

## Updated Outbreak Assessment #3

# Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) in Hungary and Slovakia

7 May 2025

### Disease report

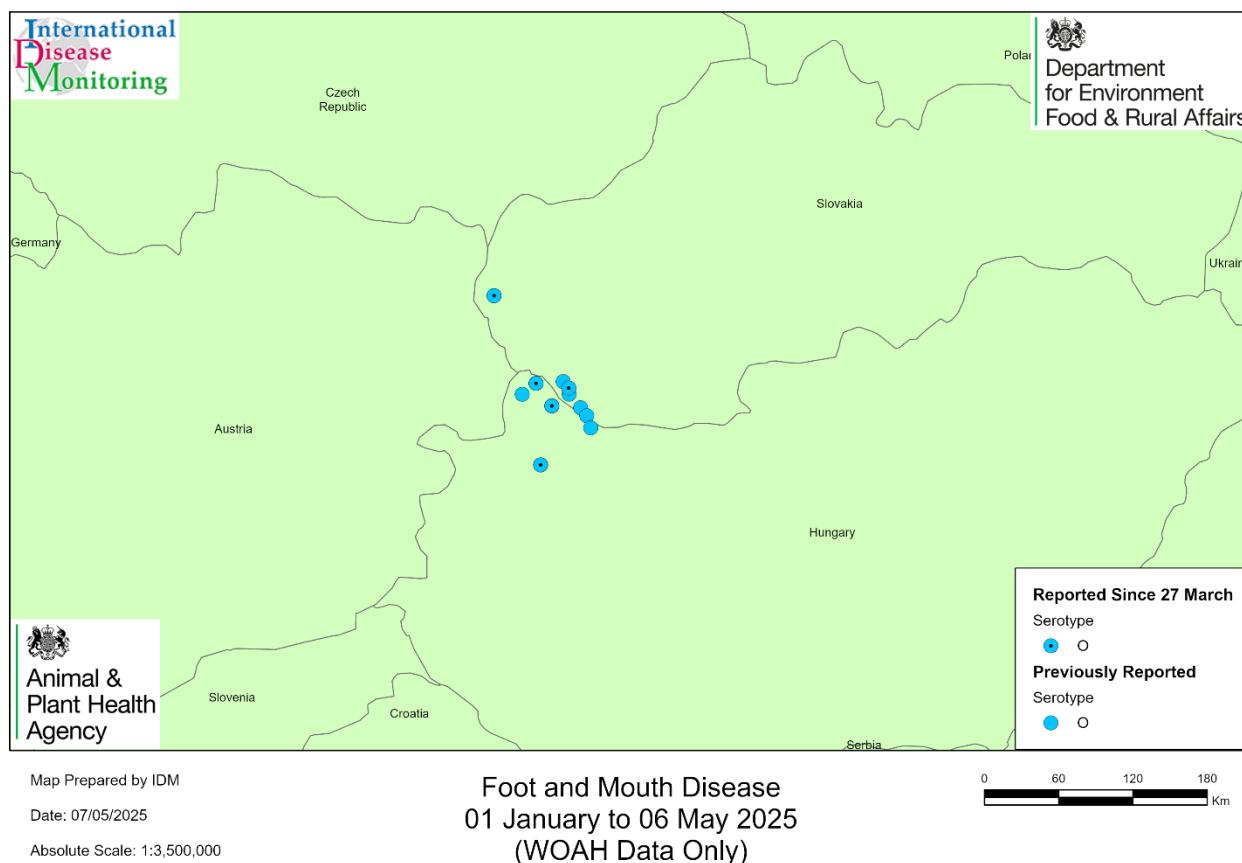
Since our previous outbreak assessment on 27 March, a further 3 outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) have been reported in Hungary (bringing the total to 5 outbreaks) and a further 2 outbreaks have been reported in Slovakia (bringing the total to six outbreaks). All outbreaks have occurred in dairy cattle.

