Has the Women's Super League (WSL) growth strategy been working? An analysis of the 2020/21 – 2023/24 seasons
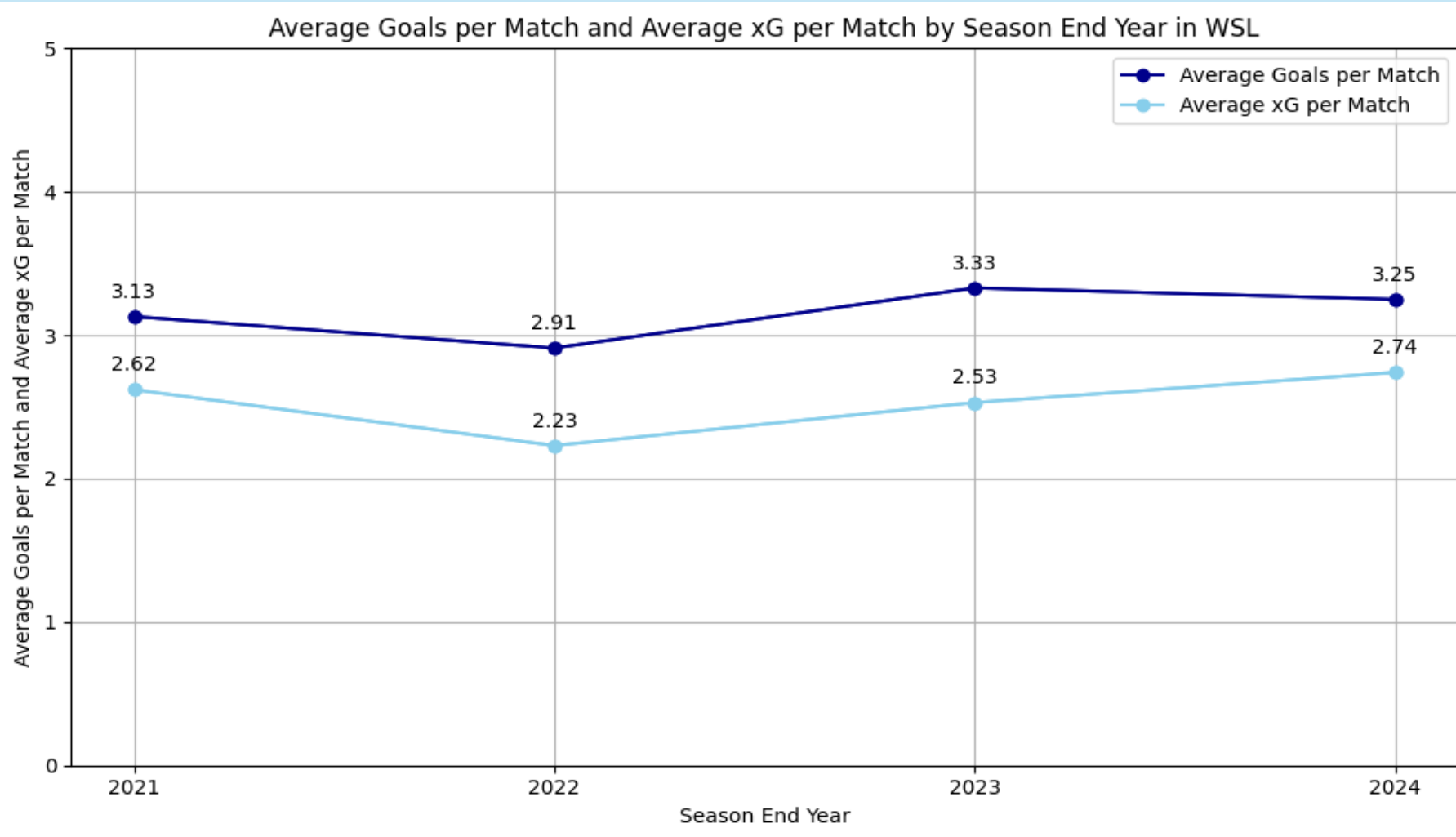

