

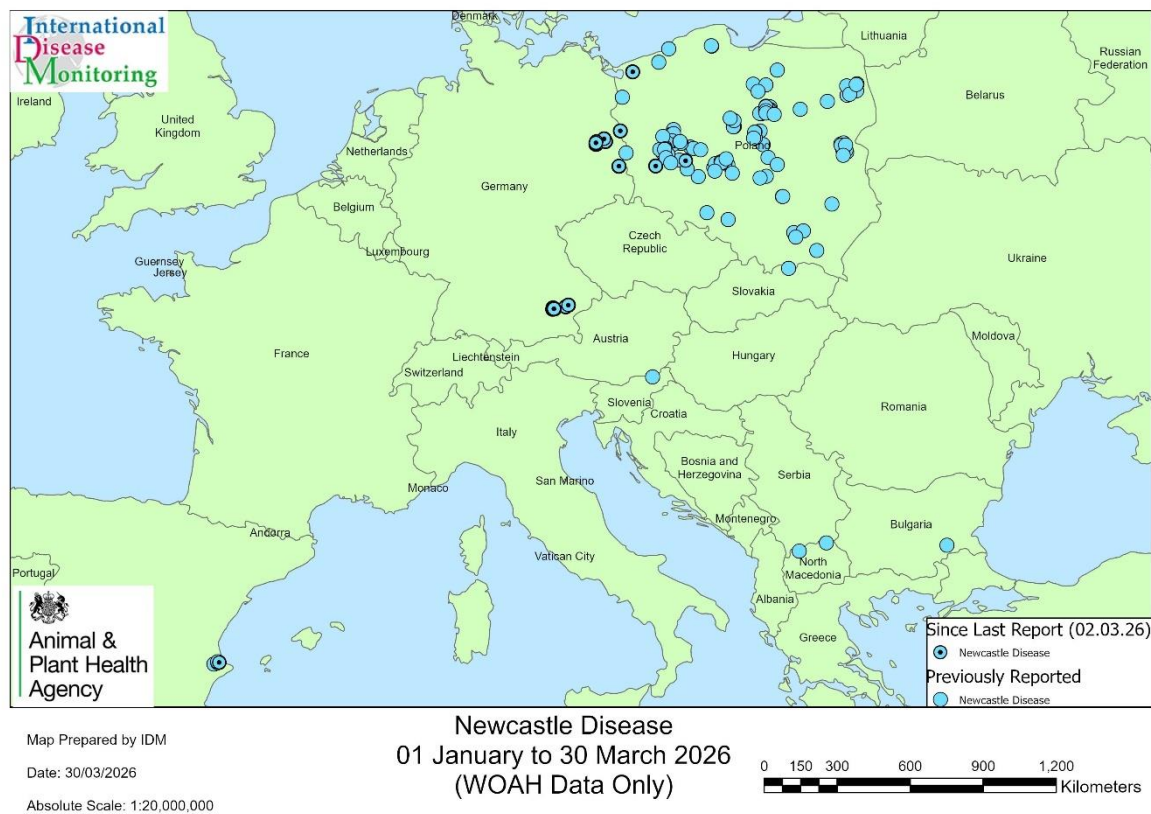
Updated Outbreak Assessment #4

Newcastle disease (ND) in Europe

30 March 2026

Disease report

Since our previous outbreak assessment of 2 March 2026 ([Newcastle Disease in Europe](#)), following the initial outbreaks of ND in Germany in late February (the first instances since 2008) in Brandenburg and Bavaria, ND has continued to circulate within Germany, with a total of 40 outbreaks in poultry reported by the Friedrich-Loeffler Institute, and 39 outbreaks (37 since our last update) reported to the World Organisation of Animal Health ([WOAH](#)). Though there have therefore been many additional outbreaks reported in March, they have remained clustered around the two original outbreaks, and there has not been further spread over large distances (see map 1). According to the Animal Disease Information System (ADIS), there have been a further eight reports in non-poultry, predominantly in Brandenburg, and two instances in Bayern. One additional outbreak in poultry has been reported in Spain ([WOAH](#)) on 9 March, in Valencia, within 10km of previous outbreaks. This is the sixth outbreak in Spain since December 2025 ([WOAH](#)), and the first since January. There is some suggestion that ND could be persisting in the area in wild birds as this has been noted as a possible route of infection by officials, according to media reports. The incidence of outbreaks has declined in Poland. Five new outbreaks in poultry were reported to WOAH in March, down from 17 in February. Thirteen additional cases have been reported in non-poultry, according to data reported to ADIS, fewer than the 22 reported in our previous assessment (Newcastle Disease in Europe), which covered a similar time period. The Chief Inspectorate Veterinary of Poland reports 11 and 3 cases in captive birds and wild birds respectively since 19 February 2026. Further, according to WOAH, two regions of Poland that had previously had outbreaks in poultry no longer have active outbreaks. Outbreaks other than those outbreaks and cases described above have also been reported in the same time period in Czechia (6 in non-poultry) since our previous outbreak assessment according to data from ADIS, but no further outbreaks or cases have been reported in other European countries.



Map 1: Map of Europe showing outbreaks of Newcastle disease in domestic commercial poultry reported to WOA from 3 March 2026 to 30 March 2026. Those events since our previous outbreak assessment on 3 March 2026 have dotted centres.

Situation assessment

Newcastle disease (ND) is the result of infection in poultry with avian paramyxovirus serotype 1 (APMV-1).

Germany