On 30 March 2025, Slovakia reported an outbreak of FMD to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH ([WOAH, 2025](#))) in a herd of 3,521 cattle in Bratislavský, roughly 60km from the previous outbreak and close to the Austrian border. The outbreak was in the further restricted zone of Slovakia with clinical signs (salivation) were observed in one milking cow. The outbreak was epidemiologically linked to the second outbreak reported in Hungary (in Levél). Slovakia reported a further outbreak in 874 heifers in Trnavský (the same district as the first three outbreaks) on 4 April 2025.

On 2 April, Hungary confirmed 2 outbreaks in Győr-Moson-Sopron, both of which were identified as contact premises of the first outbreak (through Animal by products ABP) and had previously tested negative as part of surveillance. On 17 April, Hungary reported a fifth outbreak in Rábapordány which tested positive following the onset of clinical signs (salivation and vesicles observed during milking). This is considered to be a third primary outbreak though was previously tested as a contact holding in March (results negative).

All outbreaks have undergone further testing, confirming serotype O/ME-SA/PanAsia-2, which is 100% identical (at the level of VP1 sequence) to the virus recovered from the first outbreak in Hungary.

The initial source is not currently known, though epidemiological investigations are underway, and human factors have been implicated in further spread (visits, construction and farm workers).



**Figure 1:** Map showing the locations of the outbreaks of FMD in Hungary and Slovakia, close to the Hungarian and Slovakian borders.

## Situation assessment

FMD is a viral infection of cloven-hoofed animals and can cause severe clinical outcomes. It is the most economically impactful infection of livestock and any outbreak in livestock or case in wildlife can result in widescale trade restrictions of live animals, germinal products and products of animal origin.

Following sequencing, [the EU reference laboratory](#) confirmed serotype-O (O/ME-SA/PanAsia2/PUN-16 [aka ANT-10] lineage) in Hungary and Slovakia, with identical sequences. The sequence is closely related to viruses from Pakistan in 2017 and 2018 and a virus collected in Türkiye in 2024, although the exact origin and incursion route remains unknown.

While outbreaks continue to be reported in Hungary and Slovakia, neighbouring and other European countries remain on high alert for the disease.

## Hungary

Hungary has now reported a total of 5 outbreaks of FMD since the first outbreak on 7 March 2025, with 3 of these since our [last assessment](#) on the 27 March. Two outbreaks were reported on 2 April Darnózseli and Dunakiliti (in Győr-Moson-Sopron district), housing 1,012 and 2,498 dairy cattle respectively. Both of these holdings had been identified as a contact holding of the first outbreak in Hungary through ABP (and milk regarding the second outbreak) and were sampled twice in March (PCR and ELISA negative). Clinical signs of salivation and lesions were noted on 1 April at both holdings and FMD was confirmed the following day by PCR. Suppressive vaccination was used on the holdings on 2 April to mitigate against further spread before culling could be carried out. Culling was completed at Darnózseli holding on 10 April (started 8 April) and started at Dunakiliti holding on 10 April (completed 11 April).

Outbreak 5 occurred in a dairy farm in Rábapordány, approximately 25km south of previous reports. The outbreak was confirmed on 17 April following clinical signs of salivation and vesicles noted during milking that morning and immediate sampling. Suppressive vaccination was delivered on the same day (17 April), with culling starting on 18 April and finishing on 19 April. The premises had been identified as a contact holding previously and had been sampled twice in March with negative results. As part of tracing investigations, a contact holding housing 9,888 pigs was found and the animals were preventatively culled. Contacts through personnel were also identified including a mechanic who had worked on a milking machine on the premises and at a contact holding and a farm worker who had susceptible animals at home. Both of these tracings tested negative.

The occurrence of this outbreak further south than previous reports led to an extension of the Further Restricted Zone (FRZ), with a standstill for 72 hours after the outbreak was confirmed. The FRZ was enlarged, and the end date of mitigation measures was extended based on the new outbreak date. Additionally, all pigs for slaughter within the FRZ must go to designated slaughterhouses with blood samples taken 48 hours before and clinical examination 24 hours before moving.

Hungary has been undertaking a large campaign to engage with the press and the public regarding FMD.

