

# Funding of activities of state veterinary services of Russian Federation Subjects

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## SUMMARY

The due performance by the veterinary service of its assigned functions depends largely on the amount of funding provided for different aspects and types of its activities. The paper presents analysis results for 13 main funded activities of veterinary services in 85 Subjects of the Russian Federation in 2019. All the funded activities were reviewed in relation to three funding sources: the federal budget, the budget of a Russian Federation Subject and extrabudgetary sources. The paper examines funding levels of the Russian Federation Subjects' veterinary services (against actual funding requirements) with respect to each object of expenditure and each funding source; besides, the share of each funding source in overall funding of the veterinary service of the country on the whole and of certain types of its activities was determined. In 2019, overall funding of the veterinary service of the country amounted to about 49.5 billion rubles which made up 96% of funding requirements for this period. The major sources of funding were the budgets of the Russian Federation Subjects (56.3%) and veterinary services' own extrabudgetary resources (43.2%). Only 0.5% of all the funds received by the state veterinary service of the Russian Federation were allocated from the federal budget. The following 4 out of 13 analyzed aspects of activities of the Subjects' veterinary services were fully funded: staff salaries, anti-epidemic activities, the purchase of reagents and test systems, the implementation of monitoring and screening programmes at the Subject level for contagious animal disease control. The funding levels for other activities of the country's veterinary service were from 9% (accreditation of veterinary laboratories and maintenance of accreditation) to 87% (the implementation of regional monitoring of food product, raw material, animal product quality and safety; animal health awareness-raising and information activities).

**Keywords:** Funding of veterinary service, veterinary service funding sources, funding level, federal budget, budget of Russian Federation Subject, extrabudgetary funding.

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# Финансовое обеспечение деятельности государственной ветеринарной службы субъектов Российской Федерации

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## РЕЗЮМЕ

Выполнение ветеринарной службой на должном уровне возложенных на нее функций во многом зависит от объема финансирования различных направлений и видов деятельности. В статье представлены результаты анализа 13 основных направлений финансирования деятельности ветеринарных служб в 85 субъектах Российской Федерации в 2019 г. Все направления финансирования рассматривались в разрезе трех источников: из федерального бюджета, бюджета субъекта РФ и внебюджетных источников. В работе рассмотрены показатели обеспеченности ветслужб субъектов РФ финансированием (от реальной потребности) по каждой статье расходования средств и каждому источнику финансирования, а также определены доли каждого источника финансирования в общем объеме финансирования ветслужбы страны в целом и по конкретным направлениям ее деятельности. Общий объем финансирования ветеринарной службы страны в 2019 г. составил около 49,5 млрд рублей, что соответствует 96%-й обеспеченности от требуемого

финансирования за данный период. Основными источниками финансирования явились бюджеты субъектов РФ (их доля 56,3%) и внебюджетные средства самих ветслужб (их доля 43,2%). Из федерального бюджета было выделено только 0,5% всех денежных средств, фактически поступивших в 2019 г. в государственную ветеринарную службу РФ. Полная обеспеченность финансированием ветслужбы субъектов РФ наблюдалась по четырем (из 13 анализируемых) направлениям: на заработную плату сотрудников, на противоэпизоотические мероприятия, на закупку реагентов и тест-систем, на реализацию мониторинговых и скрининговых программ субъектового уровня по контролю заразных болезней животных. По остальным направлениям деятельности уровень обеспеченности финансированием ветслужбы страны составил от 9 (на аккредитацию и поддержание аккредитации ветеринарными лабораториями) до 87% (на проведение регионального мониторинга качества и безопасности пищевых продуктов, сырья, продукции животного происхождения; на ветеринарно-просветительскую и информационную деятельность).

**Ключевые слова:** Финансирование ветеринарной службы, источники финансирования ветеринарной службы, уровень финансового обеспечения, федеральный бюджет, бюджет субъекта федерации, внебюджетное финансирование.

