Updated Outbreak Assessment #7

Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD) in Europe

15 December 2025

Disease report

Since our report on 28 October, France has reported 19 additional outbreaks, with 13 of them occurring in the Pyrénées-Orientales, located along the border with Spain. Five other outbreaks occurred in new departments in France. One outbreak was northeast of the current restricted zone in Jura, and 3 were located in departments located to the west of Pyrénées-Orientales. The other outbreak was in the department north of the Pyrénées-Orientales. Outbreaks continued in Sardinia, Italy, with 3 reported since our last update. The last outbreak to be reported in Sardinia was on 5 November 2025. Our previous outbreak assessment of the situation can be found at: Lumpy skin disease in Europe - GOV.UK. Given the large geographical jumps being made by the disease in France, likely associated with illegal animal movements, the risk of incursion into the UK is maintained at **medium (occurs regularly)**.

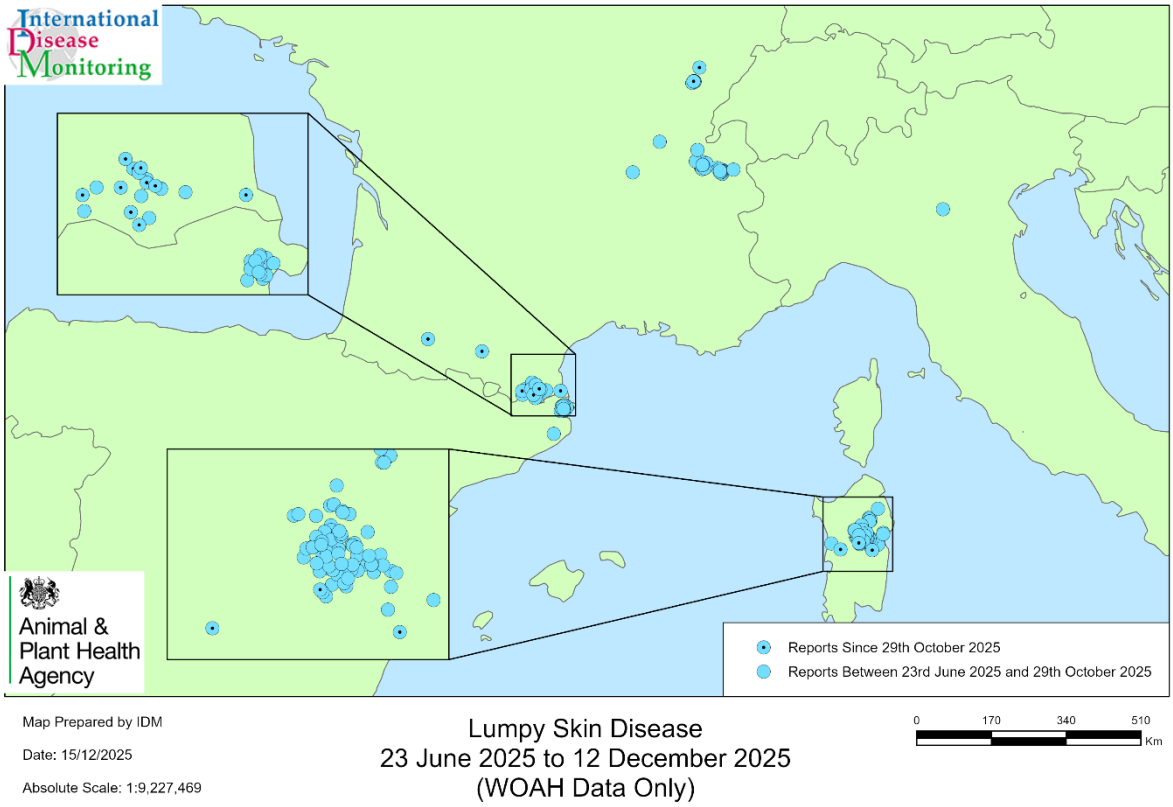

Figure 1: Reports of Lumpy Skin Disease in Europe. The map shows outbreaks of LSD reported to WOAH in Europe from 23 June to 12 December. Outbreaks that have occurred since our last update on 28 October contain a dot in the circle. Three

outbreaks (in Haute-Garonne, Aude, and one in the Pyrénées-Orientales) are not on this map.

