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COVER NOTE

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To:	Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union
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Subject:	COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Final Evaluation of Regulation (EU) 652/2014 (Union common financial framework) for the expenditure relating to the food chain, animal health and welfare and plant health and plant reproductive material for the period 2014-2020

Delegations will find attached document SWD(2026) 96 final.

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COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT

Final Evaluation of Regulation (EU) 652/2014 (Union common financial framework) for the expenditure relating to the food chain, animal health and welfare and plant health and plant reproductive material for the period 2014-2020

Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This ex-post evaluation report builds upon previous evaluations[1], relevant internal assessments, audits, and other technical reports to provide a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of Regulation (EU) No 652/2014[2], that established a Common Financial Framework (CFF) for the management of expenditure relating to the food chain, animal health and animal welfare, and relating to plant health and plant reproductive material. Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 (CFF Regulation) makes funding available for technical, scientific, coordination, and communication activities to ensure the correct implementation of Union law and its adaptation to scientific, technological, and societal developments. The evaluation primarily targets flexibility and responsiveness**,** enhanced coordination and harmonisation**,** and effectiveness of targeted interventions**.**

1.1.1 Regulatory context, purpose and scope

Article 42 of the CFF Regulation mandates to conduct an ex-post evaluation to assess the extent to which the activities carried out under the CFF achieved the relevant objectives. Nevertheless, it must be noted that the CFF Regulation was repealed by Regulation (EU) 2021/690[3], establishing the Single Market Programme (SMP) for 2021–2027, ensuring continuity of co-financing the measures in the areas previously covered by the CFF Regulation. Consequently, Article 42 of the CFF Regulation, providing that the Commission establishes and presents to the European Parliament and to the Council a final evaluation report by 30 June 2022, is in principle obsolete. However, Article 277(4) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509[4], which repeals and replaces Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046[5] provides for specific financial rules governing the

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1 European Commission: Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety, IBF, VetEffecT and Wageningen University, *Mid-term evaluation of Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 – Final report*, Publications Office, 2017, https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2875/399507.

2 Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 laying down provisions for the management of expenditure relating to the food chain, animal health and animal welfare, and relating to plant health and plant reproductive material, amending Council Directives 98/56/EC, 2000/29/EC and 2008/90/EC, Regulations (EC) No 178/2002, (EC) No 882/2004 and (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Decisions 66/399/EEC, 76/894/EEC and 2009/470/EC (Official Journal of the European Union L 189, 27.6.2014, pp. 1–32) - ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2014/652/2019-12-14.

3 Regulation (EU) 2021/690 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing a programme for the internal market, competitiveness of enterprises, including small and medium-sized enterprises, the area of plants, animals, food and feed, and European statistics (Single Market Programme) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 99/2013, (EU) No 1287/2013, (EU) No 254/2014 and (EU) No 652/2014 (Official Journal of the European Union L 153, 3.5.2021, pp. 1–47) - ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/690/oj.

4 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast) (Official Journal of the European Union L, 26.9.2024) – ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj.

5 Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (Official Journal of the

retrospective evaluation of major EU-funded programmes and activities entailing significant spending in order to assess and ensure transparency, accountability and performance. Therefore, although the European Commission was originally mandated to conduct an ex-post evaluation provided in Article 42 of the CFF Regulation – to determine the extent to which measures[6] and programmes executed under the CFF have achieved their designated objectives[7] – the main objective of this evaluation is to meet the legal obligation as set out in Article 277(4) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509.

Regarding the deadline for the ex-post evaluation, Article 42(2) of the CFF Regulation set a deadline of 30 June 2022. However, since the CFF Regulation was repealed by Regulation (EU) 2021/690 (SMP), this deadline is no longer valid but the obligation for the report remains in place, as stipulated by Article 34(3) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046. After the mentioned Financial Regulation was repealed, the same obligation continues to be stipulated from Financial Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509, Article 277(4). As such, no explicit legal deadline is set anymore (as confirmed by the Legal Services).

In addition, under the new legal basis, there is no legal requirement to share the report with the European Parliament and European Council, neither to make it publicly available. This is fundamentally an evaluation of the work programme, in line with the Financial Regulation. However, following finalisation of the report, it will be made publicly available through the SANTE website, similarly to the mid-term report for the same work programme.

The key areas covered by the CFF Regulation include funding for veterinary and phytosanitary programmes, emergency measures, official controls, training, and capacity building to help ensuring a high level of food chain safety across the EU, promoting health and safety while mitigating risks associated with animal and plant diseases. This assessment focuses on the efficacy of resource allocation and application, and the Framework's contribution of added value at the Union level. This evaluative process contributes to ensuring the relevance of the Union's financial instrument and its alignment with policy objectives.

The geographical and temporal scope of this ex-post evaluation encompasses all twenty-eight Member States (MSs) of the European Union (the United Kingdom left the Union on 31/1/2020) and third countries that benefited from EU financial support under the CFF, throughout the programme period 2014-2020. The assessment incorporates pertinent data and findings from the mid-term evaluation report performed in 2016. It provides feedback for future implementation of the actions in the food chain area. The scope of the evaluation is limited in time from 2014 until 2020. It covers territory of all EU MSs (28 during the programme period).

The evaluation focuses on six specific measures that account for the majority of the allocated budget, as follows:

a. Measures addressing food safety and animal health:
    i. Programmes for the eradication, control and surveillance of animal diseases and zoonoses
    ii. Vaccine banks and emergency measures in the domain of animal health

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European Union L 193, 30.7.2018, pp. 1–222) - ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/1046/2022-12-14.

6 Measures referred to in Chapters I and II of Title II (respectively, animal health and plant health measures) and in Articles 30 and 31 of Chapter III (respectively, EURLs and training activities).

7 Objectives set out in Article 2(1).

b. Measures addressing plant health:
    i. Emergency measures for pest detection and containment
    ii. Survey programmes concerning the presence and distribution of pests
c. Measures addressing official controls:
    i. Financial support to European Union Reference Laboratories (EURLs)
    ii. Training activities in the food chain, notably through the Better Training for Safer Food (BTSF) initiative.

This evaluation aligns with the objectives specified in Article 2(1) of the CFF Regulation, particularly concerning the contribution to a high level of health for humans, animals, and plants along the food chain and in related areas, while supporting the improvement of the welfare of animals, contributing to a high level of protection for consumers and the environment, and enhancing the competitiveness of the Union food and feed industry.

In view of the above, and following consultation with the Legal Services, it was deemed appropriate to prepare this report in the form of a standalone Staff Working Document (SWD).

For the preparation of the present standalone SWD, extensive internal consultation took place during the preparatory stage of report, regarding its content, structure, and mode of communication, involving all related services, an Interservice Steering Group (ISSG) was though not called.

1.2 Methodology

The evaluation builds on the basis of the five established criteria of EU programme assessment analysis, using both qualitative and quantitative research. According to Better Regulation Guidance the evaluation criteria applied in this report and assessing to which extent the intervention has performed in terms of: effectiveness (i.e. meeting objectives and fulfilling expectations); efficiency (i.e. cost-effectiveness and the extent to which costs are proportionate to benefits); relevance in light of current and emerging needs; coherence, both internally and with other EU interventions; and EU added value (i.e. achieving results that would not have been attained by MSs acting alone).

The information presented in this report was primarily compiled through desk research, leveraging existing data from a variety of sources, such as evidence obtained through stakeholders' consultation, literature research, analysis of operational and technical indicators, review of audit reports, and relevant studies. This document presents an assessment of final outcomes derived from analysis of implementation metrics and financial allocation data relating to CFF activities and incorporates epidemiological some findings and relevant supplementary information regarding the evolution of animal diseases and plant pests within MSs to illustrate it with practical examples.

2. WHAT WAS THE EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE INTERVENTION

2.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVENTION AND ITS OBJECTIVES

The CFF was established to address critical challenges and needs relating to animal health, plant health, food and feed safety, and official controls within the EU. The EU is constantly facing a considerable number of challenges in the areas of animal health and plant health (emerging

diseases of animals or plants, previously absent in the Union or diseases already present) that put at risk the livestock, plant production and even public health of consumers (zoonoses). To this end, MSs need to implement structured surveillance and controlled activities planned in advance (animal/plant disease surveillance and control programmes) or emergency control measures in response to the incursion of new animal diseases / plant pests (emergency measures). Implementation of these activities requires highly specialised scientific and technical support provided by dedicated EURLs. In addition, the highly specialised nature of these activities and accompanying EU legislation makes it necessary to provide dedicated training addressed to all professionals involved, in the form of the BTSF initiative.

All the above stem from the MSs' obligation to comply with EU legislation related to the safeguard and preservation of animal health and welfare, plant health, public health and consumer protection, in relation to products of animal or plant origin, including food and feed safety. Most of these activities are official duties carried out by the competent authorities of the MSs or under their supervision, and are collectively described in the EU legislation under the title "Official Controls". EURLs and the BTSF initiative offer the necessary support (technical input and training) in view of the ever-evolving scientific knowledge and legal instruments, necessary for the effective implementation of these official controls.

To help MSs meet the substantial costs associated with these activities, Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 established the CFF as the Union's funding instrument. Under the CFF, the EU provides co-financing for MSs' animal health and plant health programmes and for emergency measures, and it also provides direct Union financing for activities that underpin the EU control system, notably EURLs and training activities (BTSF). In addition, the CFF supported the EU-level procurement, establishment and maintenance of vaccine banks for selected animal diseases, strengthening preparedness and rapid response capacity across the Union. Prior to its adoption, funding in these areas was fragmented across multiple financial instruments, resulting in inefficiencies, duplication of efforts, inconsistent implementation across MSs, and limited responsiveness to emerging threats. The lack of a harmonised funding structure created risks for public and animal health, plant health, and consumer safety, and impeded the effectiveness of preventive measures, outbreak response, and overall biosecurity management within the Union.

The intervention logic was structured around clearly defined financial measures and instruments, addressing specific areas such as animal and plant health emergencies, surveillance programmes, laboratory capacity building, and training initiatives. In many cases, the expected outcomes were measurable improvements in outbreak containment, eradication of key diseases and pests, improved laboratory diagnostic capacity, harmonised official control systems, and strengthened MSs' preparedness and response capability. However, in other cases, the expected outcomes were not quantifiable in terms of financial benefits or other types of benefits that can be expressed using readily measurable units. In addition, epidemiological developments, in both the animal health and plant health domains, are inherently uncertain and at times, unpredictable. Consequently, for these situations, the expected outcome was not assessed against a specific baseline. Instead, the level of implementation of the necessary activities was assessed in the knowledge and the inevitable acknowledgement that these activities, even under optimal implementation, may not result in the direct / immediate improvement of epidemiological parameters (e.g. disease prevalence, geographical distribution, etc.).

As regards interventions related to animal and plant health (veterinary and phytosanitary programmes, veterinary and phytosanitary emergency measures) it is feasible to quantify the

level of implementation of the activities planned or stemming from the response to an emergency (the equivalent of cost-efficiency analysis). Nevertheless, proper implementation of the relevant activities both in programmes as well as emergency measures does not always guarantee the final benefit in terms of animal disease or plant pest control. Evolution of epidemics depends on a vast number of factors of which many are out of common reach and cannot be predicted or controlled. In such cases, implementation of these actions is still justified by the expected social benefits for the groups of citizens directly affected by the corresponding animal diseases or plant pests (farmers, rural populations, etc.).

The success of these interventions was to be assessed based on five standard evaluation criteria:

Relevance: Alignment of the interventions with the evolving needs of MSs and Union priorities in food safety, animal and plant health, and public health protection;

Effectiveness: Achievement of intended objectives, such as reduced incidence of targeted animal and plant diseases, improved response times during outbreaks, and improved official control practices;

Efficiency: Cost-effectiveness of financial investments, ensuring optimal use of EU resources to maximise public health and economic benefits;

EU Added Value: Demonstrable benefits from EU-level intervention compared to what could be achieved individually by MSs;

Coherence: Consistency and complementarity with broader EU policies, strategies, and international frameworks, such as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), General Food Law (GFL), Animal Health Law (Regulation (EU) 2016/429), and international collaborations (e.g., GF-TADs coordination).

2.2. POINT(S) OF COMPARISON

The ex-post evaluation used as principal comparators the baselines established at the start of the CFF, documented in the mid-term work, against end-period results. Methodologically, this meant reading the five Better Regulation criteria against (i) the programme's initial objectives and indicator set, (ii) the legal/financial architecture (eligibility rules, co-financing rates, budget ceiling), and (iii) the epidemiological and phytosanitary situation at mid-term versus end-term. Evidence sources explicitly included the mid-term evaluation and its stakeholder inputs as the "before" reference point, complemented by the ex-post report's own indicator analysis.

Quantitative points of comparison comprised (a) commitments and trends from first to last year by measure (e.g., Table 1 comparing 2014 vs 2020 across veterinary programmes, plant surveys, emergency measures, EURLs and BTSF), (b) output and capacity metrics for Official Controls (growth in EURL coverage and payments; BTSF budgets, sessions and participation), and (c) plant-health performance figures (requested vs paid amounts for emergencies; evolution of co-funded surveys vis-à-vis the number of pests notified). These were read alongside the mid-term indicator baselines to judge progress in effectiveness, efficiency and EU added value over time.

In general, where feasible, the baseline against which the outcome was compared at the end of the intervention, in the areas of animal health and plant health, was the epidemiological situation in individual MSs and/or the EU as a whole just before the initiation of the CFF (numbers of outbreaks, geographical distribution). Assessment of the outcomes related to BTSF, the EURLs

and activities such as procurement (e.g. EU vaccine banks), did not use a baseline against which the relevant outcomes should be assessed. Instead, assessment was based on the quality of implementation of the planned activities (e.g. proper operation of the EURLs, delivery of a sufficient number of trainings by the BTSF, sufficient and timely procurement of vaccines for the EU vaccine banks, etc.).

3. HOW HAS THE SITUATION EVOLVED OVER THE EVALUATION PERIOD?

3.1 Current state of play

The CFF operated with a maximum expenditure ceiling of €1,891,936,000 (≈ €270.3 million average per year). Commitments evolved across funding streams: veterinary programmes and vaccine banks declined over the period, while allocations for animal/plant emergency measures, plant-health survey programmes, EURLs and BTSF increased. MSs were the beneficiaries; support was delivered mainly via grants (standard 50% co-financing, rising to 75%/100% in specified cases).

On implementation, veterinary emergency measures totalled €231.86 million to MSs and €8.31 million to third countries, with sharp growth after 2016; disease-specific payments were highest for HPAI and ASF. Plant-health surveys saw co-funding rise from €7.59 million (2015) to €14.69 million (2020), alongside an increase in identified pests (2016–2020), reflecting intensified surveillance. EURL funding grew from €14.0 million (44 labs) in 2014 to €20.73 million (47 labs) in 2019, strengthening the EU reference network. BTSF budgets increased moderately (2014–2019), maintaining substantial training delivery and e-learning uptake; 2020 activity was curtailed by COVID-19.

4. EVALUATIONS FINDINGS (ANALYTICAL PART)

4.1 Overview of the implementation

The CFF involved an average annual spending of EUR 270.3 million with a maximum total ceiling for expenditure of **EUR 1 891 936 000** over the seven-year period 2014–2020. This represents around 0.19% of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) commitment appropriations. Table 1 below shows the amounts committed during the period under evaluation.

Table 1 - Commitments for the period 2014 - 2020 for CFF activities

Commitments for the period 2014 - 2020 for CFF activities	First year of implementation	Last year of implementation	Trend
Veterinary programmes and vaccines	136,705,397	99,029,528	↘ - 37,675,868
Plant health survey programmes	7,585,000	14,694,000	↗ + 7,109,000
Animal health and plant health emergency measures	1,911,896	63,915,746	↗ + 62,003,850
EURLs	14,010,090	20,730,600	↗ + 6,720,510
BTSF	16,170,000	18,000,000	↗ + 1,830,000
Total	176,382,383	216,369,874	↗ 39,987,492

The main direct beneficiaries of the EU financial contribution made under the CFF were the MSs, which receive an EU financial contribution for the eligible costs incurred when implementing the

eligible measures. Both the eligible measures and the eligible costs are listed in the CFF Regulation.

The Union financial contribution mostly took the form of grants and procurements with very limited contributions to international organizations), with a basic co-financing rate for grants of 50% of the eligible costs that under specific conditions can be increased to 75% or 100%.

4.2 Animal Health

The CFF Regulation contribution for animal health covers the implementation of veterinary programmes, aimed at eradication, control or surveillance activities for animal diseases and zoonoses, and emergency measures on animal health. The diseases eligible for EU financial contribution under veterinary emergency measures and programmes are listed, respectively, in Annex I and in Annex II to the CFF Regulation. The eligible costs (including, for example, the costs of animal slaughtering/culling and the vaccination costs) are also listed in specific articles of that Regulation. Annex III to the CFF Regulation lists the priorities for Union financial support as regards the orientation of veterinary programmes: based on these priorities for funding, 10 out of the 25 diseases listed in Annex II to the CFF Regulation had been initially identified[8] as priority diseases. These were African swine fever (ASF); avian influenza in poultry and wild birds; classical swine fever (CSF); rabies; bovine brucellosis; ovine and caprine brucellosis; transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs); zoonotic Salmonella; bovine tuberculosis; bluetongue in endemic or high-risk areas.

Payments for veterinary programmes make up almost half of the expenditure foreseen in the maximum total ceiling. Expenditure has progressively declined over the course of the period, with the largest payments occurring during the first three years of implementation (2014, 2015, and 2016). While the total spending for veterinary programmes is consistent, payments for animal health emergency measures are by definition not predictable, depending on the changes in the epidemiological situation over the years.

4.2.1 Veterinary Programmes (*Figure 1*)

Over the period considered, the programmes addressing five diseases, namely bovine tuberculosis, TSE (BSE and scrapie), rabies eradication, *Salmonella*, and *Brucella melitensis* represented around 83% of the payments for veterinary programmes (please see Figure 4). The main recipients of co-funding of veterinary programmes were Spain (21% of total amounts

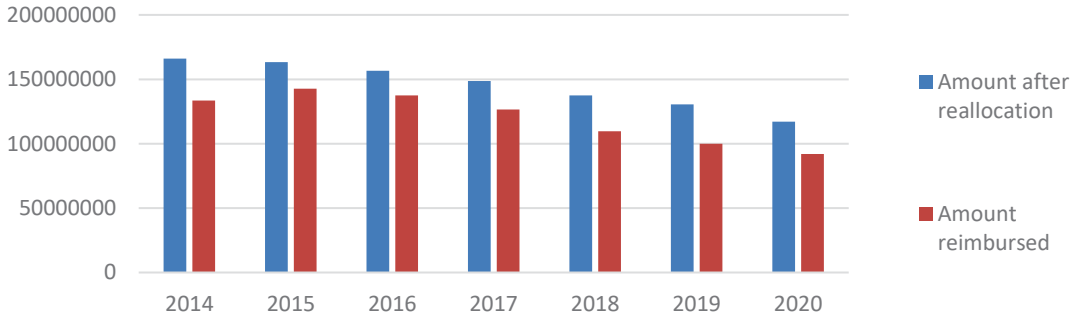


Figure 1 - Total amounts (EURO) per year of allocations and reimbursements for national veterinary programmes during the period of 2014 to 2020

[8] These diseases were listed in Commission Staff Working document SWD(2017) 314 final, part of the Document 52017DC0546 accompanying the report from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council (mid-term evaluation).

reimbursed for veterinary programmes), the UK (19%), Italy (11%), Ireland (8%) and Poland (7%).

Relevance: The allocation of funds for national plans aligns with the priorities of both the EU and MSs. The diseases selected for control under the national plans are of significant concern for public and animal health, as well as for the agri-food sector. The funds allocated for the prevention and control of these diseases have been focused on the most relevant activities for achieving long-term disease eradication, also improving disease surveillance.

EU added value: The financial support enabled MSs to implement national plans that would have otherwise been beyond their financial capacity. This EU support enhanced the capacity of MSs to address eradication of these diseases more effectively and to prevent its re-emergence.