There has been a sharp increase in instances of ND ~~has been~~ around the two foci described in our previous assessment (2 March 2026 Newcastle Disease in Europe) since outbreaks initially occurred on 19 February 2026. As described in our previous assessment (Newcastle Disease in Europe), ND was first reported in a turkey fattening flock in Neisse münde, Oder-Spree, Brandenburg, Germany. The turkeys were 6-weeks old at the time of the outbreak. Several control measures were rapidly initiated, including stamping out, a 3km Protection Zone (PZ) and a 10km Surveillance Zone (SZ), including movement restrictions, and enhanced biosecurity measures (WOAH).

On 25 February 2026 a second outbreak of ND in Germany was confirmed at a poultry farm in Bayern.

Since our previous assessment there has been a large increase in outbreaks of ND in Germany. According to WOA, a further 11 outbreaks have occurred in Bayern, approximately 85km from the border with the Czech Republic, and a further 26 outbreaks have occurred in Brandenburg, close to the border with Poland. Some of the outbreaks reported represent new barns or warehouses, which are considered independent epidemiological units, becoming infected within a previously affected farm. Outbreaks have occurred in laying hens, broilers and turkeys. Though this large and rapid increase in outbreaks is concerning, outbreaks have only occurred in two clusters close to the initial two outbreaks, and there has not been further spread over large distances (see map 1) in commercial poultry.

The Friedrich-Loeffler Institute (FLI) have described that, following the initial ND outbreak on 19 February in Brandenburg, cases predominantly occurred around Bayern. However, there has only been one case in Bayern since 7 March, and since then outbreaks have been concentrated in Brandenburg. The genotype of the outbreaks is VII.1.1, which is closely related to the viral strain circulating in Poland, according to the FLI.

Control measures have continued to be implemented, including the establishment of PZs and SZs around affected farms, and the culling of animals, as well as movement controls, and the control of wildlife reservoirs, according to WOA. According to media reports, since the initial outbreak, more than 2,000,000 animals have been culled in Brandenburg, including more than 855,000 hens culled following a single outbreak in Bestensee at the beginning of March. According to the state of Brandenburg, the Animal by-products (ABPs) of the culled animals are treated and recycled for use as biodiesel or in industry. However, there are no appropriate plants in Brandenburg so the carcasses must be transported to neighbouring provinces.