Situation assessment

The initial reports in Europe in July have been the first in Europe since 2018 (according to WOAH reports). There has been spread of the disease in North Africa since July 2024, in Algeria and Tunisia. Find our preliminary outbreak assessments for other regions: Lumpy skin disease in North Africa and East Asia - GOV.UK

Phylogenetic analysis on samples from France and Italy has demonstrated that the causative agent for LSD in both of these outbreaks is genetically very closely related, and they are also closely related to the 2018 Nigeria strain (EURL). Sequences from the more recent outbreaks are not publicly available. However, due to a lack of genomic data from North African outbreaks (such as Libya, Algeria and Tunisia), it is difficult to fully understand the virus spread and evolution.

LSD is a pox virus mainly affecting cattle and water buffalo, which is notifiable to the WOAH (Eom, Lee and Yoo, 2023). The virus is mainly transmitted by mechanical transmission by biting insect vectors.

The mortality rate is relatively low (typically 1-5%) (WOAH) but may reach between 20 to 85% in naïve and young animals (Ochwo, VanderWaal, Munsey, et al., 2018). Infection decreases milk production, causes weight loss, infertility, damages the hides (WOAH, 2025) and affects export trade.

There has never been a case of LSD reported within the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). Lumpy skin disease is difficult to control and eradicate in livestock by stamping out alone and often requires vaccination to eradicate the disease from the national herd.

Spain

Spain has not reported an outbreak to WAHIS since 27 October 2025. One outbreak, reported on 14 October, was determined to be accidental laboratory sample contamination leading to the positive detection and it was removed from WAHIS. In total, the country has reported 17 outbreaks. The emergency vaccination campaign achieved over 95% coverage in the restricted zone. A vaccination zone has also been established in bordering counties (November PAFF presentation).

France

Since our last update, France has reported 19 additional outbreaks in to WOAH (WAHIS event 6548). Thirteen of these were reported in the department of Pyrénées-Orientales, with report dates ranging from 30 October to 14 December. One additional outbreak was reported in Jura on 10 November. Finally, 5 outbreaks have been reported in new departments. with one reported in Doubs on 1 December. The department is northeast of Jura and the outbreak was located about 23 km away from the closest outbreak in Jura. The restricted zone was extended to cover the new area. This outbreak was in a vaccinated herd, but it is unclear when vaccination took place and if enough time had passed for immunity to develop before exposure and infection.

The other new outbreaks occurred in departments along the border with Spain or north of the currently affected Pyrénées-Orientales. The first, in Ariège, was reported to WAHIS on 10 December. It was located nearly 100 km away from other outbreaks in the Pyrénées-Orientales and created a new restricted zone in the country. On 10 December, another outbreak was reported even further west, in the department of Hautes-Pyrénées, which further extended the newly created restricted zone. Spain's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food reported that the French officials attributed the new outbreaks to illegal movements (MAPA note 11 December). On 12 December, an outbreak was reported in Haute-Garonne, located between the previous 2 departments. On 14 December, an outbreak was reported in Aude, north of Pyrénées-Orientales. This brings the total number of outbreaks up to 113.

Vaccination continues in affected areas. Vaccination in the eastern Pyrénées has reached 78% coverage. Vaccination in the new restricted zones to the west will begin soon. Vaccination on Corsica has reached 50%. New measures were introduced on 12 December, including prohibiting demonstrations and gatherings and requiring transport used for animal movements outside the country to be cleaned, disinfected and disinsected before departure. These additional measures will be in place until 1 January 2026 (Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty).