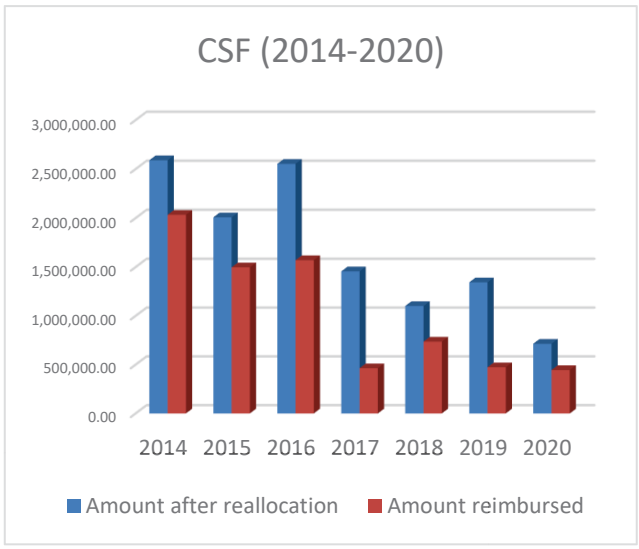
Effectiveness: The funding has proven to be effective in reducing the incidence of outbreaks and for reaching disease-free status, enhancing surveillance systems, and accelerating the eradication of targeted diseases with measurable improvements in rabies, Tuberculosis, Brucellosis and TSEs as well, based on data from European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) TSEs surveillance reports (2015-2021).

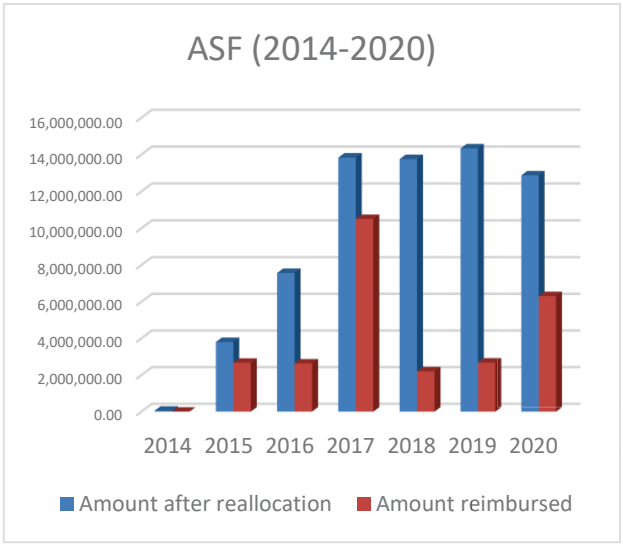
Efficiency: The financial resources allocated under the national plans have been used efficiently, with a clear focus on maximising the impact of each euro spent. The implementation was carried out with a high degree of administrative efficiency. The use of unit costs and ceilings for certain programmes, such as the vaccination of livestock against *Brucella melitensis* and rabies streamlined administrative procedures, reducing the burden on national authorities and facilitating quicker disbursement of funds. Furthermore, the co-financing arrangements under the CFF allowed MSs to leverage additional national resources, enhancing the overall efficiency of spending without unnecessary administrative overhead.

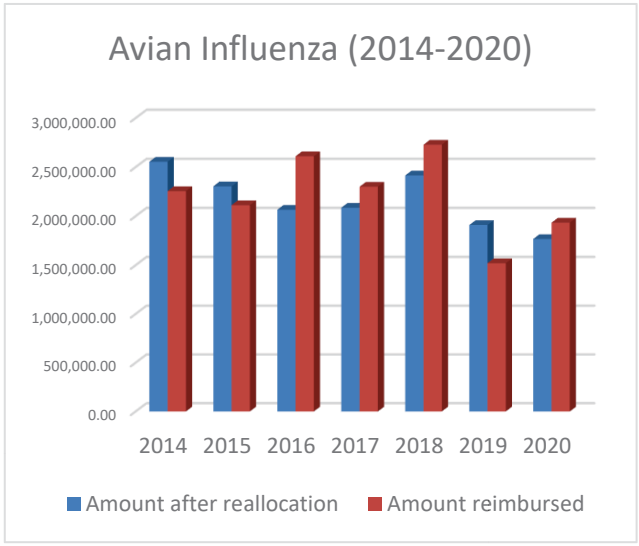
Annual exercise of funding reallocation was an essential instrument to boost efficiency. The graphical representation of the total amount (per year) after reallocation and amount reimbursed can be found in the graph below. Detailed data relating to the expenditure on the period between 2014-2020 for allocation of money to MSs' national plans regarding specific diseases, as well as amounts reimbursed per MS, can be found in figures 2 and 3 (respectively).

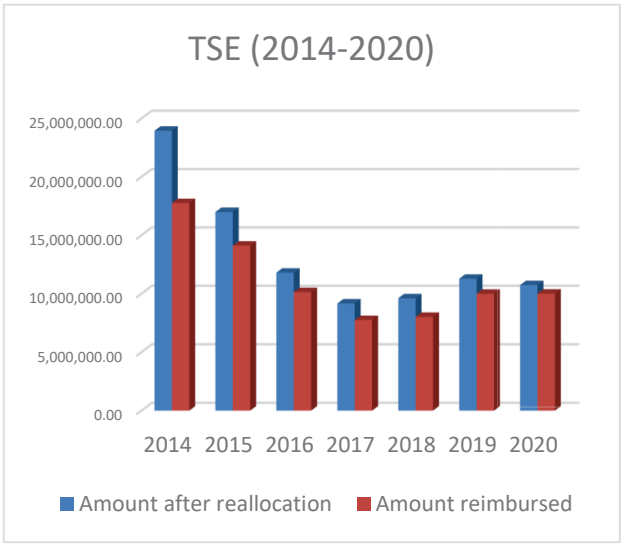
Coherence: EU funding is coherent with other EU and MSs policies, particularly those related to food safety, public health, animal health and agriculture. The national plans align with the One Health approach, clearly illustrated by the significant reduction in human brucellosis cases (from 460 in 2014 to 132 by 2020), as reported by EFSA in their EU One Health Zoonoses Reports[9]. The EU's investments in surveillance for Avian Influenza and Salmonellosis not only benefited animal health but also contributed to human health and to ensuring the safety of food products. Moreover, the national plans were designed to complement other EU initiatives, ensuring that control measures for diseases such as Lumpy Skin Disease or Classical Swine Fever were aligned with broader EU agricultural policies, guaranteeing smooth functioning of the single market.

[9] European Food Safety Authority, and European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. "The European union one health 2021 zoonoses report." *EFSA Journal* 20.12 (2022): e07666, https://doi.org/10.2903/j.efsa.2022.7666.









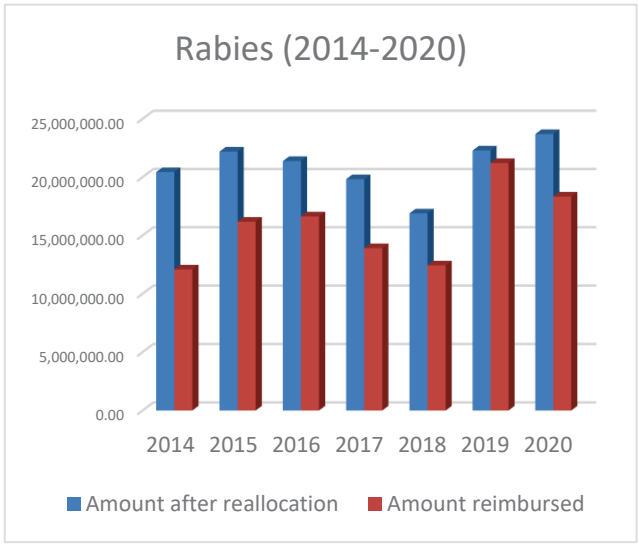
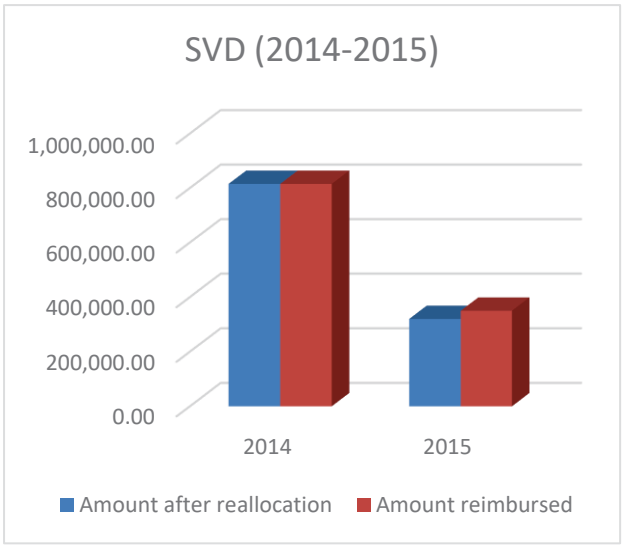
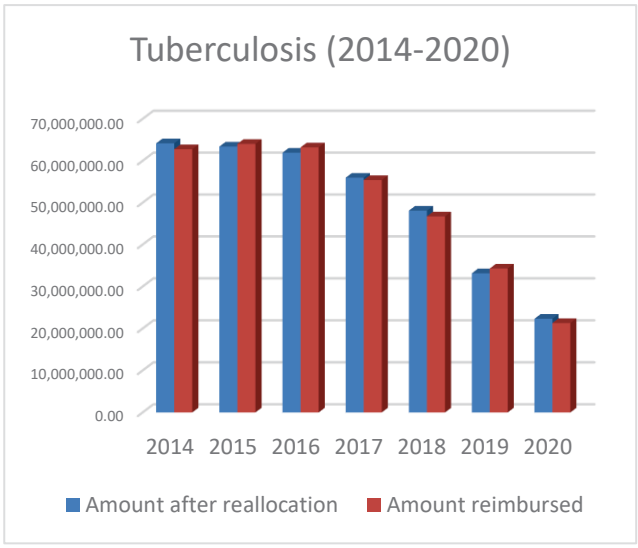
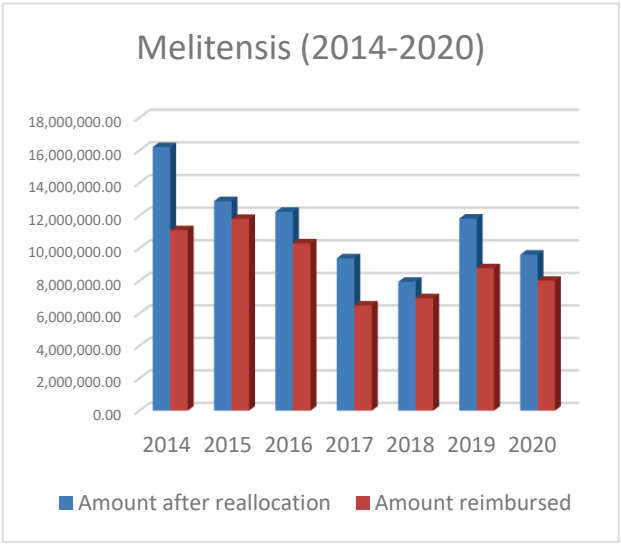
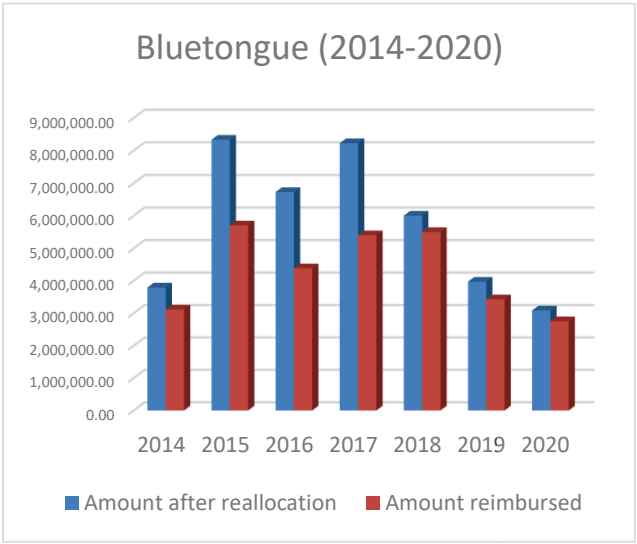


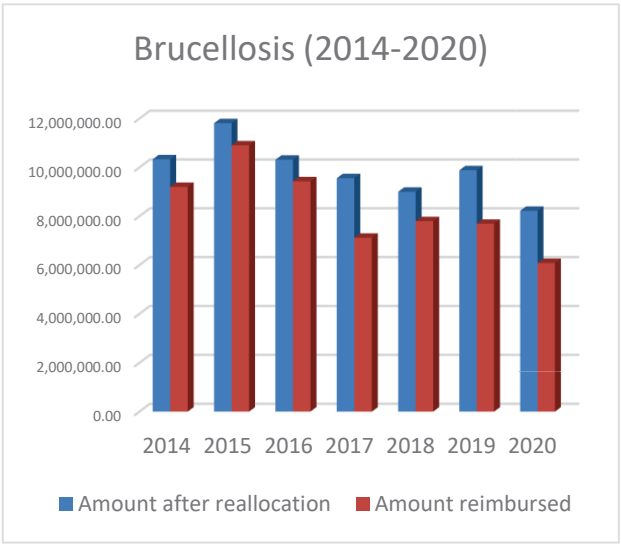
Figure 2 - Allocation and payments (EURO) to Member States' national plans regarding specific diseases











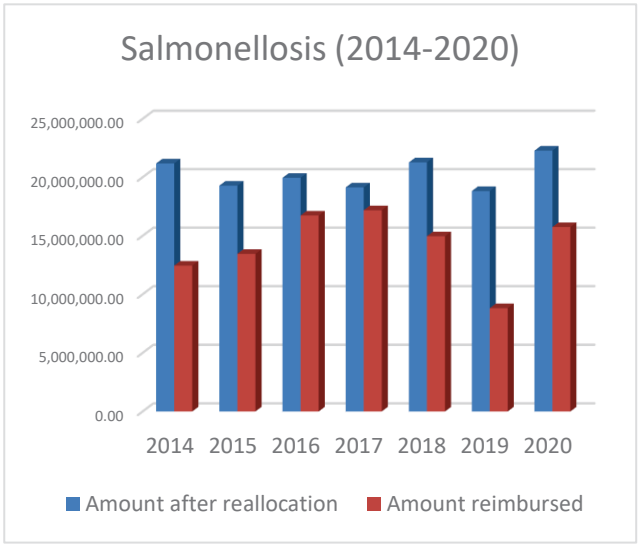


Figure 2 (cont.) - Allocation and payments (EURO) to Member States' national plans regarding specific diseases

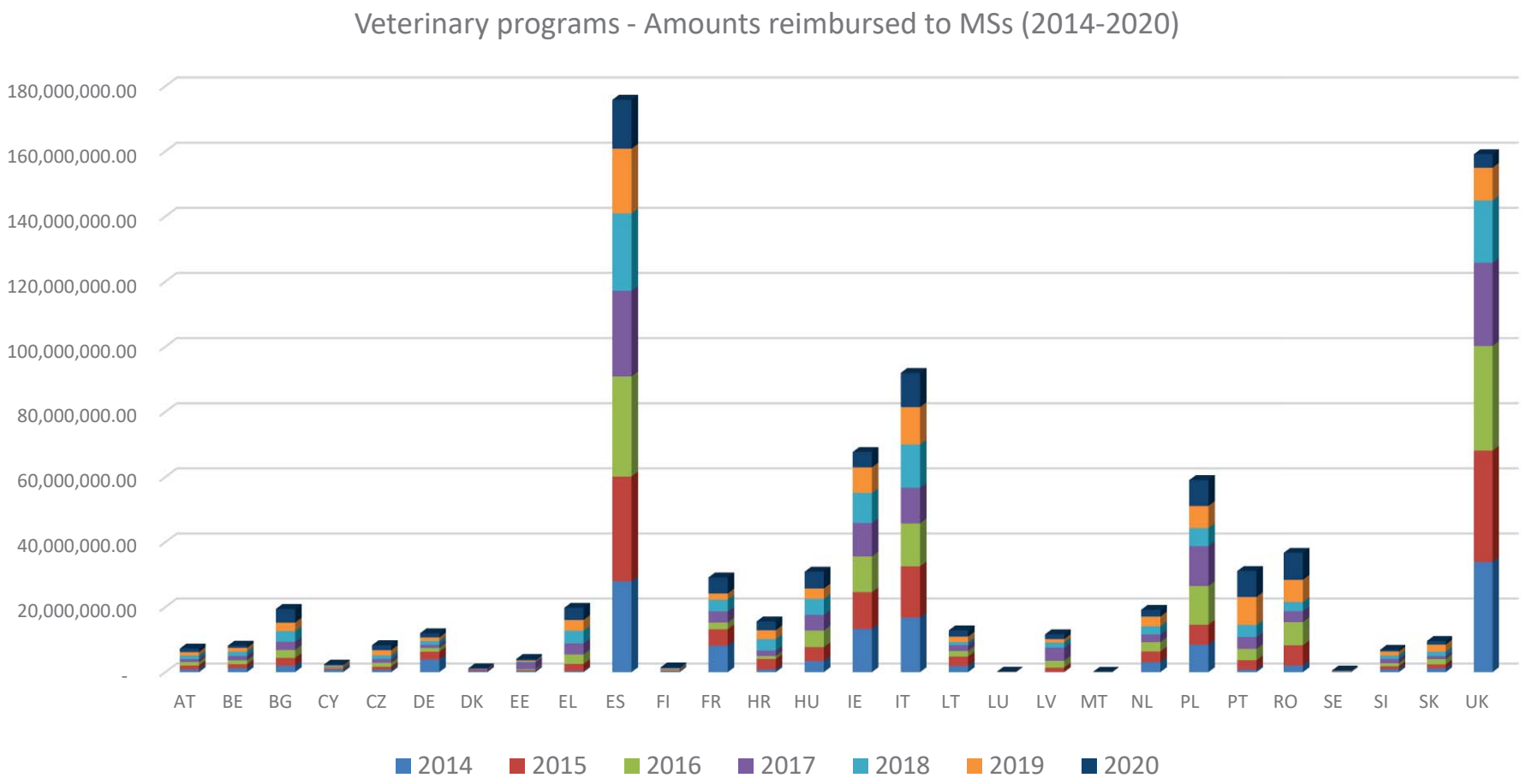


Figure 3 - Payments (EURO) for veterinary programs by Member State (2014-2020)

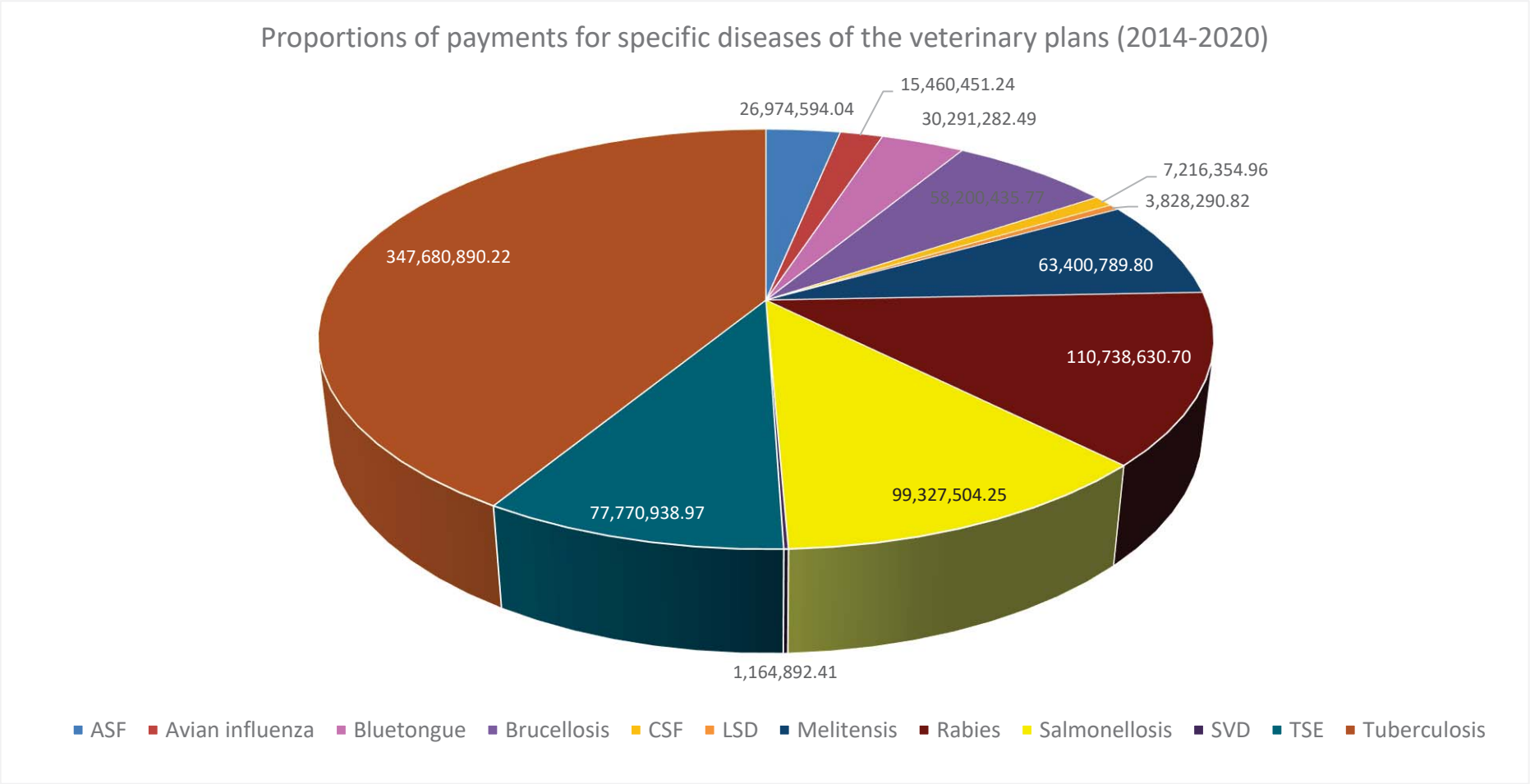


Figure 4 - Proportions of payments (EURO) for Member States by disease (2014-2020)

4.2.2 Vaccine banks

Vaccine banks are strategic reserves of critical veterinary vaccines or antigens maintained by the EU to ensure its immediate availability during outbreaks of certain transboundary animal diseases. They represent a crucial preventive measure within the EU's broader animal health strategy[10], particularly for diseases with potentially significant economic and public health impacts, such as Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), CSF, Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), and Sheep and Goat Pox (SGP). Vaccine banks enable rapid deployment of emergency vaccination, thus facilitating swift containment and minimizing the consequences of outbreaks.

