FEDERATION OF VETERINARIANS OF EUROPE

2023 Annual Report
The past years have presented us with unparalleled challenges, from pandemics to sky-high inflation and war. Despite these challenges, we remained resilient through it all and continued to stand stronger than ever – both financially and professionally.

I am delighted, together with the newly elected Board, to present this annual report. In 2023, several of our Working Groups have undergone renewal. Additionally, a task force has been initiated to explore the potential establishment of a foundation supporting animals and veterinarians. I extend my gratitude to all Members who nominated experts to contribute to these endeavours, as well as to the many experts who represent continuously FVE at the various meetings and conferences, in Brussels and abroad.

These contributions to the expert meetings, working groups and task forces are the front and centre of our Federation. Their dedication is evident! Further updates on the work will be presented in subsequent sections.

To conclude, the Federation of Veterinarians is not merely an organisation; it is a dynamic force driven by the collective passion and dedication of its members. By all of you! Together, we can and will navigate the challenges of today and shape the future of the European veterinary community. Thank you for your continued trust and commitment to our shared mission.

Siegfried Moder, FVE President on behalf of the FVE Board and FVE Secretariat
This year, FVE ran the third large-scale survey of the veterinary profession in Europe, allowing us to identify trends and understand the evolving needs and challenges faced by our profession: European veterinarians are in a growing young profession and are becoming predominantly female. These societal changes in the profession need to go hand in hand with changes in professional culture. We must ensure that all veterinarians, irrespective of background, feel welcome, and acknowledged, and are provided pathways to rewarding careers.

Workforce shortages is a common challenge our profession is currently facing. We now see veterinary shortages in many countries and sectors. This poses a challenge for the future as it endangers a solid veterinary network to protect animal health, welfare and food safety. It also puts pressure on the remaining workforce, leading to recruitment, retention and return challenges. FVE advocates for the implementation of policies focused on recruitment, retention, and return to safeguard the continuity of veterinary care and the thrive of our profession! This year’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness campaign ‘FVE - United in Diversity’ and the interactive session during the General Assembly on ‘Recent graduate networks’ were important steps towards this.

One of the outcomes of our third survey is a demonstration that private clinical practice is changing rapidly. Practice size is increasing in all countries. In addition, while slow in some countries, and fast in others, corporatisation leads to larger practices. More veterinarians work as veterinary employees instead of owners. This has an impact on earnings, work patterns and work culture. Further attention is needed to ensure all types and sizes of veterinary practices will remain viable, that veterinary oversight is maintained, and that consumers have a choice from diverse business models.

Promoting preventive veterinary medicine and embracing the One Health approach is essential for animals, people and our planet. The Animal Health Law lays down obligations for all establishments keeping animals to organise regular animal visits. We must ensure that countries implement this and collaborate with the veterinary profession to ensure enough qualified veterinarians are available to perform these visits, especially in rural areas! In addition, FVE has consistently advocated to competent authorities and industry alike that veterinarians need medicines in the toolbox to treat animals, in all countries, for all species and especially for essential indications. **We need new vaccines for emerging diseases and we need alternatives to antimicrobials!**
In 2023, the FVE Board and Secretariat attended almost 600 meetings in Brussels and abroad to monitor and follow up on the core activities, projects and public affairs.

Conducting research is not one of FVE’s core activities. Nevertheless, over the years FVE has been involved in many EU research projects that align with the FVE Strategy priorities. FVE engagement in projects is beneficial to promote One Health and sustainability, being recognised and influential and embracing technology.

Through its visibility and networking, FVE contributes to setting the European research agenda and obtains results to support the position of the veterinary profession. This fosters FVE’s credibility as a science-driven, credible partner, contributing to solutions and bridging the gap between theory and practice.
FVE proudly presented the 3rd VetSurvey report on the veterinary profession demography across Europe. From 2015 to 2022 the continuity of this survey enables us to track the trends and anticipate future developments and challenges.

The FVE Board wish to thank all the members and partner organisations who played a pivotal role in translating, promoting, and further disseminating the survey. A special thanks goes to the FVE task force who analysed the results and made points for further consideration (pg 7-12). Above all, thanks to all committed veterinarians who took the time to answer this survey. Read the full report HERE.

FVE also compared the stress levels and well-being among European veterinarians between 2018 and 2023 in a scientific publication: HERE.
328,494
Is the estimated number of veterinarians in Europe. Half of them live in Germany, Ukraine, Italy, the United Kingdom and Spain. Unemployment has decreased, even to the extent that we see veterinary shortages in many countries and sectors.

49%
Have been working as veterinarians for more than 15 years. Veterinary medicine means different career options. We must ensure veterinary workplaces are ready for this, and that enough veterinarians are available to meet the market demands.