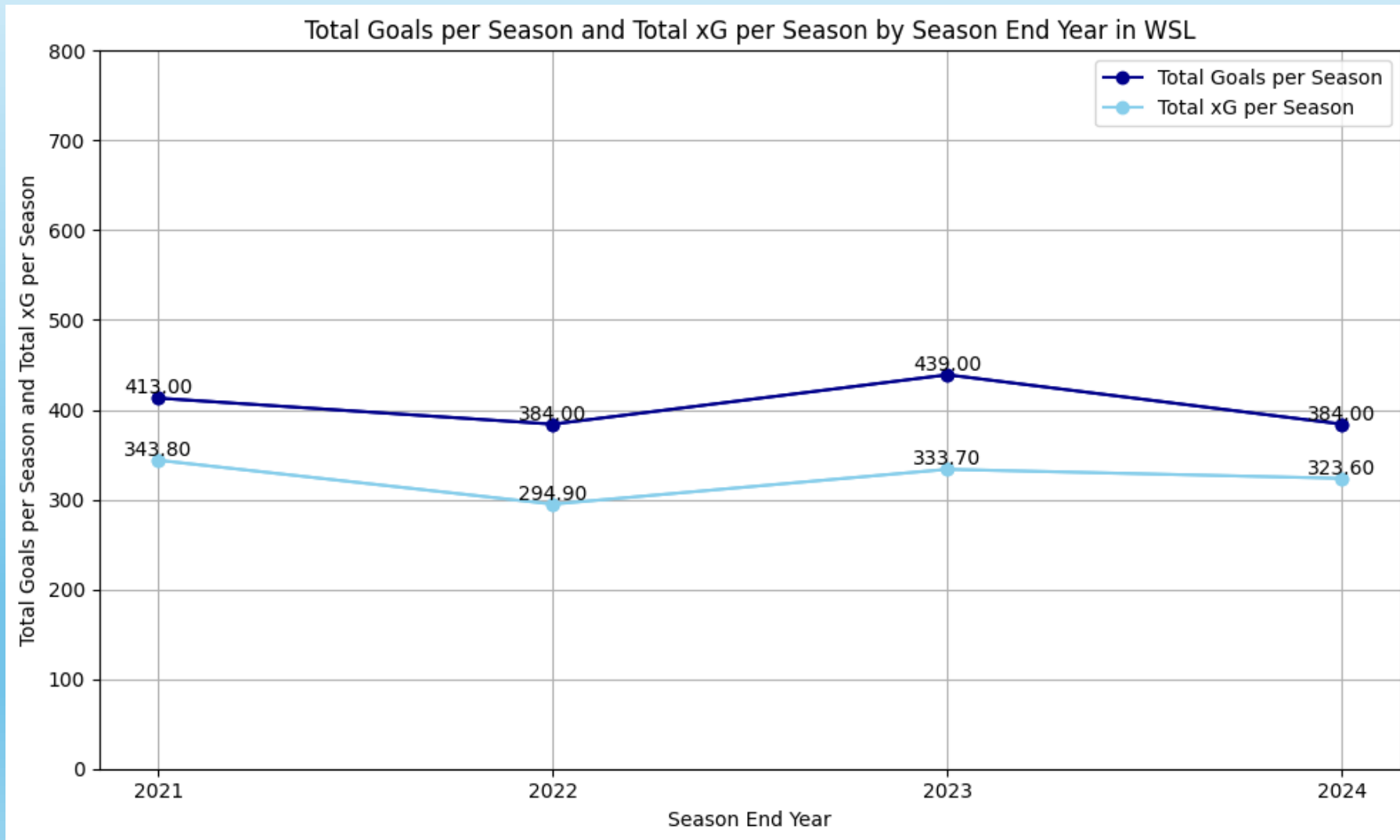By Uyi Erhabor

Executive Summary

- **Quality of the league** in terms of average goals and average expected goals (xG) per game has remained consistent

- Analysis of data available reveals no definitive trend of **competitive balance** in the WSL

- Total xG and Total goals have been **key drivers of attendances**

Minimal changes in average xG and average goals per match

Average Goals per Match and Average xG per Match by Season End Year in WSL

- Range in average goals per match (**0.42**)

