

## DISCLAIMER

The 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 the OIE of a 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.

## SELF-DECLARATION OF A STATUS OF A COUNTRY FREE FROM INFECTION WITH HIGH PATHOGENICITY AVIAN INFLUENZA VIRUSES

### 1. Introduction

The objective of this self-declaration is to declare freedom from infection with high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI) viruses for the entire territory of Slovenia from 4 February 2022 in accordance with Articles 10.4.6. and 1.6.3. of the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code)*.

The first outbreak of HPAI subtype H5N1 in poultry in Slovenia was confirmed on 27 December 2021.

Slovenia formally requests the OIE to publish this first declaration for the country freedom from HPAI. A statement of responsibility for this self-declaration is contained in Annex I.

### 2. Avian influenza situation in Slovenia

The first outbreak of HPAI in poultry in Slovenia was confirmed on 27 December 2021. Since 2004, the surveillance programme for avian influenza in poultry and wild birds has been carried out each year. The number of samples and the results are in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Number of samples and results of the surveillance programme in poultry (2016–2022\*)

Year	Poultry (number of samples)	Results (number of positive H5 or H7)
2022*	370	0
2021	2.975	0
2020	3.175	0
2019	3.305	0
2018	3.270	0
2017	2.930	0
2016	3.140	0

\* preliminary data for period from January till May

The first case of avian influenza in wild birds was mute swan (*Cygnus olor*), which was found on the bank of river Drava north-west from Maribor on 9 February 2006. The swan died during the transport to the wild animal shelter. The samples were taken in the frame of survey programme on avian influenza. On 11 February 2006 the National

Reference Laboratory (NRL) notified the positive result for Avian Influenza (AI) virus subtype H5 (RT-PCR). The HPAI H5N1 was confirmed in former Community Reference laboratory (Weybridge, UK) and in OIE Reference laboratory for avian influenza in Padova (IT). By the 25 March 2006, when the last positive bird was collected, there were 48 H5 positive wild birds altogether. The 47 positive wild birds were located along river Drava from Maribor to Markovci, only one grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*) was found west from Maribor, near Slovenj Gradec. The species of positive birds were: 44 mute swans, 2 grey herons, 1 mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) and 1 northern pintail (*Anas acuta*).

Next outbreak in wild birds was at the end of 2016, when 1 mute swan (*Cygnus olor*) was positive for HPAI H5N8. The swan was found dead on the bank of river Drava in the city of Maribor on 30 December 2016 (in the same city where was HPAI H5N1 epidemics in 2006), but the outbreak was notified to WAHIS in January 2017, when the laboratory results confirmed HPAI H5N1. The epidemics continued in 2017: from 556 tested wild birds 172 tested positive for HPAI H5 (169 H5N8, 3 H5N5). The most affected species were mute swans. Mass mortalities of wild birds occurred on two locations on the area of the same Regional Office. On first location (Benica) 89 mute swans, 1 greater white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*) and 1 great egret (*Ardea alba*) were collected. HPAI H5N8 was detected in mute swans and greater white-fronted goose. On the second location (Lakoš), 100 mute swans were collected and HPAI H5N8 was confirmed.

In 2018 and 2019, there were no HPAI outbreaks detected in Slovenia. In 2018, 1 mute swan was positive for LPAI H5N2. In 2019, 1 mute swan was positive for Influenza A subtype which was not determined (not H5 or H7). Some black-headed gulls (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) which originated from the same place tested positive for Influenza A; in one case subtype H13N6 was determined.

In 2020, HPAI was detected in 6 mute swans (5 cases of HPAI H5N8 and 1 case of HPAI H5N5). LPAI cases (not H5 or H7) were detected in mute swan, common teal, great cormorant and 2 black-headed gulls.

In season 2021/2022, 50 wild birds tested positive for HPAI H5N1: 12 in 2021 (11 mute swans and 1 black-headed gull) and 38 in 2022 (1 mallard, 1 yellow-legged gull () and 1 grey heron; others were mute swans). The number of tested wild birds and the results are in Table 2. HPAI positive cases in poultry and wild birds are presented in Map 1 and Map 2, respectively.

