

DISCLAIMER

The World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE), after performing an administrative and technical screening of a self-declaration concerning the disease-free status of a country, a zone or a compartment ("self-declaration"), as described in the standard operating procedures for self-declarations, reserves the right to publish or not the self-declaration on its website. There shall be no right of appeal from this decision nor any recourse of any kind.

The publication by WOAH of a self-declaration on its website does not reflect the official opinion of WOAH.

Responsibility for the information contained in a self-declaration lies entirely with the WOAH Delegate of the Member concerned.

Neither WOAH nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for:

- (i) any errors, inaccuracies or omissions in the content of a self-declaration;
- (ii) the use which may be made of the information contained in a self-declaration;
- (iii) any direct or indirect consequences of any nature arising from or relating to the use of the information contained in a self-declaration.

Self-declaration of country freedom from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses (HPAI) by Portugal

Declaration sent to WOAH on 3 June 2025 by Dr Susana Guedes Pombo, WOAH Delegate for Portugal, from the General Directorate for Food and Veterinary, Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

1. Introduction

The objective of this self-declaration is to officially declare Portugal (including the mainland and the autonomous regions of Açores and Madeira) as a country free from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses (HPAI), in accordance with [Chapter 10.4. Infection with High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza viruses](#) and [Article 1.6.3. Procedures for Publication](#) by the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) of a self-declaration of animal health status by a Member of the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)*.

This declaration describes two outbreaks of HPAI subtype H5N1 in poultry in Portugal, which occurred between 3 January 2025 and 10 February 2025.

Portugal formally requests WOAH to publish this self-declaration of country freedom from HPAI. The start date of the self-declaration is 26 March 2025. A statement of responsibility for this self-declaration is contained in Annex I.

2. Evidence that the disease is notifiable in the entire country

Avian Influenza is a notifiable disease as per article 5 of [Decree-law n.º 110/2007](#), of 16 April 2007, and article 18 of [Regulation \(EU\) 2016/429](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 March 2016. This legal obligation is also included in [Edict n.º 30](#) of HPAI as determined by the General Directorate of Food and Veterinary (DGAV). The higher risk areas for avian influenza are described in [Notice n.º 2](#), including biosecurity measures applicable to establishments located within these areas.

Being the national animal health and phytosanitary authority, national authority for veterinary medicines and authority responsible for the management of the food safety system, DGAV is responsible for the definition, execution and evaluation of food security, animal health and protection, and plant health and protection policies.

Within DGAV, at the central level, the activities related to animal health, namely disease surveillance, control and eradication, are carried out by the Directorate for Animal Protection (DSPA), specifically by the Epidemiology and Animal

Health Unit (DESA). DSPA/DESA supervises the veterinary authorities responsible for implementing animal disease prevention and control measures at regional and local levels. In Portugal, there are seven regional veterinary services:

- 5 in the Mainland – Directorates for Food and Veterinary of Norte, Centro, Lisboa e Vale do Tejo, Alentejo and Algarve regions
- 1 in the Autonomous Regions of Açores – Regional Directorate of Agriculture, Veterinary and Food
- 1 in the Autonomous Regions of Madeira - Regional Directorate of Agriculture

These regional directorates are responsible for implementing all the activities related to animal health, namely disease surveillance, control and eradication, within their geographical area. In the Mainland's regional directorates there are 19 Food and Veterinary Units, which carry out these activities at the local level:

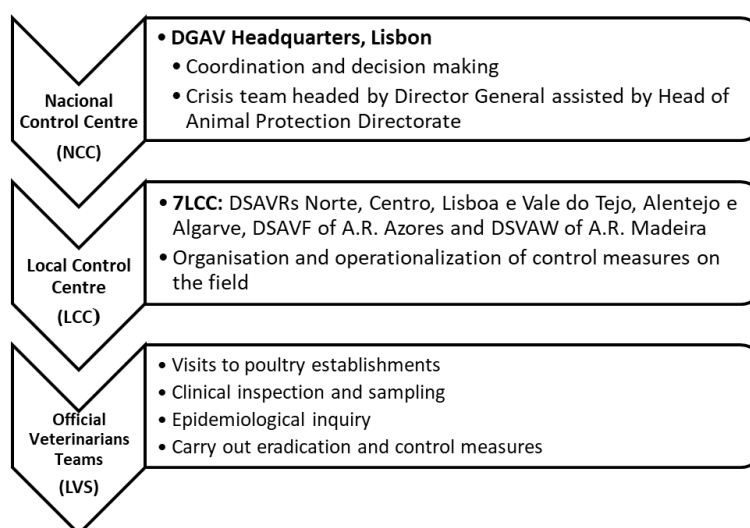
- 6 in Norte region: Braga, Bragança, Chaves-Mirandela, Porto, Viana do Castelo and Vila Real e Douro Sul;
- 6 in Centro Region: Aveiro, Castelo Branco, Coimbra, Guarda, Leiria and Viseu;
- 3 in Lisboa e Vale do Tejo region: Oeste, Ribatejo and Setúbal;
- 4 in Alentejo: Alto Alentejo, Alentejo Central, Alentejo Litoral and Baixo Alentejo