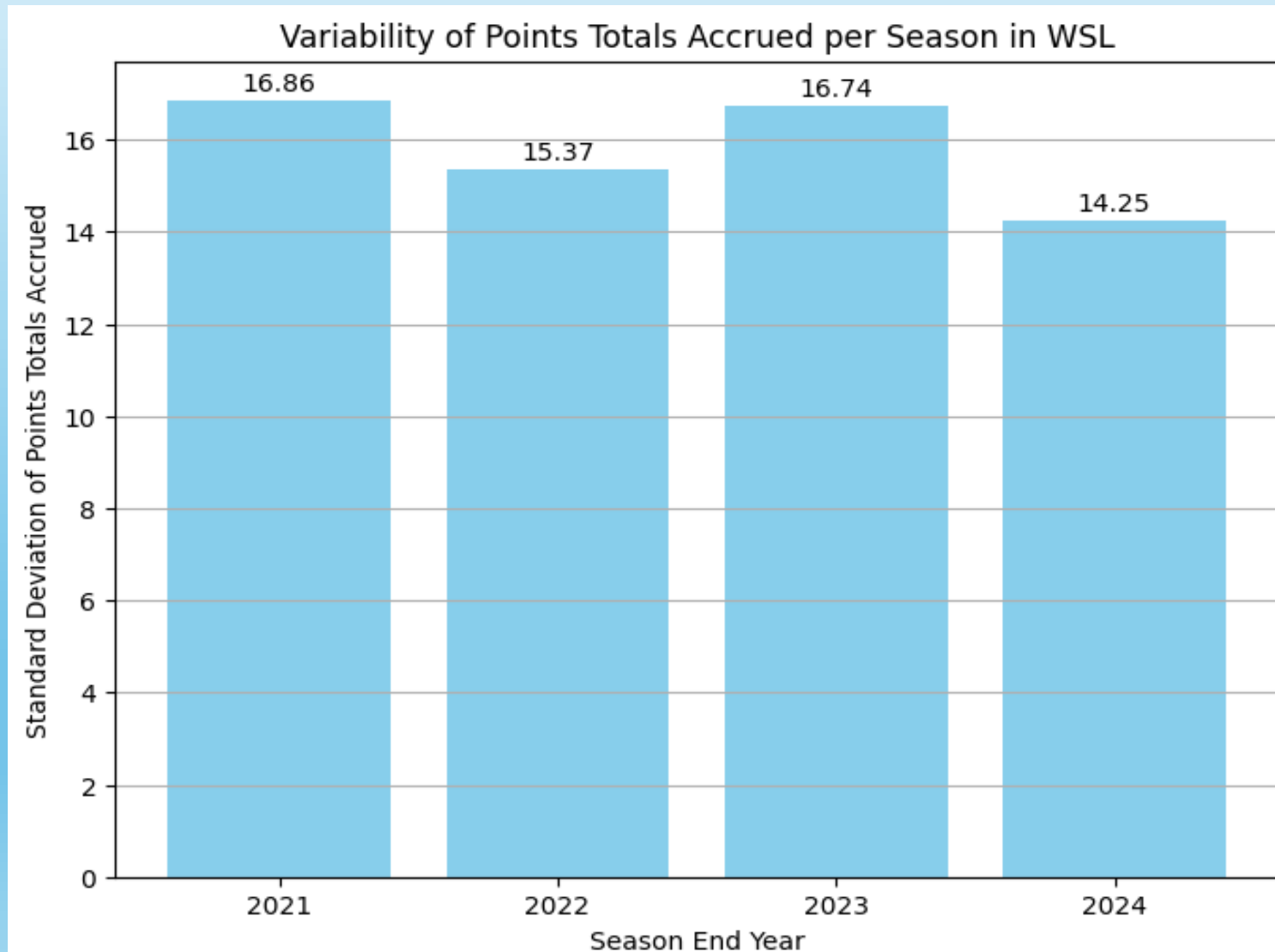- Range in average xG per match (**0.51**)
