

## Updated Outbreak Assessment number 12

# Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza H5N8 in the UK and Europe

8th March 2017

Ref: VITT/1200 Avian Influenza in UK & Europe

### **Disease report**

Since our last update on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February, the zones around the premises in East Lindsey, Lincolnshire were lifted on the 3<sup>rd</sup> March and the zones around two of the premises in Wyre district, Lancashire were lifted on the 1<sup>st</sup> March. No local spread has been found during the surveillance in the zones or from tracings. The zones around IP8, also in Wyre district and linked to the other two premises through movements of live birds before disease was detected, will be merged on the 7<sup>th</sup> March provided there is no further suspicion of disease identified from the tracings. The PZ and SZ zones around the chicken broiler breeder premises in Suffolk will be merged on the 11<sup>th</sup> and lifted on the 20<sup>th</sup> March. The map has been updated to indicate that five of the infected premises are now considered resolved, and zones have been lifted, with no further spread identified following intensive epidemiological investigations. Please note, our previous report suggested the infected premises in Suffolk was a grandparent flock. This has now been confirmed as a PARENT broiler breeder flock.

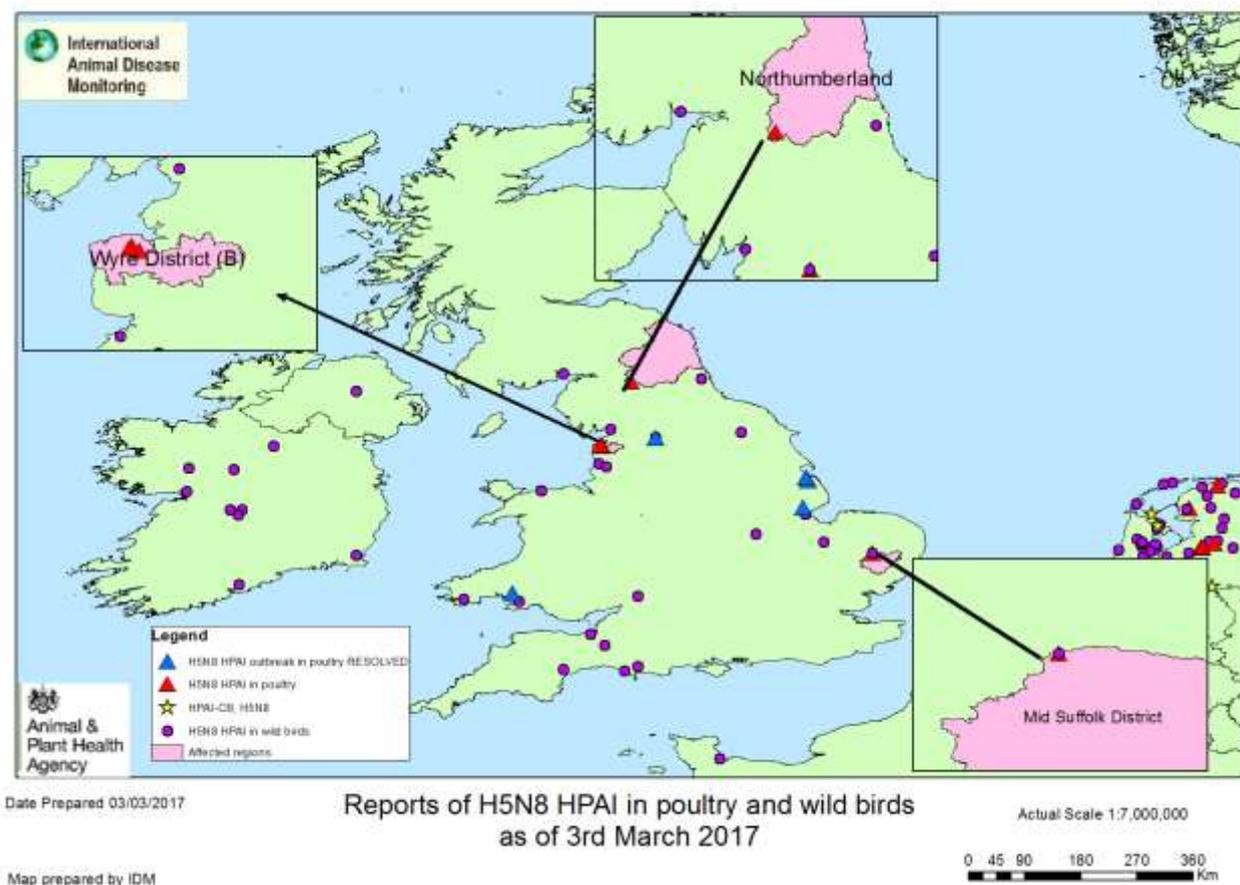
On the 24<sup>th</sup> February, H5N8 HPAI was confirmed in a backyard flock of 32 chickens in Northumberland. There are no commercial premises in the 3km PZ or 10km SZ, however, as there is also a flock of 300 sheep present, the holding is considered commercial in terms of the business connections for feed delivery and animal by product removal and therefore a decision was taken not to use any derogations available in the legislation to reduce the size of zones. All the remaining birds were humanely culled and primary cleansing and disinfection were completed on the 27<sup>th</sup> February.

