

Preliminary Outbreak Assessment

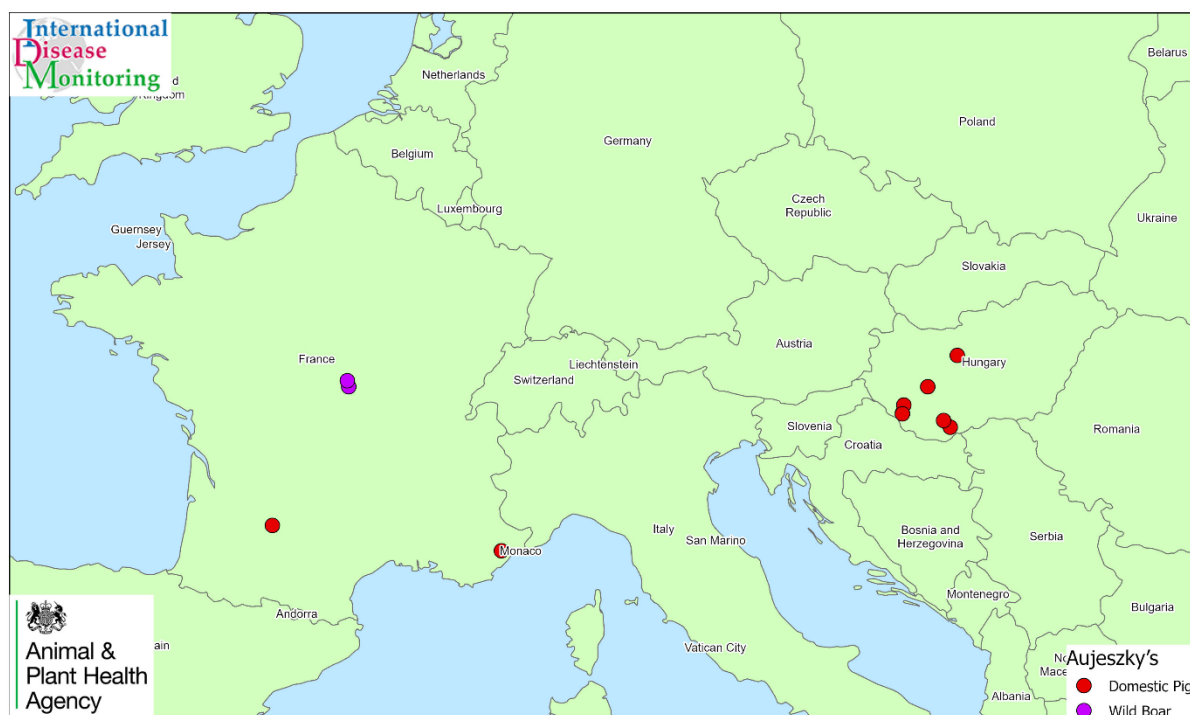
Aujeszky's Disease in Europe

30 January 2026

Disease report

On 6 January 2026, Hungary made an immediate notification to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) of Aujeszky's disease (AD) in domestic pigs, followed by 6 more reports in the same month. These are the first reports of AD in Hungary since 8 November 2021. Throughout 2025, France reported sporadic outbreaks and cases of AD to WOAH, with no reports from any other European country.

In response to the latest AD reports, the Hungarian authorities have implemented several control measures including whole herd culling of affected farms, a 2km surveillance zone around the infected farms and a transport ban (Pig Progress, 2026).



Map Prepared by IDM

Date: 30/01/2026

Absolute Scale: 1:12,000,000

Aujeszky's Disease
01 January 2025 to 30 January 2026
(WOAH Data Only)

Figure 1. Aujeszky's disease reports by WOAH between 1 January 2025 and 30 January 2026.

Situation assessment

Aujeszky's Disease is a notifiable disease of pigs, caused by a herpesvirus. It is characterised by the appearance of nervous signs and death in piglets, respiratory disease and stunting in growing pigs, and abortion in adult pigs. The disease cycles in breeding herds and can spread to young pigs in finishing herds (Wittmann, 1986). Aujeszky's disease virus (ADV) also infects a range of other species, including cattle, dogs and cats (Bo and Li, 2022). However, ADV-infected pigs are the main source of viral spread.

Other species are less important in viral spread, since there is usually 100% mortality, resulting in interrupted spread (Wittmann, 1986). The disease is widely distributed. In addition to Europe, AD is also known to occur in parts of Asia, Central and South America and Africa (CFSPH, 2017). ADV is carried in live animals and is generally spread by direct contact between pigs, although it can also be spread through fomites, semen and aerosols.

