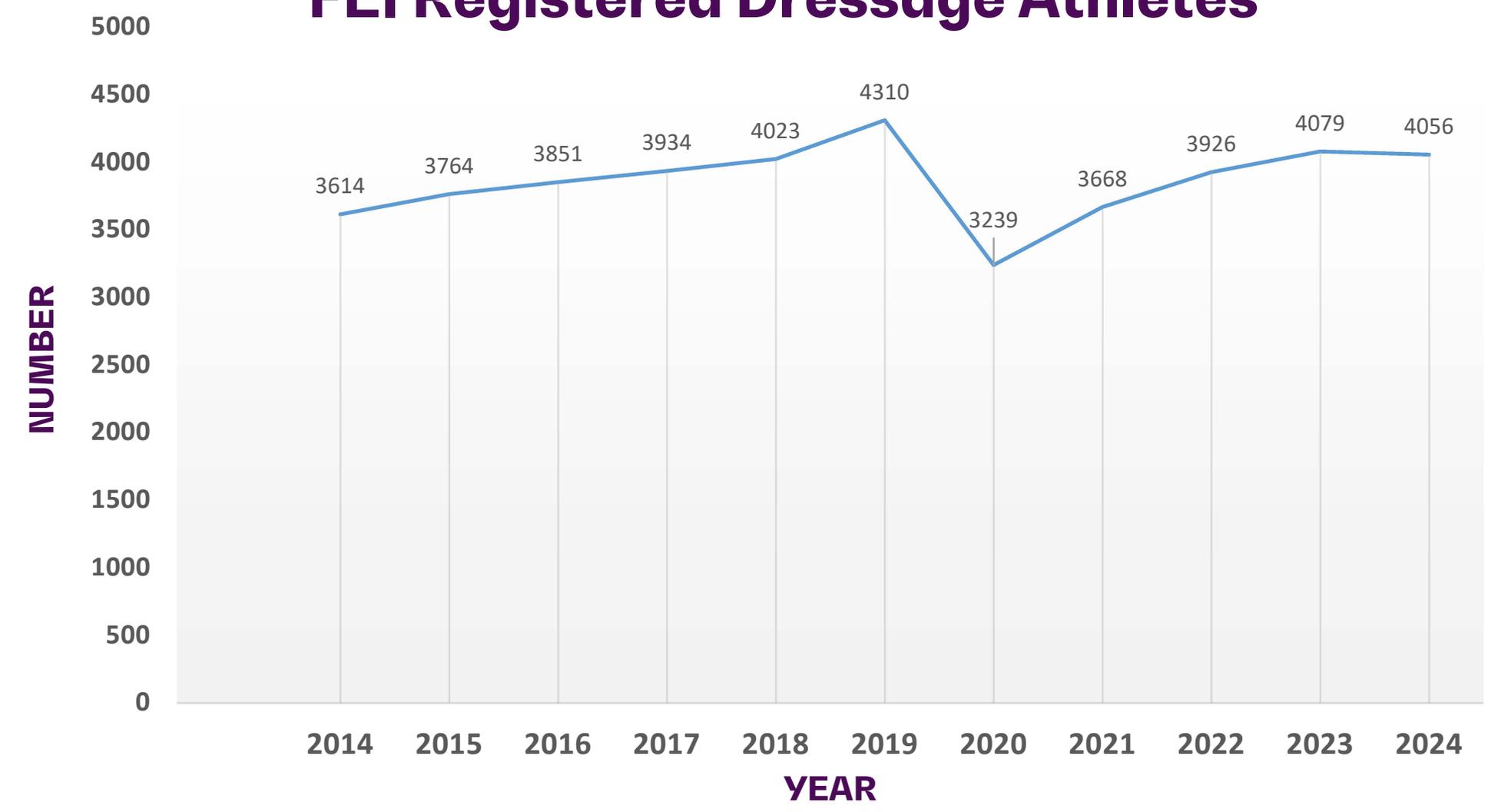
**9,629**

The Animal  
Rescue Site

Joint letter from “One voice”, “PAZ”, “L214”, “Peta France” and “Gaia” to the IOC,