In terms of wild bird findings, a kestrel found dead near the infected premises in Suffolk tested positive for H5N8 as did a wigeon found dead in Pembrokeshire, West Wales.

A GB-wide Prevention Zone remains in place until the end of April. In England, the majority of birds may be turned out, provided increased biosecurity is in place, but there are still some areas which are considered higher risk, in which it is mandatory to house or net all poultry to prevent contact with wild birds. In Scotland and Wales, the Prevention Zone requires poultry owners, who wish to turn their birds out, to prepare the ranges to ensure there is as little faecal contamination of the environment from wild birds as possible and make sure that ponds and other large water bodies are netted (where possible) or fenced

to prevent indirect contact between wild birds and poultry. Other biosecurity measures can be found in the relevant guidance at the websites for each administration. In addition, bird gatherings with poultry or captive birds of the anseriforme and galliforme orders are still prohibited. These requirements will be reviewed regularly in light of changes to the overall risk level.

All wild bird positives are published on a weekly basis on the APHA website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/avian-influenza-in-wild-birds-winter-2016-to-2017>. Only exceptional reports in new regions or unusual wild bird findings (ie a change to the disease epidemiology) will be officially reported separately.

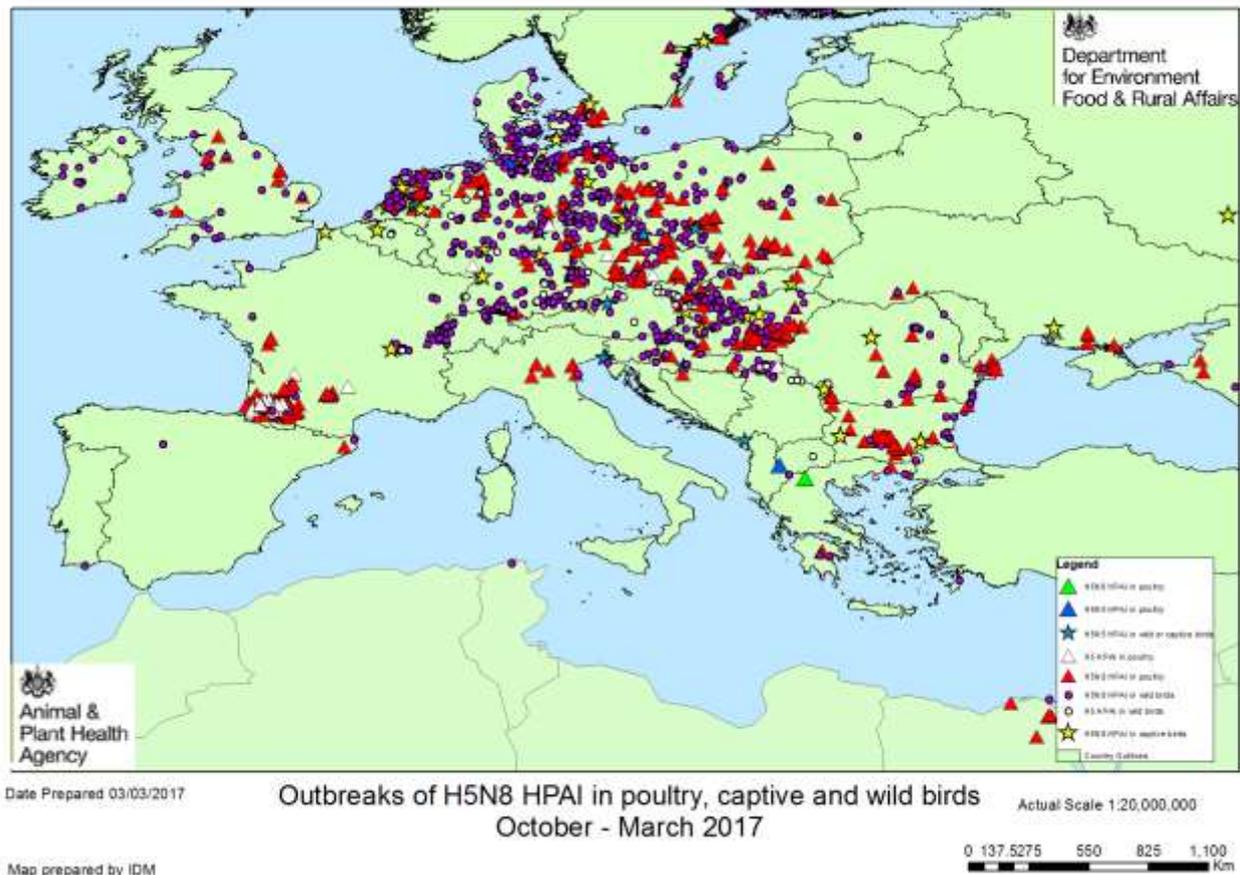


## Situation assessment

The situation in Europe has continued with wild bird findings and cases in poultry or captive birds still being reported. Lithuania has now reported findings in wild birds while Spain has reported an outbreak in domestic poultry for the first time in this epizootic. There have been over 900 outbreaks in poultry and over 40 in captive birds reported now to the EU ADNS system (which may include non-EU countries) and a small number of H5N5 reports and each day more reports are made, particularly for wild bird findings.

Austria has reported H5N5 HPAI in a wild bird, which makes it the 8<sup>th</sup> country in Europe to report H5N5. While Greece has reported H5N6 HPAI in backyard poultry – initial data on this virus suggests it is not related to the H5N6 virus which is currently being reported in Asia and which has caused few human infections. Further sequencing will be carried out in

the EURL at Weybridge for any more information. This is the first report of H5N6 HPAI this season in Europe.



