



Federation
of Veterinarians
of Europe

EQUIPPING FARMERS TO BETTER PREVENT ANIMAL DISEASE
OUTBREAKS • ANIMALHEALTHEUROPE • IRISH PRESIDENCY

How can vets support farmers with preventive health advice?

Nancy De Briyne, FVE Executive Director

14 October 2026 • Brussels



WHY PREVENTION, WHY NOW



Europe is facing growing epidemic pressure

7,119 outbreaks

65 M animals culled

1.6 M pigs, sheep, goats, cattle

Animals culled	2023	2024	2025	2026*	Total
HPAI (birds)	10.5 M	10.9 M	27.9 M	14.3 M	63.5 M
ASF (pigs)	230k	217k	290k	98k	836k
SGP	21k	95k	413k	59k	588k
FMD	–	–	16k	149k	165k
Outbreaks	1,380	1,048	3,214	1,477	7,119

Source: WOAHS WAHIS outbreak reports, EU Member States, outbreaks starting 1 Jan 2023 – 12 Oct 2026 (FVE analysis). Animals killed and disposed of; ASF = domestic pigs. *2026 to 12 October.

WHY PREVENTION, WHY NOW



Back after decades, or never seen before

BACK AFTER DECADES

FMD HU, SK

FMD DE

ASF ES

FMD GR

FIRST EVER (IN EU or CERTAIN MS)

2020+ **ASF** · DE, SE, HR

2022 **EHD** · IT, ES: new to EU

2024 **PPR** · GR, RO, HU, HR

2024 **BTV-12** · NL: new to EU

2025 **LSD** · IT, FR, ES

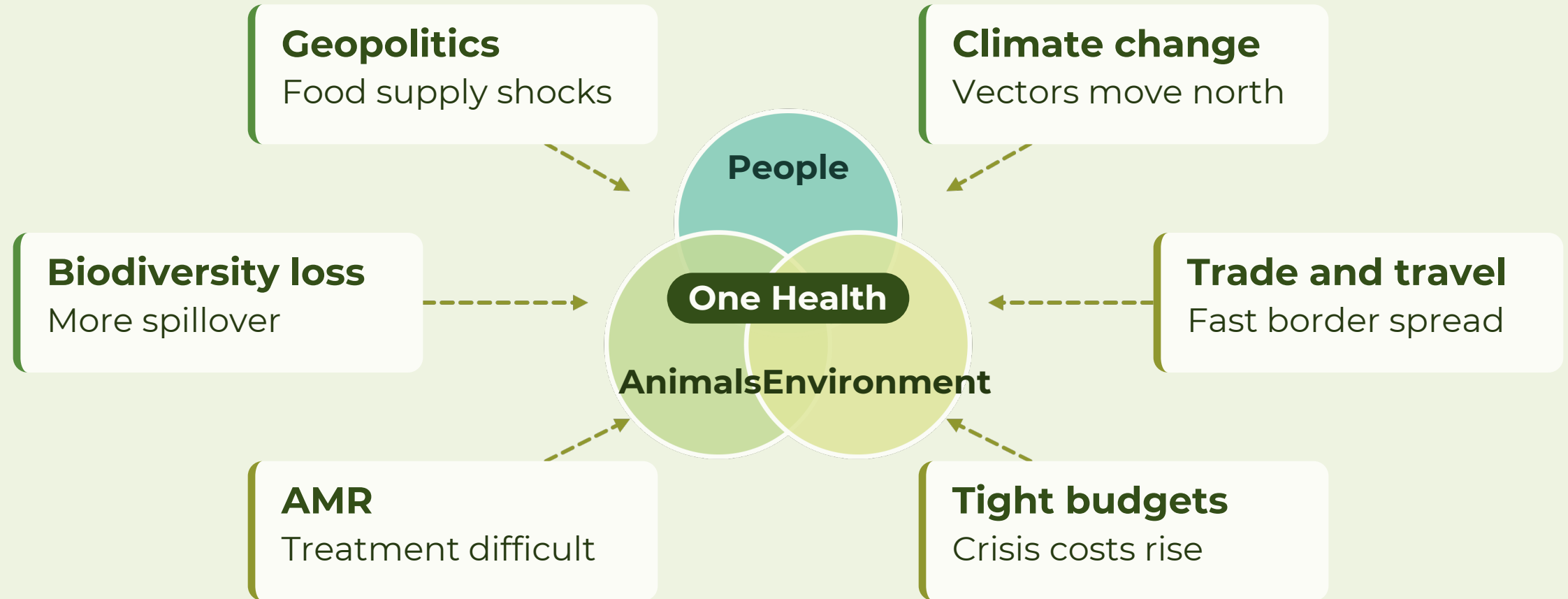
2026 **Shamonda** · +5 countries

Record scale: SGP in Greece, 2,194 outbreaks, ~493,000 animals culled

“One Health will remain an aspiration until animal health is genuinely built into how we plan and invest.” — Dr Emmanuelle Soubeyran, WOAHA Director General, 2026



