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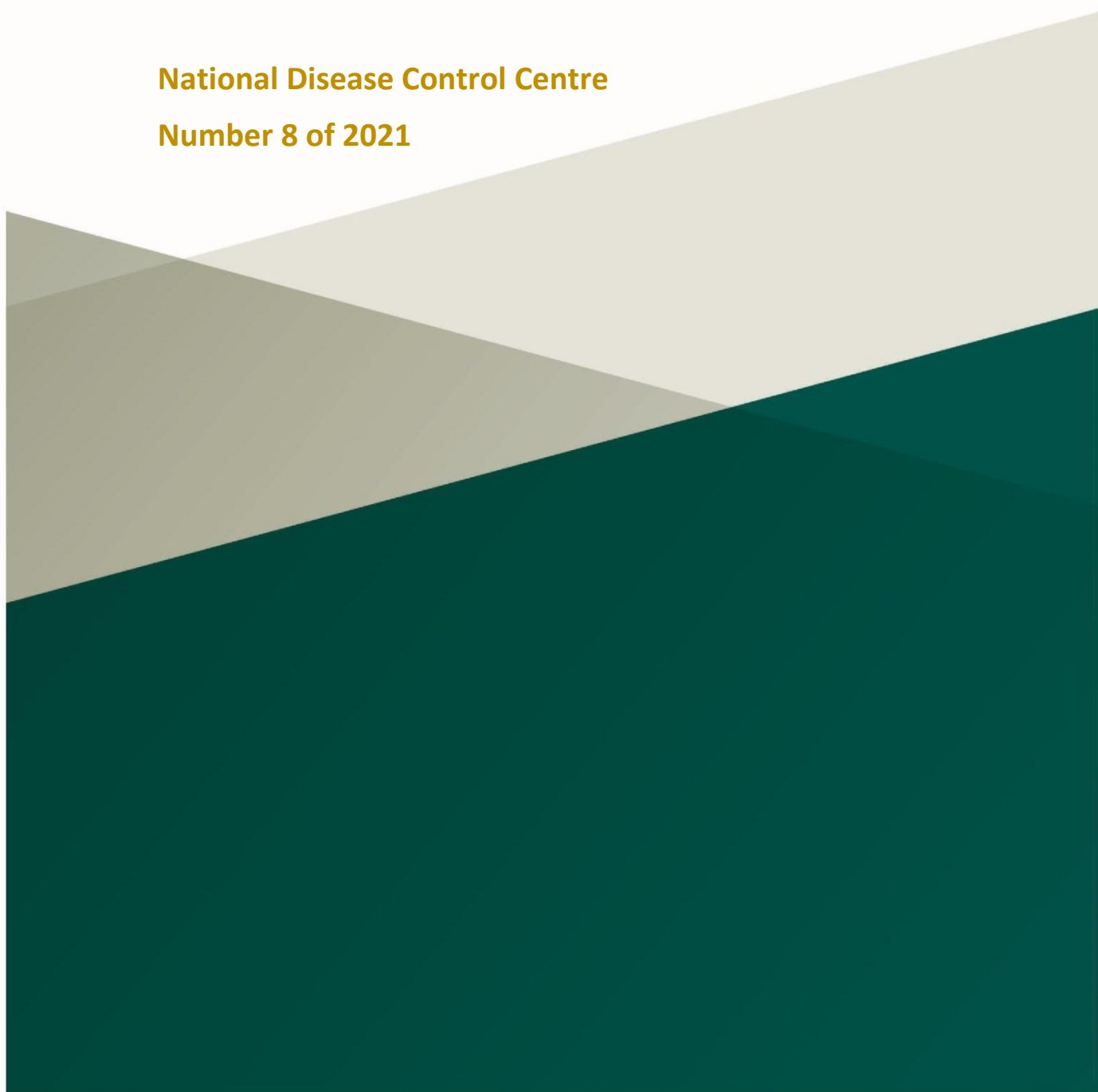
Published 1st December 2021