According to media reports, French farmers are protesting the culling measures required when a herd tests positive. Protests include road blockades and demonstrations covering areas with slurry and straw (francebleu.fr, franceinfo.fr). While most farmers support the mandatory vaccination measures, a few are resistant as it prevents them from exporting the animals for 60 days after the injection (franceinfo.fr).

Italy

Since our last report on 28 October, Italy has confirmed 3 additional outbreaks of LSD in Sardinia (National Veterinary Epidemiological Bulletin (BENV)), bringing the total number of outbreaks recorded to 80. Italy has not reported a new outbreak in the country since 5 November 2025 (WAHIS event 6568).

According to the November PAFF presentations, Sardinia achieved a vaccination rate of 96.08%. Since outbreak detection has slowed, Italy is preparing to vote on reducing the size of the restricted zones present in Sardinia.

Impact for Great Britain

Incursion of LSD into Great Britain could occur either by importing infected live cattle or mosquitos or biting flies carrying the virus entering the country and infecting animals present in the area.

No live cattle imports have been identified from any of these countries. Similar to Italy and France, Spain has now lost its LSD-free status. In response to the outbreaks in Spain, on 6 October 2025 the UK suspended imports of several bovine commodities, including live animals, germplasm, raw milk and raw milk products, offal, hides and skin (unless treated), and animal by products (unless undergoing specific heat treatment). More information can be found on 6 October 2025: Outbreak of lumpy skin disease in Spain - GOV.UK.

Additionally, from 12 April 2025 (due to the outbreaks of foot and mouth disease in Europe earlier in the year) 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 (outlined on Bringing food into Great Britain: Overview). Live animals, germinal products and untreated wool, hair, skins and hides are not permitted for personal import under separate rules. Those found with these items will need to either surrender them at the border or will have them seized and destroyed.

Biting flies carrying LSD into the UK is another potential route of incursion. Midges from the continent are capable of crossing the Channel and introducing bluetongue virus into the UK. Stable flies, a primary vector for LSD, are capable of being blown distances greater than 13 km (Showler 2015). EFSA estimates LSD can spread about 2 km a day, given the vector-borne nature of the disease (EFSA 2017). With the continued spread in France, there is the possibility of undetected spread in areas closer to GB and increasing the risk of infected vectors entering the country. This could be either with imports of other animals, like pigs or horses, or being carried over on ferries and passenger vehicles. This risk is difficult to estimate.

Given the continued presence and spread of LSD in Europe, along with the non-compliance with movement restrictions and the uncertainty that brings with understanding the full disease situation in France (there could be further undetected spread) the risk of incursion to GB is maintained at **medium (occurs regularly)**. While we are not receiving live cattle from the affected areas, vector incursion is impossible to fully mitigate against, and keepers and veterinarians should familiarise themselves with LSD presentation and report appropriately.

Conclusion

Outbreaks of LSD have continued in previously reported regions of France, alongside reports of outbreaks in new departments located over 100 km from other outbreaks. Non-compliance with movement restrictions has been attributed as the cause of disease spread, so there is concern that there may be as yet undetected spread to other parts of France.

Since the 1 June 2024 there has been no trade in live bovine animals or bovine germplasm collected in Italy, France or Spain. Restrictions are being placed on specific bovine products from these countries in light of the LSD outbreaks mentioned above. The lifting or maintaining of restrictions are under constant review depending on information that is received about the outbreaks.

Biting flies are capable of transmitting the disease, and the continued spread in France increases the likelihood of undetected spread occurring in area, potentially making this risk pathway into Great Britain more likely.

Considering the ongoing outbreaks and circulation of LSD in these areas and uncertainty in the source of incursion and the spread, the current risk level of incursion of LSD is maintained at **medium (occurs regularly)**. This reflects the continued occurrence of outbreaks in these areas, spread to new areas and uncertainty regarding compliance with movement restrictions. We are currently

mitigating against disease incursion by the restricted trade in cattle and bovine germplasm from these countries, as well as restrictions on personal imports.

We will continue to monitor the situation.

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

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at iadm@apha.gov.uk