A changing world makes prevention more urgent





The prevention tool already exists in EU law

Animal Health Law, Article 25 (since April 2021): operators must ensure **risk-based animal health visits by a veterinarian**. Visits can be combined with other visits.



1

Biosecurity

Tailored advice to the farmer on animal health

2

Early detection

Spotting listed and emerging diseases early

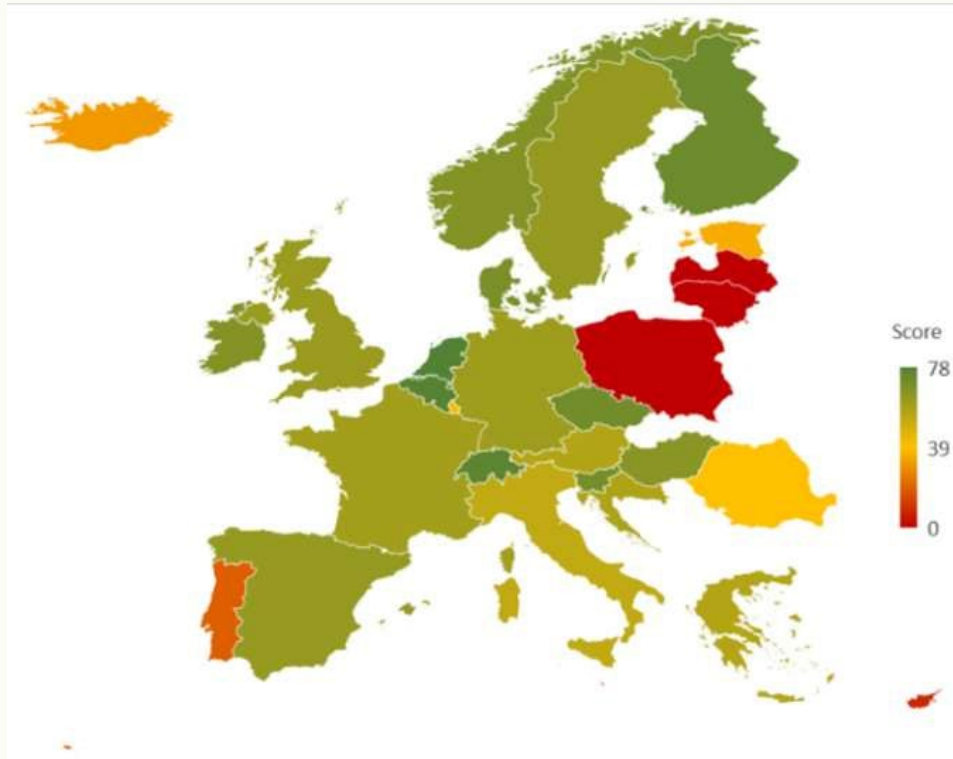
3

Surveillance

Authorities use what visits find (Art. 26)



Five years on: implemented, but not harmonised



0 countries reach the ideal score

8 Member States score below 40

22 countries include biosecurity, named in Art. 25

Full report: [FVE survey on animal health visits \(fve.org\)](https://fve.org)



What makes a visit real advice, not a tick-box

A dedicated vet

An ongoing farmer–vet relationship

Risk-based

Frequency set by species and risk

Written plan

Clear advice the farmer can act on

Follow-up

Measures checked at the next visit

Data that counts

Farm data feeds surveillance

Combined visits

Welfare, AMR and CAP advice in one



One Health: fewer zoonoses, less AMR, safer food



When prevention is funded, farmers use it

IRELAND • TASAH

Free on-farm visits by trained private vets,
funded by DAFM, run by Animal Health
Ireland

