



May 10, 2023 14:00 BST

New figures show health of cricket in England and Wales

New research published by the ECB highlights the health of cricket in England and Wales following growth in the number of fans, players, match attendances and TV viewers over recent years.

The data was shared with representatives from the wider cricket community at the ECB's 2023 AGM which was held at Emirates Old Trafford today. Key findings include:

13 million people describe themselves as fans of cricket, including 11.8

million adults and 1.2 million children. 1.5 million more people played, attended or followed cricket in 2022 compared to the launch of the ECB's Inspiring Generations strategy in 2020.

Total attendance at cricket matches bounced back from COVID disruption to reach 2.9 million in 2022. This is the second highest annual attendance on record and the highest ever when excluding global events such as the 2019 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

Up to 2.6 million people are estimated to have played cricket in 2022, including 1.4 million players aged under 16. Growth in children playing cricket has been boosted by the ECB's national programmes to introduce the game to new players, All Stars Cricket and Dynamos Cricket, which welcomed more than 100,000 participants for the second year running in 2022.

The number of Women's and Girls fixtures hit a record 20,577 in 2022, almost twice the previous year's total of 10,603. There were 220 Women's and Girls' leagues (versus 152 in 2021) following growth of more than 50% since 2019 in the number of cricket clubs with a Women's section and/or a Girls' section. 1,079 clubs now have a Women's section while 755 have a Girls' section (up from 744 and 465 respectively in 2019).

9 million viewers watched cricket at least twice on TV during 2022, almost 20% more than in 2019. Due to the crowded sporting calendar of summer 2022, with an early start to football's Premier League and the Commonwealth Games and Women's Euros competing for attention, the number of viewers was down 13% on 2021.

There has also been a significant increase in diversity within governance across the game. Of 544 Board Members across County organisations, 188 Directors are female (35%, up from 11% in 2019), and 99 are ethnically diverse (18%, up from 5% in 2019). Over 70 new Non Executive Directors have been appointed across County organisations through a partnership with executive search specialists Perrett Laver.

Richard Gould, ECB Chief Executive Officer, said:

"These figures show that cricket is in a good position today following strong growth in fans, players, attendances and TV viewers over recent years. The

current health of the game is a credit to the work of many dedicated people across the cricket network.

“We know that there are challenges ahead and much more for us to do, particularly as the game unites behinds efforts to make cricket more inclusive, more diverse and more equitable. But with strong foundations on which to build and an exciting summer ahead for our England teams, we have a huge opportunity to grow the game and deliver even greater impact in communities across England and Wales.”

The ECB is also publishing its Financial Statements today for the year ending January 31, 2023. These show that turnover increased to £334m (from £303m the year before), while inflation and additional costs of delivering the game-wide 12-point plan contributed to a rise in expenditure (£315m, up from £282m the previous year) the Group returned a profit after taxation of £13.4m, down from £21.4m the year before. Group reserves increased to £35.4m, up from £23.0m the year before.

The appointments to the ECB Board of six new Non-Executive Directors – Pete Ackerley, Penny Avis, Baroness Zahida Manzoor CBE, Jennifer Owen Adams, Ebony Rainford-Brent MBE and Gareth Williams – were also ratified at today’s meeting.

Notes

1. Final numbers of adult cricket players will be confirmed following release of casual player data by Sport England.
2. Number of children playing cricket includes those playing at least four times per year and does not include those required to participate.
3. TV viewers includes those who watched on at least two occasions. Does not include viewing to Counties’ own streaming services.
4. The Financial Statements for 2022/23 are available [here](#)
5. The full membership of the ECB Board is:

Richard Thompson, Chair

Pete Ackerley, Cricket Non-Executive Director

Penny Avis, Independent Non-Executive Director

Katie Bickerstaffe, Senior Independent Non-Executive Director

Alan Dickinson, Cricket Non-Executive Director

Richard Gould, Chief Executive Officer

Sir Ron Kalifa, Independent Non-Executive Director

Baroness Zahida Manzoor CBE, Independent Non-Executive Director

Jennifer Owen Adams, Cricket Non-Executive Director

Ebony Rainford-Brent MBE, Cricket Non-Executive Director

Scott Smith, Chief Financial Officer

Gareth Williams, Cricket Non-Executive Director

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