Avian Influenza Update

1st December 2021

National Disease Control Centre

Number 8 of 2021



Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in poultry in Ireland

- The first outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza subtype H5N1 (HPAI H5N1) in poultry in Ireland was confirmed on November 20, 2021. The outbreak occurred in a flock of 36,500 turkeys in Co. Monaghan where increasing mortalities (deaths) in the birds had been reported
- On November 23, 2021 HPAI H5N1 was confirmed in a flock of 14,800 broiler breeders in an area very close to the first outbreak
- On November 30, 2021 a third outbreak of HPAI H5N1 was confirmed in an egg laying flock in the Castleblaney area of Co. Monaghan
- The Department has expanded its protection and surveillance zones around the three flocks to further mitigate the risk of spread of the disease. This places additional controls on the movement of poultry and poultry products within the zones. Movements into and out of the zones are also subject to licensing. Additional surveillance measures also apply within the restricted zones. See figure 1. Below for location of zones.
- An interactive map (for illustrative purposes) courtesy of the Centre for Veterinary Epidemiology and Risk Analysis (CVERA) is available at the following link <https://arcg.is/19zHrf0>

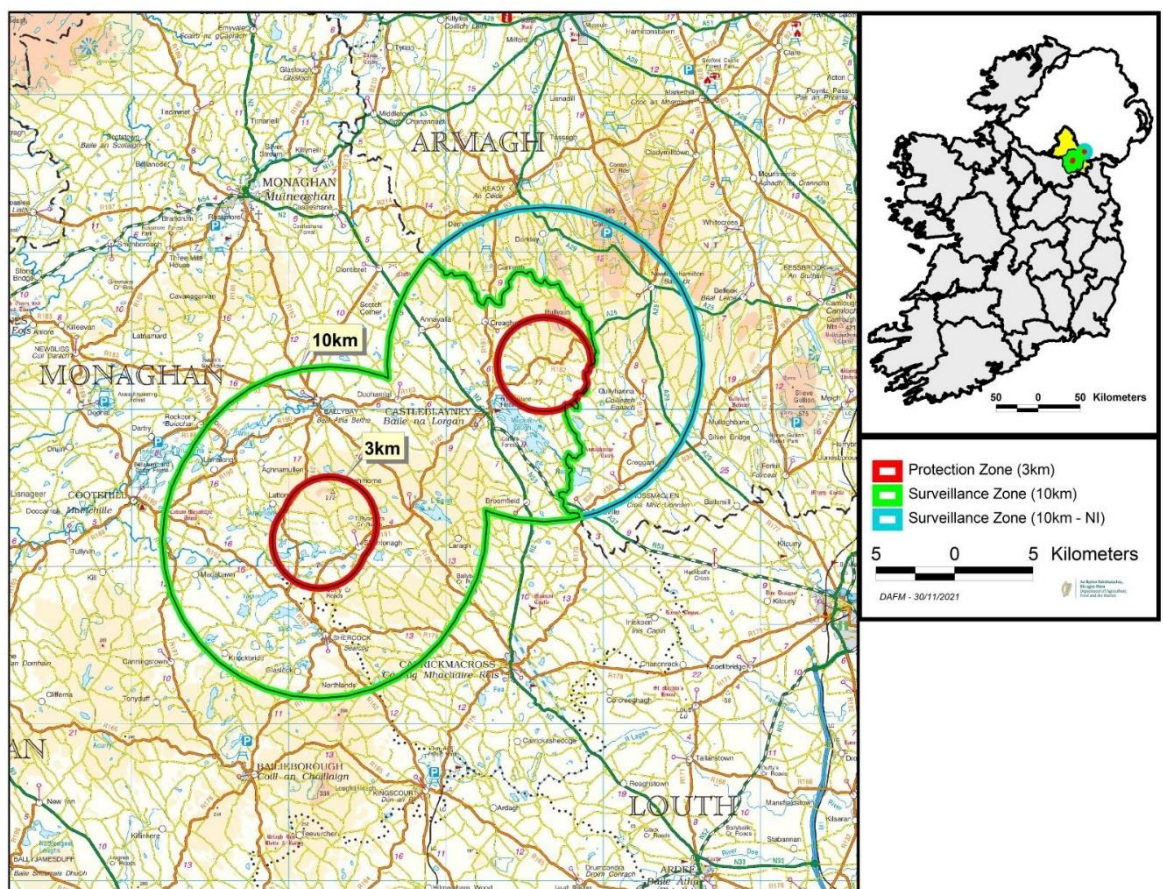


Figure 1: Map of protection and surveillance zones

Housing Order – Avian Influenza (Precautionary Confinement of Birds) Regulations 2021

- On 22nd November 2021, new regulations came into force which require flock keepers to confine all poultry and captive birds in their possession or under their control in a secure building.
- These regulations entitled **Avian Influenza (Precautionary Confinement of Birds) Regulations 2021** provide for precautionary measures against avian influenza (bird flu).
- All flock owners are reminded to continue implementing the highest levels of biosecurity. Housing of poultry and captive birds alone will not protect birds from the threat of avian influenza virus. Biosecurity still remains the #1 method in preventing and controlling the spread of disease.

