

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION OF HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA IN PORTUGAL – OCTOBER 2023 TO SEPTEMBER 2024

Despite the improvement in the epidemiological situation of highly pathogenic avian influenza in Europe since spring 2024, circulation of viruses, mainly of the H5N1 subtype, continues to be detected in several European countries. The following information describes the current epidemiological situation of highly pathogenic avian influenza in Portugal.

1. DGAV organization and contingency plan chain of command

The contingency plan chain of command is shown on figure 1.

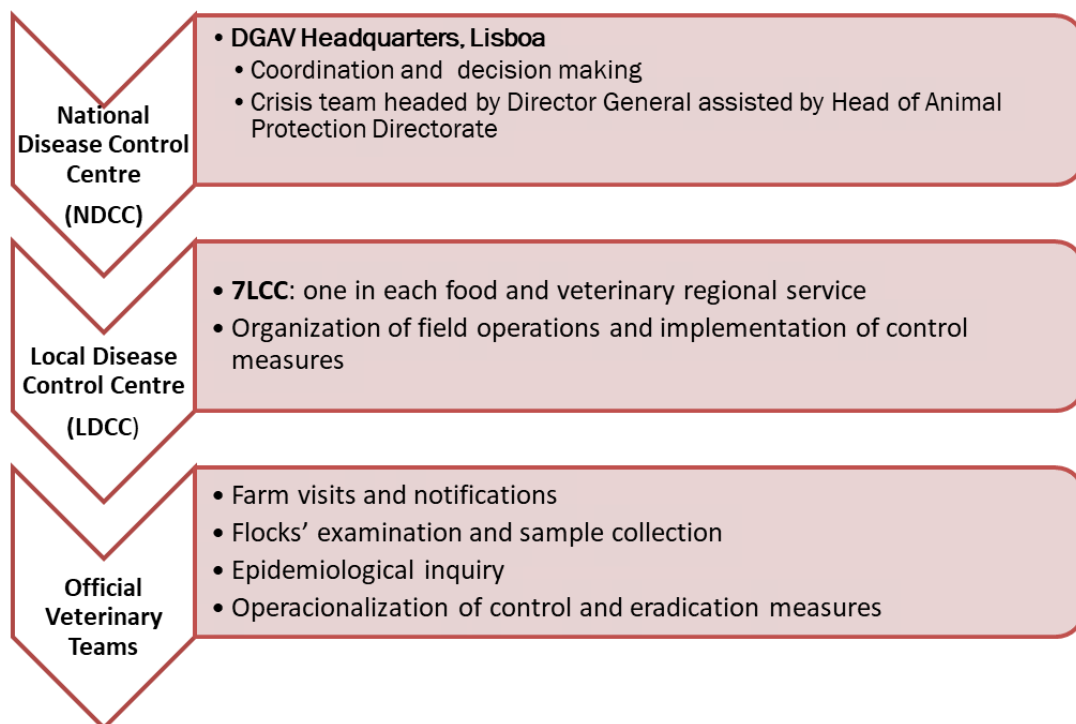


Figure 1 – Contingency plan's chain of command

2. Outbreaks confirmed in the 2023/2024 season

All outbreaks mentioned below were confirmed by the Portuguese National Reference Laboratory, INIAV, I.P., by real time reverse transcriptase PCR assays. Determination of virus subtype and level of pathogenicity was also carried out.

2.1 – POULTRY AND OTHER KEPT BIRDS

On August 14th, 2024, an outbreak of HPAI H5N1 was detected in a non-commercial backyard flock in the parish of Chafé, municipality of Viana do Castelo, district of Viana do Castelo. Subsequently to this detection, control and eradication measures, as foreseen in Delegated Regulation (EU) n. ° 2020/687 were implemented and HPAI Official Edict n.º 25 was issued by the Director General determining the measures to be applied within restriction zones.