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## INTRODUCTION

Funding level is one of the most important characteristics of state veterinary service activities.

In order to ensure animal disease freedom in the country as a whole and in particular Subjects of the Russian Federation (hereinafter – the Subjects), preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic, veterinary and sanitary, as well as other measures are implemented that are primarily aimed at the reduction of animal production costs and prevention of significant economic losses resulting from infectious animal disease outbreaks, as well as of acute zoonotic infections in humans. The implementation of such activities requires substantial funds allocated from different sources: the federal budget, the budgets of the Subjects and extrabudgetary sources. The federal funds are provided for the control of certain highly dangerous infectious animal diseases (African swine fever, rabies, avian influenza, foot-and-mouth disease, classical swine fever, etc.) in order to ensure the country's veterinary and sanitary safety and are expended in full compliance with the Law of the Russian Federation on the federal budget for a particular period and the Budget Code of the Russian Federation [1, 2].

The consolidation of the role of the Subjects' authorities in regional economic governance increases the significance of regional budgets that are created, approved and expended at the discretion of the Subjects' authorities in accordance with the Budget Code of the Russian Federation [3, 4]. Almost all the veterinary service activities are funded from regional budgets.

The income from rendering chargeable services, bank borrowings, etc. can serve as extrabudgetary funding sources [5]. They are also regulated by the law and are necessary to provide additional funding for different activities of the Subjects' veterinary services and have proven to be an important element of sustainability of the veterinary service as a whole.

The government and its structures should ensure the availability of sufficient funding for the state veterinary ser-

vice maintenance and implementation of key veterinary activities aimed at accomplishing the assigned tasks [6].

In view of the fact that available and official information on the funding of the state veterinary service of the country as a whole and of each particular Subject is very limited, the study was aimed at selection, collection and overall analysis of the most relevant indicators that allowed for assessment of funding level for different types of activities in each Region. The findings of the study aimed at the analysis of compiled quantitative data on the structure and level of funding are, for the first time, presented in this paper.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data for 2019 provided by the veterinary executive authorities of the Russian Federation Subjects using the primary data collection form developed by the FGBI "ARRIAH" served as a practical basis for the analysis of funding of the state veterinary service of the Russian Federation and its Subjects. The information was received from 85 Subjects. The data were collected using Assol. Express component of FGIS VetIS.

Theoretical and methodological framework for the study includes the laws of the Russian Federation and methods of analysis described in contemporary scientific articles on this issue published in the field-specific publications.

The following methods were used: analytical method, comparative analysis, descriptive statistics, compilation and grouping methods.

In this study, funding level was determined based on the ratio between actually provided and required (necessary) funding, i.e. the state veterinary services of the Subjects were given the opportunity to determine independently, based on reasonable expenses, their material and resource requirements for the execution of tasks and functions laid down in the Veterinary Law of the Russian Federation, taking into account each Region's particular

circumstances (natural climatic conditions, territorial factors, social and economic development level, specific features of economic activities, etc.).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The state veterinary service of the Russian Federation is tasked with ensuring compliance with veterinary and sanitary safety requirements [7]. A certain economic foundation is required for effective functioning of the veterinary service. This means that there is a close relationship between the veterinary service's performance and funding, the level of which has an effect primarily on the organization of preventive and anti-epidemic activities, as well as on the level of staff salaries, fit-out of facilities, the availability of means of transport, the purchase of laboratory equipment, etc.

The state veterinary service of the Russian Federation is funded from three sources: the federal budget, the budgets of the Subjects and extrabudgetary funding sources. In 2019, **the overall funding** (from all the funding sources) of the state veterinary service amounted to about 49.5 billion rubles, of which 56.3% were allocated from the budgets of the Subjects, 43.2% – from extrabudgetary sources, and about 0.5% – from the federal budget (Fig. 1).

In the country as a whole, veterinary service funding level was 96%. Funding received from the Subjects' budgets and the federal budget was lower than requirements, as indicated by the level of funding provided from these sources – 89 and 97%, respectively. Only extrabudgetary funding of the veterinary services' activities was sufficient to cover the requirements for funding from this source.