Table 2: Number of tested wild birds and results (2016–2022\*)

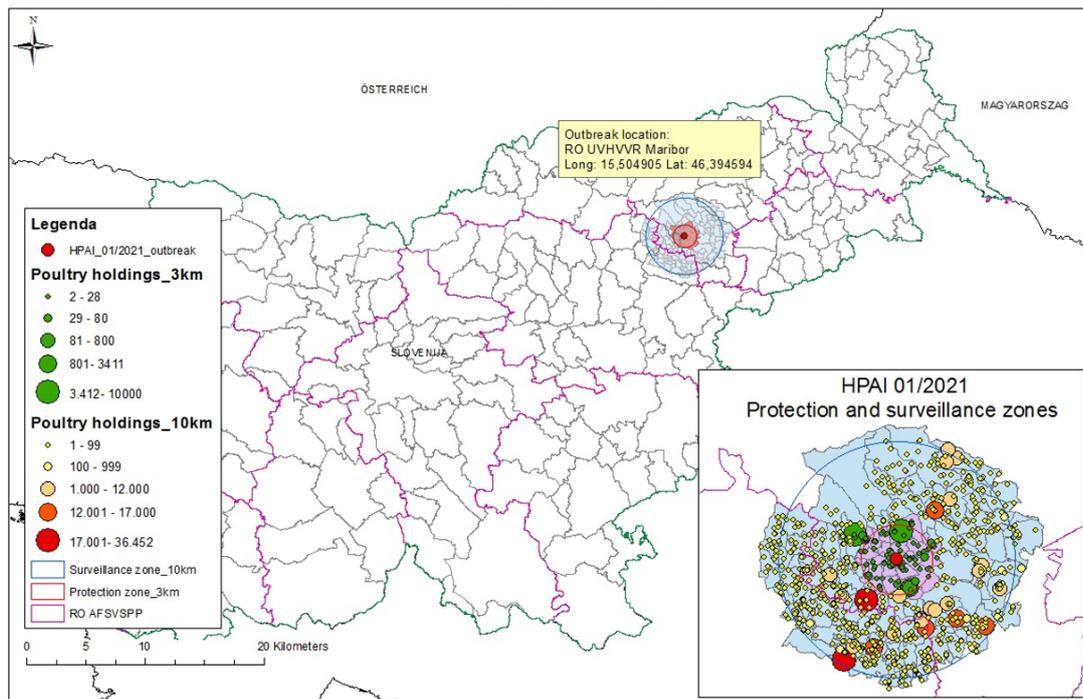
Year	Number of wild birds	Number of HPAI positive	Remarks
2022*	145	38	H5N1
2021	323	12	H5N1
2020	270	6	5 H5N8, 1 H5N5
2019	231	0	/
2018	176	0	/
2017	556	172	169 H5N8, 3 H5N5
2016	147	1	H5N8

\* preliminary data for period from January till May

### Confirmed outbreak in poultry

HPAI was confirmed on 27 December 2021 in a small backyard establishment with 55 hens, 11 geese and 29 ducks. National Veterinary Institute (NVI), which is the national reference laboratory for avian influenza confirmed the presence of HPAI H5N1 in samples taken from dead and live poultry by real time PCR. Samples were also sent for confirmation to the European Union Reference Laboratory (EURL) where they were confirmed as HPAI H5N1. The outbreak was promptly reported to the OIE via the World Animal Health Information System (OIE-WAHIS). There were no confirmed outbreaks of avian influenza in captive birds during this time.