In the Algarve region, the local level activities are carried out by the regional directorate itself.

In the Autonomous Region of Açores, the Regional Directorate of Agriculture, Veterinary and Food is the regional veterinary authority and coordinates and supervises the Agrarian Development Services, present in each of its 9 islands, responsible for carrying out activities at the local level.

In the Autonomous Region of Madeira, the Regional Directorate for Veterinary and Animal Welfare is the regional veterinary authority and is also responsible for coordinating as well as for executing activities at local level.

Upon detection of an HPAI outbreak, control and eradication measures are immediately implemented, as foreseen in [Delegated Regulation n.º 2020/687](#) and described in point 2. The following scheme shows the HPAI contingency plan's chain of command:



3. History of eradication of HPAI in the country

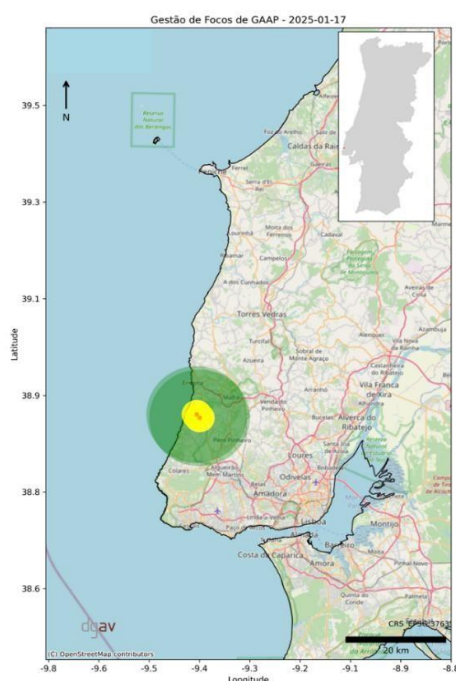
1. Avian Influenza situation in Portugal

From 3 January 2025 to date, two HPAI outbreaks in poultry have been confirmed in Portugal. Final cleaning and disinfection of the last outbreak was completed on 26 February 2025. Details of these outbreaks are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Outbreak of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in poultry in Portugal, from 3 January 2025 to date

Outbreak n.º	WAHIS report ID	WAHIS outbreak n.º	Municipality	HPAI confirmation date	Virus subtype	Suspicion type	Nº susceptible birds	Category	Holding type	Final Cleaning and disinfection completion date
2025/01	IN_171329	OB_146558	Sintra	03/01/2025	H5N1	Clinical	55427	Poultry	Laying hens	26/02/2025
2025/02	FUR_171615	OB_147418	Sintra	17/01/2025	H5N1	Clinical	346	Poultry	Mixed species	10/02/2025

The map below shows the location of these outbreaks:



Infection by HPAI H5N1 virus was confirmed by Real-Time Reverse Transcriptase Polymerase Chain Reaction (rtRT-PCR). Viral subtyping, as well as determination of the pathogenicity level, were also carried out by rtRT-PCR. All testing was done at the Instituto Nacional de Investigação Agrária e Veterinária, I.P. (INIAV, I.P.), which is the National Reference Laboratory for Animal Health (NRL).

Epidemiological investigations concluded that direct or indirect contact with wild birds was the probable source of infection for these outbreaks. The virus detected in outbreak 2025/01 (OB_146558) belonged to the EA-2024-DI.2 genotype, the most frequent and widespread genotype in Europe at the time of confirmation of these outbreaks (<https://doi.org/10.2903/j.efsa.2025.9352>).