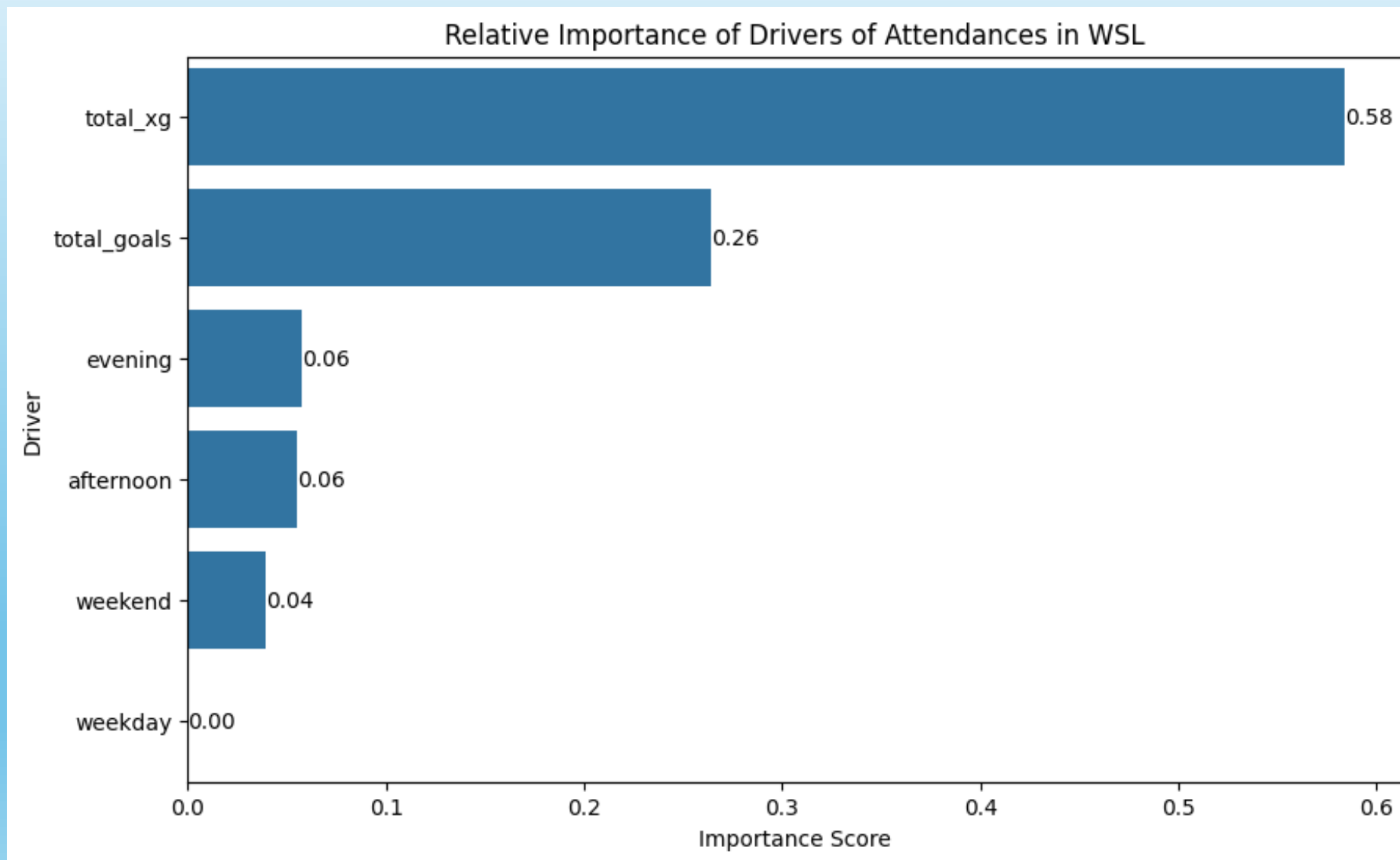
Noticeable variation in total goals and total xG