The level of funding from the Subjects' budgets was low (not more than 50% of requirements) in 6 Regions of the Russian Federation. Full (100%) funding was provided in 54 Subjects. Funding levels for the veterinary services of the remaining 25 Subjects varied over a wide range – from 51 to 99%. Thus, the veterinary services of 31 Regions of the country were, to varying extents, underfunded as regards the implementation of their assigned tasks.

The largest part (62%) of all funds allocated to the veterinary services (from all funding sources) was used to pay **staff salaries** and fully covered funding requirements for such expenditures in the country as a whole. The veterinary services of 64 Subjects were 100% funded from the regional budgets for the payment of staff sala-

ries; in other Regions, the levels of such funding varied from 40 to 99% (most of the veterinary services of these Subjects attracted additional funding from extrabudgetary sources). It should be noted that the salaries of veterinary specialists in most Regions of the Russian Federation are not high. In particular, veterinary specialist salaries, including executive salaries, were average or just above average for the Subject as a whole in 31 Subjects, and when excluding executive salaries – only in 15 Regions. Such situation requires the attention of the Subjects' authorities. Decent salaries will provide the basis for veterinary profession prestige enhancement, and this will allow for state veterinary service staffing with qualified personnel for appropriate implementation of the tasks assigned [8].

In order **to attract and retain** qualified personnel, many veterinary services implemented social support measures for veterinary specialists that are to be funded from local budgets and extrabudgetary sources only. The level of funding for these expenditures in the country as a whole (from all the funding sources) was 18%, from the budgets of the Subjects – only 16%, from extrabudgetary sources – 50%. No funding from any sources was envisaged for these expenditures in 54 (out of 85) Subjects. The veterinary service funding requirements for these expenditures were fully covered through local budgets in 16 Regions only. Underfunding of this aspect of veterinary service activities may result in lower level of competence among veterinary specialists. To improve the situation, more active attraction of additional budgetary and extrabudgetary funds is required, in particular in order to retain veterinarians in rural locations, to provide material incentives and advanced training for them.

One of important characteristics of the veterinary services of the Subjects is the level of veterinary specialists' qualification. Over the past 5 years, about 67% of the veterinary specialists of the country's state veterinary service received **advanced training**. According to the veterinary services of the Subjects, in 2019, more than 91 million rubles were spent on advanced training; three quarters of these funds were provided from extrabudgetary sources, funding level was 99%. Funding from the Subjects' budgets covered 43% of requirements in the country as a whole. The amount of funding allocated for advanced training of veterinary specialists from regional budgets

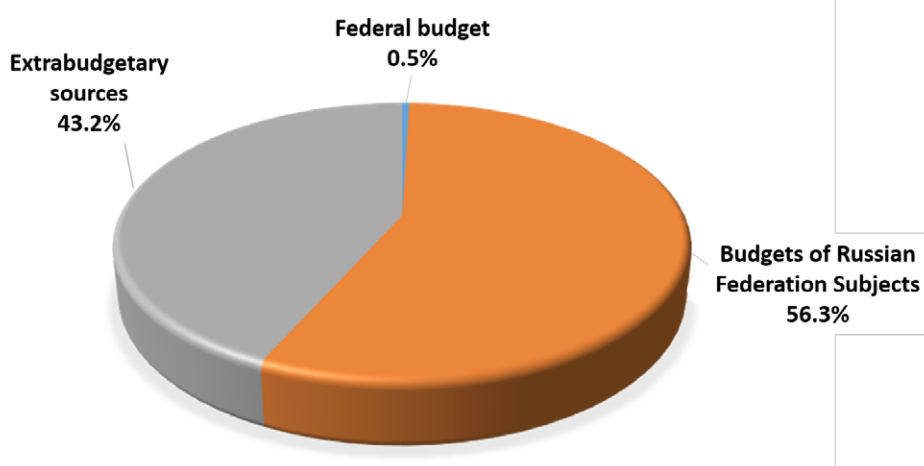


Fig. 1. Funding structure of the state veterinary service of the Russian Federation in 2019

