



LIETUVOS VETERINARIJOS GYDYTOJŲ ASOCIACIJA

LITHUANIAN VETERINARY ASSOCIATION

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National report Lithuania

The veterinary sector in Lithuania is currently experiencing several notable developments, alongside ongoing challenges that require strategic attention and regulatory adaptation. One of the most pressing issues is the shortage of veterinary specialists in rural areas. This long-standing problem has become more severe in recent years, as fewer young veterinarians are choosing to work in mixed or large animal practice. Many prefer urban clinics, primarily focusing on companion animals, which has led to a lack of essential veterinary services in more remote agricultural regions.

Another growing concern is the shortage of essential veterinary medicines, particularly for horses. Practitioners have reported difficulties in accessing equine influenza vaccines and drugs like clenbuterol, which are critical for managing respiratory conditions in horses. These shortages not only affect animal welfare but also compromise disease prevention and control efforts within the equine sector.

Despite these challenges, the Lithuanian Veterinary Association (LVA) maintains strong and productive cooperation with the State Food and Veterinary Service (VMVT). Regular meetings are held every two months, providing an effective platform for dialogue. These sessions allow the LVA to present concerns from the field and receive timely responses and guidance from national authorities. This open communication ensures that veterinary professionals are heard, and that policy can be better aligned with practical realities.

In terms of technological advancement, Lithuania is currently preparing to launch a new national e-prescription system for veterinary medicine. At present, there is no digital documentation platform in place, which often results in inefficiencies and gaps in tracking essential information. The upcoming system is expected to improve documentation, streamline processes, and enhance transparency in the use of veterinary medicinal products.

One of the more urgent regulatory issues under discussion involves the rules governing the use and storage of controlled substances, such as opioids and narcotics. Current legislation requires these

drugs to be stored in secure safes, which is impractical for mobile veterinary practitioners who operate out of their vehicles in rural areas. Recognizing this, the LVA and VMVT are working together to initiate a meeting with the Ministry of Health, aiming to revise these regulations in a way that ensures both public safety and the practical needs of veterinarians are met.

Additionally, discussions are ongoing regarding the reform of veterinary inspections and practice oversight. A new questionnaire and evaluation system is being developed to improve the quality and consistency of veterinary practice inspections. The goal is to create a fair and supportive framework that maintains professional standards while also recognizing the challenges veterinarians face in daily practice.

In summary, while Lithuania's veterinary profession faces notable challenges—especially in rural workforce capacity and drug availability—there is a strong foundation of institutional cooperation, a commitment to digital modernization, and an open willingness to improve regulatory frameworks. The Lithuanian Veterinary Association remains actively engaged in shaping a sustainable and effective veterinary system that serves both animal and public health needs across the country.

LVGA Prezidentė Dr. Vilma Zigmantaitė