Restriction on Assembly of Live Birds and Biosecurity Measures Regulation

- On 17th November 2021, regulations were introduced which contain compulsory measures that must be taken by anyone who owns poultry. The regulations and an accompanying guidance document can be found at www.gov.ie/birdflu

Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza continues to be reported in wild birds in Ireland

- The first wild bird case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza virus subtype H5N1 was confirmed on November 3rd, 2021 in a Peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*) found in Co. Galway
- Since then, further cases of avian influenza subtype H5N1 have been confirmed in wild birds in Ireland in additional locations, with more than 50 individual wild birds across 9 counties (Galway, Tipperary, Donegal, Roscommon, Wexford, Waterford, Offaly, Kerry, Longford) to date. A map indicating confirmed locations, and the species of birds involved is illustrated below in Figure 2



Figure 2. Map of Ireland indicating locations and bird species involved in confirmed avian influenza subtype H5N1 cases from Oct 1st -Nov 30th 2021

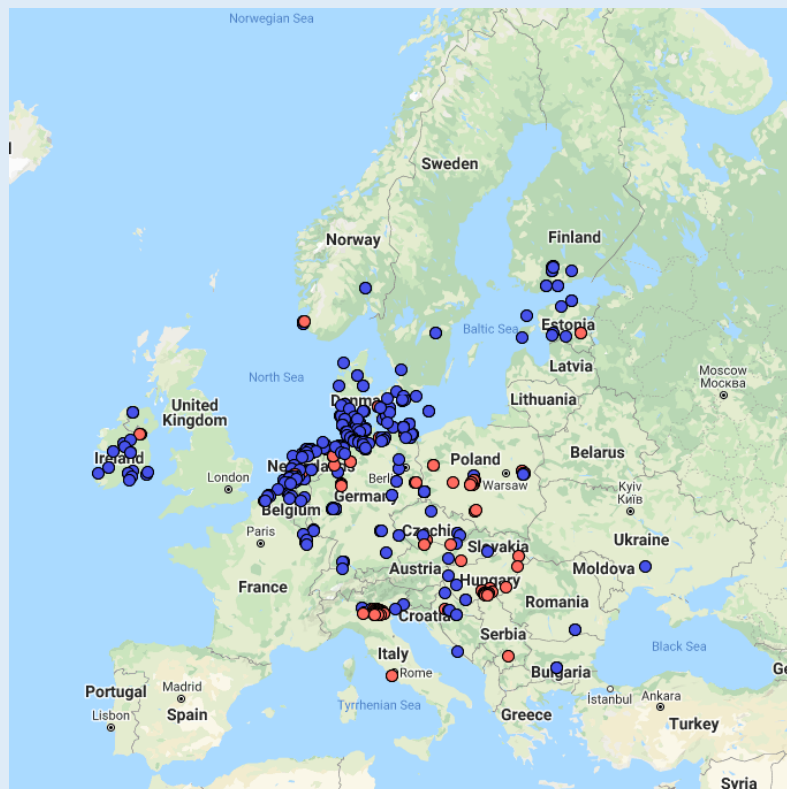
	Wild Bird species	County	Date H5N1 first confirmed in the area
	Peregrine falcon	Galway	03/11/2021
	White-tailed sea eagle Gull	Kerry	05/11/2021
	Whooper swan Greylag goose	Offaly	11/11/2021
	Whooper swan Greylag goose	Donegal	11/11/2021
	Peregrine falcon Greylag goose	Roscommon	12/11/2021
	Whooper swan Magpie	Tipperary	17/11/2021
	White-fronted goose Mute swan	Wexford	19/11/2021
	Brent goose Merlin	Waterford	19/11/2021
	Gull	Longford	23/11/2021

- Faeces (droppings) of wild birds infected with Avian Influenza can contaminate the environment with the infection, which can then spread infection to poultry and captive birds. Colder weather and decreasing daylight levels can extend the survival time of avian influenza viruses in the environment