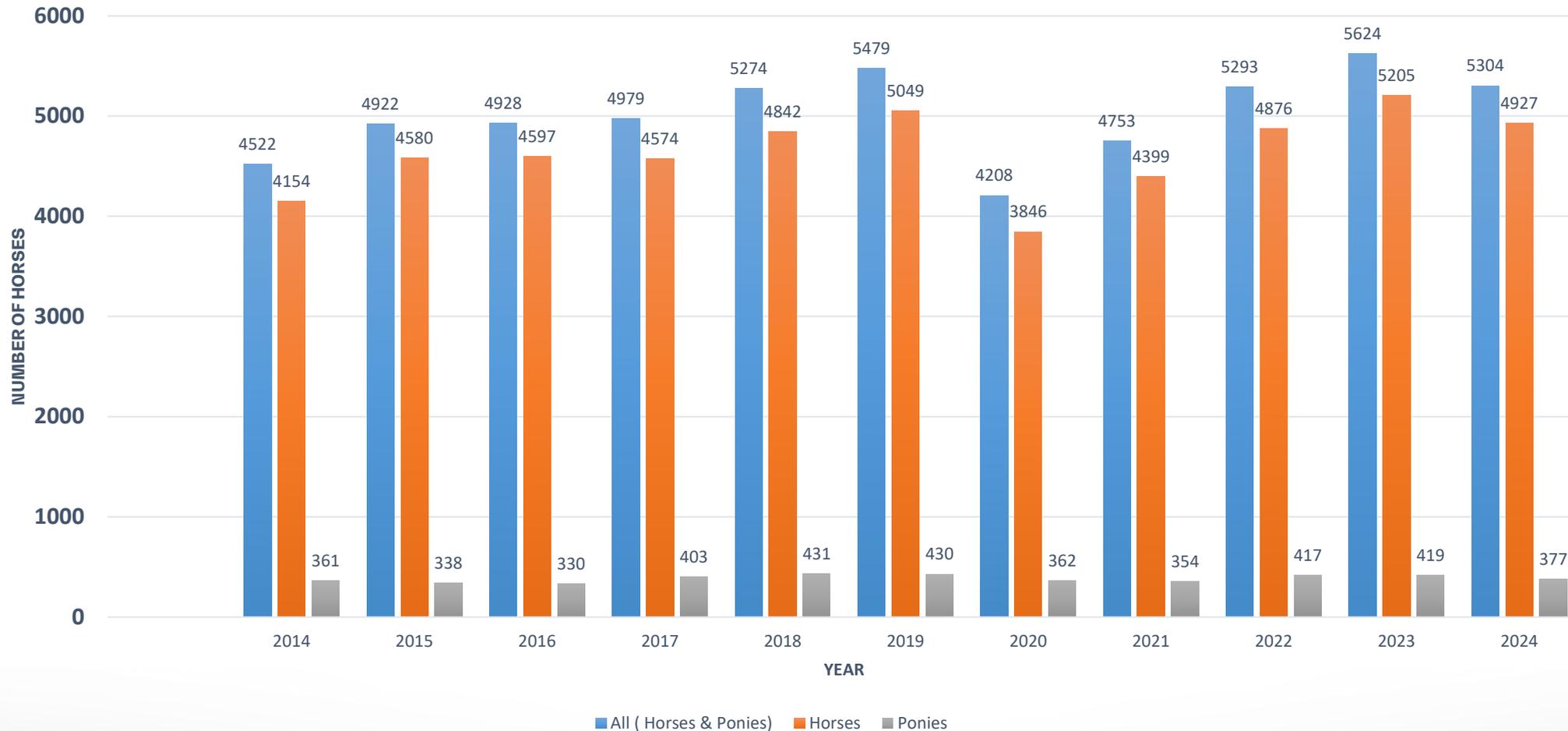


## FEI Registered Dressage Athletes



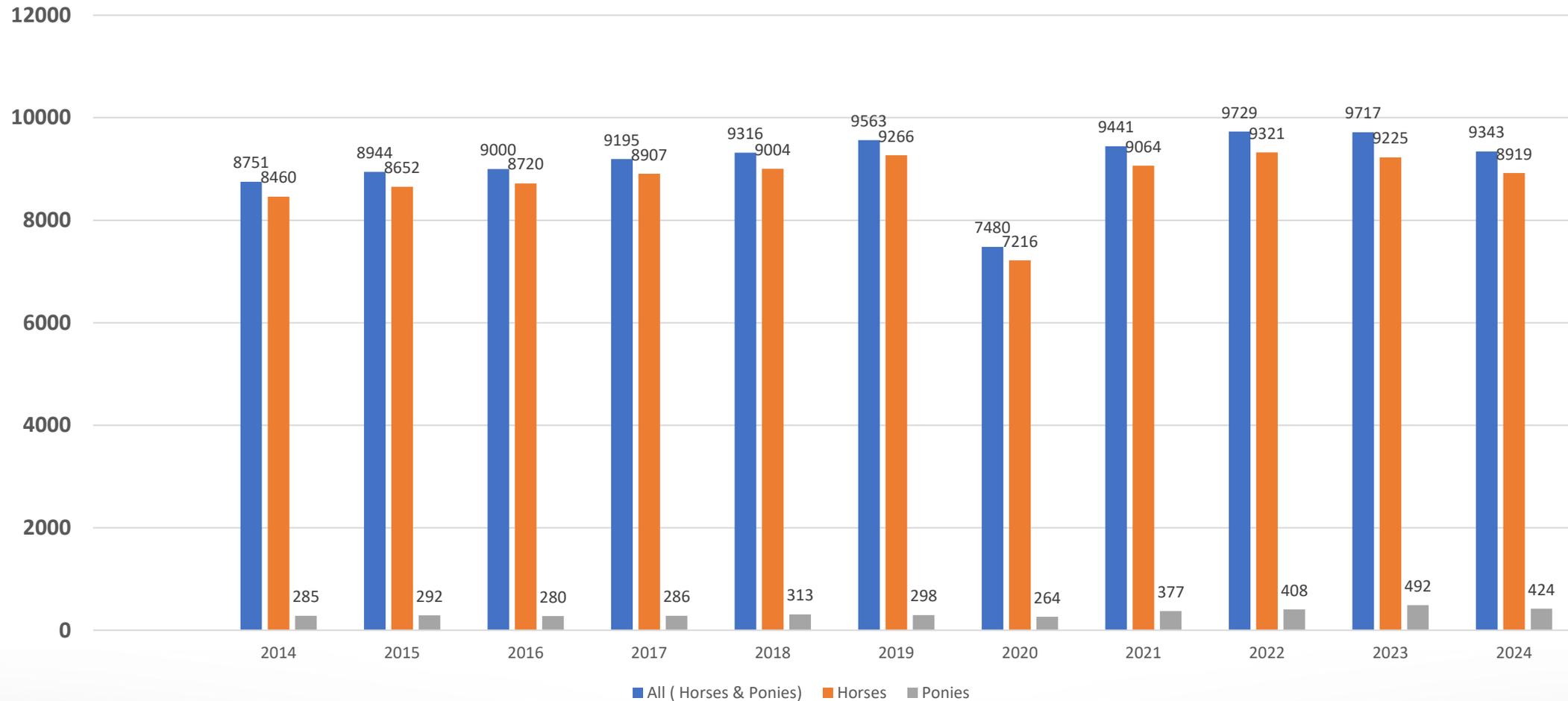


## FEI Dressage Registered Horses and Ponies



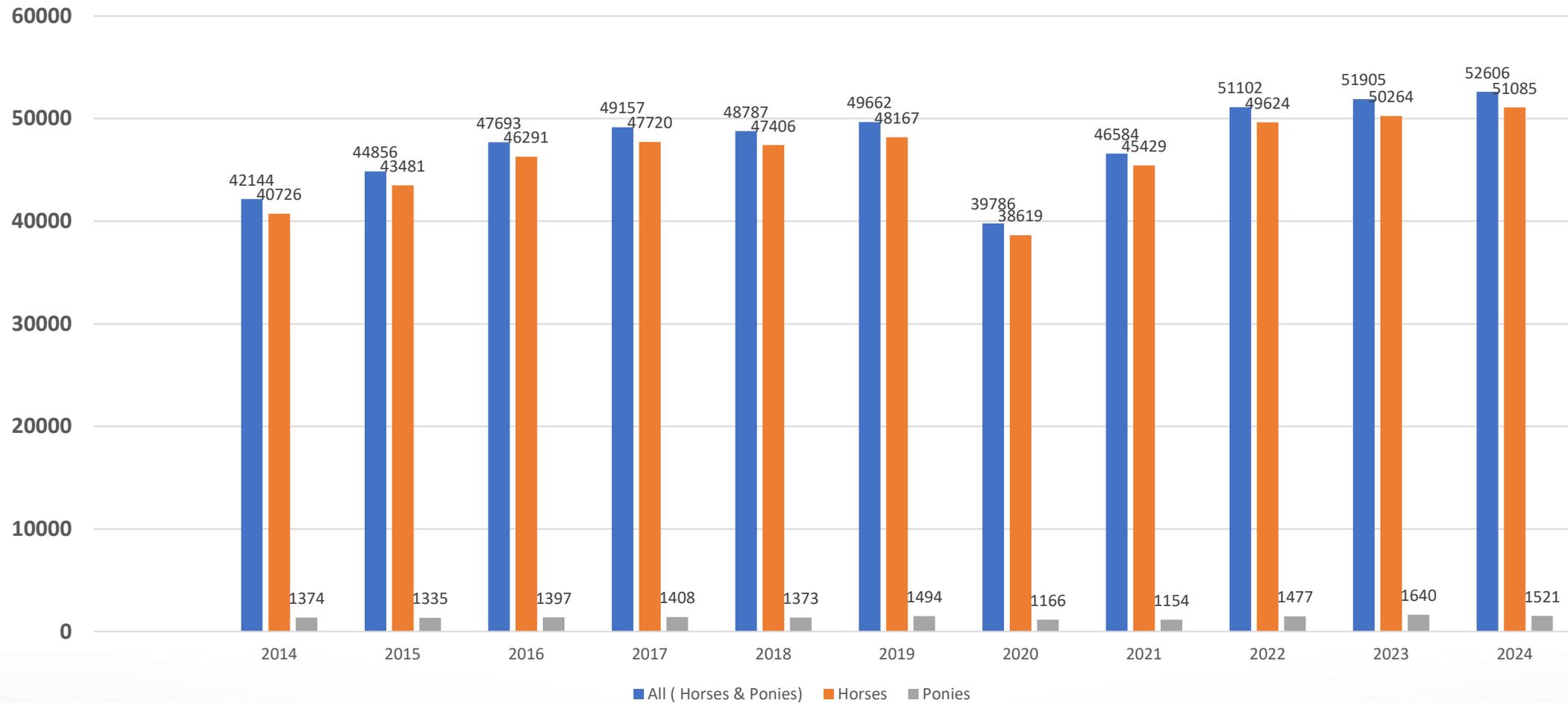