Relevance: Vaccine banks proved highly relevant, strategically targeting critical animal diseases (FMD, LSD, CSF) aligned with emerging threats in the EU, ensuring swift and effective responses and significantly contributing to EU animal health priorities.

Effectiveness: This EU funding indicates an efficient preparedness and reassurance that the EU was prepared to deploy resources swiftly in critical areas. Comparing these vaccine bank investments with other allocations (emergency measures, outbreak management, national veterinary plans), we observe strong coherence and complementarity with significant investments in vaccine banks. This is particularly clear for LSD (see figure 5), where substantial amounts were paid leading to an effective support of MSs capacity to respond to outbreaks, which significantly contributed to the rapid containment, mitigation of economic impacts, and successful control of these diseases.

Efficiency: During the period 2014–2020, the EU allocated significant financial resources to vaccine banks, reflecting targeted strategic priorities. Notably, FMD received the highest investment, totalling approximately €20.9 million across several years (2014, 2017, 2019, and 2020), underscoring the high-risk status and substantial economic threat posed by this disease. This indicates a focused EU response to outbreaks or heightened risks. LSD also received considerable investment, with around €7 million allocated in 2016–2017 (€3.52 million and €3.51 million, respectively), a period coinciding with major outbreaks within and near the EU, highlighting timely, preventive deployment of resources. Vaccine banks for diseases like PPR (€62,230.00, which was only a small fraction of the initial allocation, since there was no demand for PPR vaccines) received comparatively modest funding. There was an amount committed in 2018 for SGP, yet no payment was completed, which indicates that no additional funding was required for SGP that year. Additionally, moderate funding was allocated for CSF (€435,050 in 2015). This funding reduced the overall costs associated with disease outbreaks, thus demonstrating a positive benefit-to-cost ratio.

EU added value: EU funding for vaccine banks provides clear added value by enabling MSs to access vaccines for high-priority diseases that otherwise would have relied on 28 national vaccine banks for the different diseases. EU's collective funding allows for a coordinated approach to disease management, where individual countries may lack sufficient resources to respond rapidly to outbreaks.

[10] From 2007, the EU embraced a new motto as part of its Animal Health Strategy: "*prevention is better than cure*", put in motion by the European Commission. The aim was to focus on preventive measures, disease surveillance, controls and research.

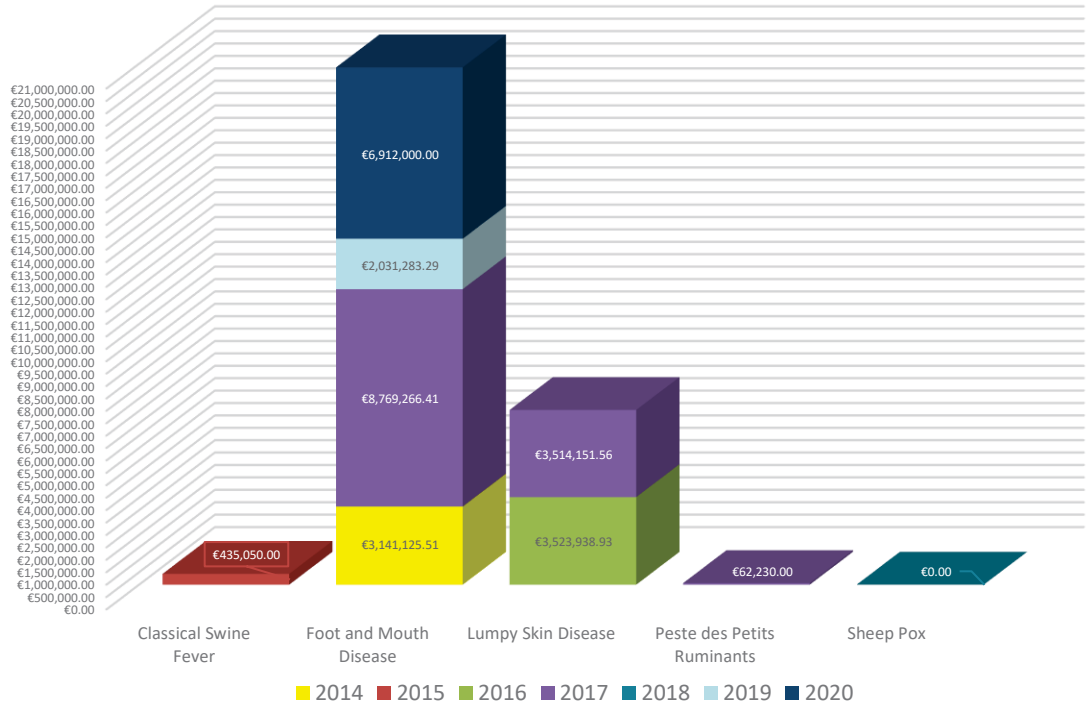


Figure 5 - EU allocated funds for vaccine banks during the period of 2014 to 2020

Coherence: The EU funding for vaccine banks is coherent with the EU's regulatory framework for disease control, which provide for the disease specific vaccine banks, such as for example, the Directives regulating FMD and CSF.

4.2.3 EU funding for emergency measures on animal health

Emergency measures represent one of the most critical and immediate applications of EU animal health policy, providing financial support to MSs and under certain conditions, also to neighbouring third countries facing outbreaks of high-impact animal diseases. These measures include actions such as stamping out, urgent vaccination, and surveillance.

The evaluation stresses the importance of the EU's swift and flexible response in these situations to limit the spread of infectious diseases across MSs. The funds allocated to emergency measures are aimed at co-financing urgent control and eradication activities for certain major diseases, supporting MSs to comply with EU legislation and minimise risks to animal health.

4.2.3.1 Payments for veterinary emergency measures (2014-2020) to Member States and Third Countries

Table 2 - Payments in euros for veterinary emergency measures to Member States and Third Countries during the period of 2014 to 2020

Year	Payments to Member States (EUR)	Payments to Third Countries (EUR)
2014	1,911,896.08	0.00
2015	11,761,625.86	391,864.60
2016	18,816,510.64	3,023,146.21
2017	49,079,185.50	39,300.00
2018	46,943,759.46	3,451,241.04
2019	52,197,137.92	206,206.72
2020	51,150,939.90	1,197,773.03
Total (2014-2020)	**231,861,055.36**	**8,309,531.60**

Table 3 - Payments in euros for veterinary emergency measures for specific animal diseases during the period of 2014 to 2020

Disease	Payment (EUR)
African Swine Fever	82,359,848.87
Bluetongue	1,061,549.35
Exotic Diseases (FMD, PPR, SGP, LSD)[11]	2,553,346.02
Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza	130,124,866.86
Lumpy Skin Disease	18,297,184.02
Newcastle Disease	1,332,882.52
Peste des Petits Ruminants	417,750.00
Rabies	698,027.87
Sheep and Goat Pox	3,325,131.45
Total for all diseases	**240,170,586.96**

[11] Along EU's eastern external border areas

Between 2014 and 2020, the EU paid a total of approximately €231.86 million to MSs and €8.31 million to third countries for emergency measures. These payments increased sharply during the period: after a modest start in 2014 (about €1.9 million to MSs and none to third countries), funding rose considerably, peaking in 2019–2020, with annual allocations exceeding €50 million to MSs. The detailed graphic representation regarding allocation of funds for emergency measures in animal health, per year, per country, can be found in figure 6. This evolution mirrors the evolving epidemiological landscape in the EU, marked by significant threats such as ASF, LSD, Avian Influenza, and others. The trend of sharply increasing emergency funding, particularly after 2016, reflects the growing scale of outbreaks.

i. Payments to Member States:

The increase in payments in 2017 (compared to €11.76 million in 2015) reflects significant outbreaks or increased disease risks in that year. The large €49.08 million payment indicates a high level of intervention and EU support for the emergency response. There was consistency in payments from 2017-2020 (around €46-52 million). Total payments of €231.86 million over the seven-year period reflect a substantial EU investment in emergency disease control.

ii. Payments to Third Countries:

The payments to third countries were much lower, with a total of €8.31 million over the same period. 2018 saw the highest payment to third countries (€3.45 million), to support neighbouring countries in dealing with outbreaks of diseases like LSD, rabies or ASF, which may have posed a risk of spreading to the EU. The low payments in 2017 (€39,30) and 2019 (€206,21) suggest that in those years, the EU's external support was more targeted or limited to specific outbreaks or regions with higher risk of cross-border disease transmission. In 2020, the payment of €1.20 million was part of a response to ongoing concerns regarding disease outbreaks affecting neighbouring regions, possibly in response to threats like ASF in the eastern EU borders or in regions like the Western Balkans.

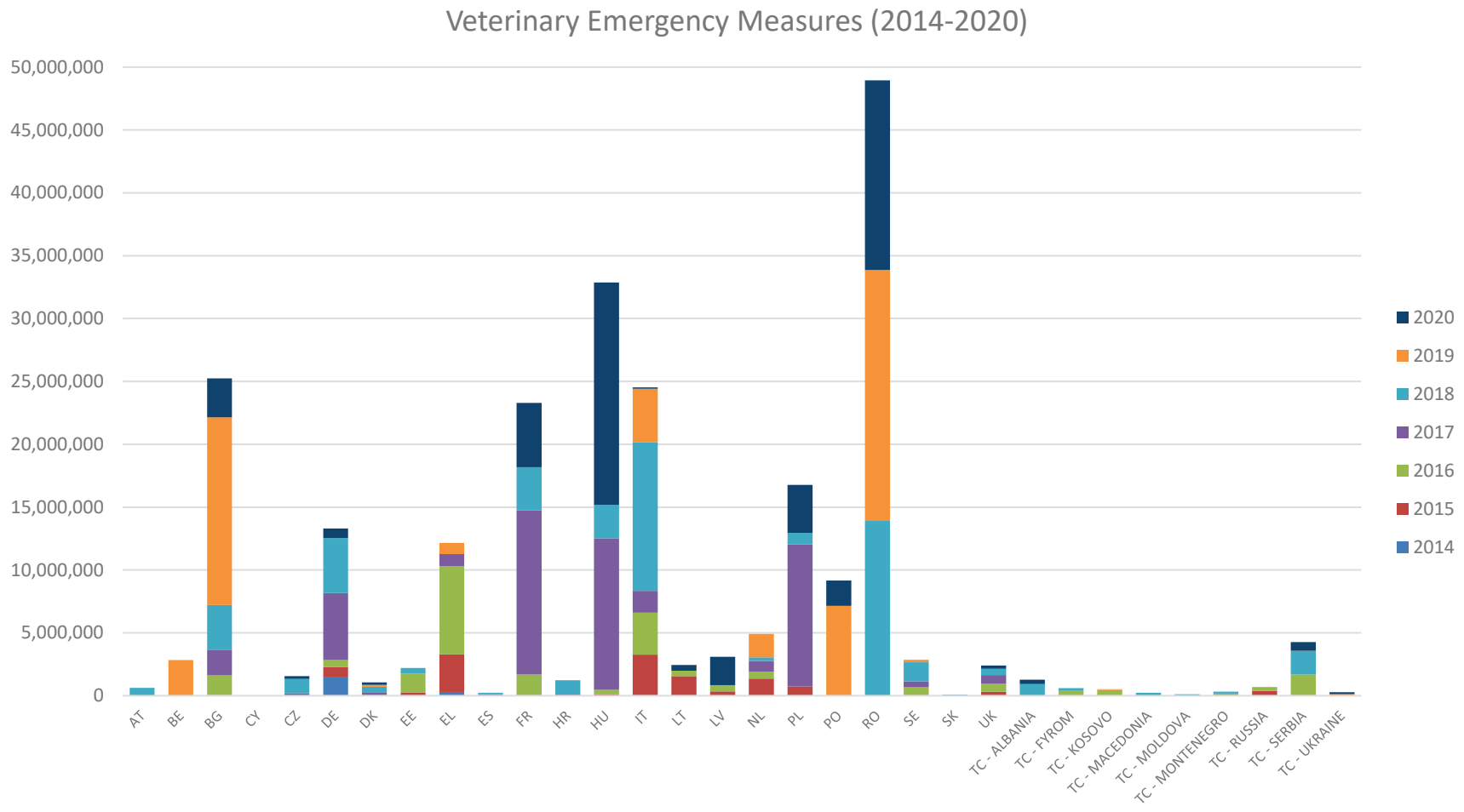


Figure 6 - Payments (EURO) for veterinary emergency measures (2014-2020) to Member States and Third Countries

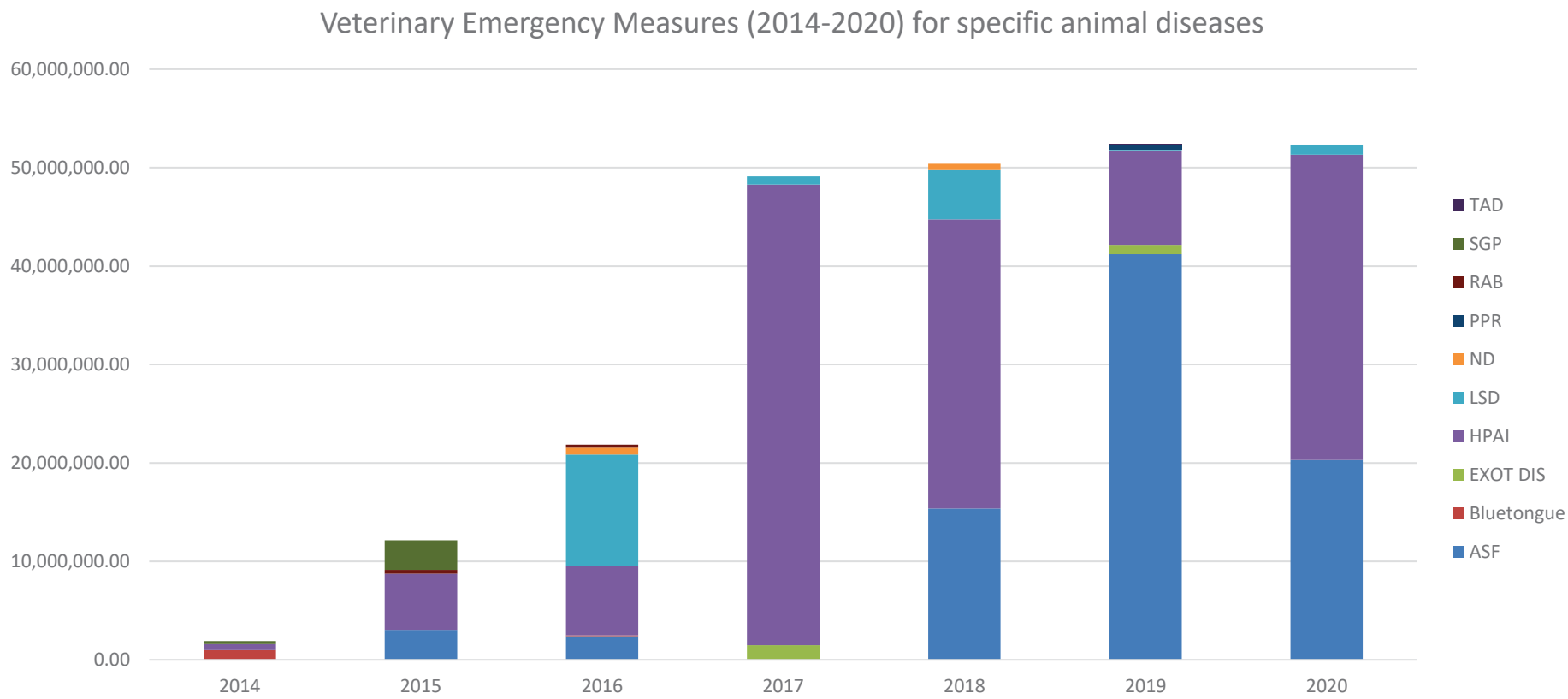


Figure 7 - Payments (EURO) for veterinary emergency measures (2014-2020) regarding specific animal diseases

4.2.3.2 Payments for veterinary emergency measures (2014-2020) regarding specific animal diseases (see figure 7)

Relevance: The payments are directed toward high-risk diseases and emerging threats, ensuring that rapid response measures (such as vaccination, surveillance, and eradication programmes) are in place.

EU added value: Payments made to MSs and third countries in response to emergency measures demonstrate the EU's substantial added value in mitigating the risks posed by infectious diseases. The EU's co-financing role ensures that MSs and neighbouring countries can implement necessary measures.

Effectiveness: The high payments for ASF and HPAI show that the EU has been responsive to urgent threats, while also preventing cross-border spread through neighbouring country support (e.g., third countries receiving funds for ASF control).

Efficiency: Payments show a flexible and adaptive approach to disease control. The allocation was strategic and efficiently used, characterised by timely, targeted interventions aligned closely with epidemiological risks and disease dynamics, leveraging financial resources to achieve maximum protection and minimal disease-related disruption across MSs and third countries.

Coherence: The financial support for emergency measures is coherent with the EU's broader animal health, public health, and food safety goals. By prioritising diseases like ASF, HPAI, and LSD, the EU's intervention strategy aligns closely with existing disease control directives applicable during the evaluation period, as well as with the requirements subsequently defined by Regulation (EU) 2016/429[12] on transmissible animal diseases ('Animal Health Law'). Moreover, specific veterinary programmes and emergency measures targeting zoonotic diseases (including Salmonellosis, TSEs, Brucellosis and HPAI) highlight a clear coherence with the One Health approach. These initiatives concurrently address animal health and public health protection, effectively harmonising disease prevention and control strategies at the human-animal-environment interface. Such a comprehensive, integrated strategy illustrates the coherent application of EU financial instruments in addressing multi-faceted health risks across the MSs and neighbouring countries.

4.2.4 Case studies on animal diseases

This ex-post report describes in depth the allocation of these funds in relation to outbreaks of five distinct animal diseases, serving as illustrative case studies: rabies, LSD, CSF, and ASF.

