

nébih

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# Experiences in the management and prevention of ASF, Hungary

2022

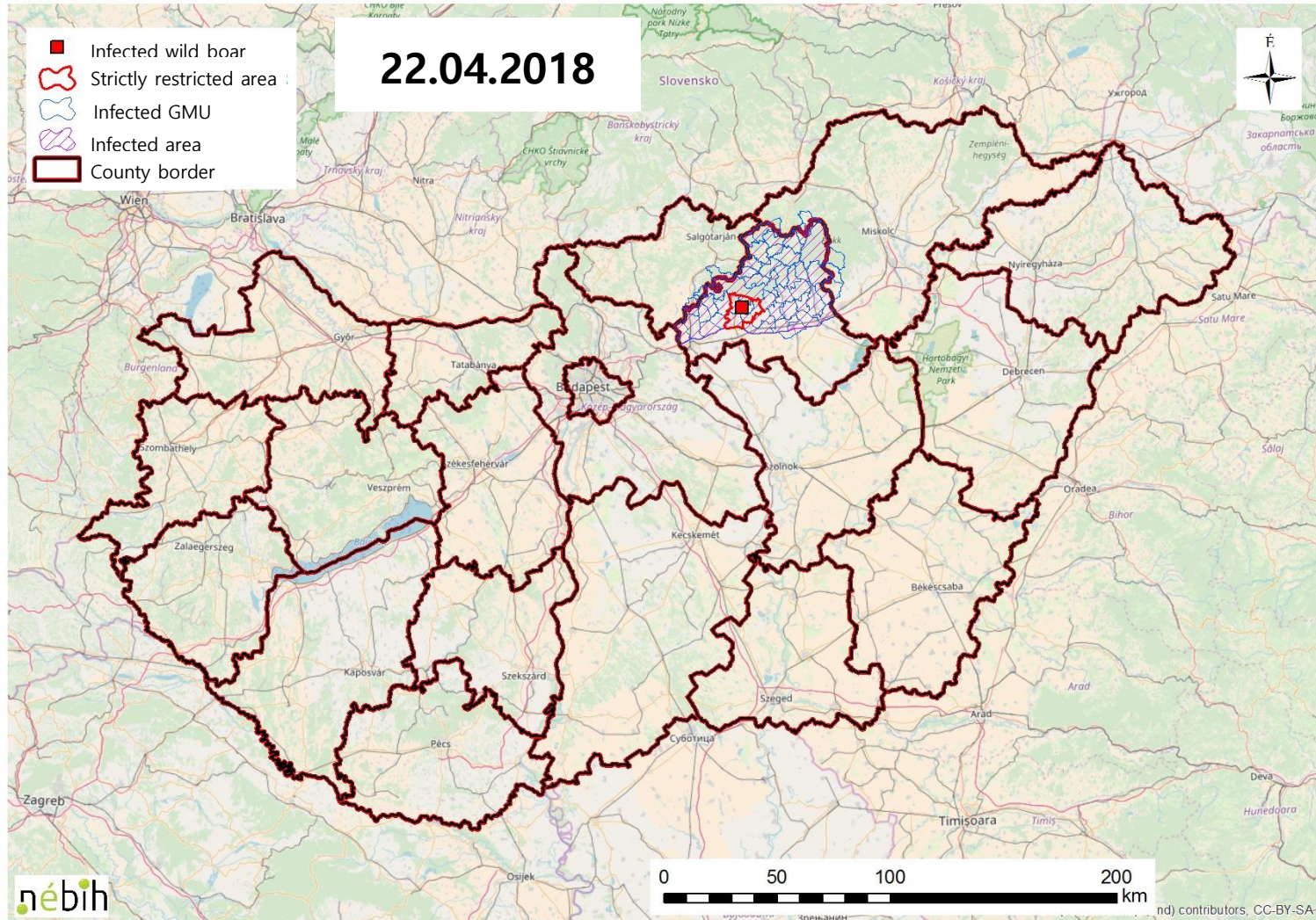


dr. Lajos Bognár  
Chief Veterinary Officer  
2022



## The evolution of the epidemic since the beginning (only in wild boar so far)

### The first case of ASF in Hungary







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## Current situation – total number of cases till 02.09.2022