4. Control and eradication measures in response to avian influenza outbreaks

For both outbreaks, following notification of a HPAI clinical suspicion, official veterinarians of the DGAV local services carried out visits to the suspected holdings for clinical inspection, sampling and placing holdings under official surveillance. Samples were immediately delivered to the NRL and analytic results were available within the first 24 hours after sampling.

Upon each confirmation, DGAV issued an Edict determining reinforced biosecurity measures, namely mandatory confinement of all kept birds in mainland Portugal, as well restrictions to be enforced in the protection and surveillance zones. Simultaneously, control and eradication measures foreseen in [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/687](#) were carried out by teams of official veterinarians, or under their supervision, including:

- Quarantine and updated epidemiological enquiry as well as traceability to assess if there were epidemiological related holdings;
- Stamping out;

- Disposal of carcasses, by-products (manure) and waste according to [Regulation \(EC\) n.º 1069/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council;
- Cleaning and disinfection of premises, vehicles, equipment and other contaminated objects;
- Tracing and recall of poultry products – table eggs;
- 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.

Within these restriction zones, the following measures are implemented:

- Inventory of all poultry holdings, which were notified of the restrictions implemented and of the obligation to report any suspicion of disease;
- All holdings located within the protection zone were visited by official veterinarians for clinical examination of the poultry and other captive birds, and sampling as needed;
- All commercial holdings located within the surveillance zone were also visited by official veterinarians for clinical examination of the poultry and sampling as needed;
- Reinforced surveillance within restriction zones:
 - Sampling for HPAI virus screening of flocks kept within protection zone: all establishments keeping Anseriformes are sampled and those keeping other species are sampled accordingly to the results of the clinical examination. In the absence of mortality and if Galliformes birds are apparently healthy, no samples are taken, as recommended by (European Food Safety Authority) EFSA;
 - All epidemiologically related establishments are visited by official veterinarians for clinical examination and sampling
 - Sampling for HPAI virus screening of flocks kept within the surveillance zone if clinical signs suggestive of HPAI are present and/or Anseriformes are kept;
 - Sampling for HPAI virus screening before movements carried out under granted derogations, according to Delegated Regulation [\(EU\) 2020/687](#).
- 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 contact with wild birds;
 - Entrance of staff and visitors only when strictly necessary. Records of each visit must be kept in the 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 disposed of promptly according to Regulation (EC) 1069/2009;
 - All vehicles and equipment used for transporting live poultry or other captive birds, meat, feed, manure, slurry, bedding and any other material or substances likely to be contaminated must be cleaned and disinfected after each transport and allowed to completely dry before any subsequent use.

Results of early warning and reinforced surveillance within restriction zones

The results of reinforced surveillance within restriction zones are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 – Results of testing (real-time RT-PCR), within the scope of the contingency plan, for High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza (from 03/01/2025 to 16/05/2025)

Avian Influenza Contingency Plan/2025				
Surveillance type	Nº of tested establishments (including captive birds)	Nº of tested animals	Nº of positive establishments (including captive birds)	Nº of positive animals
Early warning/ Clinical suspicions	12	93	3 ^{b)}	23
Restriction zones	48	469	2 ^{c)}	7
Mammals	— ^{a)}	1	— ^{a)}	0
Total	60	563	5	30

a) Goat kept at an infected captive birds establishment

b) Including the captive bird establishment where the goat was kept and birds kept at a city park

c) Including the establishment affected by outbreak 2025/02 and the birds kept at a city park

5. Surveillance programme in poultry

The licensing system of livestock production (NREAP), including poultry production, is described by Decree-Law nº 81/2013 of 14th June. According with Decree-Law nº 142/2006 of 27th July, and subsequent amendments, poultry establishments are also registered in the National System for Animal Information and Registration (SNIRA). All registered poultry establishments are assigned an individual alphanumeric code which identifies each establishment within the national territory. This registry contains data pertaining the establishment's keeper, its location, the species and number of birds under production and the type of production.

The Portuguese poultry production is mostly composed by *Gallus gallus*: broilers, which constitute around 62% of the total poultry population, laying hens (around 23%) and chicken breeders (around 7%). Turkeys and ducks represent around 3% and 1,7% of the poultry population, respectively, and quails make up around 2% of this population. The remaining population is constituted by game birds and a very small number of ratites. For the most part, these are indoor poultry and free range production represents around 7% of the total population.