- Range in total goals (**55**)

- Range in total xG (**48.90**)

# Is the WSL establishing its level of competitive balance ?

Variability of Points Totals Accrued per Season in WSL

Key drivers of Attendance: Goals over everything?

Relative Importance of Drivers of Attendances in WSL

Key findings

- **Quality of the league** in terms of average goals and average expected goals (xG) per game has remained consistent

- Analysis of data available reveals no definitive trend of **competitive balance** in the WSL

- Total xG and Total goals have been **key drivers of attendances**

Season on Season Attendance Growth

Total Attendance per Season End Year in WSL
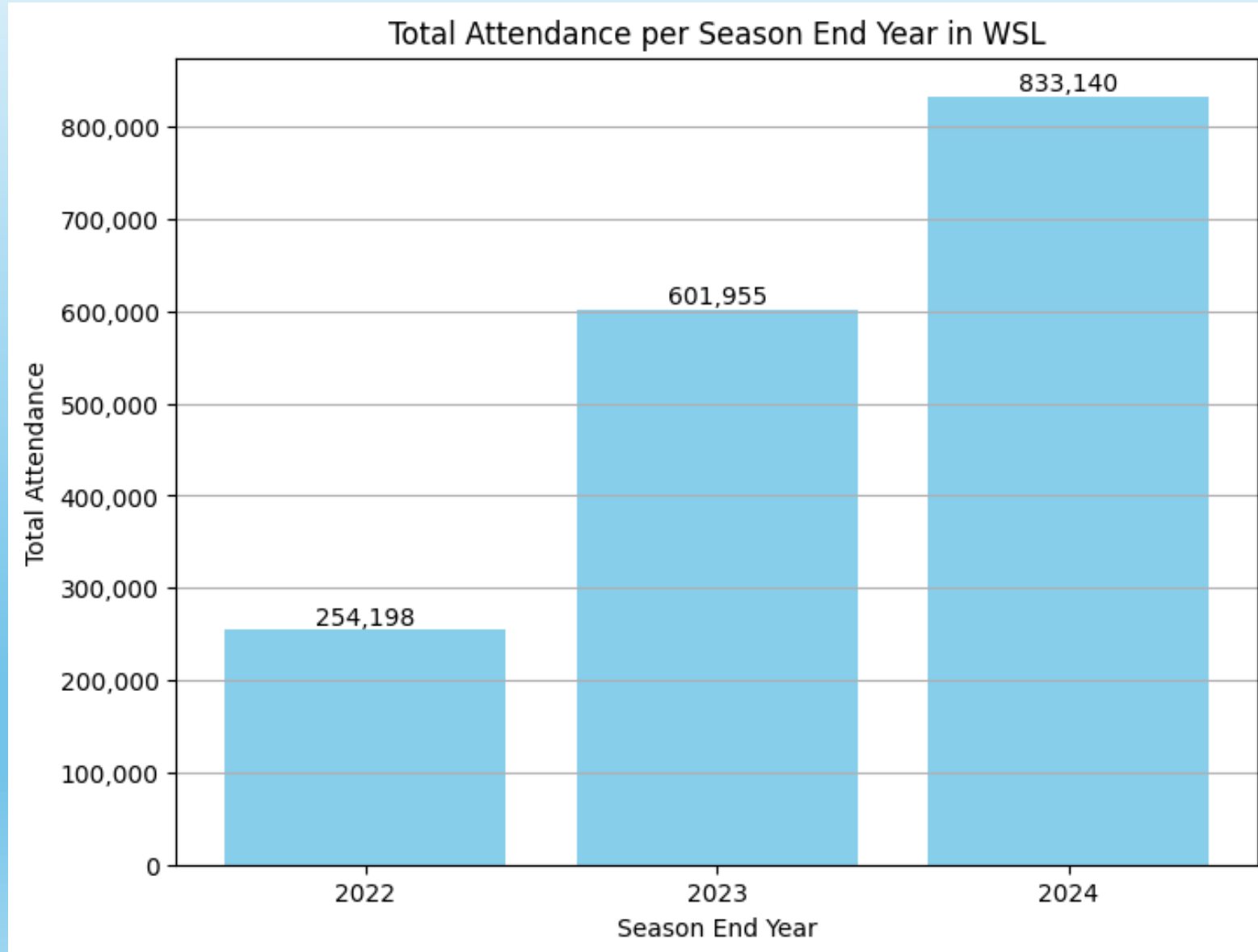
- **Percentage Change in over period analysed (69.49%)**

Has the WSL's growth strategy been working over the past few years?

- Analysis of trends in the **quality of the league, competitive balance** and **drivers** of **attendance** over at least the next 4 consecutive seasons (leveraging exhaustive data) should provide a more robust conclusion regarding the efficacy of the league's growth strategy

Additional analysis to complement existing analysis

- **Competitive Balance:** Points Distribution across seasons (calculated using the Gini coefficient measure of inequality)

- **Quality of league:** Goals Distribution (xG and goals) across venues for each season, **understand trends of high, medium and low-quality matches**

- Effect of additional drivers (different months of the year, referees and venues) on **attendance** determined using Random Forest Regression and at least one other model such as Gradient Boost