## FEI Eventing Horses Registered





## FEI Jumping Horses Registered



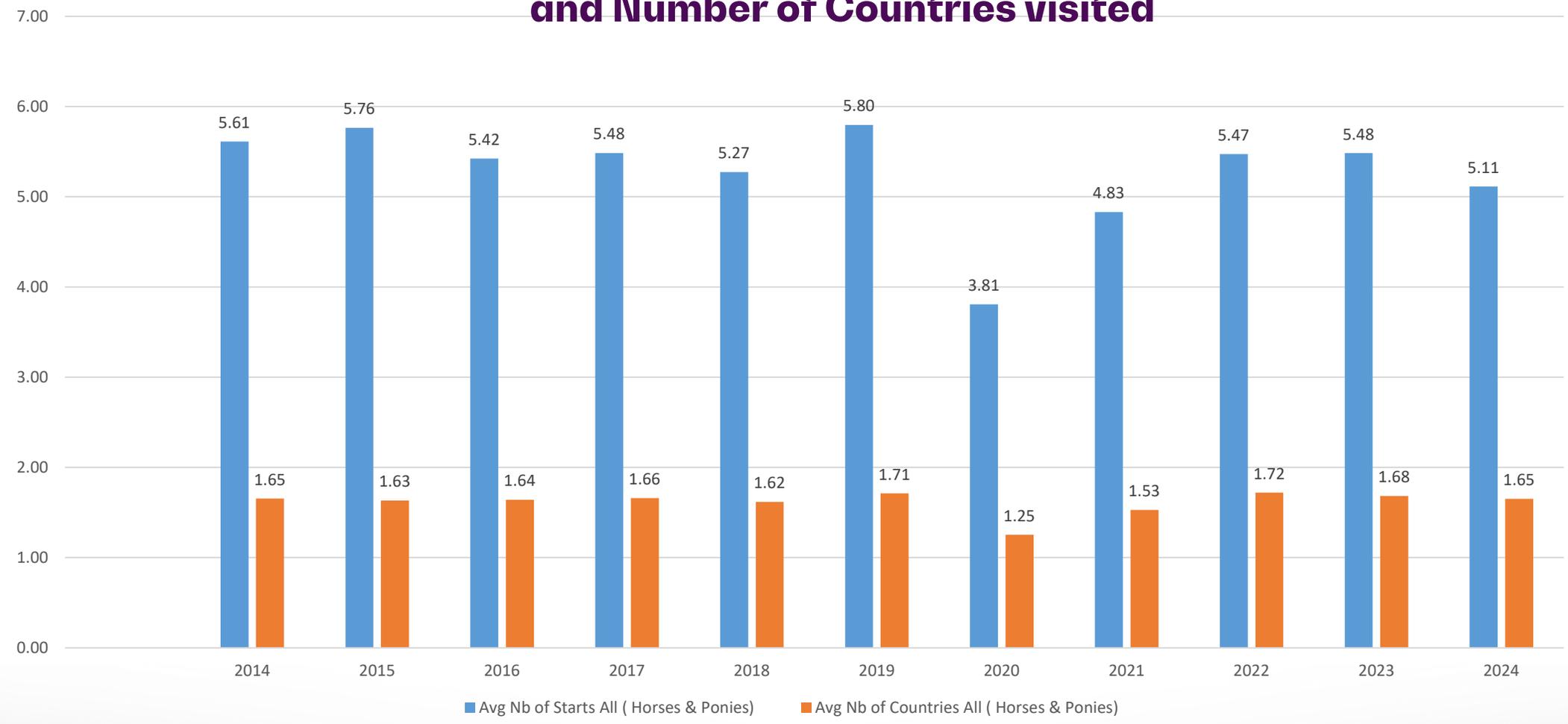


## Average Age of Dressage Horses at OGs and FEI WC and Championships

Average of Horse - FEI Age	Year											
Events	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024
CDI-W Final	12.72	13.28	13.06	14.33	14.72	13.06	13.72	14.17		13.82	13.63	13.06
CH-EU-D		13.17		13.24		12.82		12.30	12.74		12.55	
CH-M-D										12.71		
Olympic Games-D	12.92				13.33				13.43			13.27
WEG-D			13.37				13.35					
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>12.87</b>	<b>13.19</b>	<b>13.32</b>	<b>13.46</b>	<b>13.65</b>	<b>12.86</b>	<b>13.42</b>	<b>12.69</b>	<b>13.06</b>	<b>12.88</b>	<b>12.75</b>	<b>13.22</b>