85,576

visits since 2016

26,000

offered in 2026

Up to 3 hours of advice per visit

AUSTRIA

Farmer–vet herd health contracts
since 2010

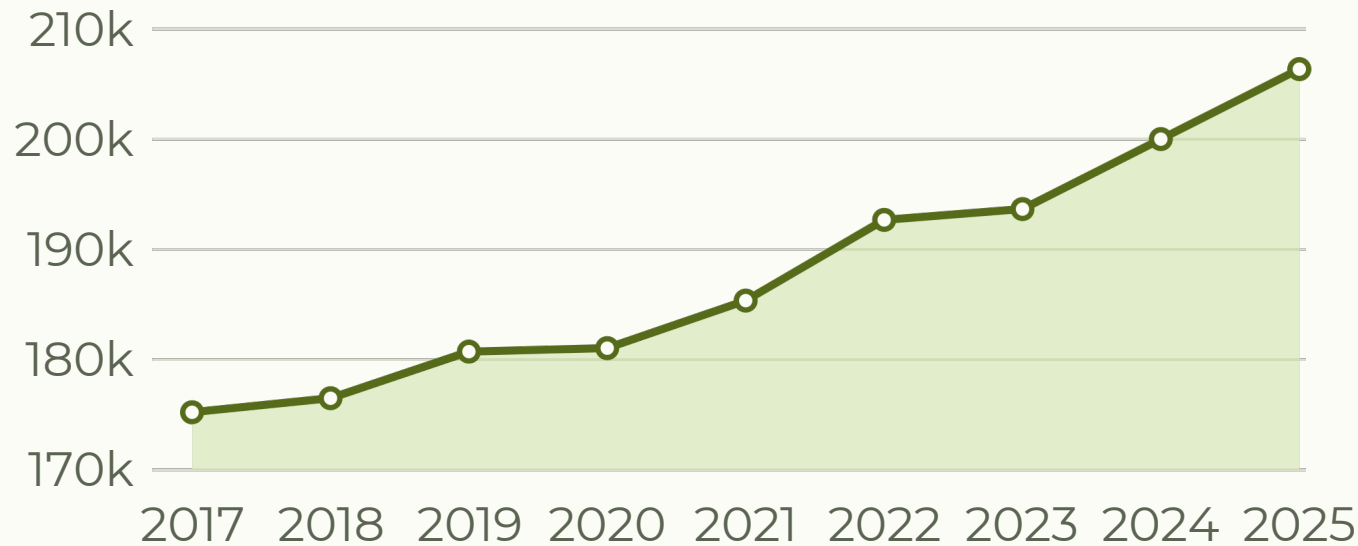
Up to 26 visits a year, by farm type

Coordinated by Animal Health
Austria since 2023



More vets than ever, but not where needed

Active vets, EU + EFTA



207,000+
active vets in 2025

+6%
companion vets since 2023

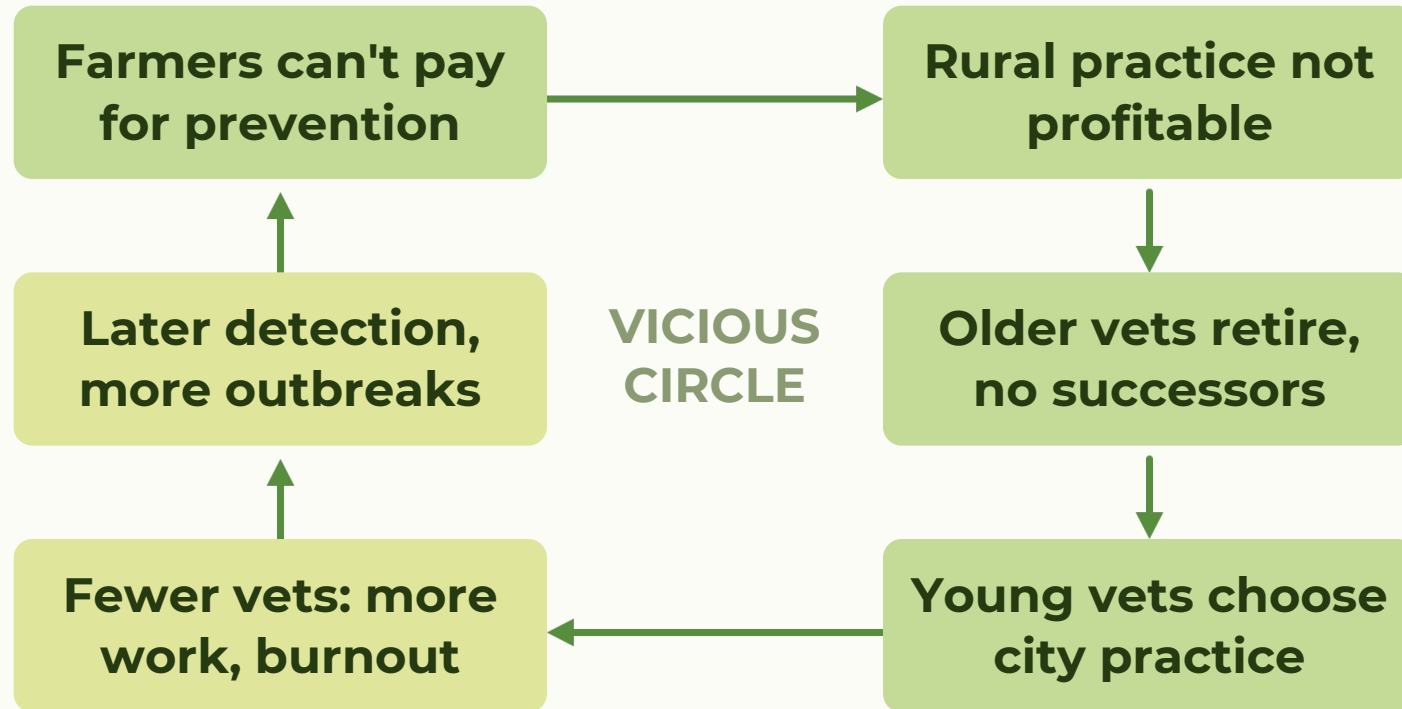
-6%
cattle vets since 2023

~80% of countries lack rural vets

35% of students reject livestock work



A vicious circle in rural practice



BREAK THE CIRCLE

Paid visits plus rural careers

Steady demand keeps practices open; mentoring and incentives bring young vets in.

‘Veterinary desertification is the last sign before agricultural desertification.’



Countries are already testing solutions

Where	Measure	Result so far
France	Tutored rural internships	80% stay in rural practice
Bavaria	Rural vet study quota	10 years in rural livestock work
Romania	State-paid rural contracts	Full territorial coverage
Norway	Funded rural mentoring	75 mentor pairs by mid-2026
Nordics	Public district vets	24/7 farm cover everywhere
Denmark, UK	Vet schools close to farms	DK intake 30 → 100 students
Scotland	Subsidised crofter visits	Remote herds stay covered

No miracle solution: combine education, money and support



AHL evaluation: the gaps are in implementation

Prevention

“...the principle of ‘prevention is better than cure’”

Preparedness

“...reinforced preparedness, enabling vaccination and upgrading contingency planning requirements.”

AHL visits today

“...a mixed application of basic operator's surveillance through animal health visits according to Article 25...”

Next step