Рис. 1. Структура финансирования государственной ветеринарной службы РФ в 2019 г.

over the year varied from 7 thousand to 8 million rubles. Extrabudgetary funding amount varied from 80 thousand to 7 million rubles for a Subject. Notably, funding allocated for such expenditures from local budgets was higher than that from extrabudgetary sources in 7 Subjects only; no funding was provided from any sources in 12 Subjects. In the country as a whole, funding level for advanced training of veterinary specialists was 72%.

One of the main tasks of the veterinary service is **the implementation of anti-epidemic activities** aimed at prevention and control of infectious animal diseases. In the country as a whole, funding requirements for the implementation of anti-epidemic activities were fully covered.

The budgets of the Subjects were the key source of funding for such activities; their share of the overall funding for such expenditures was 93%. Funds attracted from the federal budget accounted for 2% of the total funds spent on anti-epidemic activities in the country, funds attracted from extrabudgetary sources – for 5%. Funding from the federal budget was allocated to 17 Subjects that needed and applied for federal budget funding for 2019. According to the Subjects' veterinary executive authorities, 60 Subjects had no need for federal budget funding, but in 2018 the outbreaks of highly dangerous and quarantinable diseases, such as rabies, brucellosis, African swine fever, avian influenza, lumpy skin disease, sheep pox, etc. were reported there (one to six infections in a Subject), and that could have served as a ground for applying for federal budget funding for anti-epidemic activities for 2019. Many of these Subjects may have intended to solve this issue through local budget funding only; these include 5 Subjects where 1 to 3 diseases (African swine fever, rabies, brucellosis) were reported, however they did not plan to receive and received no funding from any source in 2019.

Most of the Subjects (58 out of 85) were fully funded for the implementation of anti-epidemic activities from regional budgets and thus were able to purchase disinfectants, vaccines, diagnostic kits, test systems, expendables, etc. in sufficient quantities. The level of funding was very low (only 8% of requirements) in one Oblast. Funding situation can be considered as close to critical in 2 Subjects where funding levels were 20 and 28%. Besides, 8 Regions of the country received no funding from this source. In the remaining 16 Subjects, 43 to 99% of requirements for anti-epidemic activity funding from local budgets were covered.

Thus, the analysis results show that there is an obvious connection between funding and infectious animal disease freedom (including with respect to quarantinable and highly dangerous diseases) of a Subject. Consequently, underfunding of such activities has negative impact on the epidemic situation in the Regions of the country.

Many indicators, in particular the level of funding for **the purchase and fit-out of facilities** for the veterinary service activities, show the extent to which the Subjects' authorities are interested in veterinary service development. In the country as a whole, the level of such funding was as low as 37% of requirements. The level of funding provided from the Subjects' budgets was 25%. The problem was solved mainly through extrabudgetary funding that covered 93% of requirements. No federal budget funding was provided for. The level of funding for these expenditures was very low (3, 5 and 12%) in 3 Subjects. The veterinary services in 41 Regions received no funding

for these purposes from local budgets. At the same time, the veterinary services in other 34 Subjects were 100% funded from the Subjects' budgets for the purchase and fit-out of facilities required for their activities. Funding levels varied within the range of 25–96% in the remaining 7 Regions. Appropriate implementation of duties and responsibilities assigned to the veterinary service, in particular the number and scope of veterinary activities conducted, depend on the condition and fit-out of its facilities.