Wind-borne infection can occur in areas where there is a high density of pigs and pig farms (Pejsak and Truszczyński 2006). It has been suggested that 7 of the 11 outbreaks of AD that occurred in Yorkshire in the early 1980's could have resulted from airborne spread (Gloster et al. 1984). There is some uncertainty over the limits of airborne spread of ADV (Hu et al., 2023). However, AD was reported to spread 15-40km from northern Germany to Denmark and, in one case, as far as 80km (Christiansen et al, 1990, 1993).

Hungary

Hungary has reported a total of seven outbreaks of AD in Somogy, Baranya and Fejér in western and central regions of the country. The primary infected premises was a breeding farm with over 7,300 pigs in Somogy, close to the border with Croatia. Clinical signs consistent with AD were reported on 31 December 2025 including increased piglet mortality and abortions. Disease was confirmed on 6 January 2026. From epidemiological investigations, four of the infected premises were epidemiologically linked to the first outbreak, including by some premises receiving pigs from the first farm that was affected. The source of introduction is currently unknown. According to the WOAHP guidelines, to maintain disease freedom, the herd prevalence rate in the country must not exceed 1%. This means that Hungary remains listed as free from AD. The International Disease Monitoring and UK Office for SPS Trade Assurance teams are closely monitoring the situation and may amend the third country listings as needed.

France

France has reported sporadic cases of AD during 2025, with two outbreaks in domestic pigs and two cases on wild boar farms. France is listed as free from AD and despite these reports, their freedom status is maintained, as occasional cases do not affect disease-free status.

Based on the main routes of transmission for AD, the most likely routes by which the disease would enter the country would be through importation of live pigs or semen (CFSPH, 2017, Zheng et al., 2022). This could occur if AD were to be introduced into a trading partner with disease free status without being detected at the time of export. Since

1 January 2025, there have been no live pig imports or consignments of porcine germplasm from both France and Hungary.

Germany

From the district of Börde (2025), in August 2025 AD was detected in a wild boar that was shot in the Mose district, northern Germany. Media reports (Wochen Spiegel, 2025) also state that AD has been detected in wild boar throughout Germany and advise hunters with dogs, as well as dog and cat owners, to avoid any contact with wild boar, refrain from feeding raw or uncooked meat from wild or domestic pigs, and keep dogs leashed during walks. Dogs and cats cannot transmit the virus and are considered dead-end hosts for AD however, they provide a potential fomite risk.

Conclusions

In Great Britain, the last recorded outbreak of AD occurred in 1989. Officially Free status from AD was gained in 1991, with no disease present in domestic pigs or wildlife and no use of vaccination (Defra, 2023). The most important entry route into countries free from AD is via the importation of live pigs and semen and free movement of wild boar from areas where the disease is present (Morley, 1993, Martinez-Lopez et al., 2009, Boadella et al., 2012).

Aujeszky's disease occurs sporadically in farmed wild boar and domestic pigs across Europe. Cases in wild boar sometimes spill over into hunting dogs with fatal consequences, as reported in France and the Czech Republic (Henshell et al., 2024).

To prevent an incursion of AD into Great Britain there are strict testing controls pre-export and post-import, dependent on the product type being imported and the exporting country's disease status. No post-import testing from Officially Free Countries is required unless high-risk factors are present, in which case 10% of randomly selected consignments should be sampled. All consignments from Non-Officially Free Countries are tested.

For live porcine animals imported from countries which are not free of AD, as listed in the third country listings for live ungulates (Commission Regulation (EU) No 206/2010), additional guarantees have to be met and certified. These include serological testing and residency periods for AD. For porcine semen imports, various AD guarantees are required, including testing to provide assurance of AD freedom.

The nearest reported case of AD in France is over 470km away from UK borders (**Figure 2**). This is more than 5 times the maximum reported distance for wind-borne dispersal of ADV (80km) (Christiansen et al, 1990, 1993). Given the distance from UK borders, the risk of windborne transmission to the UK is considered no greater than very low. However, this risk may increase if the disease were to spread to the northern coast of Belgium or north-west France, where there is a high density of domestic pigs (>250/km²).

We currently consider there to be a **very low** likelihood of introduction of ADV from any affected country to the UK. The new outbreaks in Hungary along with the sporadic cases detected in wild boar in France, do not affect this risk level. We continue to emphasise the importance of prompt reporting of suspect disease in pigs and the implementation and

maintenance of appropriate biosecurity measures. Guidance on identifying and reporting the disease can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/aujeszkys-disease>.

We shall continue to monitor the situation.

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