As of [27 April](#), there have been 1,712 sampling visits for FMD across the country, and 1,550 wild game tested. Following tracing activities, 98 holdings have been identified as contact premises and have undergone immediate slaughter. Criteria considered for contact holdings were direct contact (live animals), rendering plant trucks, milk collecting trucks, drivers of milk collecting trucks, milk production company, bedding transport, transport of live animals, workers, and insemination. Contact holdings have housed cattle, pigs, goats, sheep and fallow deer.

Strict official measures to prevent further spread of the disease [remain in place](#).

Within restricted areas the introduction of susceptible animals is prohibited, as is the export to other Member States or third countries. As well as the export of fresh meat from the slaughterhouse from animals within zones. Fairs, shows, or events featuring all animal species are prohibited until midnight on 9 May 2025.

Additionally, large dairy farms must take a weekly sample of mixed milk from the farm's refrigerator and send it to the district office for surveillance tests. The tests are carried out at state expense.

For premises within a 10-kilometre radius (PZ or SZ) of outbreaks in Slovakia and Hungary the home slaughter of backyard pig herds and other susceptible species is recommended and must be reported in advance to the competent district office. They may be slaughtered at designated slaughterhouses if home slaughter is not possible, with a negative test result within 48 hours of transport.

FMD susceptible animals within a 10-kilometre radius of the outbreaks must be kept indoors, they must not be allowed out to pasture, into pens or into enclosures until midnight on 9 May.

In the area subject to further restrictions, a grazing ban is currently in force for all susceptible species. The reintroduction of wild species belonging to susceptible species is prohibited.

The collection of germinal products from susceptible animals is prohibited, and only products from these species collected before 20 February 2025 may be exported. Mobile insemination and moving of animals for breeding is also prohibited.

Raw milk produced in the restricted area, both from the dairy and from the milk collector, may only be transported to a processing plant located in Hungary for heat treatment.

Until 9 May 2025, the shearing and hoof trimming of susceptible animals by service providers other than employees employed on the farm itself, as well as other activities outside of daily work processes, is prohibited. There are some welfare exceptions to this.

A surveillance scheme for hunted susceptible species was put in from 24 April, with all animals tested.

The Hungarian authorities have advised that in tourist locations with susceptible animal species (zoos, wildlife parks, game reserves, circuses), special attention must be paid to adhering to general disease control principles and minimizing direct contact between animals and visitors.

Additionally, disinfection points have been installed at the affected Hungarian-Slovak border crossings.

A [full list of restrictions](#) is available.

## Slovakia

Slovakia have reported 2 further outbreaks of FMD in cattle, close to the Hungarian and Austrian borders. The first outbreak was in a dairy herd of roughly 3,500 cattle. Samples were taken following salivation observed in one milking cow, and disease was confirmed on 30 March and suppressive vaccination was carried out. On the morning of 31 March, further samples were taken from animals which were not yet vaccinated all ELISA (serology) results were negative and all PCR results were positive.

Epidemiological investigations have attributed human factors as the [most likely source of infection](#). The premises was visited by the owner of the second outbreak reported in Hungary (in Levél), had construction company workers on the site daily and had multiple farm workers.

Following confirmation, workers stayed on the farm and were only allowed to move off the premises after decontamination. A decontamination facility for vehicles was also placed at the access road to the farm and guarded by the police.

The second outbreak (sixth outbreak in total in Slovakia) was confirmed on 4 April in Jurova. A further farm was identified as a contact holding to this outbreak and the previous outbreak reported in Baka and was culled pre-emptively.

The sampling in protection and surveillance zones was due to be finished the week commencing 28 April. To 29 April a total of 1,191 holdings had been tested and more than 400 wild animals (all negative results). Intensive sampling in the further restricted zone started from 28 April.

Regarding disease control, measures according EU legislation and extraordinary veterinary measures are in place including an export ban of live susceptible animals from the further restricted zone (whole Bratislavský, Trnavský and Nitriansky region). Strict biosecurity measures are also in place including no entry of unauthorized persons into farms, the closure of all facilities displaying susceptible animals to the public, including zoos and circuses, a ban on organizing all mass events, markets, exhibitions and gatherings with susceptible animals, and biosecurity checks on farms in cooperation with the Police or Army (particularly in restricted zones). This is in addition to random checks on the roads and checks at the border crossings.