Funding for **the purchase of laboratory instruments and equipment** (including those required for veterinary and sanitary examination) was provided from the Subjects' budgets and extrabudgetary sources (only one Oblast received funding for these expenditures from the federal budget) and covered 67% of required funding for the veterinary service of the country as a whole. The overall level of veterinary service funding provided from the Subjects' budgets was 65%, of that provided from extrabudgetary sources – 73%. The level of funding was influenced by the situation in 9 Subjects, which, according to the submitted data, had the need for funding but in fact no funds were allocated to them. The veterinary services of 3 Oblasts were significantly underfunded (with their funding levels being 8, 12 and 15%) from the Subjects' budgets. The veterinary services in 46 Subjects received full (100%) funding from this source. Due to underfunding, veterinary laboratories were provided with less diagnostic tools than required, and that naturally affected the technical capabilities and modernization of laboratories.

The situation is much better as regards the funding of veterinary laboratories for **the purchase of reagents and test systems** in the country as a whole. Funds for these expenditures were provided from three sources, and 100% of funding requirements were covered. Most of the funds for these purposes were allocated from extrabudgetary sources being 2.4 times higher than funds provided from the Subjects' budgets and 11 times higher than those received from the federal budget. The federal budget funds were allocated to 7 Subjects only, and that allowed to fully cover the requirements for funding from this source.

The level of funding provided from local budgets for these expenditures was 100% in 46 Subjects. No funding from this source was envisaged for many veterinary services (in 30 Subjects). The level of funding from the Subject's budget was the lowest (5%) in one Oblast; in the other 8 Subjects, funding levels were 45–96%. Underfunding of laboratories can affect their technical capabilities, reduce the range of veterinary services provided, and this, in turn, will have impact on epidemic situation control in the Region.

As for veterinary laboratories' activities related to **accreditation and maintenance of accreditation**, 73% of funds received for these purposes were attracted from extrabudgetary sources and only 27% – from the budgets of the Subjects. Extrabudgetary funding almost fully (97%) covered the requirements, whereas funds allocated from the Subjects' budgets covered only 3% of required funding from this source. This suggests that 60 Subjects received no funding from local budgets; in order to make up a shortfall of funding, funds from extrabudgetary sources were attracted. The situation is quite the opposite in 18 Subjects the authorities of which are interested in accreditation of the veterinary laboratories of the Region and, consequently, in the maintenance of

their status as evidenced by 100% funding provided for these activities. In the remaining 7 Subjects, the levels of funding provided by the Subjects were 9 to 59%. It is known that the accreditation of laboratories in a certain field serves as an evidence of their competence upon which the reliability of test results and the validity of managerial and organizational decisions made on their basis depend.

Funding for the purchase of various **means of transport** (in particular, specialized ones) was provided from the local budgets of the Subjects, as well as from extrabudgetary sources and covered 39 and 85% of requirements, respectively, in the country as a whole. In absolute terms, funds provided from the Subjects' budgets were 1.7 times more than those provided from extrabudgetary sources. Full (100%) funding from the Subjects' budgets was provided in 40 Regions of the country. However, no such funding was provided in 34 Subjects. The situation was close to critical in 5 Oblasts, where funding levels were 3 to 36%. Underfunding for the purchase of means of transport, especially of specialized ones, can result in undue replacement and maintenance of vehicles and, consequently, affect the mobility of veterinary service specialists and implementation of the full range of disinfection activities, and this can be critical for providing prompt veterinary assistance, especially in remote areas.

The purchase of **Komarov's disinfection units (DUKs) and other disinfection units** was 93% funded from the local budgets, and only 7% of funds were attracted from extrabudgetary sources. However, data show that funding allocated from the budgets was not sufficient, since it covered only 23% of required funding from the Subjects. This was due to the situation when the veterinary services of 13 Subjects had the need for funding for the purchase of such disinfection units, but received none. Altogether, 56 veterinary services received no funding from local budgets. At the same time, the veterinary services in 22 Regions were fully provided with funding from this source. For the remaining 7 veterinary services, this indicator varied over a wide range of 16–88%. In the country as a whole, the level of funding from both sources was 24%.