Portugal has been carrying out an avian influenza surveillance programme, in poultry and wild birds, since 2003. This programme includes both active and passive surveillance according to rules foreseen in annex II to [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/689](#) and in compliance with [Chapter 1.4.](#) and Articles [10.4.26.](#) to [10.4.30.](#) of the *Terrestrial Code*. Vaccination is prohibited, hence it is not practised in the country.

Poultry surveillance includes an early warning system, that is, notification and clinical as well as laboratory investigation of all disease suspicions and active surveillance. Until the end of 2021, poultry active surveillance was carried out according to annex I to [Commission Decision \(EC\) 2010/367](#) and was based on a representative sampling of holdings keeping the following poultry species and categories: chicken breeders, laying hens, free range laying hens, free range broilers, fattening turkeys, duck breeders, fattening ducks, ratites, gallinaceous game birds, waterfowl game birds and backyards flocks. Under this programme, chicken breeders, laying hens, free range laying hens and duck breeders were screened, by ELISA, twice a year and fattening ducks farms were tested two to three times a year, also by ELISA. Fattening turkeys and free-range broilers were screened by ELISA once a year, and game birds, ratites and backyard flocks were tested by RT-PCR once a year.

Since January 2022, HPAI surveillance is risk-based as foreseen in [annex II](#) to Commission Delegated [Regulation \(EU\) 2020/689](#) and the objectives of the programme include early detection in poultry and wild birds, detection of HPAI in poultry species which generally do not show significant clinical signs, detection of circulating low pathogenic avian influenza viruses (LPAIV) that may easily spread between poultry flocks, in particular in areas with a high density of poultry establishments, in view of their potential to mutate to HPAI and contribution to increase knowledge on HPAI and LPAIV posing a potential zoonotic risk.

Being avian influenza a notifiable disease, all suspicions of disease are within the scope of early detection of HPAI in poultry. The reporting of any sudden mortality increases in flocks or changes in production patterns, such as egg drop or marked decrease in feed and water consumption, is mandatory. Such reports are then thoroughly investigated by local veterinary services, through sampling, according to EFSA's recommendations, for avian influenza virus screening by RT-

PCR. This sampling includes at least 5 dead birds and 20 oropharyngeal swabs as well as 20 cloacal swabs. In case of absence of mortality, only the swabs will be collected. Results within the scope of this type of surveillance are shown above in Table 3.

Under the new legislation, active surveillance is risk based and, therefore, all poultry holdings, keeping relevant poultry species and categories, located within areas of higher risk for introduction of avian influenza virus are tested. Active surveillance is also carried out in the remaining Portuguese territory, namely, in poultry high density areas, based on a representative sampling of poultry farms and considering an estimated prevalence of 5% and 95% CI or 99% CI, for Galliformes and Anseriformes, respectively.

This new risk-based programme includes the following poultry categories: breeding ducks, fattening ducks, waterfowl game birds, quails, laying hens, free range laying hens, fattening turkeys and gallinaceous game birds. All poultry categories will be tested by RT-PCR, except laying hens, including free range, and fattening turkeys which will be screened by serology (ELISA). The frequency of sampling will be as following:

- Laying hens (including free range) – twice a year;
- Fattening turkeys – once a year;
- Galliformes game birds – once a year;
- Duck breeders – twice a year; • Fattening ducks – 2 to 3 times a year;
- Waterfowl game birds – twice a year.

All sampling is carried out by official veterinarians, either at poultry farms or at slaughterhouses when flocks are slaughtered.

HPAI active surveillance programme results for the last five years are shown in Table 3 while Table 4 shows the results of the active surveillance programme in 2025, until 28 May.

Table 3 – Results of the annual active surveillance of HPAI in domestic birds

Avian Influenza Surveillance Programme	2020		2021		2022		2023		2024		Total	
Nº establishments tested by active surveillance	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS	NEG	POS
Chicken breeders	41	0	41	0	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	82	0
Laying hens (including free-range laying hens)	95	0	91	0	90	0	83	0	97	0	456	0
Free-range broilers	31	0	53	0	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	84	0
Fattening turkeys	50	0	62	0	67	0	65	0	58	0	302	0
Ducks - Breeders and fattening	13	0	17	0	20	1	25	0	22	0	30	1
Ratites	3	0	3	0	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	6	0
Game birds - gallinaceous and waterfowl	29	0	32	0	32	0	36	0	37	0	166	0
Quails	a)	a)	a)	a)	14	0	12	0	11	0	37	0
Backyard flocks	41	0	58	0	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	a)	99	0
Total	303	0	357	0	223	1	221	0	225	0	1,329	1

a) With the changes already explained these categories are no longer tested under active surveillance

Table 4 – Results of the annual active surveillance of HPAI in domestic birds in 2025, until 4 June

Active Surveillance/2025	Nº sampled birds	Nº of tested establishments	Nº negative establishments	Nº positive establishments
Laying hens	260	26	26	0
Free range laying hens	150	15	15	0
Fattening turkeys	210	21	21	0
Ducks (breeders and fattening)	140	7	7	0
Game birds – pheasants	0	0	-	-
Game birds – partridges	10	1	1	0

Game birds – waterfowl	0	0	-	-
Quails	0	0	-	-
Total	770	70	70	0

6. Wild bird surveillance

Early detection of HPAI virus circulation among wild bird populations is included in the avian influenza surveillance programme.

The collection of samples from wild birds is performed mostly by official veterinarians of the local veterinary services, field workers of the Institute for Nature Conservation and Forestry, IP (ICNF), by special brigades of the National Republican Guard and Police Force and by the municipality veterinarians. Nature conservation organizations, bird ringing teams, hunters and ornithologists may also collaborate in the sample collection.

All mass mortality events of wild birds must be notified to DGAV, either at the central or local level. Personnel of the above-listed organizations regularly carry out routine rounds in protected natural areas and in rural areas where dead wild birds can be found. Also, wounded, diseased and or dead wild birds entering wild bird rescue centres can be sampled. Upon detection of dead or injured wild birds, local veterinary services are contacted, and sampling is carried out by official veterinarians, ICNF personnel or municipal veterinarians and then validated by DGAV local services. These samples are either the whole dead wild bird, or oropharyngeal and cloacal swabs. The local services are responsible for the delivery of samples to the NRL, where testing by RT-PCR is performed.

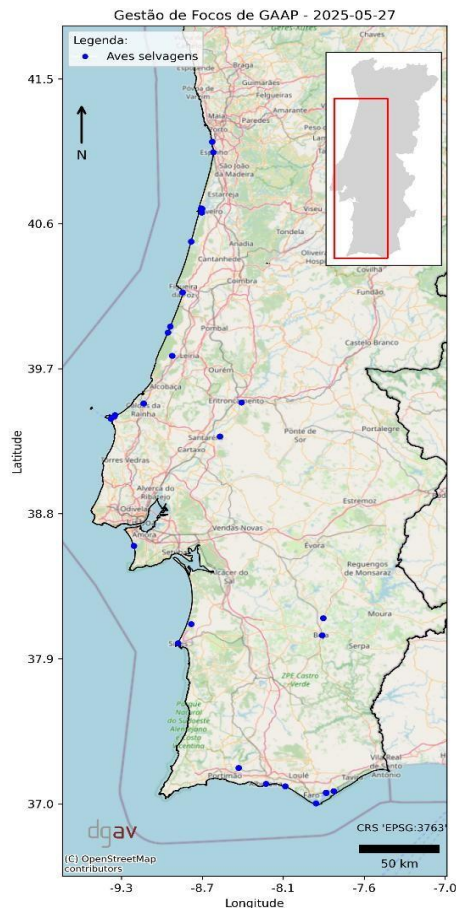
DGAV and ICNF developed an application for the reporting of dead wild animals, called ANIMAS, accessible to the public at <https://animas.icnf.pt/>. Reports registered by the public on ANIMAS, including dead wild birds, are subsequently evaluated by DGAV and, if necessary, sampling of these birds is carried out by official veterinarians.

Until January 2022, only one case of HPAI infection in wild birds had been detected in Portugal: a grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), found dead at Loulé, Algarve in January 2017, which tested positive for H5N8. Since January 2022, several wild birds positive to HPAI H5N1 virus have been detected, all in mainland Portugal and mostly in coastal areas, as shown in Table 5:

Table 5 – Results of the annual passive surveillance of HPAI in wild birds

Year	Nº of wild birds tested	Nº of negative wild birds	Nº of positive wild birds
2022	181	163	18
2023	175	169	6
2024	123	112	11
2025 (until 28 May)	43	42	1

A map of the location of the outbreaks in wild birds (in blue) is shown below:



7. Measures implemented to maintain freedom

Apart from enforcing national and European legislation and after risk assessment, additional measures, including biosecurity procedures, aimed at preventing outbreaks of avian influenza in poultry and other kept birds are determined by DGAV through the publication of Edicts and Notices. Currently [Edict n.º 30](#) and [Notice n.º 20](#) are in force.

