

A 6-year Journey through the Biosecurity of Irish Pig Farms



of Irish Pig Farms



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Biosecurity is paramount to the production of healthy animals. The rising concerns about the introduction of exotic diseases such as African Swine Fever, as well as the management of endemic diseases, raises the question: How is the biosecurity of pig farms in Ireland?

- Data were collected from 2018 to 2023, encompassing a total of 1014 surveys and 393 farms accessed using Biocheck.Ugent.



- The study population comprises all herds with more than 50 pigs per farm, as well as other smaller farms;
- 46.6% (or 183) of farms have been accessed 3 times or more.

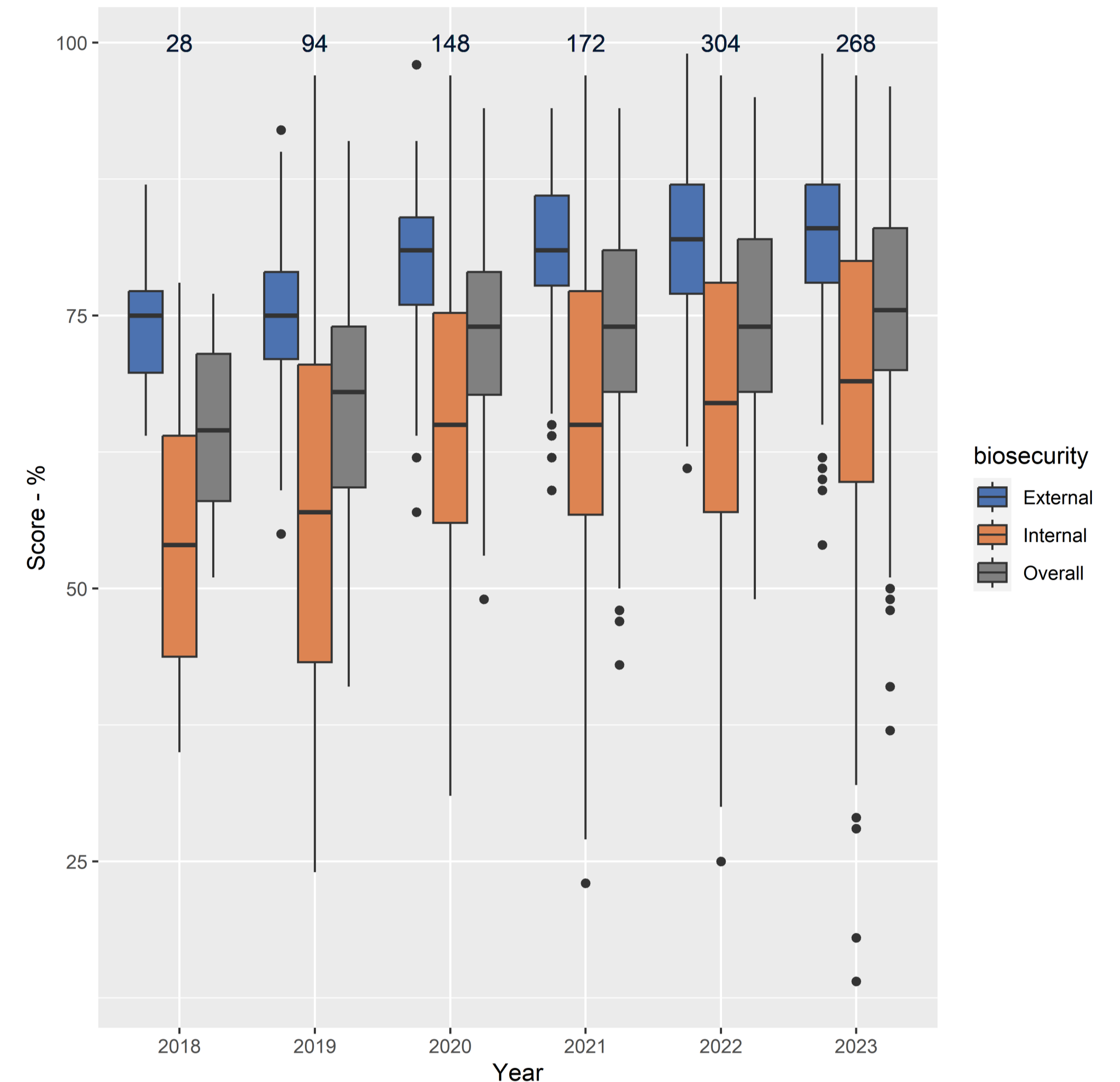


Figure 1: Boxplot of the distribution of the scores for external, internal and overall biosecurity from 2018 to 2023 and the number of farms assessed per year.