4.2.4.1 Rabies (2014-2020)

[12] Regulation (EU) 2016/429 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016 on transmissible animal diseases and amending and repealing certain acts in the area of animal health ('Animal Health Law') (OJ L 084 31.3.2016, p. 1) - ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/2021-04-21.

Rabies outbreaks in the EU between 2014 and 2020 (see figure 8), show the relationship between the allocation of EU funding under the CFF and the evolution of rabies outbreaks. There is a spike in the number of cases in 2014 (298), mostly due to wildlife cases (229), followed by a significant reduction in the subsequent years. After 2014, the trend shows a consistent and sharp decrease in both total and wildlife rabies cases until 2017, followed by slight fluctuations until 2020. From 2017 onwards, the number of rabies cases has been consistently low, indicating effective containment thanks to vaccination.

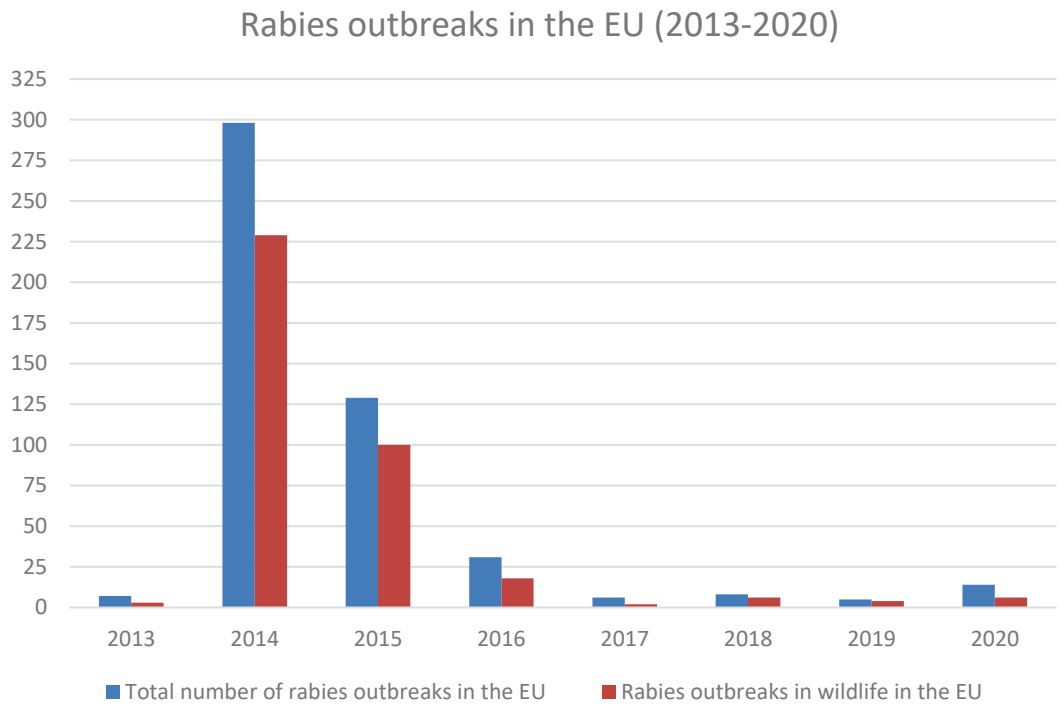


Figure 8 – Rabies outbreaks (2013-2020)

In 2020, despite an increase in total cases (14), wildlife cases remained low (6). The sharp decrease in wildlife cases from 2015 onwards demonstrates that vaccination programmes (oral rabies vaccine baits), historically supported by EU funding, have been successful. In 2020, the slight rise in non-wildlife cases indicates pockets of vaccination gaps or increased contact between wildlife and domestic animals, emphasizing the ongoing need for surveillance and rapid response despite overall control successes in wildlife.

The CFF Regulation explicitly emphasizes EU co-financing of disease prevention and eradication, including rabies. Funding is directed towards:

- Vaccination programmes in wildlife populations (oral rabies vaccine baits)
- Surveillance and monitoring activities

EU funding for vaccine banks for rabies specifically was relatively low compared to the budget allocated and spent for other diseases like Avian Influenza, ASF or even LSD. The decrease in total rabies outbreaks post-2014 aligns with the implementation of EU-co-funded vaccination and surveillance programmes and the broader EU initiatives (e.g., long-standing vaccination programmes prior to and during the CFF period) contributed significantly to reducing rabies cases. The consistently low number of outbreaks from 2017 onwards indicates sustained positive outcomes from vaccine programmes funded before or alongside the CFF initiative.

Relevance: The substantial outbreak burden recorded in 2014 demonstrated the need for sustained, coordinated intervention capacity. The problem was intrinsically transboundary rather than only national: with approximately three-quarters of 2014-2015 outbreaks occurring in wildlife, effective control required coordinated measures beyond what individual MSs could optimise independently.

Effectiveness: The outbreak trend demonstrates substantial epidemiological improvement following the 2014 peak, consistent with effective control measures. There was a significant decline in all outbreaks during the analysed period, and the evidence supports a finding that CFF-supported national measures facilitated a transition from high incidence to a low-incidence maintenance phase, with occasional fluctuations that remain epidemiologically plausible under effective control programmes.

Efficiency: The combination of modest expenditure relative to the scale of the 2014 spike and the subsequent multi-year reduction suggests a "good value for money" interpretation, while recognising that a strict quantitative efficiency assessment is not possible from these sums alone.

EU added value: Given that approximately 74% of all outbreaks in this period were wildlife cases and wildlife-mediated spread ignores administrative borders, EU-level co-financing provides added value by enabling consistent minimum capacity across MSs and supporting rapid mobilisation when risks concentrate in specific regions.

Coherence: The rabies emergency measures budget aligns with the EU's broader strategy of combining prevention, early detection, and rapid intervention for listed diseases, complementing longer-term veterinary programmes covering surveillance, vaccination, and control capacity. As a zoonotic disease, rabies measures are consistent with EU food-chain risk governance and zoonoses control objectives, despite wildlife being the primary epidemiological driver rather than production animals.

In conclusion:

- The data shows a clear positive correlation between targeted EU financial intervention and a significant reduction in rabies outbreaks post-2014
- Wildlife vaccination programmes, supported by EU funding prior to and during the CFF, were highly effective in controlling rabies, especially after the spike in 2014
- The persistence of low outbreak numbers from 2017 onwards demonstrates sustained effectiveness of these interventions and highlights the EU's critical role in disease control even with limited targeted investments

4.2.4.2 Lumpy Skin Disease outbreaks (2014-2020)

The presence of LSD at EU borders posed a significant risk of entry into the EU. In 2015 and 2016, LSD outbreaks occurred within the EU for the first time, with notable numbers in Greece (117 outbreaks in 2015, and 104 in 2016) and Bulgaria (217 outbreaks in 2016) (see figure 9). A significant decline in outbreaks within the EU occurred after 2016, dropping considerably to just 2 cases in Greece in 2017 and no reported cases from 2018 to 2020. A parallel reduction is also observed in the EU and neighbouring countries combined, indicating effective disease control and containment measures at regional level. This coordinated and harmonised regional approach

was reinforced by the Global Framework for the Progressive Control of Transboundary Animal Diseases' (GF-TADs) mechanism, which facilitated cross-border collaboration, information exchange, and harmonisation of preventive measures, thus significantly contributing to the sustained reduction and control of LSD across affected regions. The EU outbreaks were managed effectively through rapid EU co-funding and coordinated response. This coordinated regional response minimised risks and provided a buffer zone of vaccinated populations surrounding the EU.

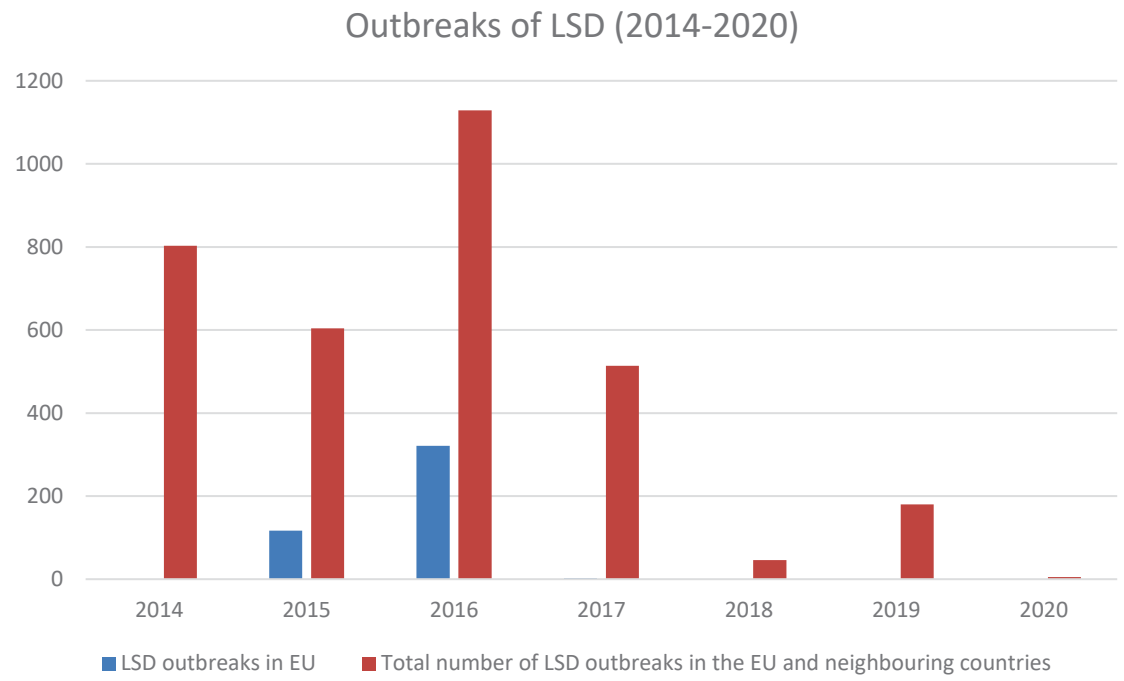


Figure 9 - Lumpy Skin Disease outbreaks (2014-2020)

The EU provided substantial funding for emergency measures related to LSD, specifically €18,297,184.02 total for the period 2014–2020. Of this amount:

- €11,318,022.94 (2016): allocated for LSD control measures in Greece, Bulgaria, and neighbouring third countries, including compensation for affected animals and vaccines
- €5,858,919.98 (2017–2018): allocated specifically for vaccine procurement for both MSs and third countries
- €1,120,241.10 (2019–2020): used specifically for LSD vaccine costs in neighbouring third countries

These figures indicate targeted investments during the critical outbreak years, notably in 2016 and 2017–2018.

The EU's decision to fund vaccine campaigns in neighbouring third countries (€5.86 million in 2017–2018, and €1.12 million in 2019–2020) shows a coherent and strategic regional approach. The sharp decline in regional outbreaks (from 1129 in 2016, to just 5 in 2020) in these neighbouring countries, demonstrates the success of this broader regional strategy.

Relevance: The critical transboundary risk of LSD (2015–2017) justified substantial EU funding, including €18.3 million for emergency measures and €7 million for vaccine banks to mitigate regional pressure and internal outbreaks.

Effectiveness: The sharp and sustained decline of LSD outbreaks from 2017 onward strongly supports the effectiveness of EU financial interventions (vaccination campaigns, animal compensations, monitoring, and surveillance)

Efficiency: Targeted funding at critical periods (2016 for immediate outbreak control, and subsequent regional vaccination programs in neighbouring countries) maximized the impact of available resources, rapidly reducing outbreaks and preventing reintroduction into the EU

EU added value: The intervention clearly demonstrates significant added value of EU-level support. Individual MSs alone (Greece, Bulgaria) or neighbouring countries may have lacked sufficient resources for effective vaccination, containment, and compensation measures. The EU's coordinated and financed response contributed to a regional-level containment

Coherence: Funding was coherent with the broader EU animal health policy, emphasising disease prevention, rapid response, and regional cooperation

4.2.4.3 Classical Swine Fever outbreaks (2014-2020)

Outbreaks of CSF during the period between 2014 and 2020 in Latvia (the only EU MS affected) decreased notably from a peak of 28 total outbreaks (27 wild boar, 1 kept pig) in 2014, to 5 outbreaks (all wild boar, none in kept pigs) in 2015 (see figure 10). From 2016 onwards, no further outbreaks were recorded, ultimately resulting in Latvia's removal from the restricted zones list in October 2020 (Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2020/1525). CSF during this period included targeted support for:

- Surveillance programmes, especially wild boar population monitoring and disease detection
- Control measures, such as vaccination (in wildlife) if deemed necessary, fencing, enhanced biosecurity, and public awareness campaigns
- Emergency measures (if and when outbreaks occurred), including animal culling (stamping out) and compensation schemes

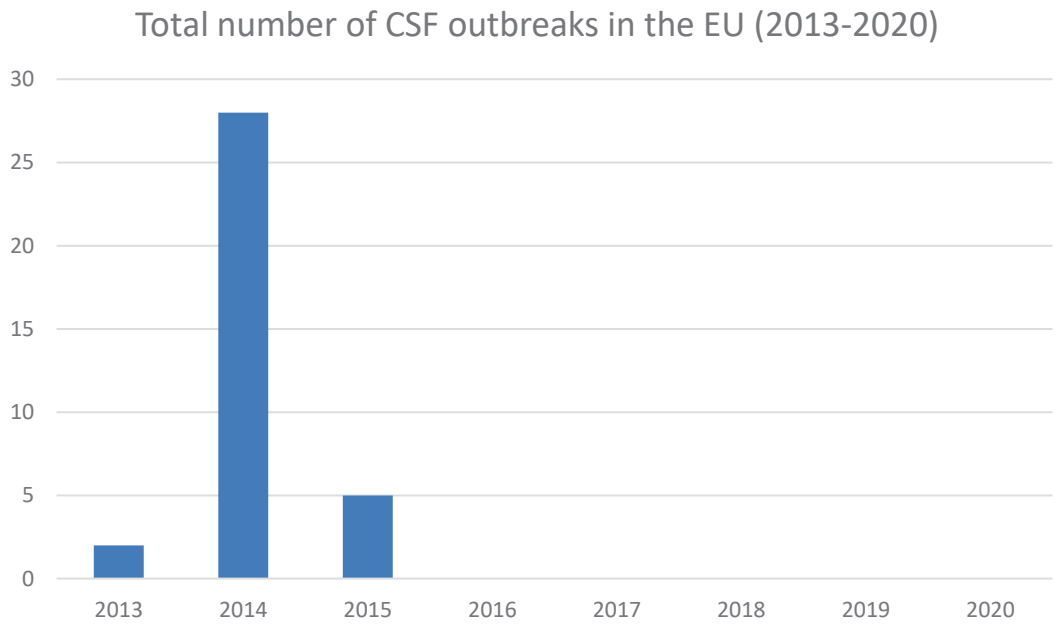


Figure 10 - Classical Swine Fever outbreaks (2013-2020)

An analysis of the impact of the EU funding and CSF outbreak trends shows that, as regards the effectiveness and timing of funding, the substantial decrease in outbreaks from 28 (2014) to 5 (2015), and subsequently to zero (from 2016 onward), indicates that rapid and targeted EU funding interventions played a decisive role in quickly containing and eradicating the disease.

The observed trends in CSF outbreaks in Latvia provide compelling evidence that EU financial interventions for CSF in Latvia:

- Directly supported preventive and containment strategies at a critical moment
- Significantly contributed to the sharp decline in outbreaks and their sustained absence demonstrate long-lasting effectiveness of these measures
- Contributed to Latvia's official removal from restricted zones and the lifting of all restrictions by October 2020 strongly reflect successful EU-funded disease eradication and control initiatives

Specifically, the EU provided €435,050.00 allocated explicitly for the CSF vaccine bank in 2015.

Relevance: CSF presented a targeted yet substantial risk in the CFF period, concentrated in Latvia and driven primarily by wild boar. Even with limited geographic spread, EU intervention remained relevant because a single MS outbreak can affect intra-EU trade, zoning and regional biosecurity, and the CFF specifically supports preparedness tools such as vaccine banks.

Effectiveness: Clear evidence of rapid and sustained disease control after targeted EU funding intervention.

Efficiency: Investments in surveillance, vaccine banks, and other measures quickly delivered significant reductions in outbreaks. The rapid achievement of disease-free status indicates efficient use of resources.

EU added value: Latvia likely benefited significantly from EU support, as the national financial capacity to swiftly and effectively control the disease may have been insufficient. EU funding thus clearly provided additional value beyond national efforts alone.

Coherence: Funding and measures align closely with broader EU policies on animal health, biosecurity, and disease eradication. Latvia's successful eradication aligns coherently with overarching EU animal health and public health objectives.

4.2.4.4 African Swine Fever outbreaks (2014-2020)

Regarding ASF outbreaks, the situation was more complex, as can be seen in figure 11.

There was a significant rise in total ASF outbreaks between 2014 and 2020, primarily driven by outbreaks in wild boars. Outbreaks in wild boars increased notably and continuously from 334 in 2014 to 10,869 in 2020. The number of outbreaks in domestic pigs decreased significantly in 2020 (from 1,852 in 2019 down to 1,188 in 2020), despite ongoing high incidence in wild boars.

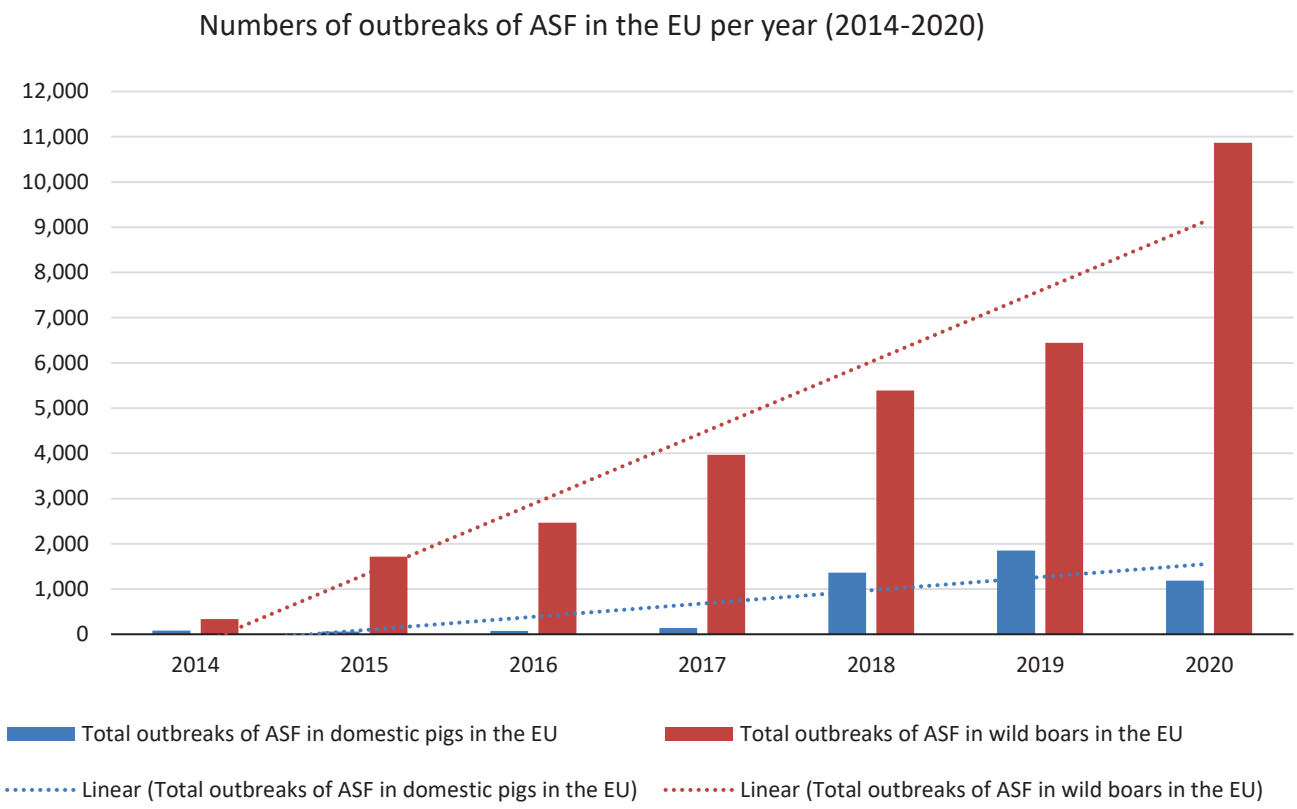


Figure 11 - African Swine Fever outbreaks (2014-2020)

ASF is particularly challenging to control because:

- Wild boars are highly adaptable and elusive, facilitating continued virus spread across broad geographical areas
- ASF virus remains infectious for prolonged periods in carcasses and the environment, making eradication highly challenging
- The absence of a safe and effective vaccine significantly limits control and eradication measures

Therefore, given the involvement of wildlife in the epidemiology of ASF, these inherent challenges meant that effective eradication of ASF was not possible within the reference period. The EU provided substantial financial support under the CFF for ASF management, including:

- Surveillance and early detection activities
- Enhanced biosecurity measures
- Intensive wild boar population management (culling, carcass removal, fencing)
- Emergency measures (culling of infected domestic pigs, compensation schemes)
- Information campaigns and public awareness initiatives

Specifically, EU financial support allocated towards emergency measures regarding ASF from 2014-2020 amounted to €82,359,848.87, highlighting significant investment in disease control. The successful containment of outbreaks in kept pigs is attributed to robust biosecurity protocols, swift outbreak response (including stamping-out measures), comprehensive surveillance and preventive actions, supported by EU financial mechanisms. While ASF outbreaks overall continued to rise, particularly in wild boars, EU funding played a crucial role in moderating the

impact on pig farms, preventing the escalation of outbreaks in kept pigs. The significant reduction in kept pigs' outbreaks observed in 2020 (from 1,852 to 1,188) further underscores the growing effectiveness and adaptation of these measures.