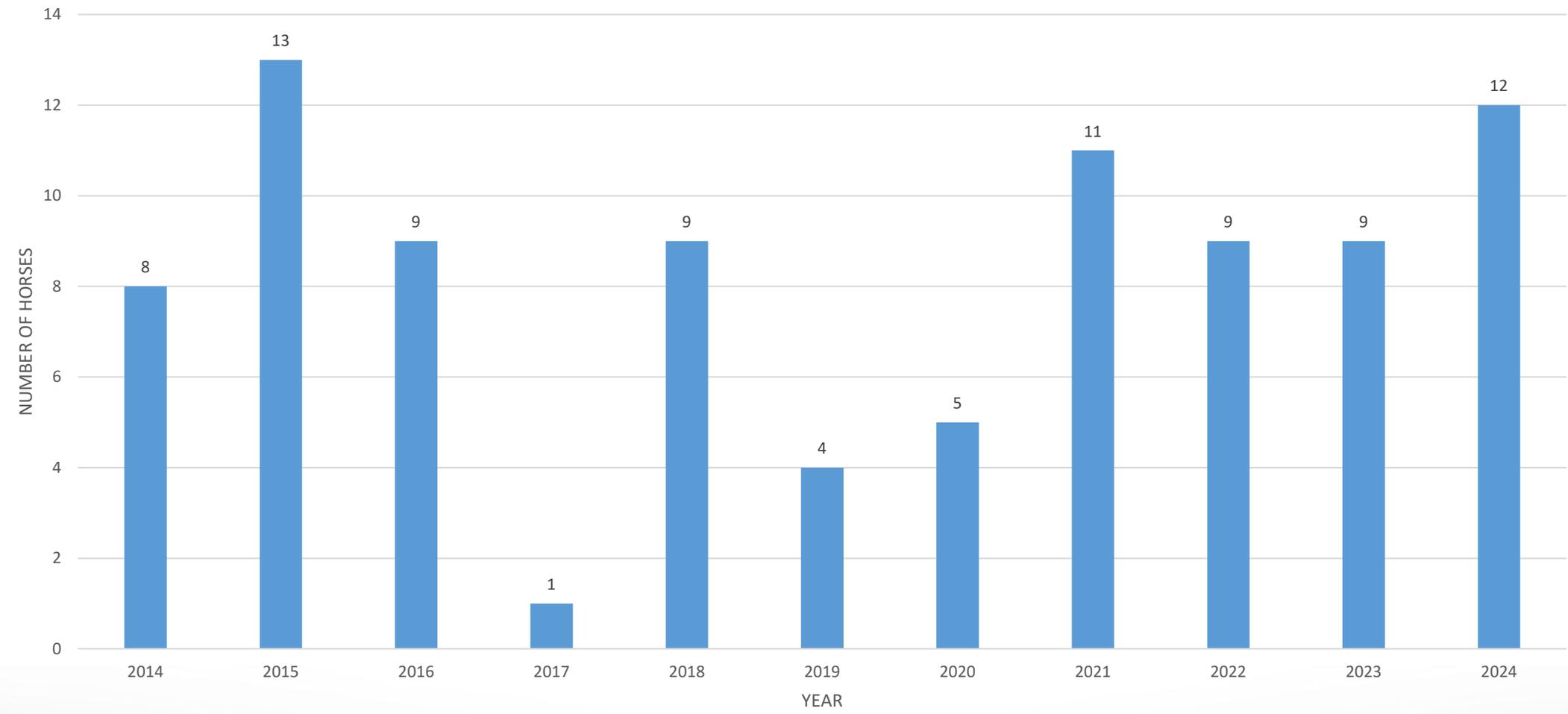


## Total starts in Grand Prix for Dressage Horses and Number of Countries visited





## Number of 8 year-old Horses in Grand Prix





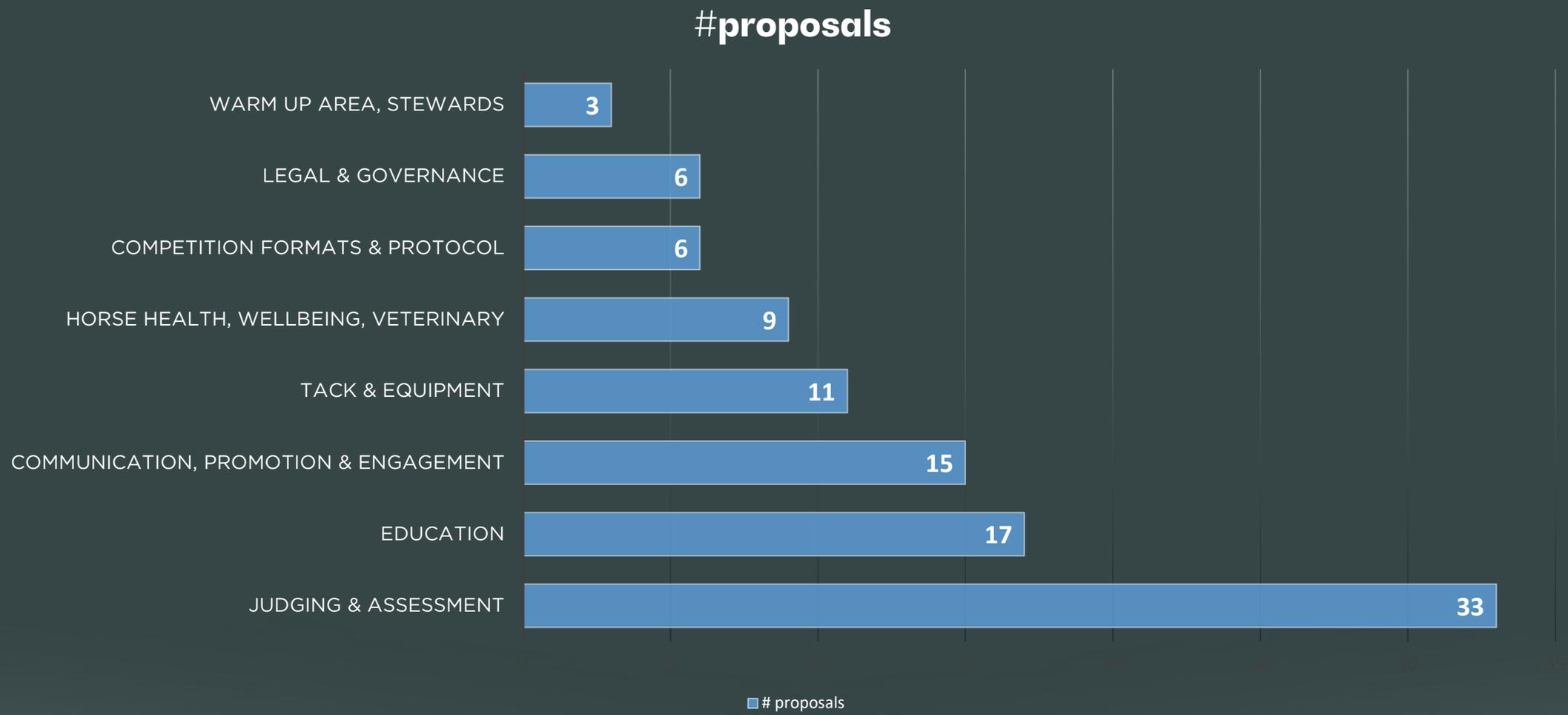
## Foundational Strategic Focus Areas

- Feedback / Suggestions from Stakeholders in advance of the October 1 Meeting.
- Strategic Focus Areas being prioritized or looked at first (before deeper exploration, action and recommendations)
  - Judging & Assessment
  - Education
  - Communication, promotion & engagement
  - Tack & Equipment
  - Horse Health, Wellbeing, Veterinary
  - Competition Formats & Protocols
  - Legal & Governance
  - Warm Up Area, Stewards





## Summary of proposals received in advance of October 1<sup>st</sup> meeting

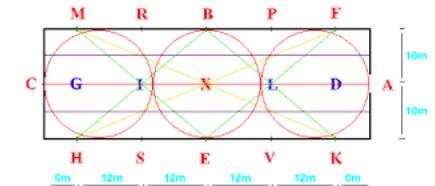




Preliminary Focus Area	Areas for Consideration / Discussion Points
Judging & Assessment	Adding a rideability score to the tests – reward good riding. Review and possibly rename existing collective mark – marks?
Judging & Assessment	Judges remarks / comments to be made public?
Judging & Assessment	Introduce a button for judges to alert one another where concerns arise over the competency of the combination at the level being assessed?
Judging & Assessment	Review the viewing / seating position of the Judges assessing the test (long side vs short side)?
Judging & Assessment Communication, Promotion & Engagement	Continued development and use of AI in Judging?