Table 1 shows all outbreaks confirmed in domestic birds until August 15th, 2024:

Outbreak	District	County	Parish	Probable Origin	Confirmation date	Holding type	Species	Number of birds
2024/08	Viana do Castelo	Viana do Castelo	Chafé	Possible contact with wild birds	14/08/2024	Backyard flock	Laying hens	100

Table 1 – Outbreaks confirmed in 2023/24

2.1.1. Measures to control and eradicate the outbreaks – domestic birds

Upon confirmation of the outbreaks, control and eradication measures were immediately implemented according to Delegated Regulation (EU) n. ° 2020/687 of 17 of December 2019.

These measures include:

- Quarantine and epidemiological enquiry;
- Stamping out (please see table 2 for details);

Outbreak	Stamping out date	Nº animals eliminated	Date preliminary clean&desinf	Final clean&desinf
2024/08	15/08/2024	100	16/08/2024	Foreseen for 25/08/2024

Table 1 – Stamping out and cleaning and disinfection details

- Disposal of carcasses, by-products (manure) and waste;
- Cleaning and disinfection;
- Implementation of restriction zones:
 - Protection zone – area within a circle of a 3 km radius centred on the infected premises;

- Surveillance zone - area within a circle of a 10 km radius centred on the infected premises.

The map below (Figure 2) shows the location of outbreak 2024/08 as well as the restriction zones implemented.

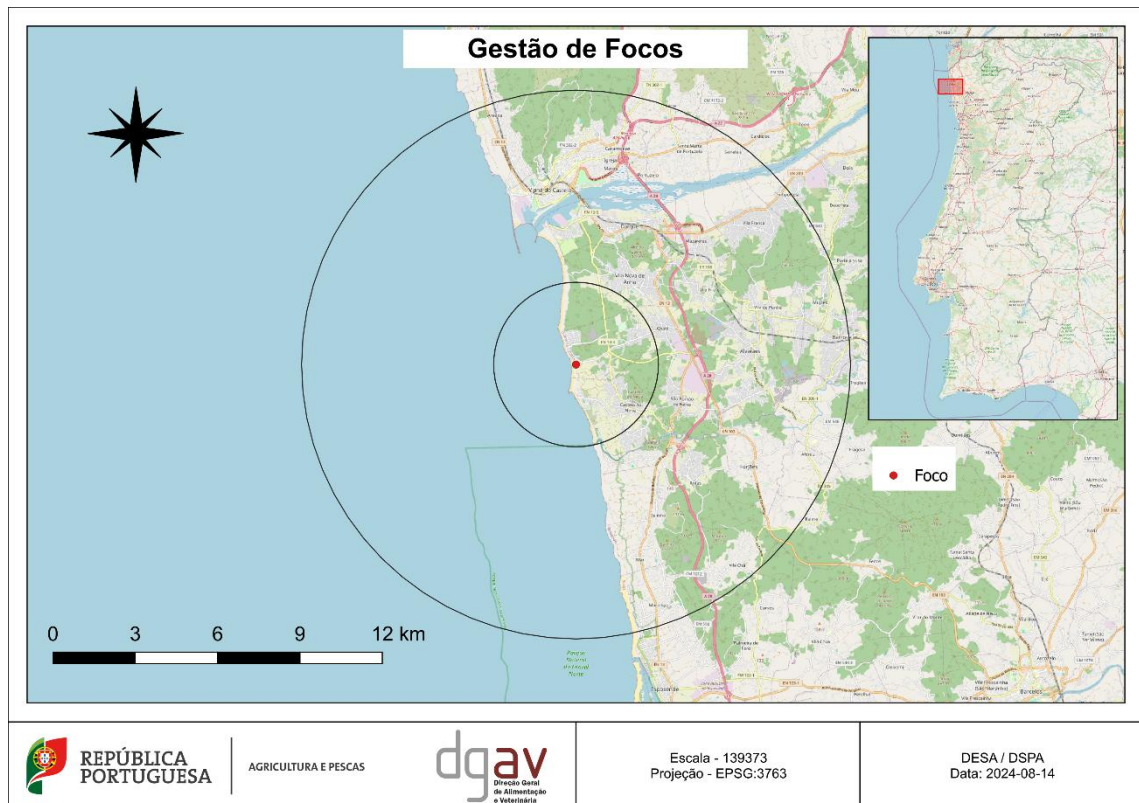


Figure 2 – Location of outbreak 2024/08, including restriction zones.