Relevance: The absence of an effective vaccine during the period and the virus's persistence in the environment made EU co-financing for surveillance, rapid response, and biosecurity measures directly pertinent to protecting animal production and the internal market.

Effectiveness: Despite increasing wild boar cases, EU measures effectively limited transmission to kept pigs, especially in later years. The 2020 reduction in kept pig outbreaks demonstrates the evolving effectiveness of measures.

Efficiency: Targeted investments (biosecurity, surveillance, stamping-out) efficiently focused resources on protecting the critical agricultural sector (kept pig farming), thereby containing potential larger economic losses.

EU added value: MSs would have struggled individually to implement comprehensive and coordinated ASF containment measures, particularly in border regions with high wildlife disease pressure. EU financial support provided critical resources, expertise, and coordination to reduce ASF's impact on kept pig populations significantly.

Coherence: Funded actions (wildlife management, biosecurity, surveillance, emergency responses) align closely with EU policies on animal health, agricultural sustainability, food safety, and cross-border disease management frameworks.

While ASF outbreaks increased considerably in wildlife populations between 2014 and 2020, the relatively moderate impact on kept pigs strongly indicates successful targeting and effectiveness of EU-funded measures under the CFF Regulation:

- The increasing numbers of outbreaks in wild boars reflect the challenges associated with wildlife disease control (virus stability, wildlife behaviour, absence of vaccine)
- The controlled and reduced transmission to kept pigs highlights the successful implementation of EU-funded containment and biosecurity measures, demonstrating significant EU added value and effectiveness
- The clear divergence between wild boar and kept pig outbreak trends strongly supports the conclusion that EU financial interventions significantly mitigated ASF impacts on the economically critical pig farming sector

The available data indicates that the implemented measures (subject to EU co-financing), such as wild boar management, disease surveillance, biosecurity measures, measures upon disease confirmation, etc., prevented ASF spread within the kept pigs' population (effective disease barriers were created to slow down ASF spread from wild boars to kept pigs, and between kept pigs), thus moderating the disease impact. In fact, in 2020 there was a reduction in the number of ASF outbreaks in kept pigs, compared to 2019.

The analysis of outbreak trends for Rabies, LSD, CSF, and ASF in the EU from 2014 to 2020 clearly demonstrates that targeted EU financial interventions under the CFF Regulation have significantly contributed to the control, management, and, in some cases, eradication of these animal diseases.

4.3 Plant health

The CFF Regulation contribution for plant health covers the implementation of survey programmes, which are aimed to support early detection of pests in the EU territory and implement phytosanitary emergency measures in case of outbreaks. The list of pests eligible for EU co-financing under the survey programmes includes hundreds of harmful organisms, which are subject to an annual prioritisation. This list is not integrated in the CFF Regulation but laid down in the specific plant health legislation. Survey programmes were first established and co-financed in 2015, with 17 EU countries presenting a programme in 2015 and 22 in 2016. Payments for 2015 survey amounted to EUR 4.2 million.

The implementation of phytosanitary emergency measures is instead developed for a limited number of pests which deserve a more targeted control strategy in order to prevent further spread and introduction into the rest of the Union territory. Among other pests, emergency measures have been developed so far for Xylella fastidiosa, *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* (so called:"Pinewood nematode") *Anoplophora chinensis* and *Anoplophora glabripennis*, *Pomacea*, *Epitrix spp*., whose further spread into the Union territory can cause unacceptable social, environmental and economic consequences. The objective of eradication of plant pests remains a complex objective to achieve due to lack of effective treatment solutions, the high number of susceptible plant species, population dynamics and lifecycle of pests and their vectors present in forests, parks and plantations with high economic, social and environmental value. Very few experiences have proven that eradication is possible only if decisive measures are put immediately in place. This was the case in two out of four outbreaks of Pinewood nematode in Spain, two outbreaks of *Anoplophora chinensis* in Denmark and in The Netherlands and two outbreaks of *Anoplophora glabripennis* in Germany and in The Netherlands. However, when the pest is considered to be established in a certain territory and eradication is no longer feasible, containment measures may still provide sufficient guarantees to prevent further spread of the pests in the Union territory. In this respect, for example, the EU financial support has allowed to successfully contain Pinewood nematode in Portugal, minimising the risk of further spread to neighbouring MSs, while preserving the functioning of the internal market. Similarly to the animal health area, although more limited in scale, the amount paid in plant health for emergency measures varies substantially between years. For the measures implemented in 2014 and 2015, payments amounted to EUR 7.2 and EUR 0.9 million, respectively. In the period considered, as far as emergency measures are concerned, three pests alone, namely *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*, *Anoplophora glabripennis* and *Pomacea insularum*, were responsible for almost all payments (91%) for plant health emergency measures.

4.3.1 Phytosanitary emergency measures

An analysis of EU Funding for emergency measures on Plant Health (2016–2020) and comparative assessment with the CFF mid-term evaluation was carried out with the following inferences.

a) Overview and funding proportions

During the period from 2016 to 2020, MSs requested a total of €86,839,297.57 from the European Commission for emergency measures targeting plant health pests. However, the Commission ultimately paid €43,885,292.13, representing approximately 50.5% of the total funds requested.

Looking at the annual disbursements, there is a clear upward trend in total funds allocated per year, with a notable surge in 2019 and 2020 (see figure 12). The marked increase in these years likely reflects heightened phytosanitary threats, particularly due to outbreaks of certain high-concern pests, as well as the maturation of MSs' surveillance and eradication programmes. This

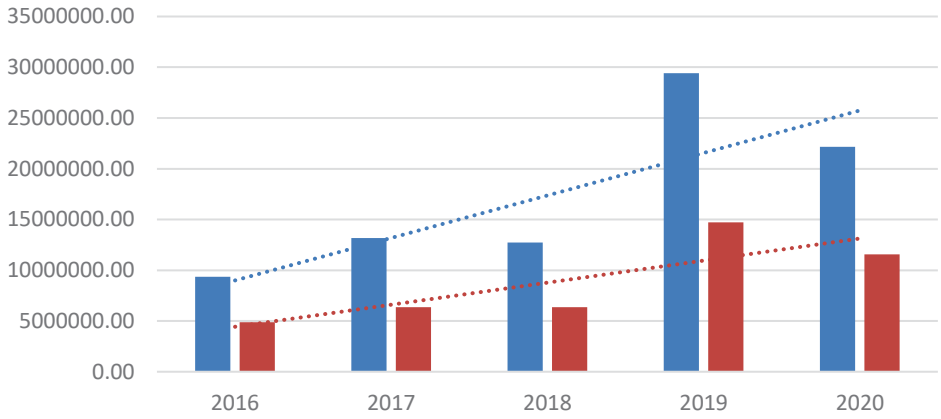
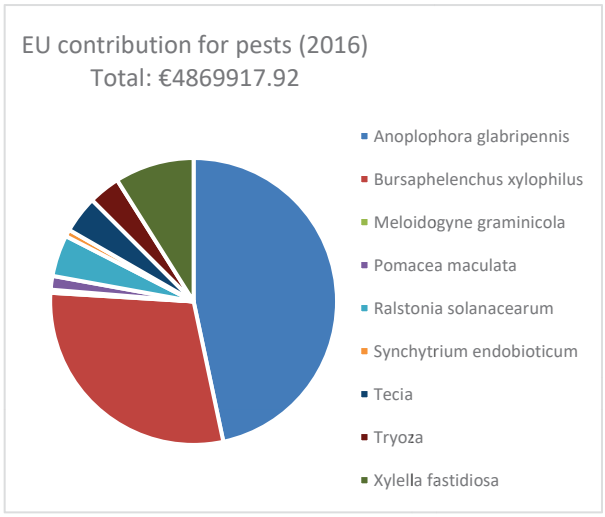


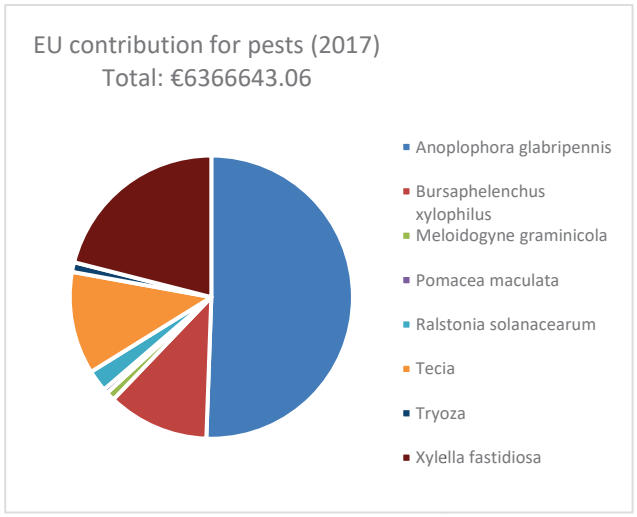
Figure 12 - EU payments to Member States (in euros) for plant health emergencies during the period of 2016 to 2020

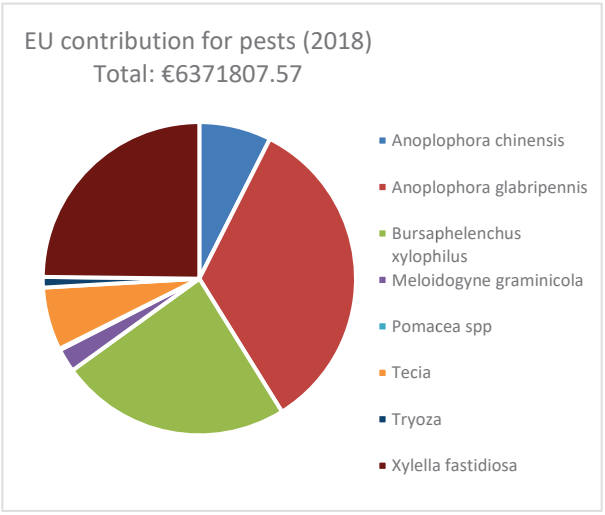
tendency towards greater expenditure mirrors broader EU priorities in plant health, notably the urgent response to large-scale incursions and the escalating threat of pests such as *Xylella fastidiosa*, which received particularly substantial support in these later years.

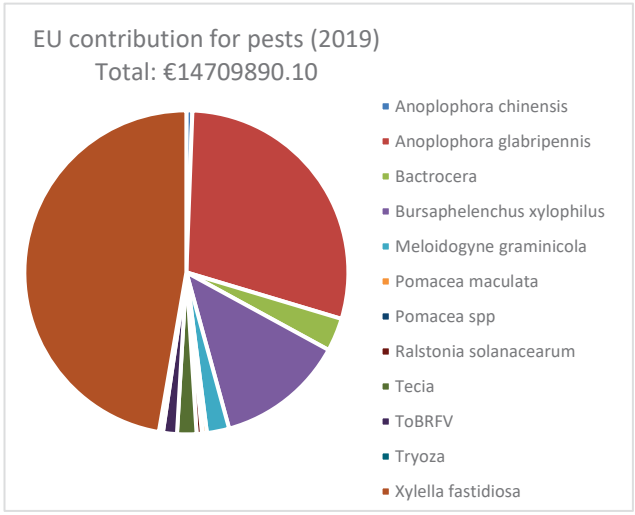
A breakdown of allocations to key pests (see figure 13 for detailed yearly EU funding per pest) provides further insight:

- Anoplophora glabripennis (Asian longhorned beetle): Approximately €15.7 million paid (across 2016–2020), representing over 36% of total funds disbursed in this area.
- Bursaphelenchus xylophilus (Pine wood nematode): Approximately €7.8 million, about 18% of the total.
- Xylella fastidiosa: Approximately €14.3 million, or roughly 33% of the total, with the largest annual payments occurring in 2019 and 2020, reflecting the severity and expansion of outbreaks.
- Tecia solanivora (Guatemalan potato moth): Over €1.9 million.
- Ralstonia solanacearum (bacterial wilt): Nearly €0.5 million.









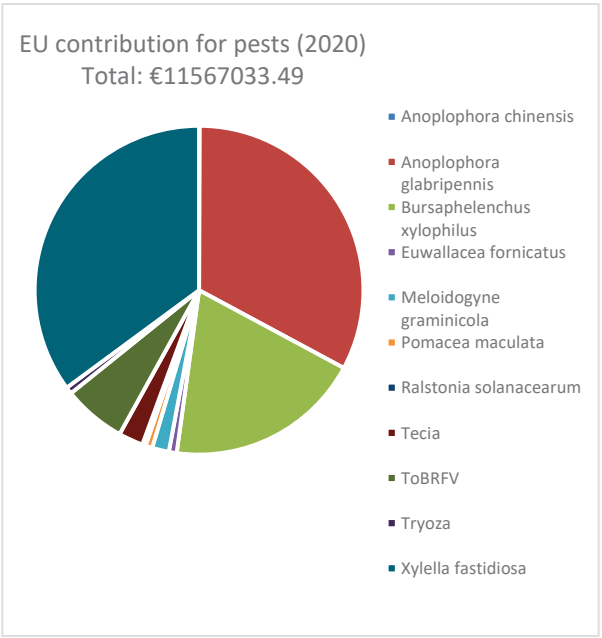


Figure 13 - Overview of contribution (EURO) proportions for pests per year (period 2016-2020)

The proportional funding devoted to *Xylella fastidiosa* and *Anoplophora glabripennis* underscores the EU's risk-based prioritization, given these pests' potential for rapid spread and high economic/environmental impact. Funding allocations were also responsive to evolving threats, as reflected by the uptick in *Xylella* support coinciding with its devastating spread in southern Europe. The mid-term evaluation of CFF Regulation (covering 2014–2016) observed that the plant health component of the CFF was both highly relevant and increasingly critical, especially with the appearance or intensification of new phytosanitary threats. However, the mid-term review also noted several challenges: limited resources relative to the growing needs, and the necessity for rapid, flexible responses as new pests emerged. The evaluation recognised the flexible functioning of the CFF, which allowed redirection of resources to urgent phytosanitary priorities as needed, yet called for further enhancements in crisis preparedness and rapid mobilization of funds.

The funding data from 2016–2020 indicates that the EU's financial response became more robust and better targeted in subsequent years, as evidenced by the increased allocations, especially for *Xylella fastidiosa*, which became a major threat after the period covered by the mid-term evaluation. The rapid growth in disbursements in 2019–2020 also aligns with the CFF's intended flexibility and responsiveness, reflecting lessons learned from earlier years.

Some key observations:

- The proportion of EU funding actually paid out compared to requested support (just over 50%) suggests continued budgetary constraint or strict adherence to co-financing and eligibility criteria.
- There is a marked increase in overall funding, especially from 2019 onward, driven largely by high-profile pest outbreaks.
- The EU's funding allocation was strongly risk-based, prioritizing pests with the greatest potential to cause widespread agricultural and environmental harm.
- The significant increase in support for *Xylella fastidiosa* in later years demonstrates an adaptive approach, with the CFF able to redirect funds in response to new or expanding threats.
- Despite improvements, the persistent gap between funds requested and paid implies ongoing challenges in fully meeting MSs' needs.

b) Assessment of funded actions for plant health emergency measures under the CFF (2016–2020) by evaluation criteria

Relevance: The actions funded under the CFF in the area of plant health have demonstrated high relevance in responding to evolving phytosanitary risks across the EU. The emergence and intensification of threats such as *Xylella fastidiosa*, *Anoplophora glabripennis*, and *Bursaphelenchus xylophilus* called for urgent, well-targeted intervention. The increasing allocation of funds for these pests (reflecting the evolving risk profile and outbreak data) shows that CFF resources were mobilized to address the most pressing plant health challenges. This direct alignment with epidemiological and pest risk trends confirms the continued policy relevance of the CFF in safeguarding the EU's agricultural and environmental resources.

EU added value: The added value of EU intervention is clear in several respects. Firstly, the CFF facilitated a coordinated approach to transboundary plant health threats that individual MSs would have struggled to address alone. The pooling of financial resources and harmonisation of response standards (surveillance, eradication, compensation) enhanced collective security and reduced the risk of pest spread between countries. Secondly, by enabling rapid funding

mobilization, the CFF strengthened the EU's ability to contain outbreaks and minimize cross-border impacts, creating public goods that benefit all MSs. The strategic allocation of funds for high-impact pests like *Xylella fastidiosa* is a testament to the distinct value of EU-level coordination and support.

Effectiveness: The implementation of plant health actions under the CFF during 2016–2020 was effective based on both financial and operational indicators. The substantial and increasing annual disbursements in response to expanding outbreaks indicate that the CFF was able to scale up support as needed. Furthermore, the targeted nature of payments (prioritizing the most dangerous pests) and the observed containment and/or eradication of several pest incursions point to positive outcomes. Overall, the flexible redirection of funds and responsiveness to new threats underpin the effective functioning of the CFF in this area.

Efficiency: Efficiency considerations reveal a mixed picture. On the one hand, the risk-based prioritization of pests and the flexible reallocation of funds maximized the impact of available resources, aligning with best practices for crisis management in plant health. Administrative processes appear to have functioned well enough to disburse significant sums on an annual basis, with increases in funding closely mirroring outbreak escalations. On the other hand, the fact that only about half of requested funds were ultimately paid indicates some inefficiency—possibly due to strict eligibility rules, delays in project execution, or challenges in substantiating costs.

Coherence: Finally, the CFF's plant health actions have shown strong coherence with other EU policies and instruments. The integration of financial support for surveillance, eradication, and crisis management aligns closely with the EU's broader plant health strategy and supports the goals of the EU Plant Health Regulation. Furthermore, funding for cross-border pest threats has been consistent with objectives under related areas, such as trade facilitation, environmental protection, and rural development. The CFF's alignment with MS programmes, and its capacity to adjust support in light of new threats, further enhances policy coherence.

4.3.2 Programmes concerning the presence of pests

a) Overview of funding allocation and number of pests

The CFF supports MSs in protecting plant health through targeted survey programmes, which focus on the early detection, monitoring, and management of plant pests, contributing to safeguarding agricultural and ecological integrity throughout the EU territory. The data from 2015 to 2020 provide a basis for evaluating the impact and efficiency of these programmes, particularly against the backdrop of increasing numbers of identified plant pests.