Funding for such essential activities as implementation of **monitoring and screening programmes** at the Subject level aimed at contagious animal disease control, the tasks and objectives of which are determined by the Subjects' veterinary services, was to be provided from the local budgets. Indeed, 96% of funds allocated for these purposes were provided from the Subjects' budgets and 4% – from extrabudgetary sources. Funding from the Subjects' budgets was allocated in 25 Regions of the country (full funding was provided). Regional funding was not provided for in 60 Subjects, despite the fact that the veterinary services of 6 Regions had the need for such funding during this period. In some Subjects, certain funds for implementation of such programmes were allocated from the local budgets, though there was no planned requirement for such funding. In the country as a whole, funding requirements for monitoring and screening programme implementation were fully covered.

Regional **monitoring of quality and safety** of food products, raw materials, animal products, feed and biological materials, the tasks and objectives of which are also determined by the Subject's veterinary service, was funded from regional budgets (89%) and extrabudgetary sources (11%). The situation was most favourable

in one third of the Subjects (26 Subjects) where funding requirements for these expenditures were fully covered. The complete absence of funding was reported by 55 Regions of the country, 5 of which had the need for such funding. As for the remaining 3 Subjects, their funding levels were 25, 60 and 70%. In the country as a whole, the level of funding from both sources was 87%; in particular, the level of funding provided from the Subjects' budgets was 86%, from extrabudgetary sources – 89%. Increased funding will allow expanding the scope of tests for quality and safety parameters for food products, raw materials, animal products, feed, etc.

One of important tasks in the work of veterinary services is carrying out **animal health awareness-raising and information activities** (organization of citizens' meetings, production of leaflets, presentations, lectures, media publications, website maintenance, etc.) [9]. In total, about 40 million rubles were spent for their implementation in the country, which covered 87% of funding required for these purposes. Funding was provided from two sources: regional budgets and extrabudgetary sources (40 and 60%, respectively.) On average, across the country, the level of funding from the Subjects' budgets was 74%, from extrabudgetary sources – 99%. Funding from local budgets was provided in 27 out of 85 Regions of the country, 25 of which were 100% funded for these activities (in 2 Subjects, the funding levels were 0.4 and 11%). No funding from the local budgets was provided for in other Regions of the Russian Federation. Besides, the veterinary services of 37 Subjects received no funding from any source.

The complete absence of funding or low funding of such activities is likely to be indicative of the lack of the Subject authorities' interest in animal health awareness-raising and information activities among the people of the Region, which are primarily aimed at preventing animal diseases and enabling people to act independently in various situations. N. I. Pirogov, a great Russian surgeon, wrote, "Medicine of the future is preventive medicine" [10].

Funding levels for various activities of the state veterinary service described above are more visibly shown in Figure 2.

## CONCLUSION

The analysis of information provided by the veterinary executive authorities of the Russian Federation Subjects allowed for objective assessment of funding level of the veterinary services of the country as a whole and of individual Subjects in relation to their main activities.

In the country as a whole, funding level was 96%. The budgets of the Subjects were the major source of funding which covered over half of total actual expenditures over the year. The largest part (62%) of all the funds allocated to the veterinary services was used to pay staff salaries, the rest of the funds were distributed among other activities.

Annual funding was fully provided from local budgets in 54 Regions of the country. The funding requirements for the following activities were fully covered through funding from the Subjects' budgets:

- staff salaries – in 64 Subjects;
- the attraction and retaining of qualified personnel – in 16 Subjects;
- advanced training – in 35 Subjects;
- the implementation of anti-epidemic activities – in 58 Subjects;

- the purchase and fit-out of facilities for the veterinary service activities – in 34 Subjects;
- the purchase of laboratory instruments and equipment – in 46 Subjects;
- the purchase of reagents and test systems – in 46 Subjects;
- the accreditation of veterinary laboratories and its maintenance – in 18 Subjects;
- the purchase of means of transport – in 40 Subjects;
- the purchase of DUKs and other disinfection units – in 22 Subjects;
- the implementation of monitoring and screening programmes at the Subject level – in 25 Subjects;
- the implementation of regional quality and safety monitoring for food products, raw materials, etc. – in 26 Subjects;
- animal health awareness-raising activities among the public – in 25 Subjects.

The effectiveness in veterinary activities depends on many factors, such as veterinary specialists' qualification level, the availability of specialized means of transport and equipment, the availability of facilities, public awareness level, etc. It is therefore essential that all the state veterinary service activities be fully funded from the budgets of various levels.

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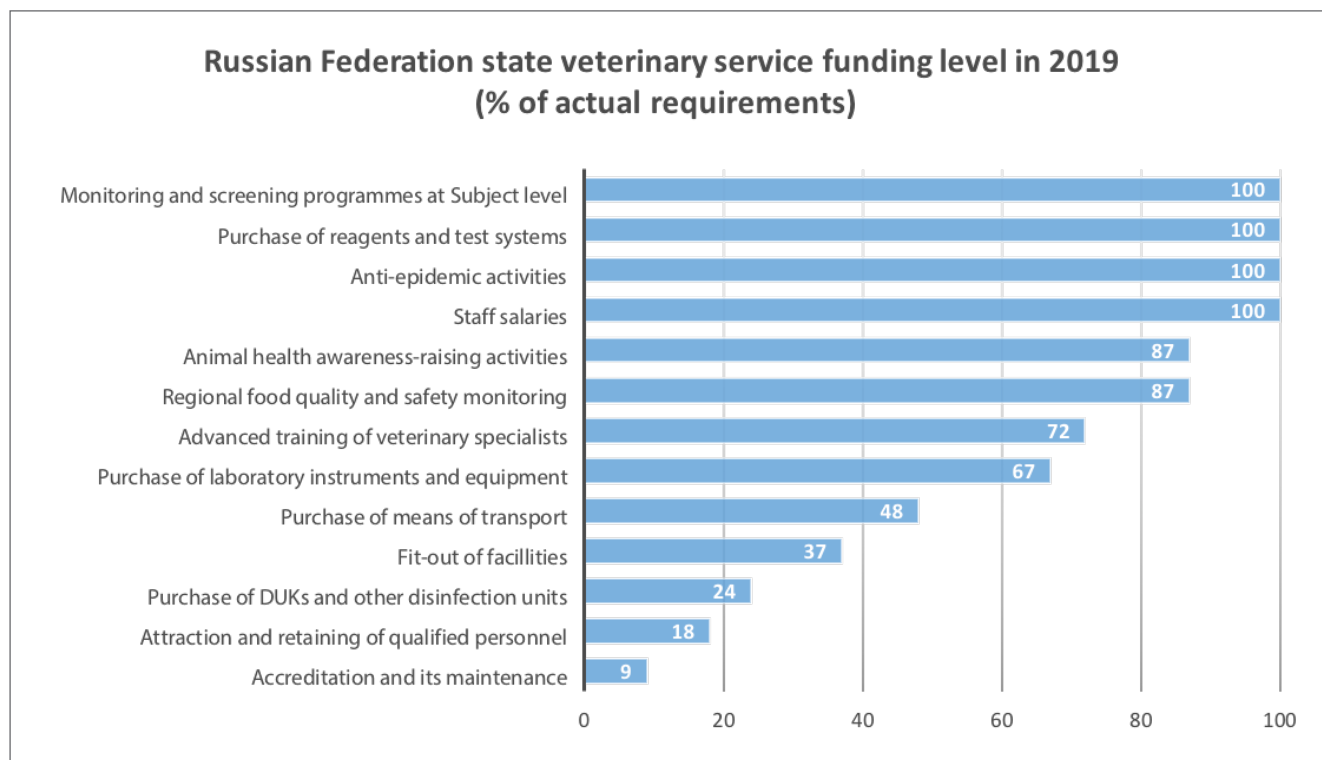


Fig. 2. Funding of the state veterinary service of the Russian Federation in 2019

Рис. 2. Финансирование государственной ветеринарной службы РФ в 2019 г.

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