A recent [EUVET mission](#) did not identify major shortcomings in the overall disease control strategy in the region of Dunajská Streda of Slovakia. There was close cooperation between the local, regional and central veterinary services noted. It was noted that further resources may be needed for more intense surveillance.

The EUVET mission commented that currently, there is no indication that the virus was introduced into the establishment in Medvedov through movements of live animals or semen, and at lesser certainty equipment or vehicles.

Due to the undetermined source of infection, the multiple routes for introduction, and taking into account possible risks of contamination of the environment, the EUVET mission recommended frequent and regular visits to establishments keeping animals of listed species shall be carried out, identified through risk-based surveillance. It was also noted that consideration may be given to a milk-monitoring for FMDV.

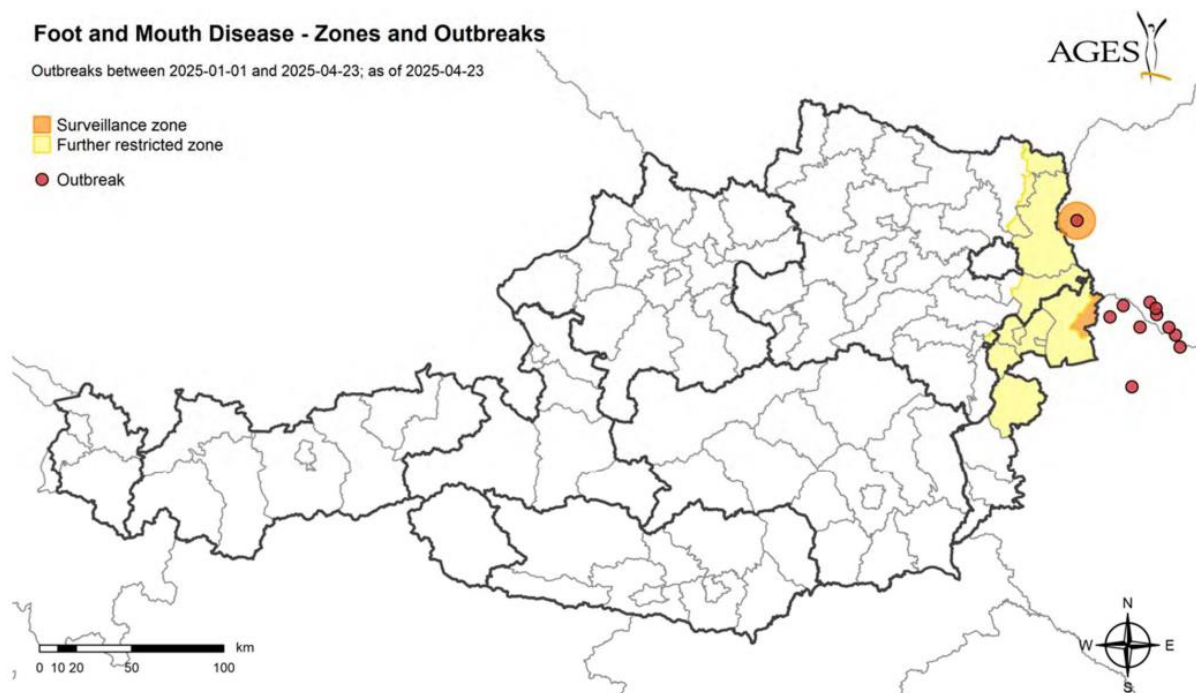
### Additional control measures in Austria and Czechia

Due to outbreaks in the region, in close proximity to the Austria-Hungarian border, Austria have implemented an extended surveillance zone. Farms with susceptible animals are being inspected by authorities, and animals are being sampled on a random basis.

According to [PAFF presentations](#), active surveillance in the surveillance zone has now completed 4 rounds of sampling (8 farms), all of which will be re-examined weekly until May 2025. All results have been negative.

Within the further restricted zones, risk based sampling and clinical inspection has sampled 99.1% and inspected 86.2% of 1,103 premises.

A total of 85 found dead susceptible wild animals have been tested from across Austria, with negative results. Austria continues to test all samples from animals with clinical signs of bluetongue virus infection (sampled between 1 January and 1 April 2025). Awareness campaigns are ongoing, and regular meetings with stakeholders. Austria has closed 23 small border crossings, with disinfection and checks taking place at major border crossing points with good acceptance among the population.