The charts below indicate the increase during this period of the EU funding allocated for pest survey programmes, and parallel to this financial increase, the total number of identified plant pests across the EU grew considerably during the evaluated period. This evident rise in the total number of pests underlines both the increasing phytosanitary pressure on the EU territory and the growing challenge posed to plant health management. The total pest surveys per year per member state is detailed in figure 16.

b) Assessment of funded actions for survey programmes on plant health under the CFF (2016-2020) by evaluation criteria

Relevance: The significant and steady increase in the number of pests detected from 633 in 2016 to 926 in 2020 clearly indicates the ongoing and escalating relevance of the EU-funded survey programmes. These programmes directly address an expanding threat landscape characterized by new pest incursions and increasing geographic distribution of pests within the EU. The progressive rise in allocated funds aligns closely with these heightened risks, underscoring the continued and growing relevance of EU support for surveys as an essential preventive measure.

EU added value: The survey programmes demonstrate substantial EU added value by facilitating coordinated pest surveillance across MSs. Such coordination is indispensable for early detection and rapid response, especially for pests that pose cross-border threats. Without this EU-level intervention, MSs could face disparate surveillance standards and capabilities, potentially leading to uneven pest detection and inadequate collective responses. The joint approach fostered by the CFF thus enhances regional biosecurity and significantly reduces the likelihood of uncontrolled pest spread.

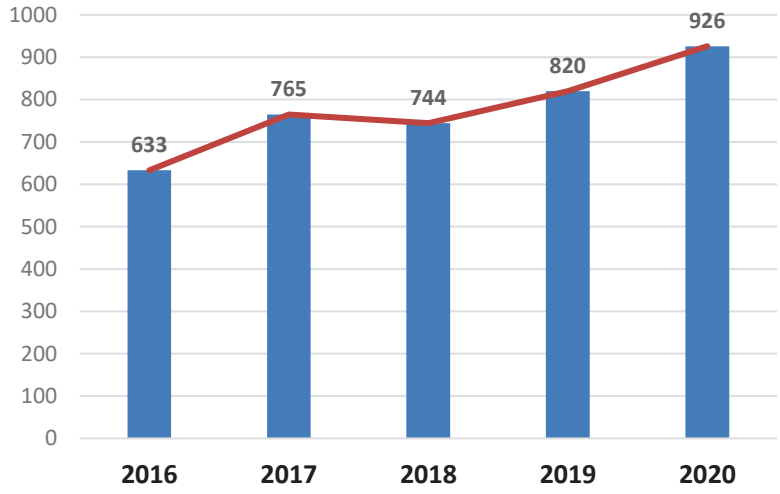


Figure 14 - Total number of pests in the EU during the period of 2016 to 2020

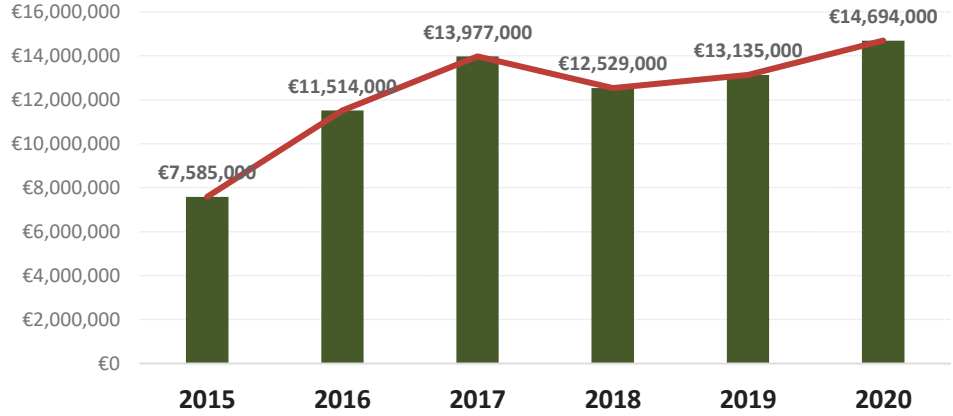


Figure 15 - Amount of co-funding (in euros) for survey programmes concerning the presence of plant pests during the period of 2015 to 2020

Effectiveness: The continued and consistent allocation of EU funding towards surveys indicates that these programmes effectively contribute to the EU's overarching objectives for plant health. While the total number of pests identified increased during the assessment period, this trend does not necessarily reflect programme ineffectiveness. Rather, the enhanced detection capability funded by EU surveys has improved pest awareness and reporting accuracy, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of phytosanitary threats. Thus, the effectiveness of the CFF-funded surveys should be viewed positively, as they significantly improve surveillance capacity, timely identification, and awareness at the EU level.

Efficiency: In terms of efficiency, the gradual rise in co-funding allocations over the years (from approximately €7.59 million in 2015 to nearly €14.69 million in 2020) demonstrates an adaptive approach to addressing increasing demands. This adaptability reflects an efficient use of resources in a highly dynamic context, with funds progressively aligned with escalating detection needs. Nonetheless, given the sharp increase in pests identified, ongoing assessments of survey methodologies, geographical coverage, and cost-effectiveness remain critical. Continuous optimization of administrative procedures, harmonisation of methodologies across MSs, and targeted allocations based on pest risk profiles are vital to maintaining and enhancing efficiency.

Coherence: Survey programmes under the CFF exhibit strong coherence with broader EU policy frameworks and objectives. They directly support the strategic aims of the EU Plant Health Regulation, complementing emergency measures and facilitating informed decision-making for timely interventions. The programmes are also coherent with other policy objectives, such as biodiversity protection, agricultural productivity, and trade facilitation, by ensuring the protection of plant resources from pest threats. The financial support structure under CFF integrates seamlessly with other EU phytosanitary measures, reinforcing comprehensive plant health governance across the EU.

4.4 Official controls

The main spending measures carried out under the official controls area consist of the activities performed by the EURLs and the implementation of the BTSF programme.

EURLs activities are financed at 100% by the EU budget and are aimed to ensure high-quality and uniform testing in the EU, and to provide trainings to hundreds of National Reference Laboratories (NRL) in a number of food safety priority areas. This co-funding is crucial as it ensures high quality, robust and reliable diagnostic capacities of the EU. It creates a reliable laboratory network which is one of the cornerstones of the EU control system as a whole, ensuring that legislation is applied in a consistent way as regards laboratory analysis and compliance testing in the context of official controls.

The BTSF initiative is also financed at 100% by the EU budget. This initiative provides for a training programme aimed to prepare officials from the competent authorities in EU MSs and in third countries in all areas of food and feed safety, animal health, animal welfare and plant health. Notably, in these areas, the EU has a well-developed set of risk-based rules in place, that MSs should apply and implement in a harmonised manner, and official controls are essential for a successful implementation. To facilitate the aforementioned objectives, it is necessary that comprehensive knowledge and awareness of the EU legislation be

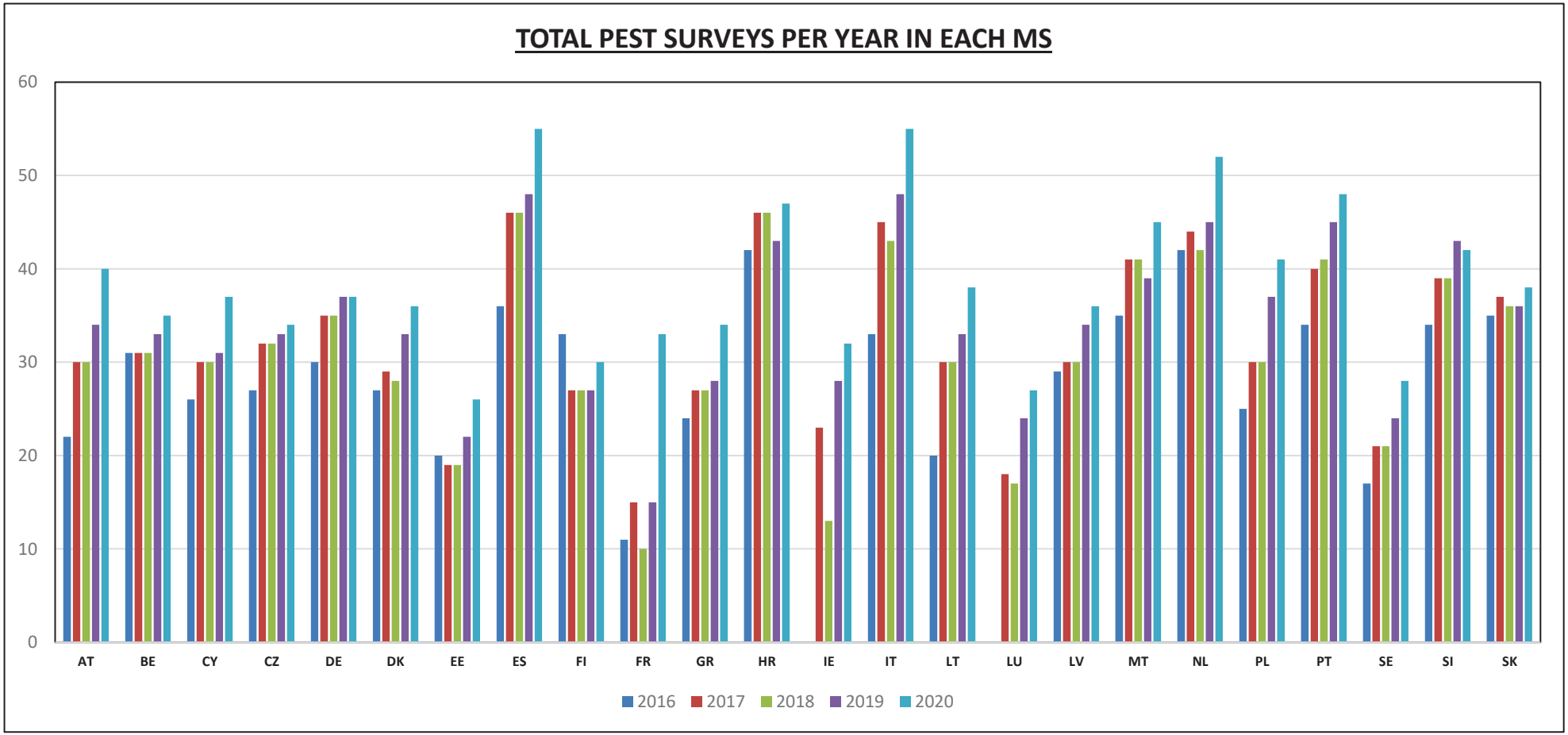


Figure 16 - Total pest surveys carried out per year in each Member State during the period of 2016 to 2020

systematically disseminated throughout all MSs and extended to international partners in third countries.

The BTSF initiative serves as a systematic mechanism for disseminating information regarding European Union legislation throughout MSs while enhancing the operational capacity of competent authorities in legislative application and control implementation. Furthermore, the BTSF programme contributes to national training frameworks by developing qualified trainers who can subsequently facilitate knowledge transfer and expand informational reach within their respective jurisdictions.

This initiative provides substantial benefits to multiple stakeholders. Primarily, it enhances the operational capacity of competent authorities. Additionally, the business sector obtains significant advantages through the establishment of harmonised control mechanisms across MSs, which effectively eliminates discriminatory practices and prevents trade disruptions that could otherwise result from inconsistent regulatory approaches.

The BTSF training programme has systematically addressed numerous topics of critical importance within the aforementioned areas, during the evaluation period. The curriculum has encompassed essential subject areas ranging from foodborne outbreak investigations to ASF outbreak management. The initiative has maintained consistent participation levels, training an average of 6,540 participants annually, thereby promoting standardised implementation approaches for EU legislation across MSs.

4.4.1 EU funding for European Union Reference Laboratories (EURLs)

EURLs play a crucial role within the EU's veterinary and food safety framework, ensuring consistent application of analytical methods, validating diagnostic tests, and providing scientific expertise and technical support to national reference laboratories across MSs.

Table 4 - Total payments in euros for EURLs during the period of 2014 to 2019

Year	Total payments (EUR)	Total EU laboratories	Average payment per laboratory (EUR)
2014	14,010,090	44	318,411
2015	14,485,760	43	336,878
2016	14,578,610	45	323,969
2017	14,578,610	45	323,969
2018	15,351,220	47	326,622
2019	20,730,600	47	441,077

An analysis of EU Funding for EURLs (2014–2019) reveals that the EU provided consistent and gradually increasing financial support to EURLs under the CFF Regulation. Funding allocations ranged from approximately €14.0 million in 2014, rising slightly each year, to a peak of €20.7 million in 2019. This progressive increase reflects both an expansion in the number of laboratories supported in the area of feed and food safety (from 44 EURLs in 2014 to 47 EURLs by 2019) and an enhanced emphasis on scientific preparedness and diagnostic capacities amidst growing disease threats.

Effectiveness: The number of laboratories receiving funding increased from 43 in 2014 to 47 in 2018 and 2019. This increase reflects the EU reinforced commitment to strengthening laboratory capacities across all relevant fields covered by the CFF, including food and feed safety, plant health, animal health, animal welfare, and related public health areas. The EU’s commitment to broadening the network of laboratories not only enhances disease monitoring and control, but also significantly contributes to improved analytical methodologies, harmonised diagnostic standards, and coordinated risk assessments across the entire food and feed safety chain, plant and animal sectors. By effectively investing in a broader spectrum of expertise,

the EU ensures comprehensive scientific support to MSs, promoting uniformity in testing practices and reinforcing overall preparedness and responsiveness to emerging and existing threats, ultimately safeguarding the European food system, agriculture, and public health. The steady increase in total payments and the consistent number of laboratories receiving funding suggests that EURLs have been able to scale their operations effectively to meet increasing demands.

Efficiency: Increase in total payments from €14.01 million (2014) to €20.73 million (2019) suggests an increasing recognition of the need for enhanced diagnostic and technical support from EU Reference Laboratories (EURLs). Moreover, increased payments from 2017 to 2019 (from €14.58 million to €20.73 million) coincide with an increase in the average payment per laboratory (from €323,969 in 2017 to €441,077 in 2019). This indicates that the EURLs needed more resources in these years, requiring enhanced diagnostic and monitoring capabilities. The cofinancing mechanisms, using standardised work programmes and templates, particularly for animal health, enhance management efficiency by simplifying administrative procedures and reducing the administrative burden on both the laboratories and the Commission. Data shows that the funding has been efficiently allocated, ensuring that the laboratories were able to scale their operations and maintain high levels of service without significant disparities in resource distribution.

EU added value: The increase in total payments, particularly between 2017 and 2019 corresponds to an expanded and reinforced scope of laboratory activities, covering critical areas such as food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, and plant health. By establishing and supporting a coordinated network of laboratories at the European level, the technical expertise has significantly enhanced, harmonisation and standardisation of analytical methodologies have been promoted, and critical scientific support and training to national reference laboratories has been provided. This unified approach ensures consistent and high-quality controls across the MSs, which contributes to maintaining uniform food and feed safety standards, robust animal disease surveillance, and harmonised responses to emerging risks. Without coordinated EU financial intervention, there could be a considerable risk of fragmented approaches among MSs, potentially leading to inconsistencies, duplication of effort, and sub-optimal resource allocation. Thus, EU investment in EURLs generates clear added value by ensuring coherence, efficiency, and a consistently high level of protection across the entire Union.

Coherence: The EURL funding is coherent with EU priorities in food and feed safety, animal health, public health and plant health. The increase in EURL funding aligns well with other EU financial interventions, such as vaccine banks, emergency measures, and national veterinary and phytosanitary programmes. The rise in EURL allocations, particularly noticeable in 2019, is coherent with the escalation in outbreaks of some major animal diseases like ASF, reflecting to reinforce diagnostic capability and technical support precisely when epidemiological pressures intensified. The alignment between financial support for EURLs and EU regulatory frameworks has enabled the laboratories to stay in sync with evolving food and feed safety, plant health and animal health regulations. The consistent support from the EU budget reflects coherence with other EU funding initiatives in the fields of official control, food safety, animal and plant health, and animal welfare.

4.4.2 Payments regarding BTSF activities during the period 2014 -2019

The BTSF initiative is a key component funded under the CFF Regulation, providing training to MS competent authority personnel and stakeholders involved in official controls in food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, and plant health. It should be noted that the analysis excludes 2020 due to exceptional disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which prevented the organisation of planned physical training sessions.

Relevance: The data strongly supports the high relevance of the BTSF initiatives throughout the evaluation period. Between 2014 and 2019, annual budgets consistently increased, from €16.17 million in 2014 to €18 million in 2019 (see figure 17), reflecting the ongoing and growing demand for training initiatives and their recognised importance. BTSF training sessions (workshops and sustained training missions) and the high participation rates highlight the clear and sustained relevance of these programmes in addressing the evolving training needs of competent authorities across Europe. The large number of e-learning enrolments, notably peaking at 11,627 in 2016 and remaining significant in subsequent years (see figure 18), underscores the importance and growing relevance of flexible training modalities, responding to diverse needs and logistical challenges.

EU added value: BTSF provides substantial EU added value by ensuring uniformity and harmonisation of official controls and regulatory practices across MSs. The considerable scale and reach of training sessions (234 in 2014, 256 in 2015, and stabilising around 160-170 sessions annually from 2017 to 2019) (see figure 19), combined with substantial participant numbers (exceeding 7,000 annually in peak years) (see figure 20), significantly contributed to a more coherent application of EU legislation, standards, and best practices. Additionally, the centralised coordination of training under BTSF delivers cost-effectiveness and standardisation that individual MSs alone might not achieve, ensuring equal quality and consistency of controls across the Union.

Effectiveness: The data demonstrates clear effectiveness of BTSF-funded activities. The rise in both the number of training sessions and participants between 2014 and 2016 corresponds to an increased training capacity. Even as the number of physical training sessions declined to around 165–169 (2018–2019), the programmes retained a substantial reach (around 6,000 participants annually). The sustained high participant numbers indicate effective planning, targeted content, and a relevant curriculum responsive to MSs' needs.

Efficiency: From an efficiency perspective, the funding provided to BTSF exhibited thoughtful resource allocation. While annual budgets gradually increased from €16.17 million in 2014 to €18 million in 2019, the programme adapted to varying training demands, shifting from predominantly physical sessions to increased reliance on e-learning, reflecting cost-efficient use of resources and improved outreach. When the total number of physical training sessions declined after 2016, the budgetary increases were modest and accompanied by sustained high levels of participants and extensive online training enrolments, implying efficient and effective use of allocated resources.