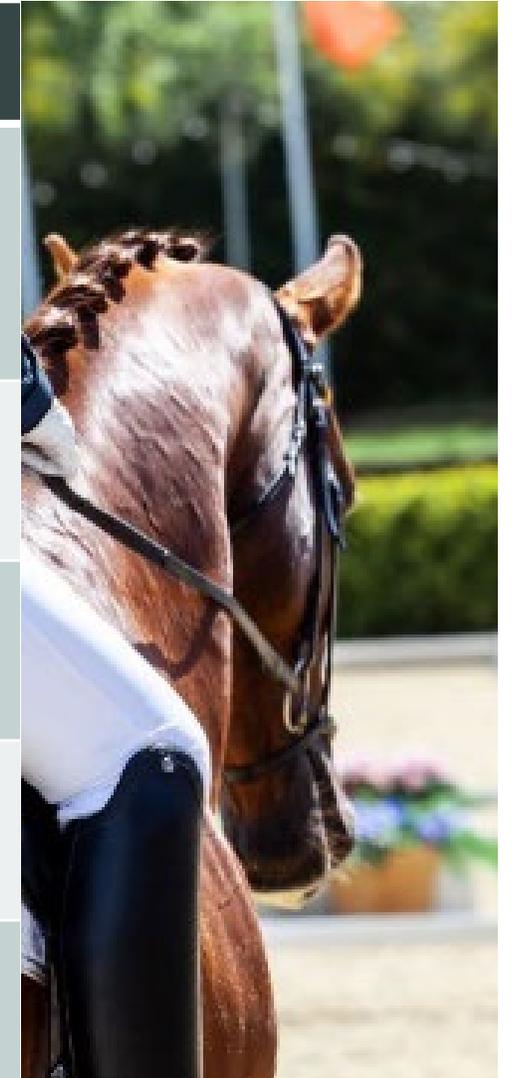


Preliminary Focus Area	Areas for Consideration / Discussion Points
Judging & Assessment	Review the DoD and Freestyles in general to prioritise harmony and the dressage scale of training.
Judging & Assessment	Clarity on issues with the contact / tongue.
Judging & Assessment	Review and revise the tests. Introduce movements to demonstrate harmony, freedom of movement, acceptance of the bridle. Align with the agreed Object of Dressage?
Judging & Assessment	Observe the combination also during the time prior to entering the arena at A?
Judging & Assessment	Judge to participate in post competition press conference.
Judging & Assessment	Review 2018 Dressage Judges Working Group (DJWG) Report and Recommendations?
Judging & Assessment	Review Judging Guidelines and Firewalls?
Judging & Assessment Education	Reintroduce a Judge General or Panel to monitor judging and to improve communication & education at all levels? Evaluate role of the JSP and JAG?





Preliminary Focus Area	Action
Horse health, wellbeing, veterinary.	Minimize potential stress. Noise (clapping during the test), prize giving, volume of music? Allow horses to start from inside or outside the arena boards?
Horse health, wellbeing, veterinary.	Review the minimum age of horses for GP and review the number of competitions per horse per year?
Horse health, wellbeing, veterinary.	Review the young horse classes and the progression of these horses in the sport? Research project.
Horse health, wellbeing, veterinary.	Review format of the Horse Inspection?
Horse health, wellbeing, veterinary.	Clarity re conflict behaviours and competition exertions.



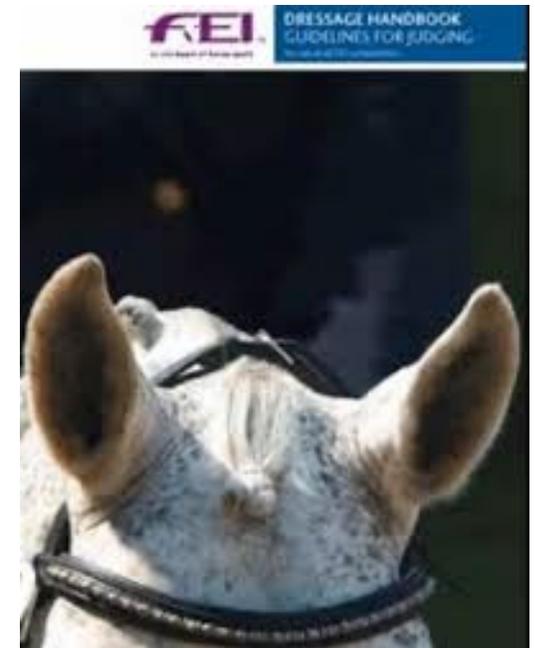


Preliminary Focus Area	Action
Tack & Equipment	Trial period. Allow choice of double versus snaffle bridle up to and including 3* GP level? Athlete age category for using double bridle?
Tack & Equipment	Standardize noseband across all GP classes regardless of choice of double versus snaffle bridle?
Warm up area, Stewards	Use an additional FEI Official / Vet delegate to support the stewards in overseeing the warm up area?
Warm up area, Stewards	Foam to be cleaned from horses lips before entering or during the warm up at the request of the FEI official / vet delegate?





Preliminary Focus Area	Action
Communication, Promotion & Engagement Education	Improved technical commentary and access to live feed during the test?
Communication, Promotion & Engagement Education	Running score (individual judges marks) to be reintroduced for the public?
Communication, Promotion & Engagement Education	Raise awareness of lifetime care of Dressage horses post competition career / retirement?
Legal & Governance	Registration & FEI ID number to be assigned to all Trainers?
Education	Collaborate with the Ethical Training Methods Working Group.
Education	Make Judging guidelines widely available.
Communication, Education	Continue collaboration between Riders, Trainers and Officials.





  
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# Panel Discussion





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Thank You