Vaccination against ND is currently compulsory for chickens and turkeys in Germany, including for hobby farms, and has been in place since the 1990s. However, according to the FLI, even when vaccination of chicks begins at one week post-hatch, full, active immunity is not achieved until six weeks post-hatch. Moreover, maternally derived antibodies begin to decline rapidly at approximately one-week post-hatch, leading to a so-called “physiological gap”, during which there is an unavoidable period of lower immunity.

Poland

The rate of outbreaks in Poland has declined considerably since our previous assessment on 2 March 2026 ([Newcastle Disease in Europe](#)). Five new outbreaks in commercial poultry farms in central and western Poland have been reported to WOA since 2 March (see map 1). In a comparable time-period reported on in our previous

assessment (27 January 2026 – 2 March 2026) there were 17 outbreaks reported. According to data from ADIS, 13 outbreaks in non-poultry have occurred in Poland, compared to 22 described in our previous assessment. Additionally, two administrative regions of Poland (Opolskie and Podlaskie) that had previously been affected are now free of outbreaks in commercial poultry, with the final remaining outbreaks having been resolved, according to WOA. H.

As discussed in our previous assessment, Poland is taking a number of actions to address the situation. According to WOA. H., responses to individual outbreaks in Poland include disinfection, movement control, official destruction of animal products, official disposal of carcasses, by-products and waste, stamping out, zoning, surveillance within the restricted zone, and tracing. Further actions have also included an awareness campaign, providing guidance to keepers, strengthening of laboratory capacity, and trialling vaccination of backyard flocks. Vaccination has been mandatory for chicken (broiler, layers and breeders) and turkey flocks since April 2025. Additionally, the entire area of Lublin Voivodeship was put under closure orders, with a ban on gatherings and strict transport restrictions, on 18 February 2026. In the update in February 2026 ([PAFF 2026](#)) it was also announced that Poland would be strengthening surveillance of poultry hatcheries, including vaccination practices therein, following the identification of irregularities and improper vaccination procedure in hatcheries. This includes the use of two different vaccines that can interfere with each others' efficacy.

Spain

There has been one further outbreak in Spain in a farm of 27,000 laying hens, with 80 cases, which began on 1 March 2026, and was reported by WOA. H. on 9 March, the first outbreak since January. The outbreak occurred in the region of Valencia, in the same region as the previous cluster of outbreaks. According to media reports, the outbreak was within a 10km SZ that was established after the previous outbreaks, but the measures were lifted in February after the situation was considered to be resolved. The outbreak occurred in a single house out of 5 on the farm, and each house is considered to be an independent epidemiological unit. Movement restrictions were imposed within a 10km zone, incorporating 21 further farms, and sanitary emptying of the farm was carried out, as well as imposition of biosecurity measures aimed at avoiding contact with wild birds.

Concerningly, according to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food in Spain, the birds were 23 weeks-old and the farm had been vaccinated against ND, with four doses of vaccine administered to the birds. It was confirmed by the National Reference Laboratory of Spain that the strain is a velogenic strain, one of the most virulent variants of the virus. Currently, the origin of the outbreak is unknown. It is unclear why an outbreak occurred in one barn despite full vaccination, and the outbreak is still under epidemiological investigation.

The Deputy Director of Agriculture and Livestock of the Generalitat Valenciana, Inma Ibor, has indicated that the virus can be introduced through wild birds. Passive surveillance is being carried out for ND in wild birds in Spain.

Outbreaks in non-commercial farms (captive birds) are not reported on WOA and are not shown in Map 1. In our previous assessments on 26 January 2026 and 2 March 2026, we noted outbreaks across Europe other than those in commercial farms, including many outbreaks in Poland, and small numbers in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Latvia. Since our previous assessment, data from ADIS, other than the aforementioned data in Germany and Poland, shows a further 6 outbreaks in non-poultry in the Czech Republic, including two outbreaks in captive birds on 17 March and 18 March. In the update to PAFF in February 2026 ([PAFF 2026](#)) it was reported that two of the outbreaks in wild birds in the Czech Republic have been in the Eurasian collared-dove.