The following table shows the counties and parishes located within the restriction zones:

Zone	District	Municipality	Parish
Protection zone	Viana do Castelo	Viana do Castelo	Anha
			Castelo do Neiva
			Chafé
			São Romão de Neiva
Surveillance zone	Braga	Barcelos	Fragoso
			Aldreu
			Palme
			Durrães e Tregosa
		Esposende	Forjães
			Esposende, Marinhas e Gandra
			Antas
			Belinho e Mar
	Viana do Castelo	Viana do Castelo	Vila Chã
			Areosa
			Santa Marta de Portuzelo
			Vila Franca
			Vila de Punhe
			Barroelas e Carvoeiro
			Mazarefes e Vila Fria
			Santa Maria Maior e Monserate e Meadela
			Darque
			Cardielos e Serreleis
			Perre
			Mujães
Subportela, Deocriste e Portela Susã			
Alvarães			

Table 2 – Poultry holdings within restriction zone

2.1.3. Measures implemented within the restriction zones:

2.1.3.1 – Protection zone

- Inventory of all poultry holdings;
- All holdings are visited by official veterinarians for clinical examination of the poultry and other captive birds and sampling for laboratory testing for HPAI virus;
- Poultry keepers must immediately report any increased morbidity or mortality or significant drop in production data to allow timely and appropriate investigations by DGAV;
- Movement restrictions and prohibitions:
 - no poultry or other captive birds as well as eggs, for incubation or consumption, may enter or leave a holding without authorisation granted by DGAV;

- removal or spreading of used litter, manure or slurry from holdings is prohibited. Removal of manure and used litter may be carried out when authorised by DGAV;
- transport of poultry meat from slaughterhouses, cutting plants and cold stores is prohibited unless authorised by DGAV;
- fairs, markets, shows or other gatherings of poultry or other captive birds are prohibited.
- Release of poultry for game birds restocking is prohibited.
- Reinforced biosecurity measures:
 - Preventing contacts with wild birds;
 - Entrance of staff and visitors only when strictly necessary;
 - Records of each visit must be kept by holdings;
 - All staff and visitors entering or leaving poultry holdings must strictly follow disinfection procedures;
 - All parts of vehicles entering or leaving poultry holdings must be cleaned and disinfected;
 - Dead birds (normal daily mortality) must be promptly disposed according to Regulation (EC) n.º 1069/2009;
 - All vehicles and equipment used for transporting live poultry or other captive birds, meat, feed, manure, slurry and bedding and any other material or substances likely to be contaminated are cleaned and disinfected after each transport and allowed to completely dry before any subsequent use.

Measures within the protection zone are lifted 21 days after conclusion of the preliminary cleaning and disinfection of the infected holdings. At the end of this period, protection zone is then included in the surveillance zone for 9 days.

2.1.3.2 - Surveillance zone:

- Inventory of all poultry holdings;
- A sample of holdings are visited by official veterinarians for clinical examination of the poultry and other captive birds and, if necessary, sampling for laboratory testing for HPAI virus;
- Poultry keepers must immediately report any increased morbidity or mortality or significant drop in production data to allow timely and appropriate investigations by DGAV;
- Movement restrictions and prohibitions:

- no poultry or other captive birds as well as eggs, for incubation or consumption, may enter or leave a holding without authorisation granted by DGAV;
- removal or spreading of used litter, manure or slurry from holdings is prohibited. Removal of manure and used litter may be carried out when authorised by DGAV;
- transport of poultry meat from slaughterhouses, cutting plants and cold stores is prohibited unless authorised by DGAV;
- fairs, markets, shows or other gatherings of poultry or other captive birds are prohibited.
- Release of poultry for game birds restocking is prohibited.
- Reinforced biosecurity measures:
 - Preventing contacts with wild birds;
 - Entrance of staff and visitors only when strictly necessary;
 - Records of each visit must be kept by holdings;
 - All staff and visitors entering or leaving poultry holdings must strictly follow disinfection procedures;
 - All parts of vehicles entering or leaving poultry holdings must be cleaned and disinfected;
 - Dead birds (normal daily mortality) must be promptly disposed according to Regulation (EC) n.º 1069/2009;
 - All vehicles and equipment used for transporting live poultry or other captive birds, meat, feed, manure, slurry and bedding and any other material or substances likely to be contaminated are cleaned and disinfected after each transport and allowed to completely dry before any subsequent use.

