

# **Project: Successful animal disease control using interdisciplinary approaches**

**Implementatin: June – December 2020**

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**Countries and institutions involved:** Veterinary Academy of the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Lithuania and Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut, Federal Research Institute for Animal Health, Germany

**Short description:** Participatory epidemiology originates from social sciences and is used in veterinary medicine since the 1980s. It was mainly applied in developing countries including the rural community in the design and implementation of animal disease control. However, the benefit of including affected people and key stakeholders in designing and performing control measures is increasingly seen also in developed countries. The project aims at a better understanding of perceptions of different stakeholders regarding disease control and subsequently a better communication between animal health professionals and stakeholders involved. As a case-study, the project will focus on African swine fever (ASF). However, the methods used will be applicable to other diseases as well. ASF is circulating within the wild boar population in Lithuania since 2014, threatening the domestic pig sector and severely affecting the economy. The disease affects different stakeholders, amongst them hunters. They are the key persons in the control of ASF in wild boar. Their understanding of the disease and their willingness to support control measures is inevitable for containing the spread of ASF.

Furthermore, the project aims to train local staff in participatory epidemiology to gain a long-term improvement in communication between stakeholders, scientist and affected group of persons.