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Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
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Avian Influenza Update

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National Disease Control Centre

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Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in poultry in Ireland

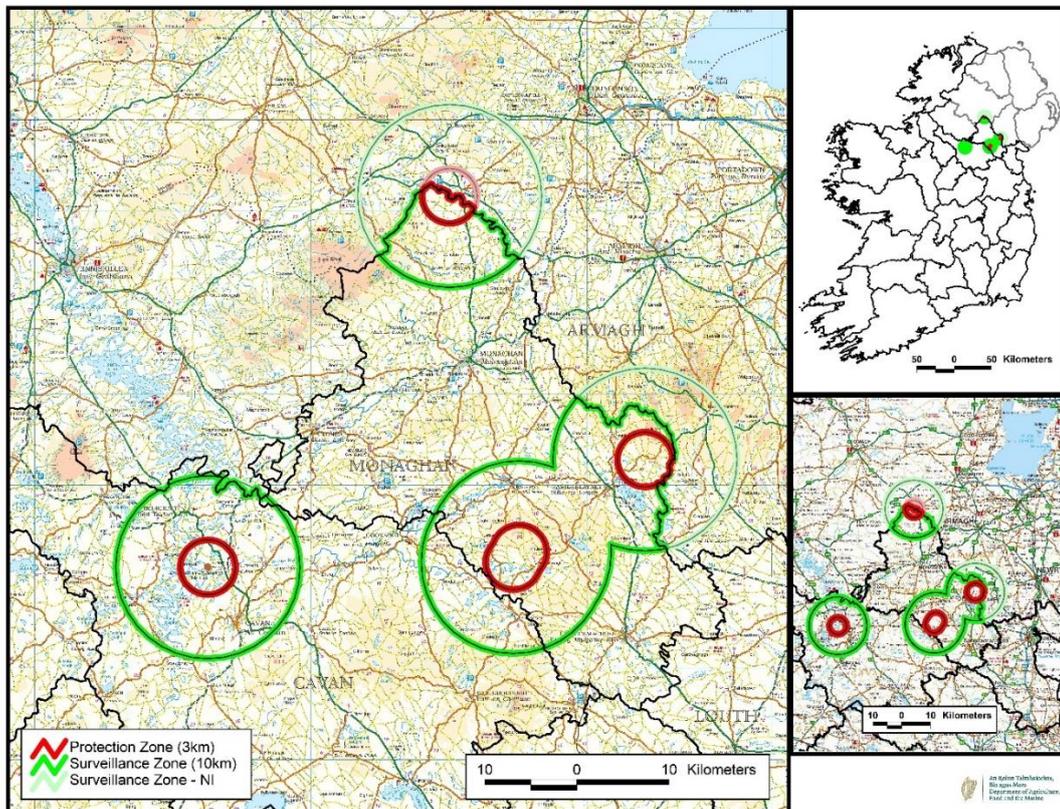
- Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N1 continues to affect poultry flocks and wild birds in Ireland
- There remains a significant risk of further outbreaks and strict biosecurity is essential on all poultry and captive bird holdings

Summary of Avian Influenza Outbreaks in Poultry and/or Captive Birds in Ireland (1st January 2021 to date)

DATE	LOCATION	ENTERPRISE
20 th November 2021	South Co. Monaghan	Commercial Turkey Fattening Enterprise
23 rd November 2021	South Co. Monaghan	Commercial Broiler Breeder Flock
30 th November 2021	North Co. Monaghan	Commercial caged layers
7 th December 2021	North Co. Cavan	Commercial Turkey Fattening Enterprise

Protection and Surveillance Zones for all above outbreaks can be viewed on the interactive map at [ArcGIS - HPAI Zones](#)

Figure 1 Map of Protection (red) and Surveillance (green) zones in Ireland 9th December 2021



- On December 3rd, 2021 the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland set up a 3km Protection zone and a 10 km Surveillance zone around a commercial poultry holding in Aughnacloy, Co. Tyrone following confirmation of Avian Influenza in the flock. As the location of the farm lies close to the border between Tyrone and Monaghan, additional restrictions are now in place in Co. Monaghan
- 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>

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. Where this is not possible, they must be secured in a manner that prevents access to other poultry, captive birds or wild birds
- 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 Regulations

- On 17th November 2021, regulations were introduced which contain compulsory measures that must be taken by anyone who owns poultry and/or captive birds. 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 10 counties (Galway, Tipperary, Donegal, Roscommon, Wexford, Waterford, Offaly, Kerry, Longford and Dublin) 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 -9th December 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
	Kestrel, Water Rail		09/12/2021
	Gull	Longford	23/11/2021
	Swan	Dublin	09/11/2021

- 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

- Since 1st October to 29th November 2021, highly pathogenic H5N1 outbreaks have been confirmed in poultry in 24 countries across Europe as well as in Wales, Scotland and England. See Table 1 for details

Figure 2: Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Outbreaks reported to European Commission from 02/01/2021 until 05/12/2021 (Source: Animal Disease Information System)