As a result of the continuing reporting in the EU, the risk level for the UK is maintained at “**HIGH**” for an incursion of an infected wild bird, and as “**LOW TO MEDIUM**” for introduction of infection to poultry on individual premises dependent on the level of on-farm biosecurity. Commercial poultry premises with good or high biosecurity measures are unlikely to get disease. The widespread locations of the positive wild bird findings suggest that we should consider the whole of the UK as a risk area for wild bird infection but that areas with populations of waterfowl species may carry a greater risk proportionally in terms of risk level for poultry premises.

As a result of the increase in positive findings in wild birds in Europe, we ask that the public use the **Defra helpline (Tel: 03459 33 55 77)** to report findings of dead wild birds. In particular, any wild ducks, wild geese, swans, gulls or birds of prey and where more than five birds of any species are found dead in the same location.

Further information is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu> including updated biosecurity advice for poultry keepers which they should take note of: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu#prevention-zone>

## Conclusion

We continue to consider the risk level is high for further introductions via wild birds, but the risk of entry into poultry farms remains as low to medium depending on the level of biosecurity.

We would like to remind all poultry keepers that the clinical signs of this virus are variable and will depend on the species, but any suspicion of production drop, increased mortality, sick and depressed birds with a temperature and neurological signs should be initially discussed with their private veterinarian.

We will continue to report on the situation

## Authors

International Disease Monitoring team

## References

For all disease outbreaks, more information is available on the OIE website at [http://www.oie.int/wahis\\_2/public/wahid.php/Diseaseinformation/WI](http://www.oie.int/wahis_2/public/wahid.php/Diseaseinformation/WI)

See also:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu> ;

<http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/poultry/bird-gatherings-advice/?lang=en> ;

<http://gov.scot/avianinfluenza>

For up-to-date information on the situation in the EU, also see the Commission website at [https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/avian-influenza\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animal-diseases/control-measures/avian-influenza_en)

See our interactive map at <https://iadm.carto.com/me>



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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/animal-diseases-international-monitoring>

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