“The Commission can develop rules with criteria and baseline frequency of animal health visits and develop guidance on biosecurity”

Workforce

“...resource issues, especially a shortage of veterinarians.”



Livestock strategy: prevention comes first

The threat	<i>“Animal diseases including zoonoses remain among the most serious threats to livestock resilience...”</i>
Prevention	<i>“Strong biosecurity measures remain a first line of defence and are an essential element of prevention.”</i>
One Health	<i>“...a basis for updating the Union's One Health approach to disease management.”</i>
Advisory	<i>“...ensure adequate advisory services and sufficient veterinary staffing by introducing financial incentives for veterinarians in rural areas.”</i>
Vets on farms	<i>“...access to and uptake of preventive tools, including biosecurity and vaccines and ensure adequate advisory services and sufficient veterinary staffing”</i>



Four asks to European decision makers

1 Make Article 25 work
EU minimum standards per species,
incl. biosecurity

2 Pay for prevention
Fund visits via CAP; shift money from
compensation

3 Keep vets in rural areas
Recruit, retain, return: mentoring and
incentives

4 Use all prevention tools
Incl. vaccination, accepted by trade
partners

Replacing vets with lower-qualified staff won't fix the gap

Prevention is cheaper than controlling outbreaks. Vaccination is better than mass culling.

Prevention is better than cure.

**Prevention only works with the
people to deliver it.**

**Healthy animals, healthy people, healthy
planet: One Health starts on the farm.**

Read more at fve.org: FVE positions on animal health
visits, vaccination and farm biosecurity; workforce report
and 4th VetSurvey

Thank you · nancy@fve.org