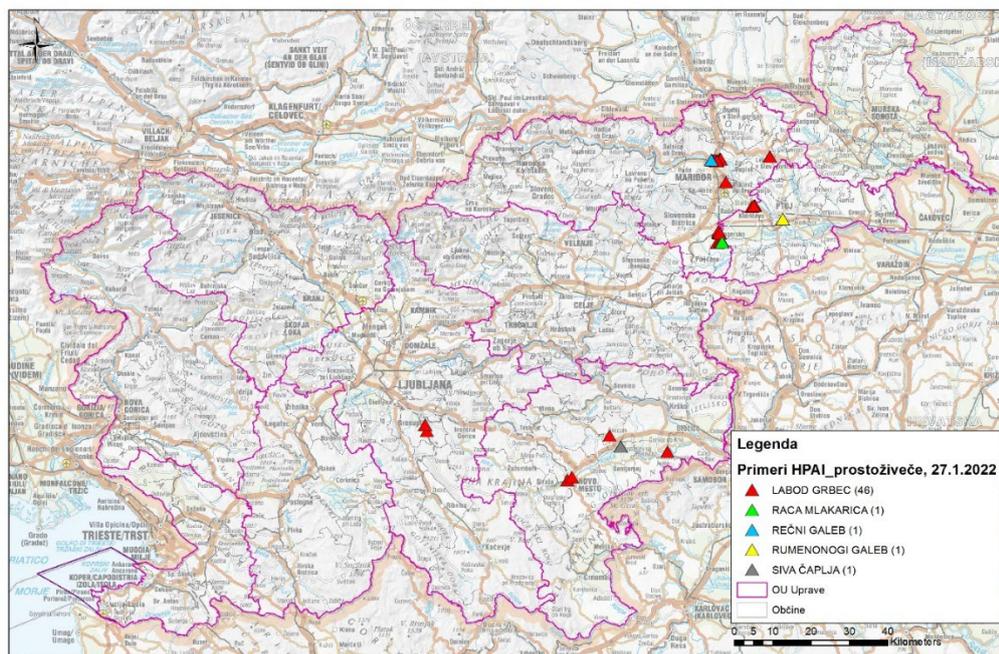
### HPAI in poultry - 01/2021



© Uprava Republike Slovenije za varno hrano, veterinarstvo in varstvo rastlin 2021

Map 1: Location of the outbreak and restricted zones of the HPAI outbreak in poultry in Slovenia in 2021

### HPAI v Sloveniji



© Uprava Republike Slovenije za varno hrano, veterinarstvo in varstvo rastlin 2022

Map 2: Locations of cases of the HPAI in wild birds in Slovenia in 2021-2022

### 3. Control and eradication measures in response to avian influenza outbreak

On 27 December 2021, HPAI H5N1 was confirmed in a backyard holding. Outbreak was confirmed on the basis of clinical signs and positive laboratory results. National disease control centre (NDCC) was established and measures were implemented in line with EU Regulation 2016/429 (Animal health law) and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687.

Immediately after the confirmation, the following measures were applied on the infected holding:

- killing of all poultry and safe disposal of carcasses in line with Regulation (EU) 1069/2009;
- cleaning and disinfection of the premises and equipment in line with Article 15 and Annex IV of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687;
- safe disposal and destruction of feed and other materials not suitable for cleaning and disinfection;
- sampling of other animals on the holding (pigs, horses, dog and cats).

NDCC defined restriction zone (protection and surveillance zone) in line with provisions of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 and applied the following measures:

- inventory and regular update of all establishments keeping poultry;
- transport of animals and products through the restricted zone without stopping or unloading in the restricted zone, prioritising major highways or mainline railways and avoiding the vicinity of establishments keeping animals of listed species;
- each sampling in establishments with poultry, which is not intended for the confirmation or ruling out HPAI, must be approved by the competent authority (CA);
- vehicles for the transport of poultry and their products originating from the zones, must be in line with Article 24(1) of the Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687;
- contact with wild birds must be avoided and poultry must be kept away from other animal species;
- operator must immediately notify every change in health status of poultry, including the number of diseased or dead animals, change in production to the veterinarian or CA;
- disinfection barriers on the entrance/exit to and from the establishments;
- biosecurity measures (changing clothes, disinfectant barriers, washing and disinfection of hands; etc.);
- keeping data in the establishment (all persons, vehicles entering the establishment, number and species of poultry, date of death, other changes in animals, etc.)
- ban on repopulation of game birds;
- ban on exhibitions, shows, markets and other gatherings of poultry.

Beside abovementioned measures, the following measures were also applied in the protection zone (3 km) and surveillance zone (10 km):

- visits of all establishments in the protection zone in accordance with Article 26 and visits of certain number of establishments in the surveillance zone in line with Article 41 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687; visits are performed by CA;
- ban on movements of poultry and their products within, to and from the protection zone, except movements of poultry for slaughter, fresh meat and eggs for human consumption based on the approval of the CA;
- ban on movements of manure and used litter from the protection zone, except to the dumping ground in line with Article 35 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687, following the CA approval.

All measures in line with Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 were performed in the infected holding and in the restriction zone and the results of clinical examination and laboratory test were negative for HPAI. On the 27 January 2022, NDCC, in line with Article 39 and 55 of Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687, lifted protection and surveillance zone and prescribed measures.