Primary Improvement

Areas identified for improvement

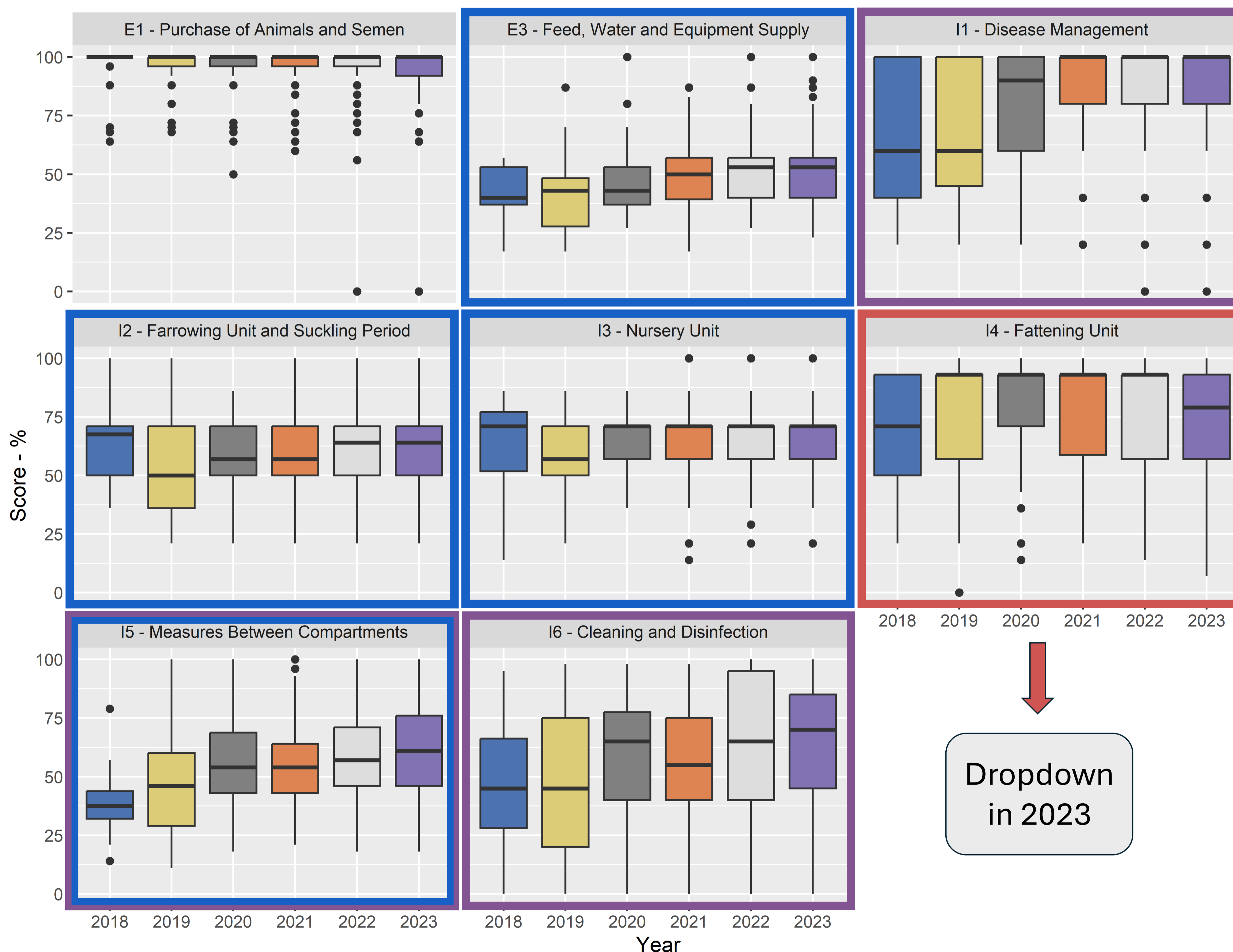


Figure 2: Boxplot with the distribution of the scores over time for the subcategory of external (E) and internal (I) biosecurity.

- I1 - Disease Management;
- I6 - Cleaning and Disinfection;
- I5 - Measures between compartments and the use of equipment.

- E3 - Feed, Water and Equipment Supply;
- I2 - Farrowing Unit and Suckling Period;
- I3 - Nursery Unit;
- I5 - Measures between Compartments and the use of Equipment.

Discussion & Conclusion

External biosecurity scores higher than internal biosecurity, primarily due to the weight attributed to the E1 - Purchase of Animals and Semen. This trend is largely observed because most Irish farms follow a farrow-to-finish production type (close cycle).

- Median scores showed improvement between the years 2018 and 2023 for most of the categories.
- Using this framework areas requiring improvement are easily identified.

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