**KEY FACTS:**
WHAT VETERINARIANS PREDICT FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

- **Growth** in demand for veterinary services for companion animals and exotics
- **Decline** in demand for equine, goat and sheep veterinary care and treatment
- **Growth** in areas of practice: specialist services and telemedicine
- **Strong demand** for training in communication, business and digital skills
WEBINAR HIGHLIGHTS

FVE/PVSG webinar on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Preparedness

On April 6th, FVE and the Poultry Veterinary Study Group of the EU (PVSGEU) were delighted to host a joint webinar on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza preparedness, which gathered scientists, private poultry practitioners, state veterinary officers, the industry and policymakers alike. FVE Past-President Rens van Dobbenburgh welcomed the more than 250 participants and shared his very personal experience of stamping out measures, back when he was a poultry practitioner. Please find more information HERE.

FVE/FECAVA on challenges and opportunities of FIP treatment

On July 4th, FVE and the Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations (FECAVA) hosted a joint-joint webinar on the challenges and opportunities of Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP) treatment. The webinar gathered scientists, practitioners, competent authorities, the pharmaceutical industry and policymakers alike. Read our summary brochure on FIP treatment options within the EU and beyond and find more information HERE.
ANIMAL WELFARE WORKING GROUP

The joint FVE/UEVP Animal Welfare Working Group was renewed at the beginning of 2023. The group, chaired by Vibe Lund with as co-chair Stefan Gunnarsson. They worked on

- Recommendations on horizontal animal welfare indicators
- The long-awaited legislative proposal on kept animals, transport, slaughter and animal welfare labelling.
- They agreed to amplify further the 10 FVE key recommendations for better animal welfare.

The expert discussions focused on the revision of the animal welfare legislation, in particular the EU legislative proposals on the protection of animals during transport and the welfare of dogs and cats, and the European Citizens’ Initiative “Fur Free Europe”.

FVE will strengthen its communication on these important topics, which will keep the group busy for many months to come.

MEDICINES WORKING GROUP

The joint FVE/UEVP Medicines Working Group was renewed in September 2023. Jobke Van Hout, Netherlands, chairs this term and led the first meeting in December. This meeting focused on harmonised prescription and use of veterinary medicines, a better understanding of the availability and shortages of veterinary medicines, especially for minor species, and better recruitment, retention and return (RRR) of veterinary professionals. The next steps will be to work on best practices, justifications for exceptions, and infringements related to the national application of Art. 106 and to explore the gaps in the availability of veterinary medicines for minor species and VMP group, including but not limited to antimicrobials, anti-inflammatory, analgesic, anaesthetics and immunological.
MENTAL WELLBEING AND DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSIVENESS WORKING GROUP

On 6 September, the newly established joint FVE/FECAVA/IVSA working group on mental well-being, diversity, equity and inclusiveness met for their first meeting. FVE Vice-President Mette Uldahl was delighted to welcome the participants from all over Europe and highlighted the importance of this cooperation between the sister organisations to join efforts. Chair Tricia Colville (FECAVA) led the discussion on the two new projects: ‘Vet for a day’, an outreach programme for secondary school pupils, and the ‘Great Veterinary Workplace Award’, incentivizing workplaces that go the extra mile for mental well-being.

Two subgroups were formed to steer the implementation of the projects. The group expressed its gratitude to Zoetis for the financial support given to promote veterinary wellbeing which is crucial for the future of our profession.

VETERINARY PUBLIC HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY WORKING GROUP

Chaired by Ole Alvseike, Norway, the newly established Working Group on Veterinary Public Health and Sustainability met on 14th December. Reflected by the rebranding, the group’s remit encompasses for the term 2023-2026 key issues regarding veterinary public health and sustainability and in particular, address disease prevention, control, and management, safe and secure food supply and food waste management.

The group had a fruitful debate about the role of veterinarians in public health and the diversity and role of the animal production systems across the EU to identify their strategic objectives and deliverables. The next steps will focus on pandemic preparedness, including zoonoses prevention and antimicrobial resistance and sustainable aquaculture.
Established in mid-2023, this Task Force aims to explore the feasibility and practicality of establishing a European Veterinary Foundation aimed at providing support to veterinarians, animals, and the community.

Based on a comprehensive overview of existing veterinary-related charities, subsequent discussions delved into the viability and significance of establishing a European Veterinary Foundation. Topics included potential governmental and administrative structures, the integration/relration with FVE, the envisioned scope and remit, and the financial administration and day-to-day operational management.

The Statutory Bodies Working Group, Chaired by Dietmar Gernster, focused in their second year of the term 2022-2024 on
- the review of the Position Paper on telemedicine,
- workforce shortages,
- and veterinary para-professionals.

A project was finalised to assist Georgian colleagues in establishing their own Veterinary Statutory Body. To do so, a comprehensive overview report was produced providing an overview of the structure, tasks and financing of statutory bodies in Europe. A study for the Georgian colleagues took place in Vienna, to discuss the main findings and recommendations from the FVE report on Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSB) across Europe and to let them learn from other statutory bodies. Visits were organised to the Vienna Veterinary University (VetmedUni), the Austrian Veterinary Chamber (OTK), and the European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education (EAEVE). Together, we’re advancing the livestock sector and the veterinary profession in Georgia. Special thanks to the OTK, EAEVE and the VetFaculty for the great hospitality!