Implications for Great Britain

Great Britain applies disease safeguard measures and lists countries and regions approved for export of live poultry and poultry meat according to regionalisation. Therefore, no such products can be consigned to Great Britain from a disease restriction zone. Nevertheless, there are uncertainties around why there have been a large number of outbreaks in Europe, particularly now considering the rapid increase in outbreaks in Germany. Serological monitoring in Poland has found protective antibody titres to be below desired levels in broilers and turkey fattening flocks ([PAFF 2026](#)). The reason behind the rapid spread of ND Germany remains unknown, but epidemiological investigations are underway and strict controls are in place. It will be important to monitor the situation in Germany. To date, though there has been an increase of ND in Germany, there have been no outbreaks a large distance away from the initial outbreak clusters. It will be important to monitor the situation in Germany to observe if ND remains localised to these existing clusters, or if it spreads further westwards in Germany, closer to the UK.

As of 25 April 2025, it has been mandatory to vaccinate flocks on commercial farms against ND in the entire territory of Poland. Vaccination of chickens and turkeys on both commercial and hobby premises is also mandatory in Germany. As discussed in a previous assessment we produced on the 6 June 2025 ([Newcastle disease \(ND\) in Poland and Europe](#)), it is well documented that outbreaks of ND can still occur in the face of vaccination. There is no evidence to suggest that vaccines are ineffective, and it is possible that this is instead due to inaccurate assessment of immunoprotection levels, improper administration of vaccines such as using two different vaccines ([PAFF, 2026](#)), or the aforementioned incomplete or inadequate vaccination of young flocks.

In our assessment on 2 March 2026 (Newcastle Disease in Europe), we reported that there had been no further outbreaks in commercial premises in Spain since January. However, the occurrence of a further outbreak in a commercial premises suggests that ND could be continuing to circulate within the wild bird population in Spain, at least in the region of Valencia, where the other outbreaks have occurred.

When considering movements of wild birds from the area, while there are no large-scale movements of wild pigeons anticipated from the area, small-scale movements of turtle doves will occur in April and May. Also, millions of smaller passerines including warblers, wheatears and cuckoos in addition to hirundines (swallows and martins) and swifts will be flying north through Spain and into France and Great Britain from March through into May.

Conclusion

Newcastle disease virus is continuing to spread in commercial and non-commercial poultry. While there has been a reduction in cases in Poland, there has been a significant increase in reports of ND in Germany. Moreover, the disease continues to spread in the Czech Republic, a limited number of outbreaks in Poland, and a further outbreak in Spain indicates continued spread within wild bird population. With several countries now implementing vaccine campaigns, this may put strain on vaccine supply logistics. The disease landscape is uncertain, with sub-optimal vaccination protocols implicated in the persistence of the outbreaks.

Following the increased infection pressure in parts Europe and upcoming movement of passerines the risk of introduction of ND into poultry in Great Britain remains at **Medium**. Regionalisation is in place to prevent introduction of ND via trade, but disease may be introduced via illegal trade, wild birds or fomites, or where vaccination protocols are sub-optimal, and these events highlight the background risk to commercial poultry from feral pigeons as potential carriers of ND. Pigeon paramyxovirus type 1 (PPMV-1) is endemic in pigeons in Great Britain and Europe.

Importantly, the association of wild birds with APMV-1 infection remains poorly understood and so, with the exception of Columbiformes that maintain an endemic cycle of PPMV-1, risk factors from different wild birds and migratory pathways are hard to define. Current outbreaks in poultry across Europe are not caused by PPMV-1 strains and so a significant knowledge gap remains in the role and risk of different avian species and APMV-1 infection.

It is recommended that poultry keepers consider vaccinating their flocks and practice good biosecurity. Vaccines for ND with marketing authorisations are commercially available in the UK and vaccination is common in most, if not all, commercial layers, layer breeders and broiler breeders. It is also common in most turkey breeders and some commercial turkeys and broilers ([Newcastle disease in Europe](#)).

We will continue to monitor the situation closely.

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