**Figure 2:** Map displaying surveillance zone (orange) and additional restriction zone (yellow) in Austria. Outbreaks in neighbouring Hungary and Slovakia, to the east of Austria are marked with a red circle. [AGES \(Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety\)](#).

Czechia have implemented [several control measures](#) to help prevent FMD entering the country. As part of joint checks, to 5 May 2025, police officers have stopped and checked over 372,000 vehicles, particularly at border crossings with Slovakia and Austria, since 21 March. Vehicles carrying commodities subject to veterinary supervision or intended for their transport are subject to thorough checks by veterinary inspectors.

To 5 May 2025, the Slovakian veterinary service (SVS) recorded almost 1,250 veterinary checks of vehicles transporting (or intended for transport) animals, germinal products, food of animal origin or animal by-products, in cooperation with the Police of Czechia and customs officers.

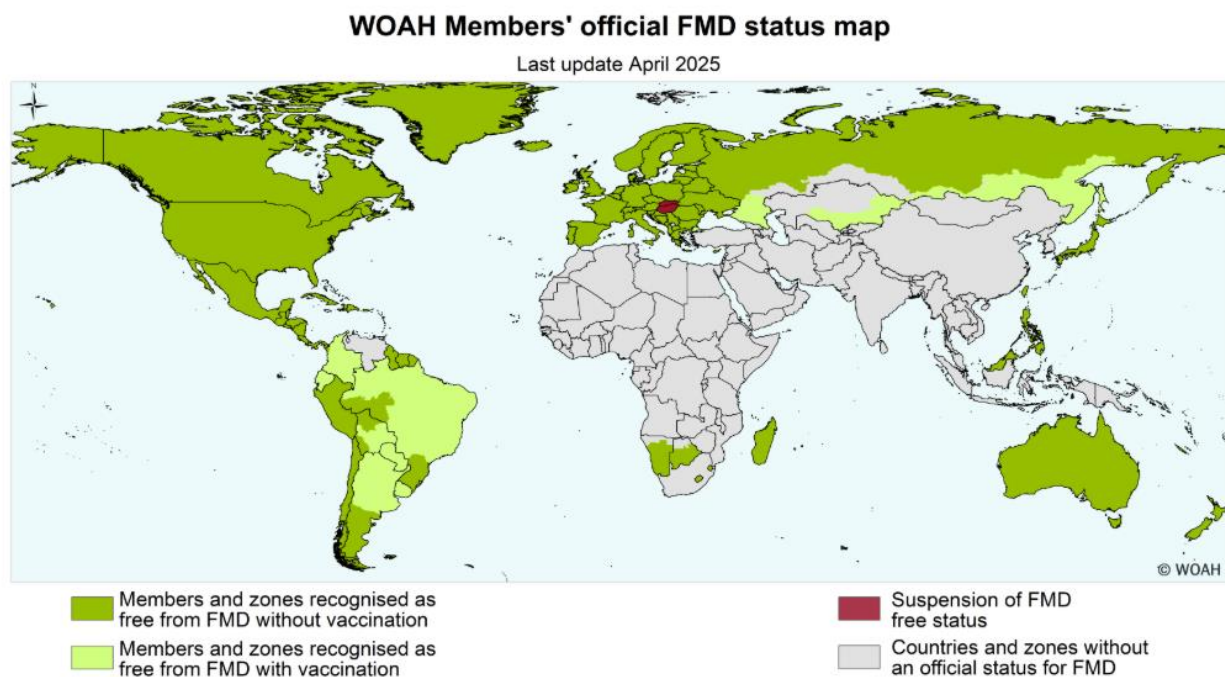
At 8 border crossings between Slovakia and the Czechia, firefighters are also disinfecting vehicles over 3.5 tonnes. All trucks are currently undergoing basic disinfection by driving over disinfection mats, while selected high-risk vehicles intended for the transport of animals or animal products are undergoing extensive disinfection, using disinfection frames.