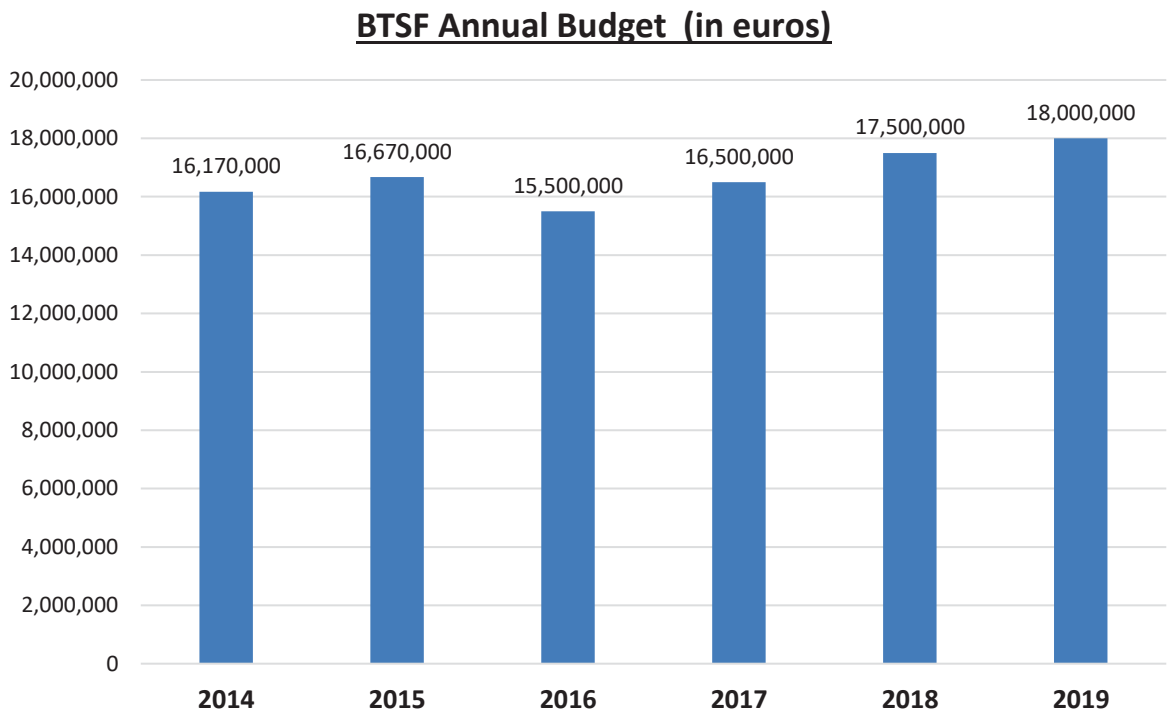


Figure 17 - BTSF annual budget (EURO) for the years 2014 until 2019

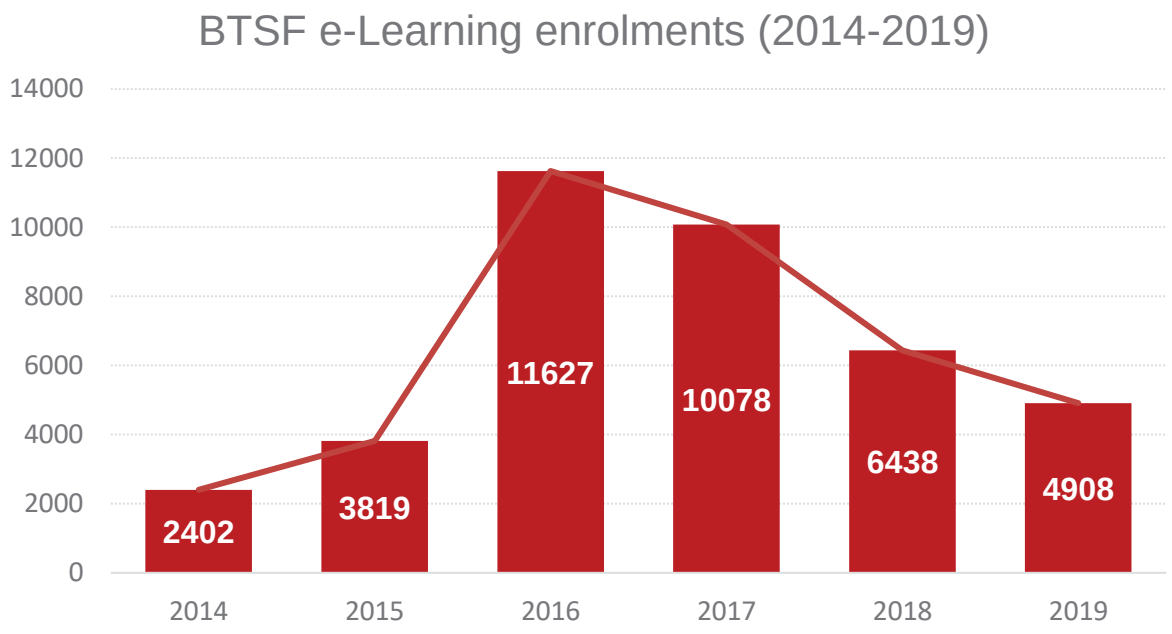


Figure 18 - Total e-Learning enrolments for the years of 2014 until 2019

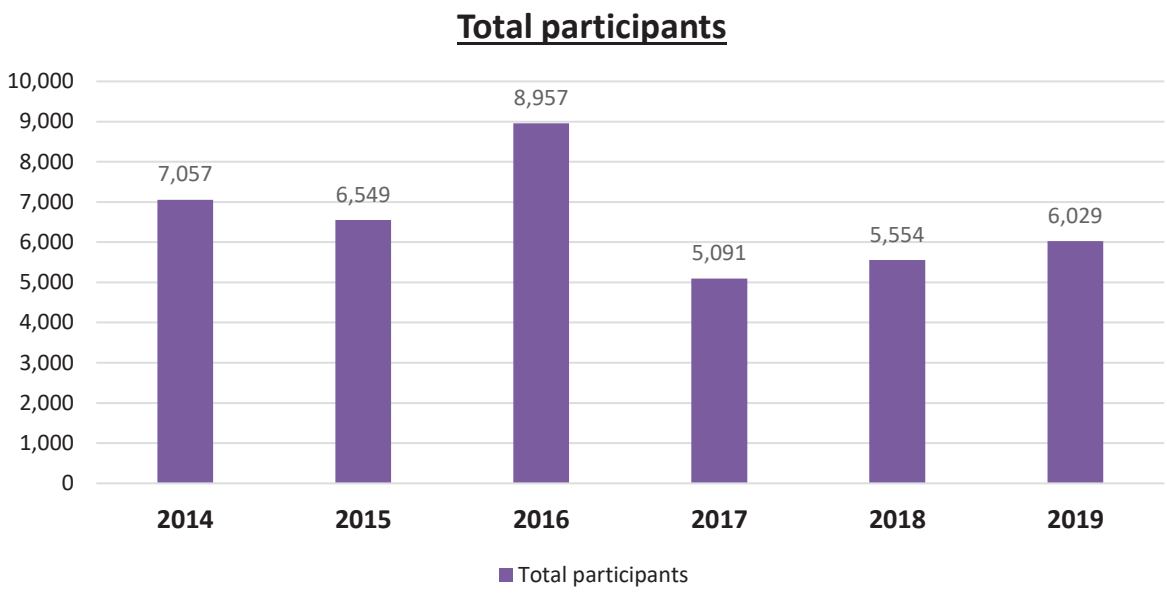


Figure 20 - Total participants in BTSF activities for the years of 2014 until 2019

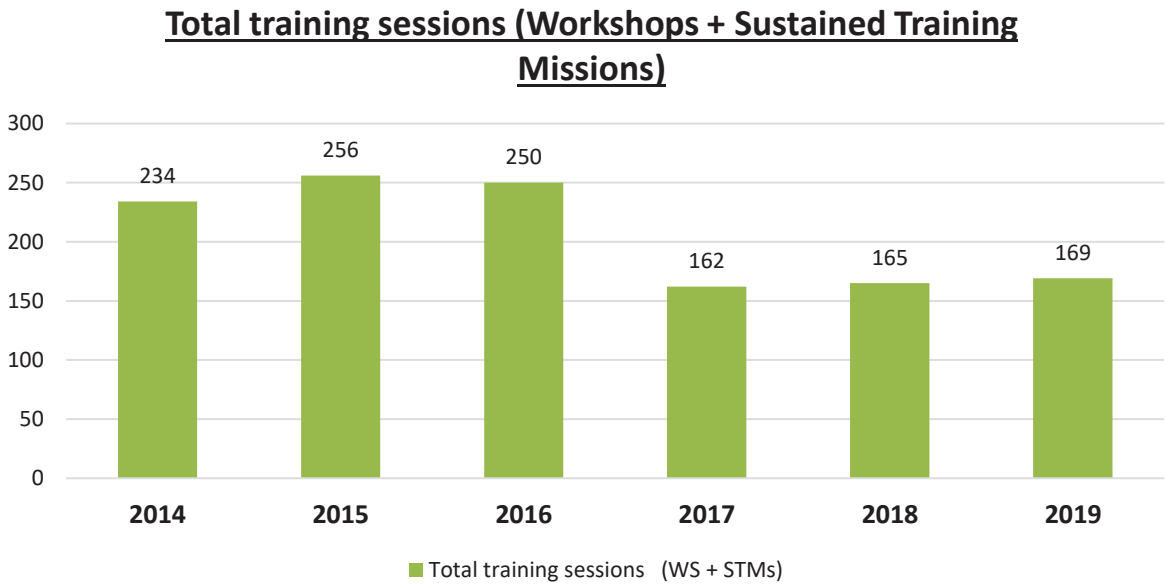


Figure 19 - Total training sessions (amounting total workshops and sustained training missions) carried out for the years of 2014 until 2019

Coherence: BTSF demonstrates strong coherence with the broader EU policy framework, aligning closely with objectives outlined in the EU legislation governing food chain including the CFF Regulation. The BTSF initiative demonstrates strong coherence with the General Food Law by equipping competent authorities with harmonised training that ensures effective and consistent implementation of EU food and feed safety legislation across all MSs. BTSF's training topics consistently addressed key priorities. and the integrated training approach directly complements the EU's wider food safety, public health, and biosecurity strategies, reflecting the "One Health" principle, which underscores interlinked human, animal, and environmental health concerns.

4.5 To what extent were the interventions successful and why?

The CFF interventions were broadly successful across all pillars. In animal health, long-term veterinary programmes achieved sustained progress (payments tapered as eradication efforts matured) while emergency appropriations scaled up with outbreaks, allowing rapid containment (e.g., large step-up in 2017–2020) and limiting costs. In plant health, expanded survey and emergency funding improved early detection and response. And in official controls, increased support to EURLs and sustained BTSF delivery strengthened harmonised capacity. This performance reflects risk-based prioritisation, flexible co-financing tools, for alignment of spending with epidemiological development and objectives.

4.6 How did the EU intervention make a difference and to whom?

The main direct beneficiaries were MS competent authorities, reimbursed for eligible measures; businesses also benefited from harmonised controls that reduce discriminatory practices and avoid trade disruption. EURL funding delivered Union-wide added value by standardising methods, strengthening NRL networks and supporting coordinated risk assessment, results that would be unattainable through fragmented national action. BTSF training (hundreds of sessions; thousands of participants) improved the consistency and quality of official controls across the Union, enhancing compliance with EU law.

4.7 Is the intervention still relevant?

The report explicitly assesses relevance and shows continued alignment with evolving needs and with the wider policy acquis (GFL, Animal Health Law, CAP) and international coordination, while funding patterns tracked epidemiological pressures (e.g., ASF) and operational demands (EURLs, BTSF). The sectoral synthesis confirms that the CFF's design remained fit for purpose through 2014–2020, informing the continuity of actions under the subsequent Single Market Programme.

5. WHAT ARE THE CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED?

5.1. SECTORIAL CONCLUSIONS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF CFF REGULATION

Allocation of EU funds was substantially in line with the forecasted budget. For the concerned years, it was sufficient to cover the different needs, thanks to the good results achieved in the four major spending areas; the positive trend mainly concerned the animal health field, especially eradication programmes, where the successful implementation of long-term measures led to the progressive reduction of the related spending, and veterinary emergency measures, whose ad hoc system of early detection and intervention allowed to timely extinguish or contain the outbreaks occurred in the period under evaluation, therefore limiting the associated costs.

Reallocation of funds was an essential instrument to boost efficiency in the control of diseases within the framework of national programmes and reveals that the financial resources have been applied effectively and in alignment with the objectives set out by the CFF Regulation. The financial support from the EU, combined with national efforts, has proven to be effective, efficient, and coherent with EU policies. The use of these funds has led to measurable successes in reducing the incidence of targeted diseases, preventing outbreaks, and enhancing the overall resilience of EU MSs against future health threats.

EU's funding for vaccine banks has been well-utilised to address both emerging and existing health threats within the EU and beyond, ensuring coordination, preparedness, and swift action in disease control. EU financial investment in vaccine banks from 2014 to 2020 reflects strategic prioritization and responsiveness to epidemiological threats, reinforcing preparedness against major animal diseases.

The evaluation acknowledges that emergency measures play a pivotal role in preventing and controlling outbreaks of animal diseases and plant pests across the EU. The regulation outlines how the EU can intervene financially to support MSs and third countries when emergencies occur, which can have significant public health, food safety, agricultural, and economic impacts. The selection of four priority diseases for EU vaccine banks has enhanced efficiency and the types of vaccines chosen for the banks also reflect the suitability of the prices for the procurement of those vaccines. Targeted allocation of EU emergency funds by disease during 2014–2020 was not only well aligned with disease pressures and epidemiological trends, but also demonstrably effective in reducing, containing, or eradicating outbreaks in the EU, especially for diseases where emergency measures could break transmission cycles.

Available data demonstrates that the EU, through the CFF, has increasingly prioritised and expanded its financial response to plant health emergencies, fully aligning with the objectives. The marked surge in funding for key pests (especially *Xylella fastidiosa* and *Anoplophora glabripennis*) reflects both an evolving threat landscape and the Commission's ongoing commitment to supporting MSs in effectively managing plant health crises. The CFF has proven to be a relevant, effective, and EU value-adding instrument regarding plant health emergencies, characterised by its capacity for targeted, risk-based funding and its adaptability to emerging phytosanitary challenges. EU's financial support for plant pest survey programmes under the CFF has demonstrated significant relevance, substantial EU added value, clear effectiveness in enhancing surveillance capabilities, efficient adaptation to emerging phytosanitary challenges, and strong coherence with broader EU policy objectives. While the number of identified pests rose markedly during the evaluated period, this is indicative not of reduced programme effectiveness, but rather of improved detection and reporting capabilities fostered by the EU's investment. The progressive scaling up of survey funding, reflecting increasing phytosanitary threats, aligns well with the findings and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation, which emphasised the necessity for enhanced preparedness, surveillance, and responsive financial interventions. Overall, these survey programmes have reinforced the EU's capacity to promptly identify, monitor, and respond to phytosanitary risks, ensuring robust and resilient plant health management across MSs.

The evaluation of the CFF Regulation confirms that the EURLs have effectively supported EU policy objectives in food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, and plant health through targeted financial investments. The progressive increase in funding to this network has enhanced laboratory capacity, technical expertise, and methodological harmonisation across MSs. This strengthened infrastructure reinforces a robust and coordinated EU-wide system of official controls, significantly contributing to early detection, risk management, and effective crisis response, thus demonstrating high added value and coherence with broader EU policy frameworks. The mid-term evaluation findings are thus reinforced, confirming that continued EU support to EURLs remains vital for ensuring consistent high-level standards across Europe.

The BTSF initiative funded under the CFF Regulation has effectively delivered significant EU added value, demonstrating clear relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and coherence with overarching EU policies and MS needs. The maintained and moderately increased budget ensured continued robust participation rates, complemented significantly by growing use of e-learning platforms. The adaptability of the BTSF programme reflects strategic foresight and efficient resource management. This flexibility allowed BTSF to maintain its high value even under logistical constraints, as exemplified by the proactive e-learning approach prior to the unprecedented disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. BTSF remains an essential instrument in facilitating the development of a harmonised, efficient, high-quality approach to official controls, thereby enhancing public and animal health, animal welfare, plant health, food and feed safety, and Europe's biosecurity framework.

5.2. OVERARCHING CONCLUSION ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CFF REGULATION

The evaluation of the CFF Regulation has confirmed its strong relevance, substantial EU added value, clear effectiveness, efficient resource allocation, and robust coherence with wider EU policies across its three key sectors. Regarding animal health, and despite the persistent challenge posed by certain diseases, notably the rising outbreaks of ASF, EU-funded veterinary programmes and emergency measures significantly mitigated the potential economic and public health impacts. Targeted disease control actions, vaccine banks, coordinated regional approaches, and strengthened biosecurity markedly reduced outbreaks for diseases such as TSEs, LSD, rabies, and Brucellosis, demonstrating substantial progress in animal disease containment and eradication within the EU territory.

As regards to plant health, EU-funded survey programmes and emergency interventions effectively strengthened early detection, surveillance, and rapid response capacities to significant phytosanitary threats. Funding allocations showed adaptive increases responding to evolving pest threats such as *Xylella fastidiosa* and *Anoplophora glabripennis*. Although funding requests exceeded available resources, the progressive and risk-based deployment of funding has considerably enhanced the EU's preparedness and responsiveness to plant health emergencies. Finally, EU investments into Official Control measures, including support to EURLs and comprehensive training activities under the BTSF initiative, greatly harmonised and strengthened the enforcement and consistent application of EU food chain legislation. These initiatives clearly improved MSs' capacity and capabilities, ensuring uniform quality, reliability, and effectiveness of official controls throughout the EU, sustaining the Single Market.

Overall, Regulation (EU) No 652/2014, through the CFF, has substantially improved the EU's capability to respond proactively and effectively to animal and plant health threats and food safety risks significantly contributing to safeguarding EU public, animal, and food safety. While key areas identified for operational improvement during the CFF evaluation have been effectively addressed within the new Single Market Programme framework, the CFF has demonstrably succeeded in achieving its key objectives, providing substantial added value at Union level. This solid foundation should continue to inform future financial frameworks and policy approaches, maintaining and strengthening EU leadership in food chain safety, animal and plant health, animal welfare, official controls, and comprehensive biosecurity management.

The main lessons learned following the overview of the assessment of all activities supported by the CFF funding tool, can be summarised as below:

- EU cofinancing of the measures supporting animal health and plant health is instrumental for the effective implementation of the relevant actions by the national competent authorities of the countries involved.
- The operation of a central (EU) financial tool for certain horizontal activities meant to benefit all EU MSs (EURLs, BTSF, EU vaccine banks) is indispensable for the uniform implementation of official controls and all relevant EU legislation, while at the same time it provides a more flexible funding mechanism compared to the national ones (for example, in the area of procurement).
- The effectiveness of this central financial tool is due to a large extent to its adaptability to the ever-evolving epidemiological situation in the areas of animal health and plant health. As a result, prioritisation of specific animal diseases / plant pests should remain a key feature of similar future financial tools.
- Operation of similar central financing tools can benefit greatly through simplification, where this is feasible, with a view to reduce administrative burden and complexity of the relevant procedures.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The evaluation was led by the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE). The organisation and timing are described as covering the full implementation period 2014–2020, building on the mid-term evaluation that assessed 2014–2016. The evaluation period commenced at the conclusion of the 2014–2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (31 December 2020, as established by Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013[13]) and extended to the present date. The initiation of evaluation activities was delayed due to a transitional period necessitated by the dissolution of the responsible unit. The data analysis phase spanned six months. Data collection occurred during two distinct periods: February to March 2022, and subsequently from September 2024 to May 2025.

The evaluation followed the Commission's Better Regulation Guidelines and applied a counterfactual approach, assessing what would likely have occurred in the absence of the CFF. Evidence was triangulated through desk research (DG SANTE/Eurostat data, MS annual reports, audit/inspection material), an open public consultation, targeted questionnaires, interviews, and case studies, with analysis structured around the five evaluation criteria.

For the reasons explained in section 2.1 ("Description of the intervention and its objectives") analysis in relation to animal health and plant health activities was often limited to the level of cost-effectiveness (quantity and quality of implementation of the activities) rather than cost-efficiency (comparison between financial costs incurred and resulting financial benefits).

The evidence base combines Commission administrative series (commitments/payments by measure) and the updated findings from the mid-term study. The ex-post evaluation document presents factual time series and tables for animal-health emergency payments, plant-health surveys, EURLs and BTSF, while the mid-term evaluation details the data-collection approach. The Commission SWD – Synopsis Report (SWD(2017) 316 final)[14] summarises stakeholder consultation inputs. These official documents describe triangulation across multiple sources and reliance on operational/technical indicators. The mid-term exercise functioned as an external study supporting the Commission's assessment, and it was prepared under a study contract for the

[13] Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1311/2013 of 2 December 2013 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2014-2020. *OJ L 347, 20.12.2013, pp. 884-891*

[14] COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT Synopsis report Accompanying the document Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and to the Council Mid-term evaluation of Regulation (EU) No 652/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down provisions for the management of expenditure relating to the food chain, animal health and animal welfare, and relating to plant health and plant reproductive material, amending Council Directives 98/56/EC, 2000/29/EC and 2008/90/EC, Regulations (EC) No 178/2002, (EC) 882/2004 and (EC) No 396/2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council, Directive 2009/128/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 1107/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Council Decisions 66/399/EEC, 76/894/EEC and 2009/470/EC; SWD/2017/0316 final

SANTE/2016/D4/SI2.739084 by the IBF Consortium, including the IBF Consumer Policy Centre, VetEffecT and Wageningen University & Research Centre (WUR).

ANNEX II. METHODOLOGY AND ANALYTICAL MODELS USED

Details of the methodology and analytical models are set out across this document (section 1.2 'Methodology') and the earlier body of documents, namely the mid-term evaluation and accompanying Commission SWDs (Synopsis Report and Accompanying Document). Taken together, they describe the logic, data sources, stakeholder consultation, indicator framework (six performance indicators operationalised by 21 technical indicators), and quality-assurance arrangements. This report applies the same evaluation framework as previously established, without significant modifications, and updates the evidence to cover the 2014–2020 period. The supporting evidence and data used for the purposes of the present ex-post report are listed in the following table.