Current Situation in Europe

- Almost 95% of cases in wild birds have been confirmed to be of subtype H5N1, with small numbers of H5N3 and H5N8 also confirmed.
- Since October 1st, 2021, highly pathogenic H5N1 outbreaks have been confirmed in poultry in Italy (111), Poland (27), Hungary (25), Germany (18), Netherlands (7), Czech Republic (6), Denmark (2), Norway (2), Slovakia (1), France (1), Estonia (1), Bulgaria (1), Belgium (1) and Austria (1).
- Wild bird species affected listed in order of decreasing prevalence of confirmed cases are:
Mute swan, Greylag goose, Barnacle goose, Eurasian widgeon, Mallard duck, Cygnus spp (unidentified), Canada goose, Whooper swan, European herring gull, Common buzzard, Common shelduck, Great Black-backed Gull, Black-Headed Gull, Ardeidae, Laridae, Greated White-fronted goose, Pheasant, Common Teal, Grey Heron, Numenius, Northern Goshawk, Gadwall, Peregrine falcon, Accipiter, White-tailed eagle, Corvidae, Eurasian magpie, Tundra bean goose, Charadriidae, Anatidae, Oystercatcher, European crane, Ferruginous duck, Ruddy turnstone, Brent goose, Northern Pintail, Ural Owl, Eurasian Eagle-Owl, Merlin, Yellow-legged Gull, Egyptian goose, Pink-footed goose, Common Eider, Pied Avocet and Scolopacidae.

Figure 2- HPAI Outbreaks in Poultry (Red) and Cases in Captive and Wild Birds (Blue) from 1st October - 30th November 2021 (courtesy of ADIS)



Country	Poultry	Captive Birds	Wild Birds*	Total
Germany	18	2	240	260
Italy	111	0	4	115
Netherlands	7	6	40	53
Poland	27	0	3	30
Hungary	25	1	2	28
Denmark	2	2	22	26
Ireland	2	0	20	22
Belgium	1	0	10	11
Czech Republic	6	0	4	10
Sweden	0	0	8	8
Estonia	1	0	7	8
Finland	0	0	7	7
France	1	0	4	5
Croatia	0	0	4	4
Norway	2	0	2	4
Slovakia	1	0	2	3
Bulgaria	1	1	0	2
Luxembourg	0	0	2	2
Switzerland	0	1	0	1
Austria	1	0	0	1
Ukraine	0	1	0	1
Romania	0	0	1	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	0	1	1
United Kingdom**	15	2	144	161
Total	221	16	527	764

Table 1. No of HPAI positive events notified to European Commission's Animal Disease Information System (ADIS) by country and poultry category from October 1st - 30th November 2021. Information courtesy of the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie (IZSVe) European Union Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease

*** UK no longer reports to ADIS, data sourced from [Avian influenza \(bird flu\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-bird-flu) up to 22/11/2021*