These measures are enforced for at least 30 days following the date of completion of preliminary cleansing and disinfection on the infected holding. Please see table 4 for details regarding duration of control measures within restriction zones.

Outbreak	Date of restrictions' lifting
2024/08	15/09/2024

Table 3 – Restrictions' lifting dates

2.2 – WILD BIRDS

During this season, 14 HPAI outbreaks were confirmed in wild birds. All outbreaks were confirmed by the National Reference Laboratory for Animal Health, INIAV, I.P. which carried out real-time RT-PCR assays for virus detection as well as sequencing assays of the haemagglutinin (HA) cleavage site to determine the pathogenicity of the detected viruses.

Information regarding these outbreaks is shown on the following table:

Outbreak	District	County	Parish	Confirmation date	Holding/ bird type	Species	Nº of birds
2023/01	Aveiro	Ílhavo	Gafanha da Nazaré	06/11/2023	Wild bird	Lesser Blackbacked Gull	1
2023/02	Leiria	Peniche	Atouguia da Baleia	20/11/2023	Wild bird	Yellow-legged-gull	1
2023/03	Faro	Olhão	Quelfes	24/11/2023	Wild bird	White stork	1
2023/04	Faro	Olhão	Moncarapacho e Fuzeta	24/11/2023	Wild bird	White stork	1
2023/05	Faro	Olhão	Quelfes	18/12/2023	Wild bird	White stork	1
2023/06	Setúbal	Sines	Sines	22/11/2023	Wild bird	Lesser Blackbacked Gull	1
2024/01	Faro	Faro	Sé e São Pedro	26/07/2024	Wild bird	Audouin's Gull	1
2024/02	Faro	Albufeira	Albufeira e Olhos de Água	01/08/2024	Wild bird	Audouin's Gull	1
2024/03	Aveiro	Ílhavo	Gafanha da Nazaré	02/08/2024	Wild bird	Yellow-legged-gull	1
2024/04	Coimbra	Mira	Praia de Mira	02/08/2024	Wild bird	Lesser Blackbacked Gull	1
2024/05	Aveiro	Espinho	Praia de Espinho	09/08/2024	Wild bird	Gull	1
2024/06	Leiria	Marinha Grande	Praia de Vieira de Leiria/ Pedrógão	09/08/2024	Wild bird	Yellow-legged-gull	1
2024/07	Aveiro	Ílhavo	Gafanha da Nazaré	13/08/2024	Wild bird	Yellow-legged-gull	1
2024/09	Leiria	Leiria	Coimbrão	21/08/2024	Wild bird	Mew gull	1

Table 5 – HPAI cases confirmed in wild birds 2023/2024

Whenever HPAI cases are confirmed in wild birds, an inventory of poultry establishments located within a radius of 1 kilometre of the place where the birds were collected is carried out, for the purposes of reinforced surveillance. As part of this surveillance, no outbreaks of infection have been recorded to date.

2.2 – Geographical distribution of HPAI outbreaks in wild and domestic birds

The geographical distribution of the above-mentioned outbreaks is shown in the map below:



Figure 3 – HPAI outbreaks in wild birds in 2023/2024 (until August 21st, 2024).

3. Information and communication

In addition to measures mentioned above, official information regarding the outbreaks was sent to the Ministries of Agriculture, Health and Environment and Climate Action as well as to counties, law enforcement and civil protection authorities.

Information concerning the outbreaks were also sent to all stakeholders, namely: poultry industry associations, racing pigeons associations, hunters associations and zoos, including instructions regarding preventive measures and biosecurity.

Press notes about each outbreak and public information and awareness leaflets including advice on biosecurity and HPAI preventive measures are available on DGAV webpage at:

- <https://www.dgav.pt/>
- <https://www.dgav.pt/animais/conteudo/animais-de-producao/aves-de-capoeira/saude-animal/doencas-das-aves/gripe-aviaria/>.

Lisboa, August 22nd, 2024