Type of intervention	Evidence / data	Comments
Veterinary programmes	Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS), now replaced by Animal Disease Information System (ADIS). Annual comprehensive lists of EU cofinancing per disease programme, country and type of measures. EFSA EU One Health Zoonoses Reports. EFSA TSEs surveillance reports. Stakeholders' consultation	
Vaccine banks	Comprehensive list of the amounts incurred for each and every procurement procedure (2014-2020) Stakeholders' consultation	
Emergency measures on animal health	ADNS, ADIS. Comprehensive lists of the funds granted per year, disease, country. Stakeholders' consultation	Amounts broken down per grant (payment per country)
Phytosanitary emergency measures	Comprehensive lists of the funds granted per year, pest, country. Stakeholders' consultation	
Programmes concerning presence of plant pests	Annual comprehensive lists of EU cofinancing per pest programme, country and type of measures. Stakeholders' consultation	
EURLs	Comprehensive lists of the funds granted per EURL and year. Stakeholders' consultation	
BTSF activities	Comprehensive list of the annual budget allocated to BTSF including annual numbers of activities (workshops, short technical missions) and numbers of participants. Stakeholders' consultation	

ANNEX III. EVALUATION MATRIX AND, WHERE RELEVANT, DETAILS ON ANSWERS TO THE EVALUATION QUESTIONS (BY CRITERION)

To ensure methodological rigour and transparency, the ex-post report presents the evaluation questions explicitly and in alignment with the five Better Regulation criteria (effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value) so that responses to those questions constitute the principal evidence underpinning the assessment of findings:

Relevance: do CFF objectives still address EU/Member-State needs?

EU added value: what benefits arise beyond national action alone?

Effectiveness: to what extent were objectives/results achieved?

Efficiency: were resources used cost-effectively relative to outputs/outcomes?

Coherence: is CFF consistent with related EU/Member-State policies and instruments?

Where overarching questions (e.g. “To what extent was the intervention successful?”) necessarily cut across multiple criteria and a clear separation between effectiveness, efficiency and coherence is not feasible, the report provides criterion-specific answers to their respective evaluation questions, thereby supplying details on the evidence base informing the integrated narrative.

CFF EVALUATION MATRIX – ANIMAL HEALTH

CFF Evaluation Criteria	Sector	Activity	Evidence /Data used	Data Collection Method	Assessment method
• **Relevance** • **Effectiveness** • **Efficiency** • **EU added value** • **Coherence**	**Animal Health**	**Veterinary programmes**	- Animal Disease Notification System (ADNS), now replaced by Animal Disease Information System (ADIS). - Annual comprehensive lists of EU co-financing per disease programme, country and type of measures. - EFSA EU One Health Zoonoses Reports. - EFSA TSEs surveillance reports. - Stakeholders' consultation	- ADNS/ADIS online database - Desktop review of SANTE archives - EFSA website - Questionnaire distributed among competent authorities	- Data analysis (statistics etc.) - Case studies (Rabies, LSD, CSF, ASF) - Cost – efficiency analysis (where feasible) - Use of indicators (e.g. number of human cases of zoonoses, rate of successful implementation of veterinary programmes, etc.)
		Vaccine banks	- Comprehensive list of the amounts incurred for each and every procurement procedure (2014-2020) - Stakeholders' consultation	- ADNS/ADIS online database - Desktop review of SANTE archives - Questionnaire distributed among competent authorities	- Data analysis (statistics etc.) - Case study (LSD)
		Emergency measures on animal health	- ADNS, ADIS. - Comprehensive lists of the funds granted per year, disease, country. - Stakeholders' consultation	- ADNS/ADIS online database - Desktop review of SANTE archives - Questionnaire distributed among competent authorities	- Data analysis (statistics etc.) - Case studies (Rabies, LSD, CSF, ASF) - Cost – efficiency analysis (where feasible) - Use of indicators (e.g. number of disease cases / outbreaks)

CFF EVALUATION MATRIX – PLANT HEALTH, OFFICIAL CONTROLS

CFF Evaluation Criteria	Sector	Activity	Evidence /Data used	Data Collection Method	Assessment method
• **Relevance** • **Effectiveness** • **Efficiency** • **EU added value** • **Coherence**	**Plant health**	**Plant pest programmes**	- Annual comprehensive lists of EU co-financing per pest programme, country and type of measures. - Stakeholders' consultation	- Desktop review of SANTE archives - Questionnaire distributed among competent authorities	- Data analysis (statistics etc.) - Cost – efficiency analysis (where feasible) - Use of indicators (e.g. allocation of funds)
		Phytosanitary emergency measures	- Comprehensive lists of the funds granted per year, pest, country. - Stakeholders' consultation	- Desktop review of SANTE archives - Questionnaire distributed among competent authorities	- Data analysis (statistics etc.) - Cost – efficiency analysis (where feasible) - Use of indicators (e.g. allocation of funds)
	Official controls	**EU Reference laboratories**	- Comprehensive lists of the funds granted per EURL and year. - Stakeholders' consultation	- Desktop review of SANTE archives - Questionnaire distributed among competent authorities	- Data analysis (statistics etc.) - Cost – efficiency analysis (where feasible) - Use of indicators (e.g. allocation of funds)
		Better Training for safer food	- Comprehensive list of the annual budget allocated to BTSF including annual numbers of activities (workshops, short technical missions) and numbers of participants. - Stakeholders' consultation	- Desktop review of SANTE archives - Questionnaire distributed among competent authorities	- Data analysis (statistics etc.) - Cost – efficiency analysis (where feasible) - Use of indicators (e.g. allocation of funds, numbers of e-Learning enrolments , training sessions , participants etc.))

ANNEX IV. OVERVIEW OF BENEFITS AND COSTS

Table 1. Overview of costs and benefits identified in the evaluation[15]

		Citizens/Consumers		Businesses		Administrations		[Other…] _ specify	
		Quantitative	Qualitative (comment)	Quantitative	Qualitative (comment)	Quantitative	Qualitative (comment)	Quantitative	Qualitative (comment)
[Cost or Benefit description]:									
Mark the type of cost/benefit, each on a separate line: **Costs:** **Direct compliance costs** (adjustment costs, administrative costs, regulatory charges) **Enforcement costs:** (costs associated with activities linked to the implementation of an initiative such as monitoring, inspections and adjudication/litigation) **Indirect costs** (indirect compliance costs or other indirect costs such as transaction costs and movement restrictions) **Benefits:** **Direct benefits** (such as improved well being: changes in pollution levels, safety, health, employment; market efficiency) **Indirect benefits** (such as wider economic benefits, macroeconomic benefits, social impacts, environmental impacts)	**Type:** recurrent	Direct compliance costs: N/A	No direct fees/charges attributable to citizens identified; effects (e.g., price pass-through) not quantified (in addition to the information provided).	Direct compliance costs: N/A	Biosecurity upgrades, sampling/self-monitoring, record-keeping vary widely by species/sector and are not reported in monetary terms.	Direct compliance costs: N/A	The CFF records EU co-financing of measures, not the full administrative cost incurred by MS; no harmonised costing.	Direct compliance costs: N/A	Third Countries: no systematic reporting of compliance costs linked to EU-funded actions.
	Type: recurrent	Enforcement costs: N/A	Non applicable as costs borne by authorities/businesses	Enforcement costs: N/A	Operator time for inspections/responses not monetised across MS (in addition to the information provided).	Enforcement costs: N/A	MS enforcement effort (staff time, labs) not disaggregated or monetised in evaluation sources.	Enforcement costs: N/A	Third Countries: not systematically captured.
	Type: episodic/one-off in emergencies; otherwise, recurrent	Indirect costs: N/A	Transitory market effects (availability/prices) not monetised (in addition to the information provided).	Indirect costs: N/A	Production/trade disruptions, standstills, cleaning & disinfection beyond co-financed items not reported in euros.	Indirect costs: N/A	Opportunity costs (reprioritisation) not quantified.	Indirect costs: N/A	Third Countries: not quantified (in addition to the information provided).
	Type: recurrent (health protection; safer food/feed; faster outbreak control)	Direct benefits: N/A	Reduced disease risk and safer food are public-good benefits; no monetised valuation (in addition to the information provided).	Direct benefits: N/A	Benefits from disease-free status (market access, avoided losses) are real but not monetised in a comparable way.	Direct benefits: N/A	Efficiency gains from EURLs/BTSF, harmonised methods and unit-costs not converted into € in the evaluation.	Direct benefits: N/A	Third Countries: ancillary benefits from regional containment measures not quantified in monetary terms (in addition to the information provided).
	Type: recurrent / episodic	Indirect benefits: N/A	Avoided public-health burden and confidence effects not monetised (in addition to the information provided).	Indirect benefits: N/A	Avoided mass culling/long standstills, smoother trade and fewer barriers are not valued in euros in the evidence.	Indirect benefits: N/A	Reduced duplication via EURLs, shared tools/training and coherent emergency funding not monetised (in addition to the information provided).	Indirect benefits: N/A	Regional externalities (buffering at borders) not costed.

15 Where there is a prior impact assessment, the table should contain as a minimum the costs/benefits identified in the IA with the information gathered on the actual cost/benefit. As available, the table should include the monetisation (€) of the costs/benefits based on any quantitative translation of the data (time taken, person days, number of records/equipment/staff etc. affected or involved represented in monetary value – see Standard cost model, for example). For all information presented, it should be included in the comments section whether it relates to all Member States or is drawn from a subset. An indication of the robustness of the data should be provided in Annex II on Methodology and analytical models used.

Note: Monetisation is not feasible in this exercise because the available documentation records EU budget commitments and payments by measure rather than costs or benefits by stakeholder group, so the necessary disaggregated financial data are absent. Moreover, the principal benefits (fewer outbreaks, faster eradication and harmonised controls) are public-good outcomes shaped by multiple factors; without a reliable counterfactual, robust valuation cannot be produced. Administrative and compliance costs also vary widely across MSs and sectors and are neither harmonised nor reported in a comparable, disaggregated format. Accordingly, this report provides qualitative evidence and budgetary trends rather than stakeholder-level monetary estimates.

Linkage between CFF outlays and stakeholder benefits (2014–2020):

- Animal health – emergency measures and vaccine banks. Stakeholder benefits: (i) Competent authorities: faster outbreak financing and reimbursable eligible costs, enabling timely response and continuity of services; (ii) Businesses (farmers, operators): reduced duration and spatial extent of restrictions, lower culling volumes than counterfactual, protection of disease-free status and market access; (iii) Citizens: lower zoonotic exposure (e.g., HPAI, rabies), steady food supply; (iv) Neighbouring third countries: co-financed actions that curb cross-border spread. Complementing this, vaccine banks provided immediate access to antigen/finished doses, shortening reaction time and reducing response costs during peaks (evidenced by the rapid decline of LSD outbreaks in the EU from 2016 to near-zero after 2017, where vaccine availability and coordinated campaigns were decisive).

- Plant health – emergency measures and survey programmes. Stakeholder benefits: (i) Competent authorities: capacity to mount demarcated zones and risk-based surveys; (ii) Businesses (nurseries, growers, operators): earlier detection limits trade-disrupting spread and preserves plant-health status; (iii) Citizens/environment: protection of ecosystems and amenity trees; (iv) Third countries: reduced cross-border pest pressure through EU co-financed containment at the source.

- Official controls – EURLs and BTSF. Stakeholder benefits: (i) Competent authorities/NRLs: reduced duplication and fewer inconclusive results; (ii) Businesses: predictable, uniform controls across borders, lowering compliance uncertainty; (iii) Citizens: more reliable official controls and earlier signal detection. BTSF annual budgets financed hundreds of sessions and thousands of participants, plus significant e-learning uptake, diffusing best practices on surveillance, biosecurity, sampling and enforcement. Stakeholder benefits: (i) Competent authorities: scalable skills transfer, consistent interpretation of EU rules; (ii) Businesses/citizens: smoother, more predictable enforcement that protects public and animal/plant health.

- Overarching effects. The blend of emergency finance, standing survey capacity, reference laboratory functions, training, and vaccine readiness created system-level benefits: faster containment, fewer repeat tests, uniform methodologies, and shorter time-to-action. While these are not monetised by stakeholder in the available documentation, the quantified outlays above map directly to observable outputs and system capabilities that reduce the depth and duration of crises, stabilise trade, and maintain a high level of protection across the Union.

TABLE 2: Simplification and burden reduction (savings already achieved)

*Report any simplification, burden reduction and cost savings **achieved already** by the intervention evaluated, including the points of comparison/ where available (e.g. REFIT savings predicted in the IA or other sources).*

	Citizens/Consumers/Workers		Businesses		Administrations		[Other…] _ specify	
	Quantitative	Comment	Quantitative	Comment	Quantitative	Comment	Quantitative	Comment
Title[16] *[Select among: (i) direct compliance cost savings (for example adjustment cost savings, administrative cost savings, savings from regulatory charges); (ii) enforcement cost savings (for example cost savings associated with activities linked to the implementation of an initiative such as monitoring, inspections and adjudication/litigation); (iii) indirect cost savings (if possible - for example indirect compliance cost savings or other indirect cost savings such as transaction cost savings).*								
(i) Direct administrative cost savings via unit costs & ceilings in veterinary eradication programmes **Type: recurrent**	N/A	Savings increase mainly to administrations.	N/A	Indirect benefit through faster reimbursements and programme predictability; no monetisation reported.	N/A	Mid-term evidence and the ex-post narrative indicate lower administrative burden and faster cost clearance for MS and DG SANTE once unit costs/ceilings are set (fewer invoices, simplified verification, predictable rates). Exact staff-time savings are not collected in a harmonised way across MS.	N/A	Not systematically reported.
(ii) Enforcement cost savings via EURLs' harmonised methods, QA schemes and PTs **Type: recurrent**	N/A	Benefits materialise as more reliable controls; not monetised.	N/A	Fewer repeat tests and consistent requirements reduce uncertainty; no EU-wide €uro estimate available.	N/A	EURLs' guidance/proficiency testing, validated methods and training avoid duplication across MS laboratories and reduce re-analysis; uploaded reports do not quantify laboratory-hour savings or avoided consumables.	N/A	Not quantified for NRLs in associated/third countries.
(i) Administrative cost savings via standardised funding rates (50/75/100%) and clearer eligible-cost lists **Type: recurrent**	N/A	Not applicable.	N/A	Indirect – simpler rules reduce delays in implementation; not monetised.	N/A	The CFF's standard rates and stable eligibility rules reduce negotiation/verification time and make annual work programmes easier to plan; no cross-MS monetisation in sources.	N/A	Not reported.
(i/iii) Cost savings from BTSF centralised training and e-learning (reduced travel/per diem; reusable content) **Type: recurrent**	N/A	Public-good benefits through better official controls; not monetised.	N/A	Indirect – more uniform controls reduce compliance uncertainty; not monetised.	N/A	Central EU procurement of courses and large-scale e-learning (e-enrolments rising to 11,627 in 2016, 10,078 in 2017, 6,438 in 2018, 4,908 in 2019) lower travel costs and enable repeat use of materials. The reports do not present €uro savings per participant/day.	N/A	Third-country trainees benefit similarly; no €uro data.

16 Each simplification/saving should be included on a separate line.

PART II: II <u>Potential</u> simplification and burden reduction (savings) *Identify further potential simplification and savings **that could be achieved** with a view to make the initiative more effective and efficient without prejudice to its policy objectives[17].*								
	Citizens/Consumers/Workers		Businesses		Administrations		[Other…] _ specify	
	Quantitative	Comment	Quantitative	Comment	Quantitative	Comment	Quantitative	Comment
Description:…								
Extend unit costs/ceilings beyond current veterinary uses (e.g., more plant-health activities, emergency vaccination/logistics); expand standard cost options where data support them. Type: recurrent	N/A	Public-good impact; no €uro figure.	N/A	Indirect stability; no € figure.	N/A	Expected benefits include reduced staff time for grant management and approval processes, as well as faster payment flows to MSs; however, these savings have not been quantified in existing sources.	N/A	Not quantified.
Digital-by-default grant management (common templates, pre-validated cost categories, machine-readable claims) and wider use of multi-annual programming where appropriate. Type: recurrent	N/A	Not applicable.	N/A	Fewer implementation delays; not monetised.	N/A	Would reduce transaction costs (fewer iterations; automated checks); no EU-wide baseline €uro yet.	N/A	Not quantified.
BTSF Academy/repository with open access for competent authorities and structured blended learning to replace part of classroom time. Type: recurrent	N/A	Not applicable.	N/A	Indirect through more consistent enforcement; not monetised.	N/A	Expected travel/per-diem savings and broader reach; no €uro reported in sources.	N/A	Not quantified.
Facilitate joint/regionally coordinated programmes (where epidemiologically justified) to reduce duplication across MS and along borders. Type: recurrent	N/A	Not applicable.	N/A	Smoother cross-border trade; not monetised.	N/A	Potential economies of scale in procurement and supervision; not monetised.	N/A	Benefits to neighbouring third countries; not quantified.

Note: The ex-post documentation provides qualitative evidence of simplification (e.g., use of unit costs/ceilings, EURL harmonisation, BTSF e-learning, standardised funding rates) but does not report stakeholder-level savings in euro terms. Any monetisation would require proxy methods and new assumptions (e.g., staff-hours saved × average labour cost; avoided travel days × per diem), which lie beyond the scope of the present evaluation and would necessitate a dedicated cost-efficiency exercise with harmonised data collection from MSs.

17 This assessment is without prejudice to a possible future Impact Assessment.

ANNEX V. STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTATION - SYNOPSIS REPORT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO COMPETENT AUTHORITIES OF MEMBER STATES

On the specified date (22/02/2022), questionnaires were distributed to MSs, representing 99% of Common Financial Framework (CFF) recipients. The questionnaires were designed to solicit feedback on evaluation parameters and addressed all assessment criteria for the CFF: effectiveness, European Union added value, relevance, coherence, and efficiency. The deadline for replies was until 31/03/2022, and reminders were sent 10 days before the end of the deadline.

Responses were received from seventeen MSs, who submitted their responses through either consolidated reports or separate submissions from distinct authorities within the same jurisdiction, with the latter typically differentiating between animal health and plant health competencies. In instances where dual reports were received (four MSs), these were subsequently consolidated into unified documents for analytical purposes.

The responses from seventeen MSs (out of 27 contacted) were systematically categorized into quarterly divisions (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4) to facilitate structured analysis. Additionally, a stakeholder consultation process was conducted with MS competent authorities, who retained the discretion to engage with relevant domestic stakeholders, including agricultural producers, farmers' associations, and industry representatives, as deemed appropriate within their respective jurisdictions.

In summary, across core objectives, most MSs were clearly positive about the CFF. In Q1 (needs-fit), the combination of "Strongly agree/Agree" dominates for animal-health prevention and emergency measures (e.g., 8–10 "Strongly agree" and 8–12 "Agree" across items such as preventing transmissible diseases, preventing outbreaks, supporting disease-free status, and reducing outbreaks), and for plant-health surveys and emergency measures; Q3 likewise shows sizeable "Fully/To a large extent" responses for impacts on the internal market and agri-food competitiveness. Perceived implementation conditions were also rated favourably: in Q13, "Very efficient" + "Somewhat efficient" is the majority for most lines (e.g., 19/… for preventing transmissible diseases; 18/… for preventing outbreaks), and Q17 shows that respondents mainly see the CFF as "Synergy/Complementary" with national animal-health and plant-health policies as well as with official-control arrangements.

At the same time, there is a strong, shared signal that EU co-financing remains necessary and that specific problems should be addressed. In Q2 (counterfactual), "Less measures will be implemented by the MS" is ranked among the most likely consequences if EU funding stopped (8–7 votes in ranks 5–6), and both "Uniformity will be lost" and "Uniformity will be compromised (same measures slowed down)" are also placed toward the likely end of the scale—underscoring the EU-level necessity for scale and harmonisation. Q11 shows a clear budget sufficiency message: 12 respondents say the overall envelope "should have been higher" versus 9 "appropriate," pointing to pressure on available resources. Finally, Q15 confirms that a majority experienced implementation shortcomings (9 "yes" vs 7 "no"), with reasons clustered around administrative burden, procedural complexity/timeliness, flexibility, and cash-flow (advance payments)—all actionable areas for refinement or continued support.