HPAI was also confirmed in wild birds. On 28 December 2021 HPAI H5N1 was confirmed in a dead mute swan (*Cygnus olor*). Due to this outbreak and situation in poultry, NDCC decided to apply certain measures on the whole territory of Slovenia in order to minimise the risk of introduction of HPAI in establishments keeping poultry:

- keeping of poultry and captive birds in closed facilities or in such way that contact with wild birds, especially waterfowl is avoided;
- feeding and giving water to poultry and captive birds in closed or covered facilities;
- treatment of water from water reservoirs to which wild birds have access, so that AI viruses are inactivated (boiling of water, use of filters, UV, adding chlorine, etc.);
- ban on feeding of wild waterfowl;
- ban on gathering of poultry and other captive birds on markets, shows, exhibitions, etc.;
- recommendation to hunters to ban hunting of mallards or when hunting, strictly follow biosecurity measures;

- recommendation to ban ringing of waterfowl or strictly follow biosecurity measures;
- notify National Crisis Centre (112) in case of found dead or injured waterfowl or bird of prey or larger number of dead birds in one location.

In total, 50 found dead wild birds (mute swan, mallard, black-headed gull, yellow-legged gull and grey heron) were tested positive for HPAI H5N1. The last positive bird (mute swan) was found dead on 20 January 2022. From that date on, there were no information on larger numbers of dead waterfowl or birds of prey. Based on that, NDCC has adapted the measures affecting poultry on the whole territory of Slovenia. Since 15 February 2022, it has not been compulsory to keep poultry and captive birds inside or protected against contact with wild birds, but they can be kept in fenced area, and supplied with feed and water indoors. All other measures, imposed by NDCC to minimize the possibility of introduction of HPAI in establishments keeping poultry, still remained in place. All measures, imposed because of HPAI in wild birds, ceased to apply on 9 April 2022.

#### 4. Surveillance programme and early detection system

Slovenia carries out surveillance programme with the aim to rapidly detect early incursions of disease and to demonstrate freedom from infection with HPAI and LPAI subtypes H5/H7. The programme includes both active and passive surveillance in accordance with Chapter 1.4. and Articles 10.4.26. to 10.4.30. of the *Terrestrial Code* and Annex II of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689. The national strategy in relation to AI surveillance is to prevent establishment of disease by monitoring for the presence and early detection of the virus through active and passive surveillance of poultry and wild birds.

After confirmation of HPAIV in poultry establishment protection and surveillance zone were established.

In the protection zone inventory of poultry establishments were made and clinical examination of poultry on all establishments were performed (Map 3). The following surveillance was conducted:

- in case of mortality of animals: 5 animals per facility were tested by PCR;
- in case of clinical signs: 20 animals or all, if less animals present are tested;
- in the case of observed changes (drop in laying, reduced consumption of feed, water, ..): 20 animals or all, if less animals per establishment were tested by PCR;
- all waterfowl establishments (sample of healthy animals) are tested: 60 animals or all, if less animals present were tested by PCR as well as blood samples were taken for serological testing (HI test).

In the surveillance zone, clinical examinations were performed in following poultry establishments (Map 3):

- all waterfowl establishments,
- all establishments which, due to their proximity (radius 500 m), pose a risk to commercial poultry establishments (more than 350 animals),
- all establishments where changes have been reported (drop in production, reduced feeding and water abstraction, increased mortality or other clinical signs),
- all establishments which dispatched poultry for slaughter outside the zone.

The following surveillance was conducted:

- in case of mortality of animals: dead animals in the restricted zone are collected daily and delivered to the NVI; for commercial farms the dead poultry is collected as needed or at least twice a week; 5 animals or all, if less animals died, per facility were tested by PCR;
- in establishments where clinical signs or changes are observed (drop in daily egg production, drop in feed and water intake or other clinical signs): 20 animals or all, if less animals per establishment were tested by PCR;
- all waterfowl establishments: 20 animals or all, if less animals per establishment were tested by HI test.