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FVE continued the close coordination of views with the European Association of Establishments of Veterinary Education (EAEVE), the European Board of Veterinary Specialisation (EBVS) and the International Veterinary Students’ Association (IVSA) via the European Coordinating Committee on Veterinary Training (ECCVT).

FVE/MSD SCHOLARSHIP

MSD Animal Health and FVE were honoured to announce that 68 veterinary students from across 26 veterinary faculties from the European Region have been awarded the 2023 Veterinary Student Scholarship Programme.

The review committee selected 68 students out of 212 applications. So far, the partnership between FVE and MSD Animal Health has provided scholarships for 364 veterinary students in the last 8 years, many of whom will surely become young leaders in the veterinary field.

FVE especially also thanks IVSA for the continuing support.
Collaborative ‘One Health’ Activities

EPRUMA
FVE stays a committed partner to EPRUMA, the European Platform on Responsible Use of Medicines for Animals. Jane Clark (FVE Vice-president) joined the EPRUMA Core Group, which had several meetings in 2023. The platform facilitates and promotes a co-ordinated and integrated approach on the Responsible Use of Medicines in Animals.

AMR ‘ONE HEALTH’ NETWORK
FVE was proud to become in 2023 an official member of the European Commission AMR One Health Network. This network, set up in 2017, is the main platform to discuss AMR in a One Health way. FVE presented the achievements in the animal health sector at the network meeting in 2023.

FEAM
FVE is part of the Advisory Forum of the Federation of European Academies of Medicine. A joint online workshop on 26th October 2023 drew attention to the current mental health challenges, affecting specifically the healthcare and veterinary sectors in the EU. More information HERE.

CPME
For more than 10 years, FVE has been closely working together with the European Doctors’ Association CPME and other European Healthcare professions to ensure a ‘One Health’ Approach e.g. joint press releases for European Antibiotic Awareness Day.
WORK started in 2023 on the implementation of ‘Vet for a Day’ as an outreach programme for teenagers, an annual ‘Great Veterinary Workplace Award’, a voucher system for veterinary workplace coaching and a framework for mentor/mentee system for young graduates. FVE is the coordinator of two ZOETIS projects on MWB and DEI.

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A multi-actor inter-sectorial project aimed at developing alternatives to antimicrobials for the management of bacterial infections in pigs, especially diarrhoea during the weaning period, the efficacy of the most promising interventions will be assessed by farm trials. FVE is a partner in the project, involved the DEC work package. (WP8)

FVE ANNUAL REPORT

YEAR 2023

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

HEALTHYLIVESTOCK

The research programme focusing on investigating the impact of improved animal health and welfare in reducing the necessity for antimicrobial usage in pigs and poultry was finalised in 2023. The programme encompassed various components, including the development of biosecurity tools, enhancement of animal resilience, rapid disease detection methods, targeted medication usage, and exploration of alternative solutions to antimicrobials. FVE is a DEC work package (WP6) leader of the project, and member of the core team.

ENOVAT COST ACTION

Optimise veterinary antimicrobial use with special emphasis on the development of antimicrobial treatment guidelines and refinement of microbiological diagnostic procedures. Surveys, tools, diagnostic methods, and treatment guidelines will be disseminated to national and international stakeholders. FVE is a co-leader in the reach-out taskforces and participate as an expert in the Guidelines development (WP4)

ARMOR CLUSTER

The ARMOR Cluster is a consortium of interconnected projects aimed at combating antimicrobial usage and resistance in livestock farming. These projects collaborate to devise strategies for preventing and addressing AMR through unified efforts. The cluster comprises ; HealthyLivestock, AVANT, DISARM, Roadmap, AMRILS, BM-FARM and FARM-CARE . FVE is the chair of the ArMoR Cluster under AVANT project as projects cluster leader.

AMR TRAINING FOR VETS AND FARMERS

Work started on hands-on training targeted to farmers and veterinarians working with food-producing animals to support the ‘F2F’ strategy target and an efficient implementation on the ground of the new measures to fight antimicrobial resistance.

FVE is a partners in the project, a part of the streaming committee and management team.
Looking ahead, FVE priorities in line with the Strategy objectives will focus on:

- Work further on medicines availability and the outstanding acts and implementation of the new medicines Regulations
- Work on Workforce Shortages with short and mid-term actions and support recent graduates
- Let the veterinary voice be heard in the new legislative proposals on Animal Welfare
- Explore technological advancements in Official Controls in and across sections to support veterinarians
- Let our voice be heard in the 2024 European Parliament elections
- Run successfully the projects FVE is involved in to support the veterinary profession

VETERINARY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE ALLEVIATION IS MULTIDIMENSIONAL!

RECRUITMENT
Awareness raising of the different career options
Attract diverse profile e.g. minority graduates
Ensure number of students places align with market demand

RETENTION
Mentoring/support young vets
Ensure fair remuneration
Monitor workplace satisfaction
Foster work-life balance
Special emphasis to the less served areas

RETURN
Provide pathways to return e.g. after maternity break