According to data currently provided by the Fire and Rescue Service, more than 266,000 vehicles have passed through the disinfection mat at the above-mentioned crossings to 5 May since 27 March 2025, of which almost 14,500 cars have undergone complete decontamination.

To 5 May 2025, a total of 520 milk samples have been taken, (519 with negative results, 1 pending).

The SVS will expand monitoring to 2 other regions neighbouring Slovakia (Zlín and Moravian-Silesian) for preventive reasons. As part of the monitoring, milk from more than sixty farms that keep over 100 dairy cows from the two regions will be tested. In total, approximately 120 farms in three regions will be monitored in cooperation with dairies and the State Veterinary Institutes.

As part of the monitoring carried out on susceptible wild game in selected hunting grounds in the districts of Břeclav and Hodonín near the border with Slovakia, samples from 73 game (wild boars, deer, fallow deer) have so far been taken and examined, all with negative results.



**Figure 3:** [WOAH Members official FMD status map](#) showing suspension of FMD free status for Hungary and Slovakia

## Impacts for Great Britain

FMD is a highly contagious viral disease of cattle, sheep, pigs and other cloven-hoofed animals. It causes very significant economic losses, due to production losses in the affected animals and due to the loss of access to foreign markets for animals, meat and milk for affected countries. FMD does not infect humans and does not pose a food safety risk. While death rates in susceptible species are typically low, the disease can make animals ill with fever, decreased appetite, excessive drooling, blisters, decreased production, and other signs.

The virus spreads easily through contact and airborne transmission and can quickly infect entire herds. People can facilitate the spread of the virus through fomites via farming equipment, bedding, shoes, clothing and vehicle tyres that have come into contact with the virus.

There have been no imports of live FMD-susceptible animals (including sheep, goats, cattle and pigs) from Hungary and Slovakia since 7 February (covering 2 incubation periods, as per the standard approach to tracing imports). The import of all live ungulates and FMD-susceptible species from Hungary, Slovakia, and Austria remain temporarily suspended.

Illegal trade in live animals of FMD-susceptible species from any affected areas to Great Britain is less likely due to logistics, but it cannot entirely be ruled out. As the situation is emerging, there is additional uncertainty regarding how far disease has spread before detection.

Consignments of germinal products, products of animal origin (POAO) and animal by-products (ABP) from susceptible species from Hungary, Slovakia, and Austria remain restricted unless processed with a treatment that sufficiently mitigates FMDV (applicable to POAO and ABP only, all germinal products are restricted).

Due to the ongoing foot and mouth FMD situation, there are restrictions in place on commercial imports of live animals, germplasm, fresh meat, meat products, milk and milk products, animal-by-products, and hay and straw from the entire territories of Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and parts of Germany. Additionally, from [12 April 2025](#), it has been illegal for travellers to bring cattle, sheep, goat, and pig meat, as well as dairy products, from EU countries into Great Britain for personal use (personal imports) with very [limited exemptions](#). Live animals, germinal products and untreated wool, hair, skins and hides are not permitted for personal import under separate rules.

Vehicles, farming equipment and people represent a risk of fomite transmission from regions with high levels of infection, possibly on vehicles or people who have visited livestock in the region. Therefore, maintaining biosecurity for returning vehicles, equipment, and workers visiting livestock premises is paramount.

## Conclusion

The continued detection of FMD virus in a third European country in a short timeframe remains of great concern. The events highlight how this virus can make significant and unexpected jumps, often through trade and movements of people, animals and animal products, and there is a need for continued vigilance. It is still unclear how disease translocated to Hungary and Slovakia, and understanding how many premises have been affected or whether virus has infected local wildlife in both Hungary and Slovakia, such as wild boar or deer, is of high priority.

We consider the risk of incursion of FMD to the UK is maintained at **medium** (event occurs often) during this period of uncertainty.

The risk from illegal imports is difficult to quantify but travellers are reminded that when returning from Europe and other third country areas, those who bring meat or dairy products into the UK, can face prosecution and a large fine.

We will continue to monitor the situation and remind livestock keepers of the importance of maintaining strict on-farm biosecurity, compliance with the swill feeding ban, and the reporting of all suspicions of notifiable disease promptly.

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