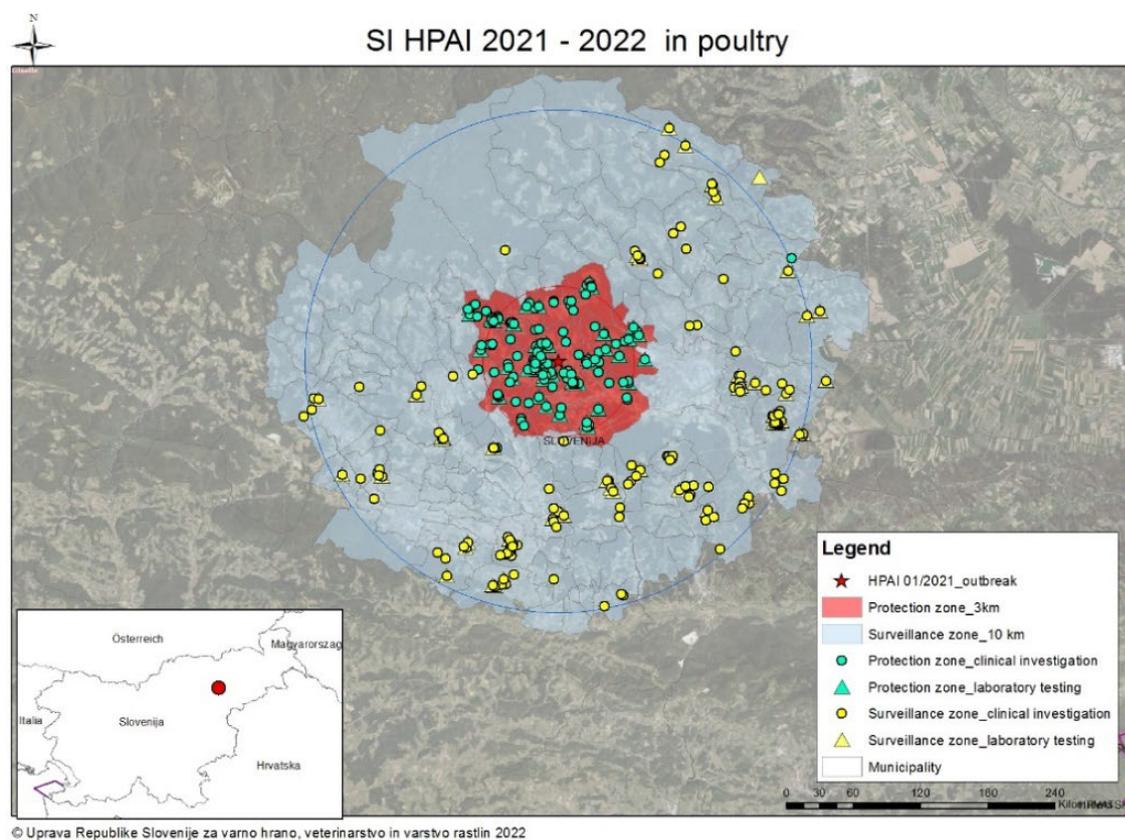
The number of clinical investigations is in Table 3. In Table 4 are data on number of establishments and samples taken for laboratory testing. All results were negative.

Table 3: Clinical investigation

Restriction zones	No. of establishments	No. of animals	No. of empty establishments
Protection zone (3 km)	169	25.311	13
Surveillance zone (10 km)	151	250.760	29

Table 4: Laboratory testing

Restriction zones	No. of establishments tested	No. of establishments/samples tested		
		Swabs (pharyngeal/cloacal)	Blood (establishments/samples)	Organs (establishments/animals)
Protection zone(3 km)	53	148/148	53/222	4/4
Surveillance zone (10 km)	54	58/58	34/147	20/39



Map

3: Location of establishments for clinical investigation and laboratory testing in protection and surveillance zone

### Passive surveillance

Avian Influenza is a compulsorily notifiable disease in Slovenia according to national legislation Veterinary Compliance Criteria Act (Official Gazette RS, no 93/05, 90/12 – ZdZPVHVVR, 23/13 – ZZZiv-C, 40/14 – ZIN-B and 22/18) and Rules on animal diseases (Official Gazette RS, no 81/07 and 24/10). Operator is obliged to report the suspicion or the outbreak of the disease to the veterinary organisation. At the suspicion of Avian Influenza, the veterinary organisation having established the suspicion immediately notifies thereof by telephone and by fax or e-mail on a prescribed form Administration for food safety, veterinary sector and plant protection Headquarters (AFSVSPP HQ) which, in turn, immediately convenes a meeting of the NDCC members. The AFSVSPP HQ provides for a 24/7 phone line for these purposes. In the event of suspicion of Avian Influenza in an establishment, AFSVSPP immediately conduct an investigation to confirm or rule out the presence of the suspected disease. The designated

laboratory immediately communicates the results of diagnostic investigations by telephone (via the 24/7 phone line) and by fax or e-mail to the AFSVSPP HQ.