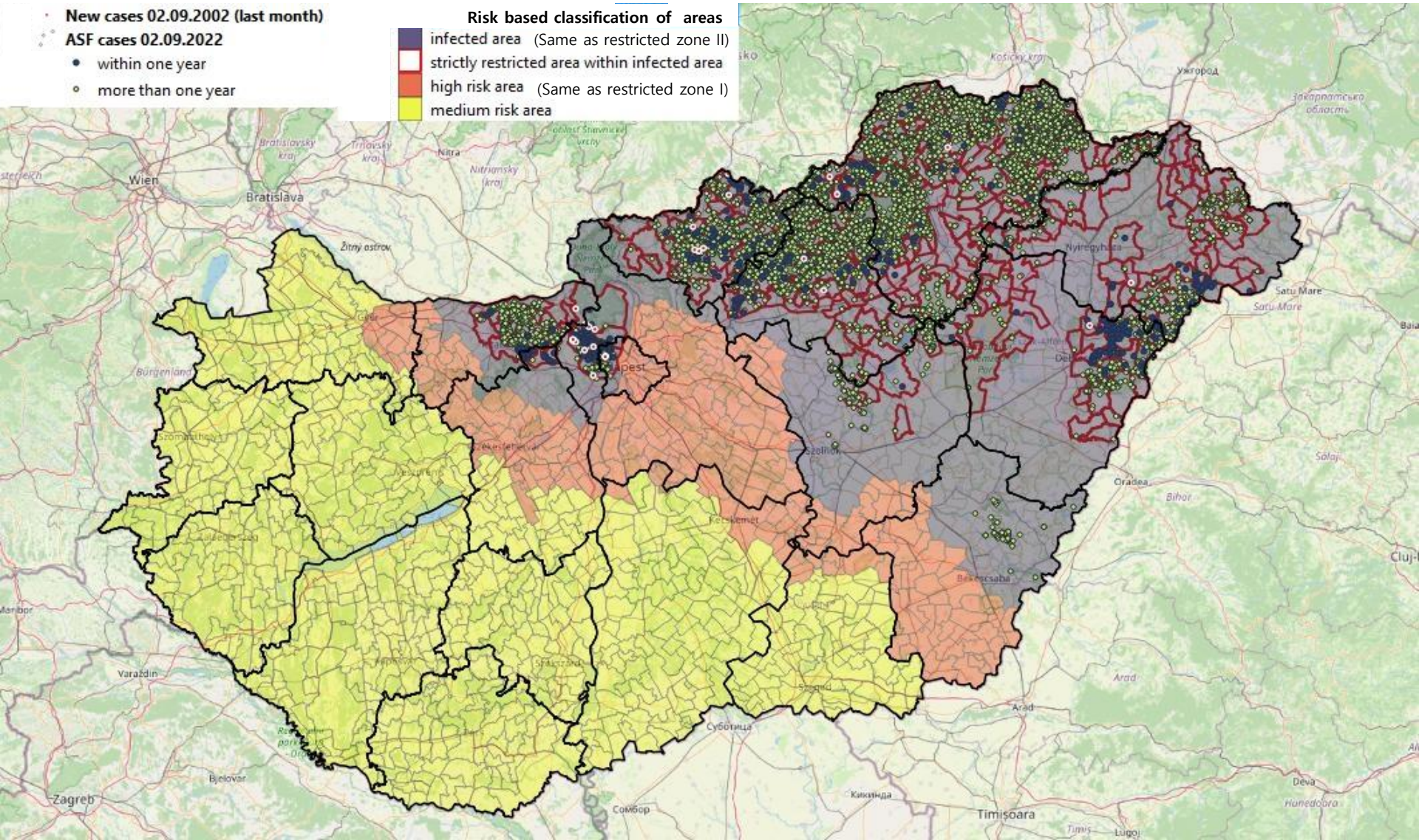
New cases 02.09.2022 (last month)

ASF cases 02.09.2022

- within one year
- more than one year

Risk based classification of areas

- infected area (Same as restricted zone II)
- strictly restricted area within infected area
- high risk area (Same as restricted zone I)
- medium risk area