HPAI(P)			
Highly pathogenic avian influenza (poultry)			
Disease	Country	N° of outbreaks	Latest Dispatch Date
	Belgium	1	29/01/2021
	Bulgaria	12	02/12/2021
	Croatia	1	26/11/2021
	Czech Republic	43	02/12/2021
	Denmark	13	01/11/2021
	Estonia	3	22/10/2021
	Finland	1	10/02/2021
	France	475	27/11/2021
	Germany	235	03/12/2021
	Hungary	37	01/12/2021
	Ireland	3	01/12/2021
	Italy	141	03/12/2021
	Kosovo	21	07/10/2021
	Lithuania	39	31/05/2021
	Netherlands	11	23/11/2021
	Norway	2	18/11/2021
	Poland	371	02/12/2021
	Romania	8	17/05/2021
	Slovakia	3	22/11/2021
	Sweden	15	22/04/2021
	Ukraine	6	01/03/2021
	United Kingdom (Northern Ireland)	2	12/01/2021
		Total: 1443	

- Great Britain has reported 24 outbreaks of HPAI H5N1 avian influenza since 29th October to include outbreaks in commercial turkeys and free range layers, in addition to backyard poultry and captive bird flocks, a wildlife rehabilitation centre and a mixed ornamental bird flock (source: [Avian influenza \(bird flu\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-bird-flu) up to 29/11/2021)
- In Europe to date this year, almost 95% of cases in wild birds have been confirmed to be of subtype H5N1, with small numbers of H5N3 and H5N8 also confirmed
- 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, Jackdaw and Scolopacidae

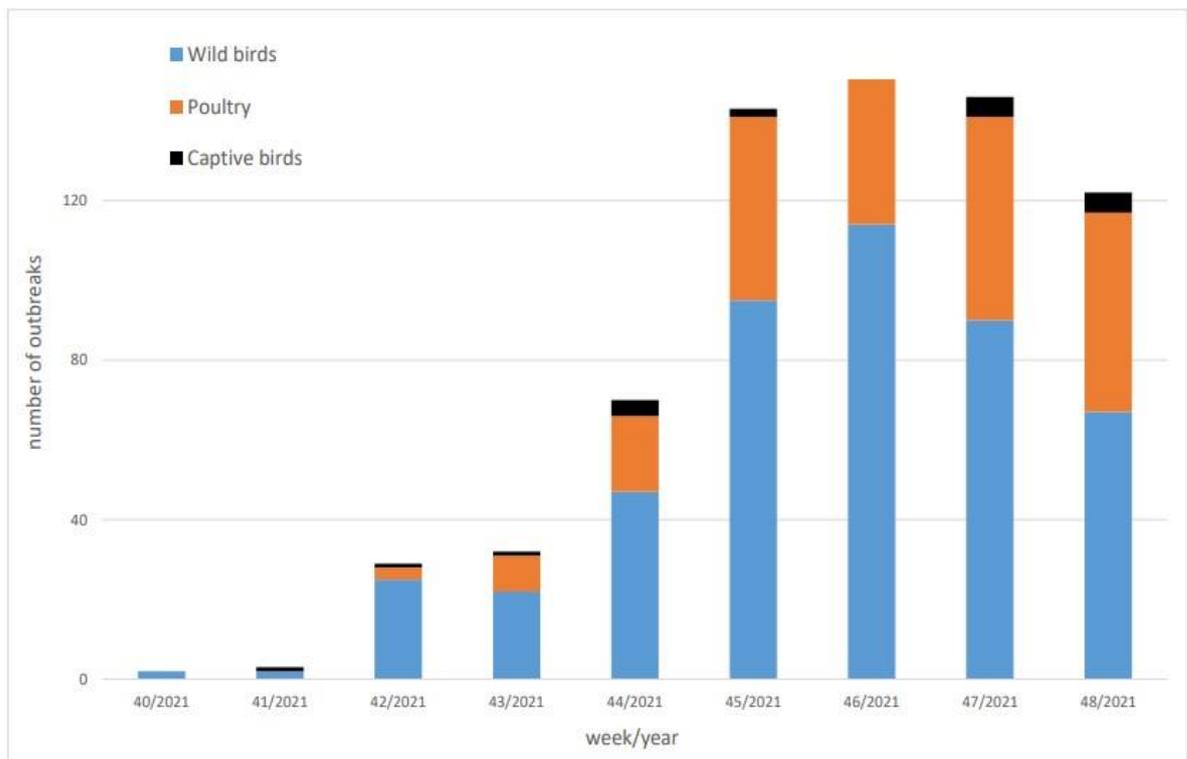


Figure 3. No of HPAI positive events per week notified to European Commission's Animal Disease Information System (ADIS) by country and poultry category from October 1st- 6th December 2021

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

- All birds should be housed in a secure building or confined in a manner where they do not have access to other poultry, captive or wild birds
- 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)

- It is not advisable to bring a sick wild bird to a premises where other birds are kept due to the risk of an avian influenza outbreak occurring as a result
- **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:

[gov.ie](http://www.gov.ie) - [Avian influenza - Bird Flu \(www.gov.ie\)](http://www.gov.ie)

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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