In case of suspicion or an outbreak of Avian Influenza in poultry in an establishment, AFSVSPP implements measures, which corresponds to the measures of the Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687. Measures include measures on the establishment where the disease was suspected or confirmed, establishment of protection and surveillance zones and measures to be implemented in these zones, etc.

In case of a suspicion or an outbreak of Avian Influenza in wild birds, AFSVSPP may determine the infected zone and implements measures, which corresponds to the measures of the Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687.

AFSVSPP notifies the outbreak of the disease immediately or no later than within 24 hours to the European Commission, the OIE, and the competent veterinary authorities of neighbouring countries.

AFSVSPP prepared informative materials (leaflets, information on website, short announcements on radio) for poultry breeders and general public. The main message was to stress out the importance of biosecurity measures and to notify any change in production, clinical signs, etc. immediately to the veterinarian. Information on avian influenza situation and implemented measures were communicated to the relevant stakeholders.

Due to wild bird's cases, there were also measures implemented for poultry breeders, e.g. keeping all poultry indoors, preventing contacts with wild birds, ban on feeding of wild birds.

## **Active surveillance**

### **a) Poultry**

Since 2004, the surveillance programmes for avian influenza have been carried out each year. The testing on avian influenza is also carried out at high mortalities of poultry as differential diagnosis.

Surveillance programme is prepared in line with Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689. The programme includes early detection system for detection of avian influenza and serological testing of poultry establishments.

In frame of early detection any change in normal production and health parameters (such as mortality rate, feed and water intake and egg production) and any clinical sign or post-mortem lesion suggesting HPAI are subject to investigation.

Serological surveillance is meant for species of poultry that generally do not show significant clinical signs of avian influenza and to detect possible circulation of LPAI viruses. The target populations for serological testing comprise the following categories and species of poultry: fattening turkeys, chicken breeding flocks, laying hens, game poultry (pheasants, partridges, mallards), and duck (smaller establishments for local market).

For each poultry production category, except those of ducks and mallards, the number of poultry establishments to be sampled shall be defined to ensure the identification of at least one infected poultry establishments where the prevalence of infected poultry establishments is at least 5 %, with a 95 % confidence interval. The number of duck and mallard establishments to be sampled shall be defined to ensure the identification of at least one infected poultry establishments where the prevalence of infected poultry establishments is at least 5 %, with a 99 % confidence interval.

The number of birds to be sampled in the poultry establishments shall be defined to ensure 95 % probability of identifying at least one bird that tests sero-positive for avian influenza, if the prevalence of sero-positive birds is ≥ 30 %. Blood samples for serological examination shall be collected from all poultry production categories and poultry species from at least 10 birds (except ducks and mallards) per poultry establishments, and from the different sheds, where more than one shed is present on a establishment. In case of several sheds, samples shall be taken from at least five birds per shed.

The numbers of ducks and mallards to be sampled in the poultry establishments shall be defined to ensure 95 % probability of identifying at least one bird that tests sero-positive for avian influenza where the prevalence of sero-positive birds is  $\geq 30$  %. Twenty blood samples shall be taken for serological testing from each selected poultry establishments.

The samples for serological testing are tested with haemagglutination-inhibition (HI) test for H5 and H7 subtypes.

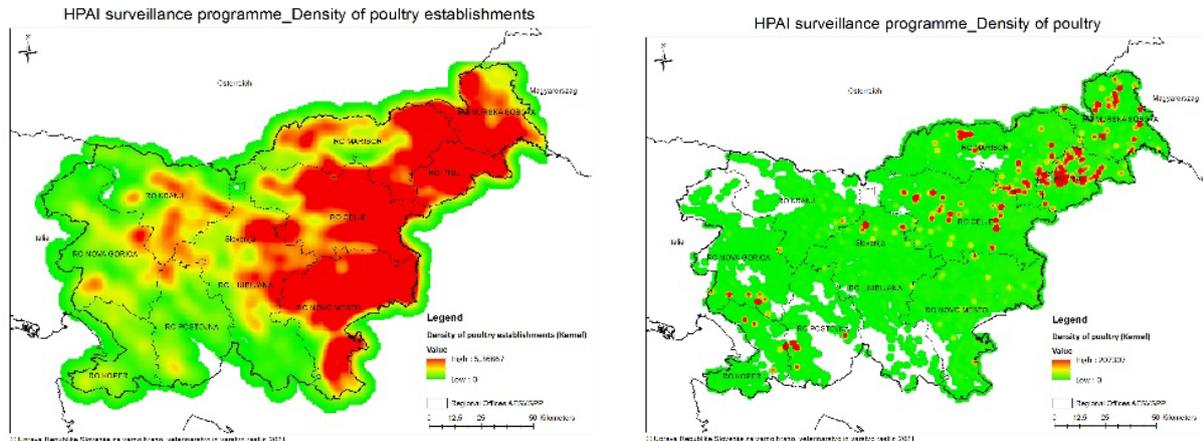
Virological testing is performed on the establishments with positive serological results and for early detection (clinical signs suggesting avian influenza, sudden deaths, increased mortality (> 3 times normal mortality rate of the flock), drop in daily feed and water intake (>5%), drop in daily egg production (>5%) or dead birds with possible contacts with wild birds (e.g. ZOO birds)). Cloacal and oropharyngeal swabs and/or tissue/organs are taken.