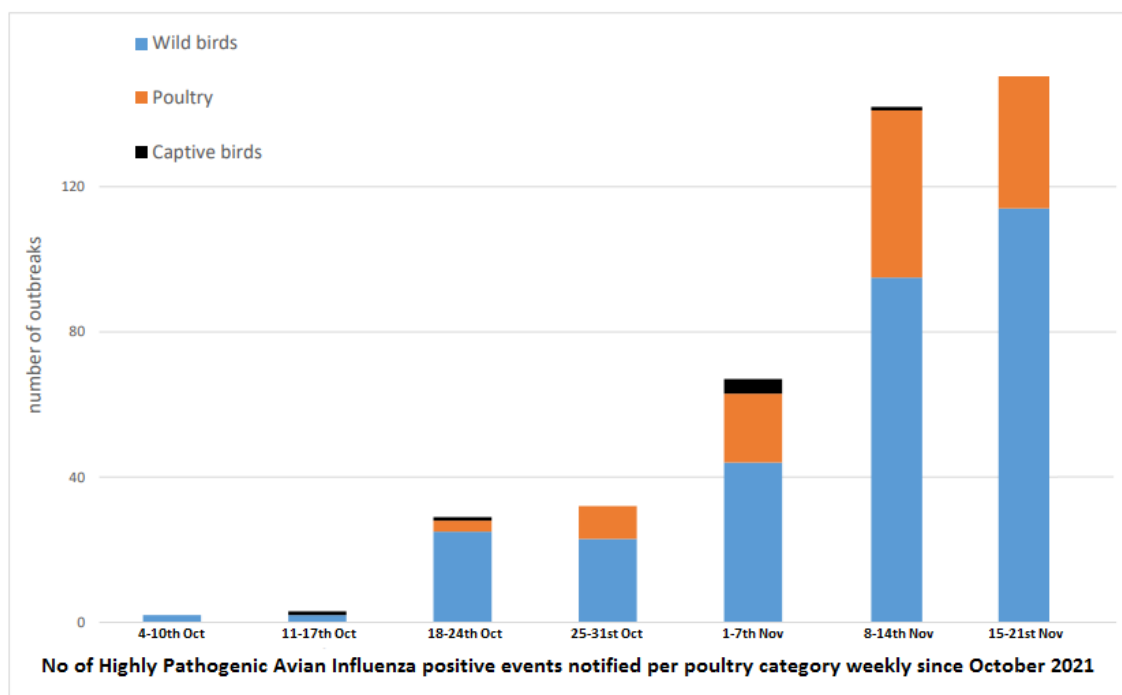


Figure 3. No.s of HPAI positive events notified to European Commission's Animal Disease Information System (ADIS) by country and poultry category from October 1st- 21st November 2021

Risk to Ireland regarding Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1

- **The disease poses no food safety risk for consumers. Properly cooked poultry and poultry products, including eggs are safe to eat**
- From October onwards each year we enter into the higher risk period for Avian Influenza in Ireland. Colder weather and decreasing daylight can extend the survival time of Avian influenza viruses in the environment
- This is due to the fact that migratory wild birds, the natural hosts of many avian influenza viruses, start to arrive in large numbers to overwinter here
- Migratory wild birds are known to carry the H5N1 subtype of Avian influenza, and this can increase the level of risk for a potential outbreak of Avian influenza in Ireland
- HPAI H5N1 is a notifiable disease both in Ireland and to the European Commission and the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)
- Outbreaks of HPAI H5N1 in poultry in Ireland impact upon our international trade in poultry and poultry products
- The disease is highly contagious for birds, but risk of transmission to humans is considered very low

What can poultry owners do to reduce the risk of avian influenza?

- Flock owners should **remain vigilant for any unexplained signs of disease** in their flocks, and report any disease suspicion to their nearest [Regional Veterinary Office](#)

1. Be vigilant- Monitor your birds carefully for any clinical signs of disease. If in doubt, contact your veterinary practitioner for advice. Signs of avian influenza include:

- Death/high mortalities in a flock
- Depression/lethargy
- Loss of appetite
- Respiratory distress such as gaping beak, coughing, sneezing, gurgling, rattling
- Swelling and blue discolouration of combs, wattles, neck and throat
- Diarrhoea
- Reduced egg production or no egg production

2. Biosecurity

[Advice on biosecurity to prevent Avian Influenza](#) including clinical signs and leaflets can be found at www.gov.ie/birdflu

Personnel and Visitors

- Wear disposable or dedicated outer clothing when in contact with your birds
- Wear boots that can be disinfected, disposable gloves and wash hands after contact with poultry
- Only allow essential personnel access to your birds

Buildings and Equipment

- Regularly clean and disinfect hard surfaces such as paths and walkways
- Provide clean boot washing and disinfection facilities at all entrances/exits and ensure that people use them
- Clean and disinfect any vehicles or equipment that comes into contact with the birds after use
- Have suitable pest control in place

Wild Birds

- Feed and water birds inside or at least under cover
- Clean up any waste feed in outdoor areas frequently
- Use netting or wild bird decoys or deterrents to keep wild birds away from poultry areas

Management

- Keep ducks and geese separate to other poultry species

- The Department also reminds all poultry owners, including those who keep only 1 or 2 birds, of their legal obligation to register their premises with the Department.
- Use an [approved disinfectant](#) against Avian influenza in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions

DAFM surveillance for avian influenza?

- DAFM implements avian influenza surveillance measures which take place right throughout the year in both wild birds and poultry and form part of our well established Early Warning System for the detection of avian influenza. The submission of dead wild birds which are on the target species list for avian influenza surveillance for testing at the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory forms part of this programme
- Members of the public are advised not to handle sick or dead wild birds. Please report sick or dead wild birds to the local Regional Veterinary Office or contact the DAFM disease hotline on 01 607 2512 (during office hours) or 01 492 8026 (outside office hours)
- **Sick or dead wild birds can also be reported to DAFM using the Avian Check - Wild Bird App** <https://aviancheck.apps.rhos.agriculture.gov.ie/>

Further information:

DAFM has a wide variety of biosecurity resources for avian influenza- please see:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/7e230-poultry/>

To register a poultry flock:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/984df6-poultry-register/>

RVO contact details:

[Regional Veterinary Office](#)

List of target species of wild birds for avian influenza surveillance:

[List of Target Species for Avian Influenza Surveillance](#)

European Commission

https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/diseases-and-control-measures/avian-influenza_en

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