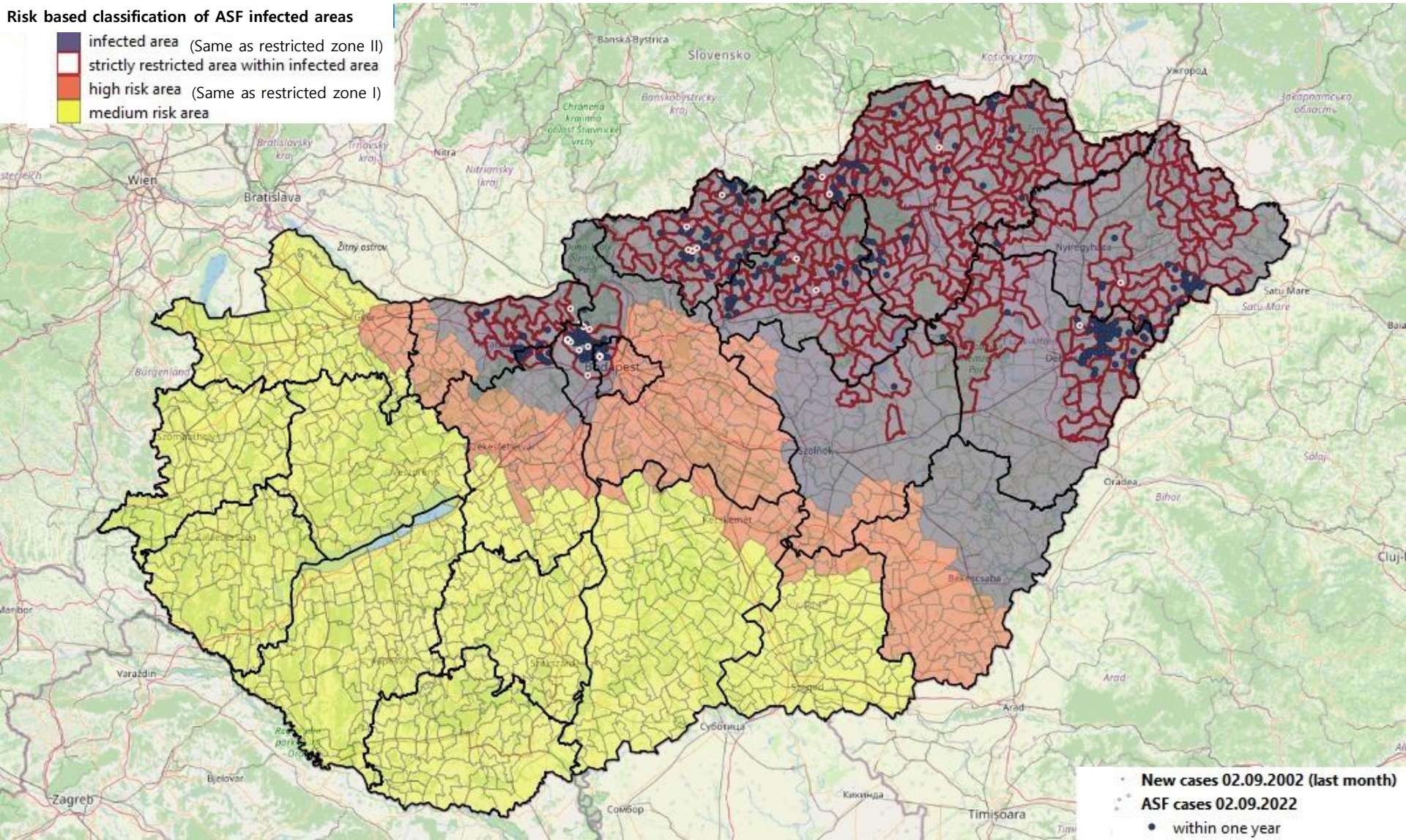


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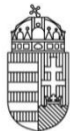
## Cases within one year (up to 02.09.2022)

Risk based classification of ASF infected areas

- infected area (Same as restricted zone II)
- strictly restricted area within infected area
- high risk area (Same as restricted zone I)
- medium risk area