The samples are tested by PCR (for matrix gene and H5 and H7 subtypes). In case of positive PCR test, the pathogenicity test to determine if it is LPAIV or HPAIV is performed as well as virus isolation test.

There are approximately 27,600 registered establishments with poultry in Slovenia. Majority of them are backyard flocks, many of them with more than one species of poultry. Regarding commercial poultry establishments (Table 5), the main part is represented by broiler establishments. Smaller part of commercial poultry establishments is represented by laying hens and fattening turkeys. There are also chicken breeder establishments, but there are no grandparent flocks in Slovenia. Map 4 shows the density of poultry establishments and the density of poultry.

Table 5: Poultry production in Slovenia

Poultry production	Number of establishments	Capacity
Broilers	299	5,730,000
Laying hens	350	1,465,000
Fattening turkeys	35	150,000
Chicken breeders	7	478,300



Map 4: Density of poultry establishments and the density of poultry

Testing of samples is carried out by NVI which collaborates with EURL for Avian influenza and prepares protocols for testing in line with the diagnostic protocols recommended by EURL.

Blood samples are tested with haemagglutination-inhibition (HI) test for H5 and H7 subtypes.

In case of positive serological results in HI test, epidemiological investigation and sampling for virological and molecular testing shall be performed. For follow-up investigation molecular and virological tests shall be used:

- PCR,
- virus isolation,
- sequencing.

The same tests (virological, molecular) shall be used for testing samples in frame of early detection.

AFSVSPP has set up the information system called CIS VET EPI, which enables the traceability of samples from the point of sampling to the final assessment of test results. The samples get the unique code at sampling. The person who samples enters the codes and other relevant information (date of collecting, date of sampling, location, type of samples, species of wild birds, etc.) into the system and sends samples to the laboratory. The laboratory returns the results of the testing to the system. Through CIS VET EPI, local and central level can monitor the implementation of the programme.

#### **b) Wild birds**

Samples shall be taken from found dead, injured or sick wild birds, especially if found close to poultry establishments or in poultry high density areas. Special emphasis shall be given to wetland areas where positive wild birds were found in HPAI outbreaks in previous years. If possible, targeted wild bird species shall be sampled (the list of species is available on the website of the EURL: <https://www.izsvenezie.com/documents/reference-laboratories/avian-influenza/useful-resources/wild-bird-target-species-for-passive-surveillance.pdf>). In addition to targeted wild bird species, other wild bird species shall also be included, especially in suspected episodes of mortality. If the epidemiological situation for the HPAI virus so requires, surveillance activities shall be enhanced by awareness raising and active searching and monitoring for dead or sick wild birds, in particular for those belonging to targeted wild bird species. This could be triggered by the detection of the HPAI virus in poultry and/or wild birds in neighbouring Member States and third countries or in countries that are linked via the movement of migratory wild birds, in particular those of targeted wild bird species, to Slovenia. In that case the specific migration patterns and wild bird species shall be taken into account.

The experts from NVI take samples from dead, sick or injured wild birds and send them to the laboratory. The samples are cloacal and tracheal/oropharyngeal swabs and tissues/organs (especially in cases when virus transmission through cloaca or oropharynx is low or if it is not possible to take cloacal and tracheal/oropharyngeal swabs).