Furthermore, an [avian influenza dedicated page on DGAV web portal](#) containing relevant information for stakeholders and the public is continuously updated and, in case of confirmation of outbreaks, press releases and edicts are also publicised on DGAV main webpage.

On November 2024, an awareness campaign for poultry keepers, including backyard flocks, comprising a video and a poster, was launched and was widely publicized through DGAV social media and web portal. At launching, these awareness materials were also sent to relevant stakeholders, namely, to the poultry industry associations. The video and poster are available at DGAV web portal at <https://www.dgav.pt/destaques/noticias/gripe-aviaria-como-prevenir/> as well as in the avian influenza dedicated webpage.

Regular information and awareness meetings with poultry industry stakeholders are also carried out, with an emphasis on HPAI preventive measures and a [Biosecurity Manual for Poultry Holdings](#) was developed by poultry industry associations in collaboration with DGAV.

All imports of poultry, poultry products and by-products are carried out according to provisions of Chapter 10.4 of the *Terrestrial Code* as well as according to [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 692/2020](#) and [Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2021/404](#). Intra-EU trade of the aforementioned commodities is carried out as foreseen in [Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2020/688](#), of the European Parliament and of the Council, [Regulation \(EC\) 1069/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council and [Regulation \(EU\) 142/2011](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council.

7. Conclusions

Considering that:

- Infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses is a notifiable disease in Portugal;
- All outbreaks of infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza were handled according to [Article 10.4.6 of the Terrestrial Code](#) ;
- Control measures for all poultry outbreaks included stamping out and cleaning and disinfection of affected holdings according to procedures approved by DGAV on the dates shown in Table 1 and that the last such date is 26 February 2025;
- More than 28 days have elapsed since the end of the cleaning and disinfection of the premises affected by the last outbreak as prescribed in Article 10.4.6. of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- Surveillance has been carried out in accordance with Articles 10.4.26 to 10.4.30. of the *Terrestrial Code*;
- Commodities are imported in accordance with Articles 10.4.7 to 10.4.22. of the *Terrestrial Code*; and
- There are ongoing awareness programmes on HPAI regarding notification of suspicion of disease and to disseminate information concerning preventive measures.

The Delegate of Portugal to WOAHP declares that the country complies with the requirements for a country free from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses (HPAI) in poultry as of 26 March 2025, in accordance with Chapter 1.6. and Article 10.4.6. of the *Terrestrial Code* (2022) and consistent with the information provided to the WOAHP-WAHIS system.

Annex I

Statement to be included in the self-declaration document.

I, the undersigned, Dr. Susana Guedes Pombo, Delegate of Portugal to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH), take responsibility for the self-declaration of freedom from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza viruses (HPAI) in accordance with the provisions of Article 10.4.6. of the WOAH *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*.

DISCLAIMER

The WOAH, after performing an administrative and technical screening of a self-declaration concerning the disease-free status of a country, a zone or compartment ("self-declaration"), as described in the standard operating procedures for self-declarations, reserves the right to publish or not the self-declaration on its website. There shall be no right of appeal from this decision or any recourse of any kind.

The publication by the OIE of self-declaration on its website does not reflect the official opinion of the OIE. Responsibility for the information contained in a self-declaration lies entirely with the OIE Delegate of the Member concerned.

Neither the OIE nor any person acting on its behalf may be held responsible for:

- (i) Any errors, inaccuracies or omissions in the content of a self-declaration,
- (ii) The use which may be made of the information contained in a self-declaration;
- (iii) Any direct or indirect consequences of any nature arising from or relating to the use of the information contained in a self-declaration.

Drawn up on 27 May 2025

Signature of the Delegate:

Susana
Guedes
Pombo

Assinado de forma digital por Susana
Guedes Pombo
DN: c=PT, title=Diretor Geral,
ou=Gabinete da Diretora Geral,
o=Direção Geral de Alimentação e
Veterinária, sn=Guedes Pombo,
givenName=Susana, cn=Susana Guedes
Pombo
Dados: 2025.06.03 11:21:36 +01'00'