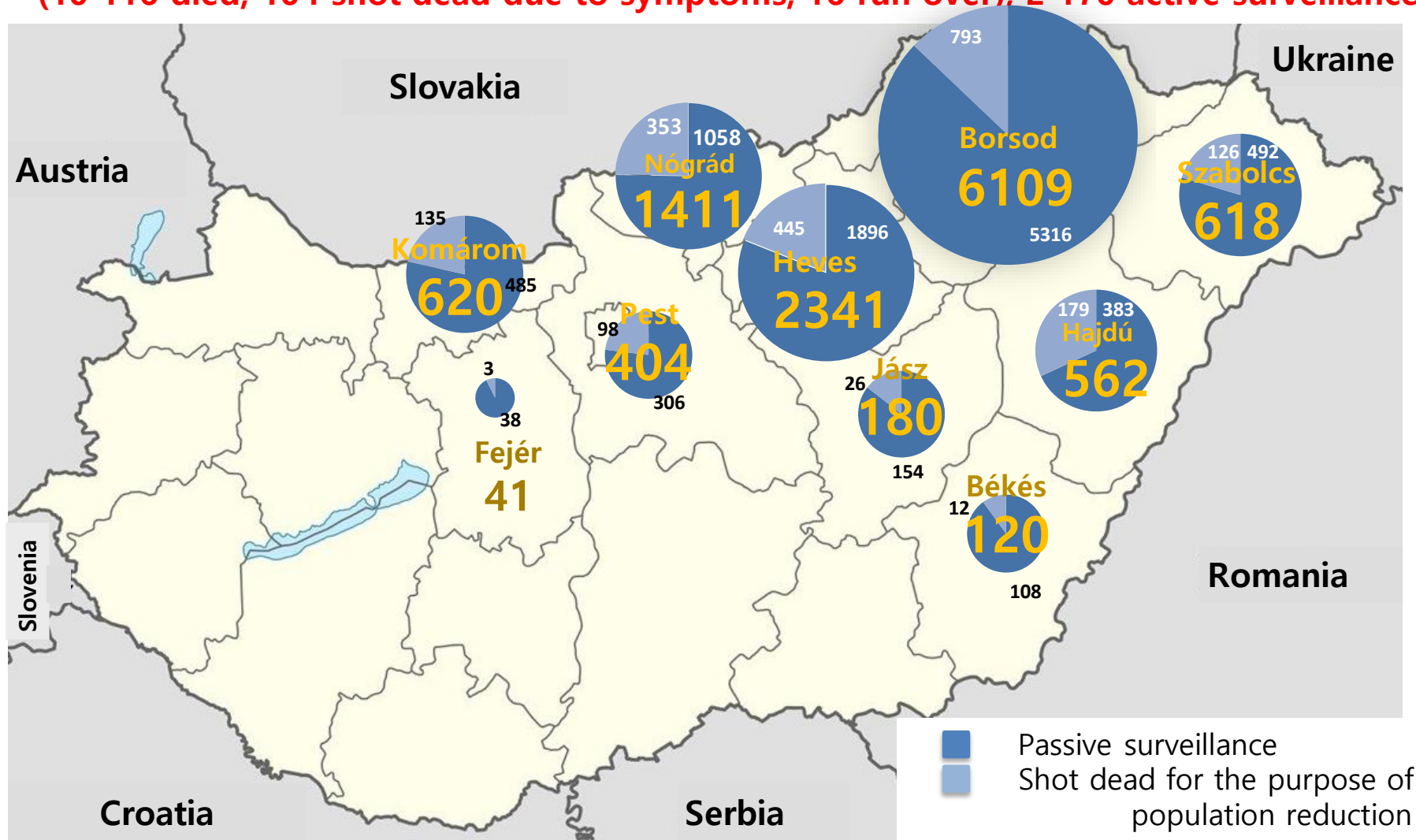




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## Statistical data- Total number of cases per county

Total number of cases, all counties: **12 406**, passive surveillance: **10 236**  
(10 116 died, 104 shot dead due to symptoms, 16 run over), 2 170 active surveillance





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## Disease prevention and control

### 1. Measures, instructions

Apply **also to the medium risk areas** (outside the restricted zones according to regulation 605/2021), not only to the high risk and infected areas

#### 1.1 ASF Eradication Plan- to control the epidemic

Under constant modification according to experiences gained during ASF prevention

#### 1.2 National Action Plan – for the control of wild boar population





## 2. Selected elements of ASF prevention and control, focusing on practical experiences

### 2.1 Searching for dead wild boars, disposal

- **Remuneration:**
  - **Essential for early detection**, anything else (e.g. pay per hour) is a waste of money
  - Double remuneration (**50 EUR**): in infected areas outside the strictly restricted areas, and in high risk areas

### 2.2 Intensive population reduction

- National Action Plan outlines the details (January 2021, ASF Expert Group)
- Long term plan: wild boar population density **< 0.5 animal/km<sup>2</sup> by 2025**, in order to reach this:
  - **All hunters entitled to hunt are required to set up a plan:**
    - Long term plan- how the target population density would be reached
    - Yearly plan
  - **ASF Advisory Network** has been set up:
    - to help hunters with wild boar population reduction;
    - Difficult start, now successful, hunters trust them more than vets

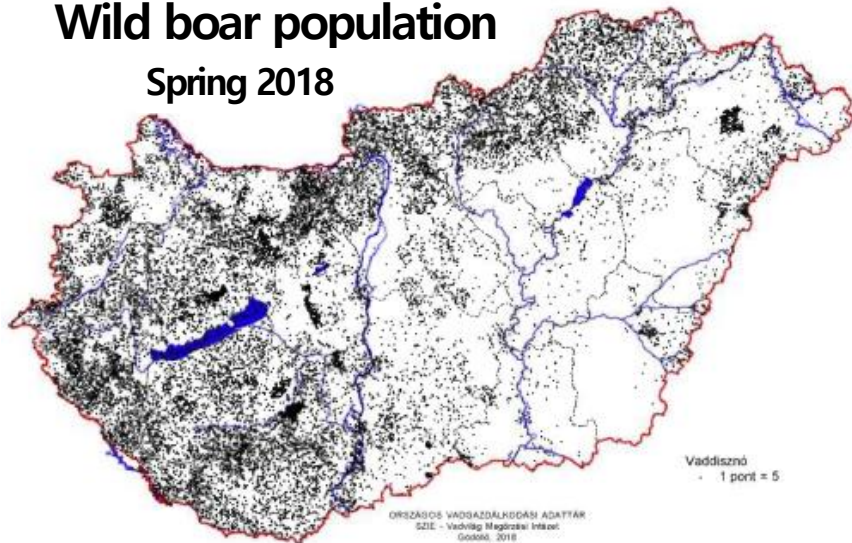


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- **Effect of Covid pandemic:** wild boar population reduction has increased- hunting societies had no other income, only the state compensation paid for shot wild boars
- Intensive population reduction was successful: population density dropped remarkably

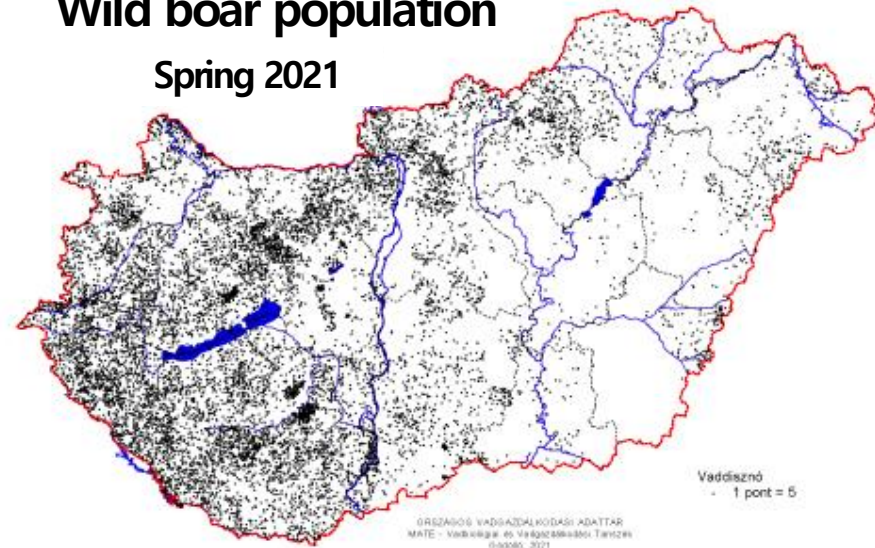
## Wild boar population

Spring 2018



## Wild boar population

Spring 2021







## 2.3 Sampling, sample collection

- **Sample submission:** Hunters must submit the samples to **the local district government offices 8-10am** the morning after hunting, weekdays and weekends including
- **Transportation of samples to the lab:** Nébih collects them from all submission sites
- **Electronic test results** (Nébih website): within **1 day** (within **48 hours** of taking the sample), - hunters can identify carcasses on the basis of the identification tags attached to them
- **for the elimination of financial abuse: genetic testing** in suspicious cases (to avoid sample multiplication)
- **340 cold storage containers:** storage of carcasses in high risk areas till negative results are received: Nébih supplies them for free (in infected areas they either have been removed, or the hunting societies have bought them)





## 2.4 Biological security

### Increasing awareness regarding biological security

- **Communication** with farmers, hunters, general public (see below)
- Regarding hunters: **ASF Advisory Network** -excellent tool
- Problems:

**Hunters: Enforcement of regulations is difficult**, as no direct consequence for them (not allowing guest hunters to enter the hunting ground with their own vehicle, changing of clothing and footwear, disinfection of vehicles on the spot, leak-proof transportation)

Solutions:

- **Intensive communication is key**
- Free disinfectants were handed out to hunters initially

- Positive outcomes:

**Communication regarding hunters towards farmers has been successful**: they do not allow hunters to enter their premises



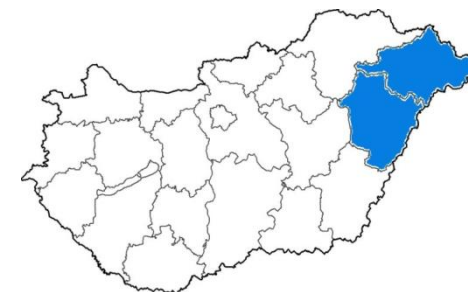
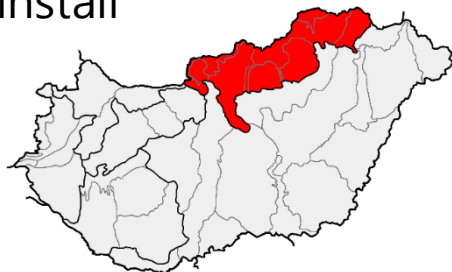




## Effectiveness of fencing

**All factors should be carefully considered** in order to be effective, and to avoid unnecessary costs

- Northern Hungary: unrealistic to install fences (mountains, hills)
- Romanian border, Hajdú and Szabolcs counties: survey has been carried out, lots of land owners, several entrances to a land, **difficulties in getting permissions and authorisations**
- Pilis Park Forest, Pest county: despite the **swift renovation** of an old fence, the **virus managed to get to the neighbouring county** (Komárom-Esztergom), by the time it was finished



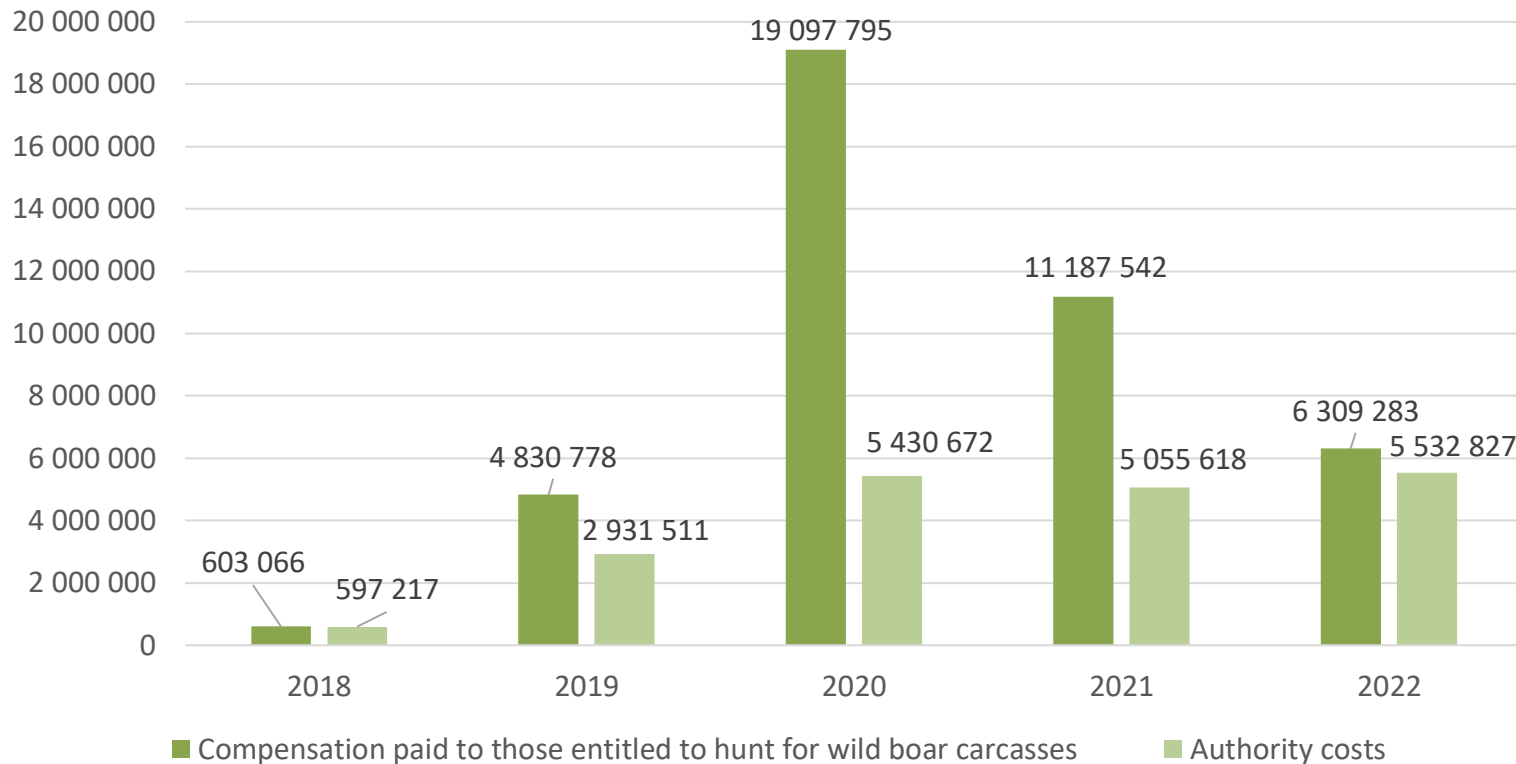


## 2.5 Compensation, financial support

**In total: 61.58 M EUR**

- To accomplish effective ASF control, **those entitled to hunt have to be made financially interested**: rewards for everything: shooting, sampling, disposal

### **Compensation paid to those entitled to hunt, authority costs (EUR) over the past 5 years**







## Financial support for farmers



- **RDP support** could be applied for from 2020 to summer 2021
- **315** applications, **10.83 M EUR** granted, of which **3.8 M EUR** paid out
- Not specifically-ASF related
- Aim was to support **poultry and pig farms that are mostly affected** by epidemics and whose biosecurity **can be most effectively improved** with technological advancement



## Relationship with hunters

- **Communication error:** the magnitude of the danger was not communicated clearly: hunters had experience in dealing with the classical swine fever epidemic in 2007 and 2009 in Pest and Nograd counties, they assumed ASF could be controlled the same way
- Initially (2018) **cooperation, then increased resistance:**
  - Against measures that are against **hunting ethics** (shooting of sows that are pregnant or have piglets) and **hunting traditions** (intensive shooting all year around)
  - Regarding the **amount of government funded financial support:** -careful consideration is needed: reducing it later is difficult due to lobby of stakeholders, interest groups
  - Most sinister **resistance: against National Action Plan**-political will and support is needed





## – Control over hunters entitled to hunt:

- Currently: **full checks** done yearly
- **Plan for the future: Checks on basis of risk assessment**, especially non-compliant hunters: less but more efficient checks
- **Inspection of hunters hunting in groups, diagnostic shootings:**

Disappointing results:

High degree of ignorance, disinterest,  
lack of even minimal disease prevention  
measures





## Impact of ASF on the wild boar industry

- **Contribution to GDP dropped** from **2M EUR** (before ASF epidemic), -to the **fraction of it** (infected areas: closure of game processing plants, meat can only be processed for own use, ban on the transport of wild boar)
- High and medium risk areas: **difficulty in populating so-called „game gardens“** that still operate; **guest hunting** (hunting by visitor hunters) has **reduced** significantly







## Results, aims

### 1. Wild boar

- **Most infected area: North- Hungary** (Nógrád, Heves, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén counties)-very high wild boar population density before the start of the epidemic
- Highest number of positive cases: hunting year 2020/2021, **2021/2022: marked decrease** even in most affected counties, **same trend in 2022/2023**
- causes:
  - **Efforts in disease prevention and control in the past 4 years**
  - **Intensive population reduction** (since March 2020)
  - After the introduction of National Action Plan: further decrease
- **Aim: stop it from spreading to the South side of the M1 motorway**, which would endanger huge, ASF free areas in Transdanubia with high wild boar population density





## 2. Domestic pigs

### Aim: prevention

- Large-scale farms: efforts to gain **PRRS-free status enhanced preventative measures in general**
- Small-scale farms: ASF is a constant threat
  - Closure of farms in infected areas: technically justified, politically impossible
  - Stock is constantly changing- **to encourage their willingness to report: this year nationwide census, also informing, educating farmers**
- Backyard farms (non-commercial farms): **most vulnerable, most difficult to protect**

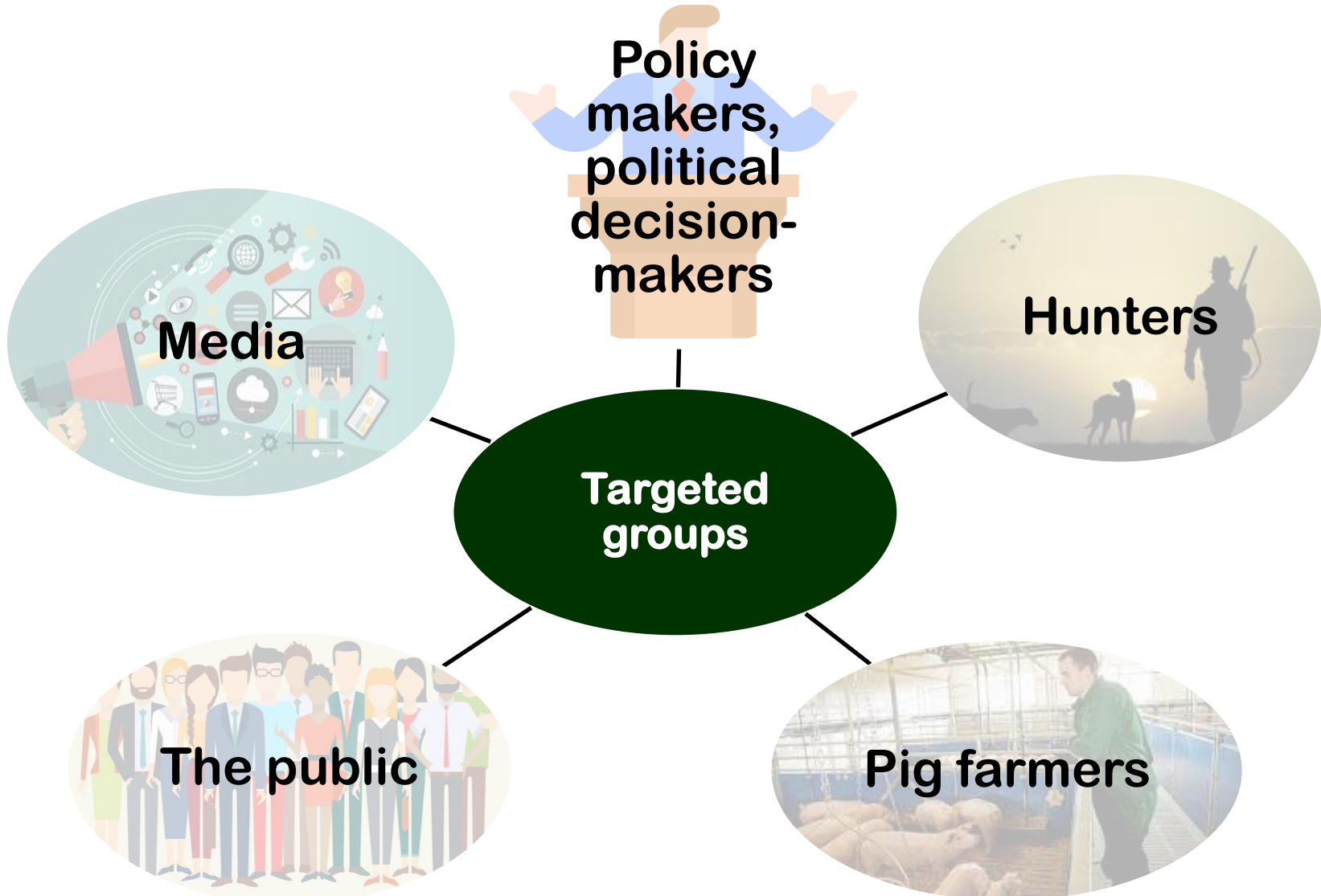




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## Communication







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**Free  
communication  
through  
existing  
communication  
channels of the  
central  
authority**



## News, announcements

- CA announcements: 23 | news on website: 52



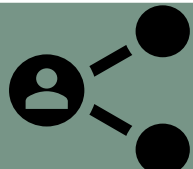
## Interviews given to press by CA

- 386 (verbal: 216 | written: 170)



## Written press release

- 3.513 (printed: 464 | online: 2 817 | RTV: 232)



## Social media

- Posts: 32 activities 1 372 accesses: 171 183



## CA's website

- Viewings of ASF related sites: 695.769 | downloads of documents ( e.g.guidelines) : 51 437



## Paid adverts, campaigns

- Costs: **379 698 EUR**, out of which **278 562 EUR** paid by the EU
  - Mediums:
    - Leaflets- 1,5 M, out of which 1.3 M directly delivered
    - TV, Radio spots (646)
    - Articles in papers and online
    - Online videos-110 thousand viewers
- Popular Hungarian Youtube vlogger-"A Zállatorvos"

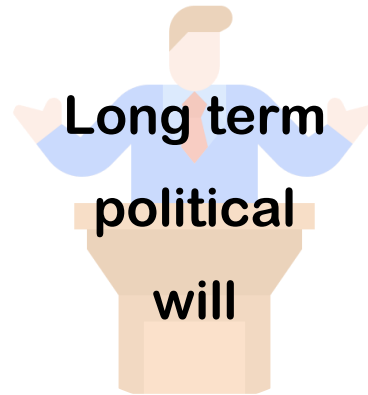




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## Lessons learnt



Compensation

Essential  
elements of  
successful  
prevention of ASF

Cooperation with  
hunters

Support for  
farmers, getting  
them interested in  
preventative  
measures





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**Thank you for your  
attention!**