Testing of samples are carried out at the NVI, which collaborates with EURL for Avian influenza and prepares protocols for testing in line with the diagnostic protocols recommended by EURL.

Cloacal and tracheal/oropharyngeal swabs and/or tissues samples are tested for the presence of Influenza A virus using initial screening for M-gene PCR. It is foreseen that up to three samples shall be taken from one wild bird. In case of high mortality up to 5 samples could be pooled (same place, same time and same species). The laboratory subsequently tests positive samples by H5 and H7 PCR. In case of H5 and/or H7 positive finding, the cleavage site is analysed as soon as possible to determine whether it is a HPAI or a LPAI. PCR for N subtypes is performed as well. Virus isolation test on embryonated eggs and determination of virus subtype is also performed.

### **5. Measures implemented to maintain free status**

Avian Influenza is a compulsorily notifiable disease in Slovenia according to national legislation (Veterinary Compliance Criteria Act and Rules on animal diseases). Operator is obliged to report the suspicion or the outbreak of the disease to the veterinary organisation. At the suspicion of Avian Influenza, the veterinary organisation having established the suspicion immediately notifies thereof by telephone and by fax or e-mail on a prescribed AFSVSPP HQ which, in turn, immediately convenes a meeting of NDCC members. The AFSVSPP HQ provides for a 24/7 phone line for these purposes. In the event of suspicion of Avian Influenza in an establishment, AFSVSPP immediately conduct an investigation to confirm or rule out the presence of the suspected disease. The designated laboratory immediately communicates the results of diagnostic investigations by telephone (via the 24-hour service line) and by fax or e-mail to the AFSVSPP HQ. For the purpose of monitoring and reporting of certain animal diseases, which are included in different surveillance and control programmes, AFSVSPP has set up the information system called CIS VET EPI. The system enables the traceability of samples from the point of sampling to the final assessment of test results. The samples get the unique code at sampling. The person who samples enters the codes and other relevant information (date of collecting, date of sampling, location, type of samples, species of wild birds, etc.) into the system and sends samples to the laboratory. The laboratory returns the results of the testing to the system. Through CIS VET EPI, local and central level can monitor the implementation of the programme.

According to the national legislation (Veterinary Compliance Criteria Act), poultry establishments have to be registered at AFSVSPP. Legal and natural persons involved in rearing activity are obliged to report any changes to AFSVSPP. Provisions for registration or approval of establishments are in line with the provisions of the Regulation

(EU) 2016/429, Rules on the protection of farm animals (UL RS No 51/10 and 70/10), which transpose Council Directive 2002/4/EC, lays down the conditions for registration of establishments with laying hens.

Surveillance programme is prepared in line with Regulation (EU) 2016/429 and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/689 and includes surveillance (passive and active) in poultry and wild birds.

Control measures for HPAI are laid down in Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 and in national legislation (Veterinary Compliance Criteria Act, Rules on animal diseases, Contingency plan).

Requirements for imports of poultry and poultry products into Slovenia are in line with the provisions of Chapter 10.4.7. to 10.4.22 on infection with High Pathogenicity Avian Influenza Viruses of the *Terrestrial Code*. All imports of poultry, poultry products and hatching eggs are subject to veterinary certification in accordance with the provisions of EU legislation, including Regulation (EU) 2016/429 (Animal Health Law) and Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/688.

## 6. Conclusion

Considering that:

- High pathogenicity avian influenza is a notifiable disease in Slovenia,
- Prior to the outbreak, which was confirmed on 27 December 2021, Slovenia has never confirmed HPAIV in poultry,
- A stamping out policy has been applied to the infected premises, following confirmation of the virus in poultry. The final cleaning and disinfection was performed on 7 January 2022,
- 28 days have elapsed since the date of stamping-out at the confirmed infected premises 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*,
- A continual awareness programme in relation to avian influenza is in place, and
- Commodities are imported in accordance with Articles 10.4.7. to 10.4.22. of the *Terrestrial Code*.

**The OIE Delegate of Slovenia 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 04/02/2022, in compliance with the provisions of Chapter 1.6. and Article 10.4.6. of the *Terrestrial Code* and consistent with the information provided in OIE-WAHIS.**

## ANNEX I

I, the undersigned, Breda HROVATIN, MSc, DVM, Delegate of SLOVENIA to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), take responsibility for the self-declaration of freedom from high pathogenicity avian influenza (HPAI).

Date:

09. 06. 2022

Signature:

