



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Stakeholder Webinar: Avian Influenza

Nigel Gibbens

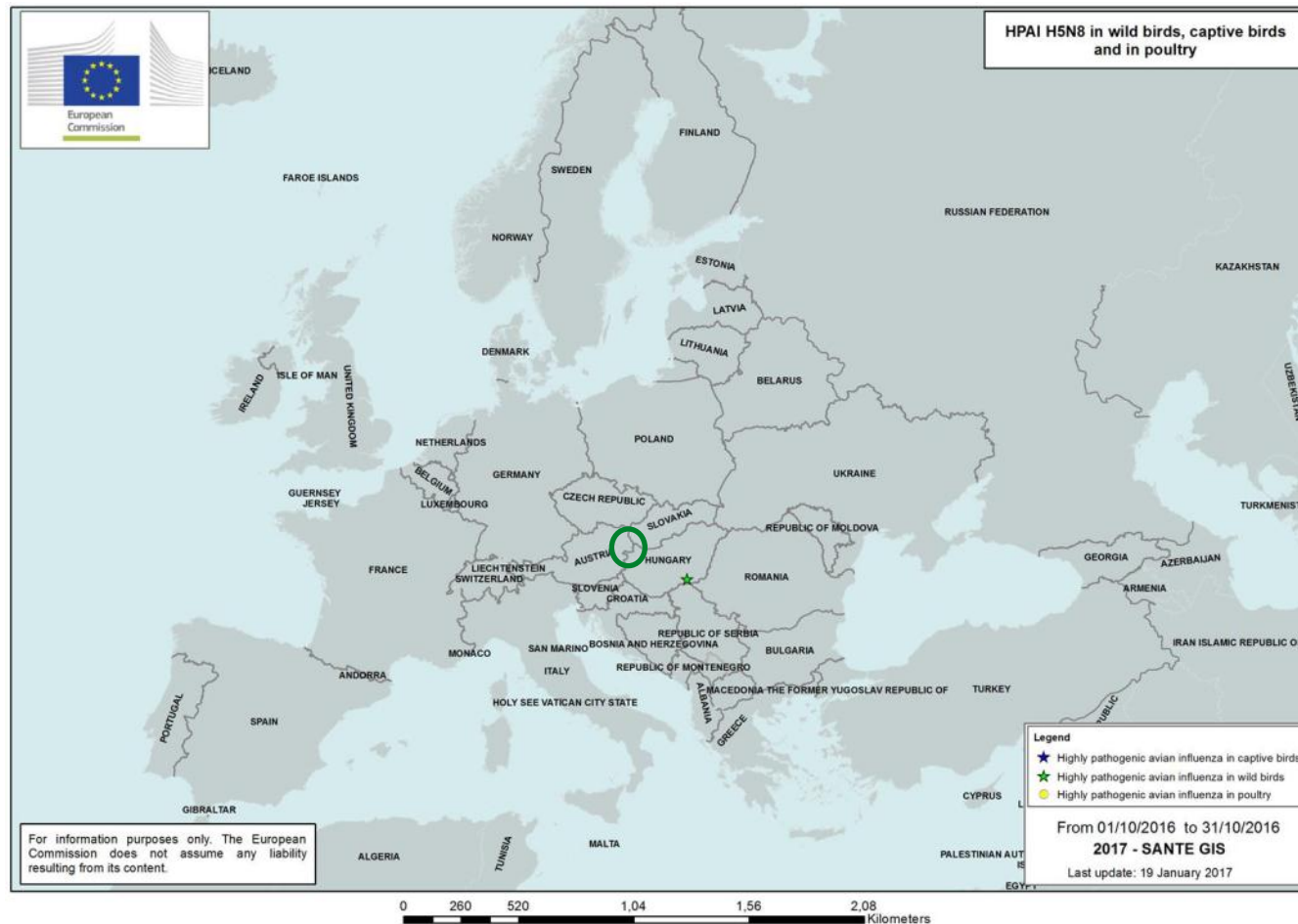
UK Chief Veterinary Officer

Outline

- Avian Influenza 2016-7 across EU and beyond
- Measures to date
- Cases in the UK
- Species infected
- Wild bird and poultry risk areas
- Expected Measures
- Key Points

Avian Influenza: Progression across EU

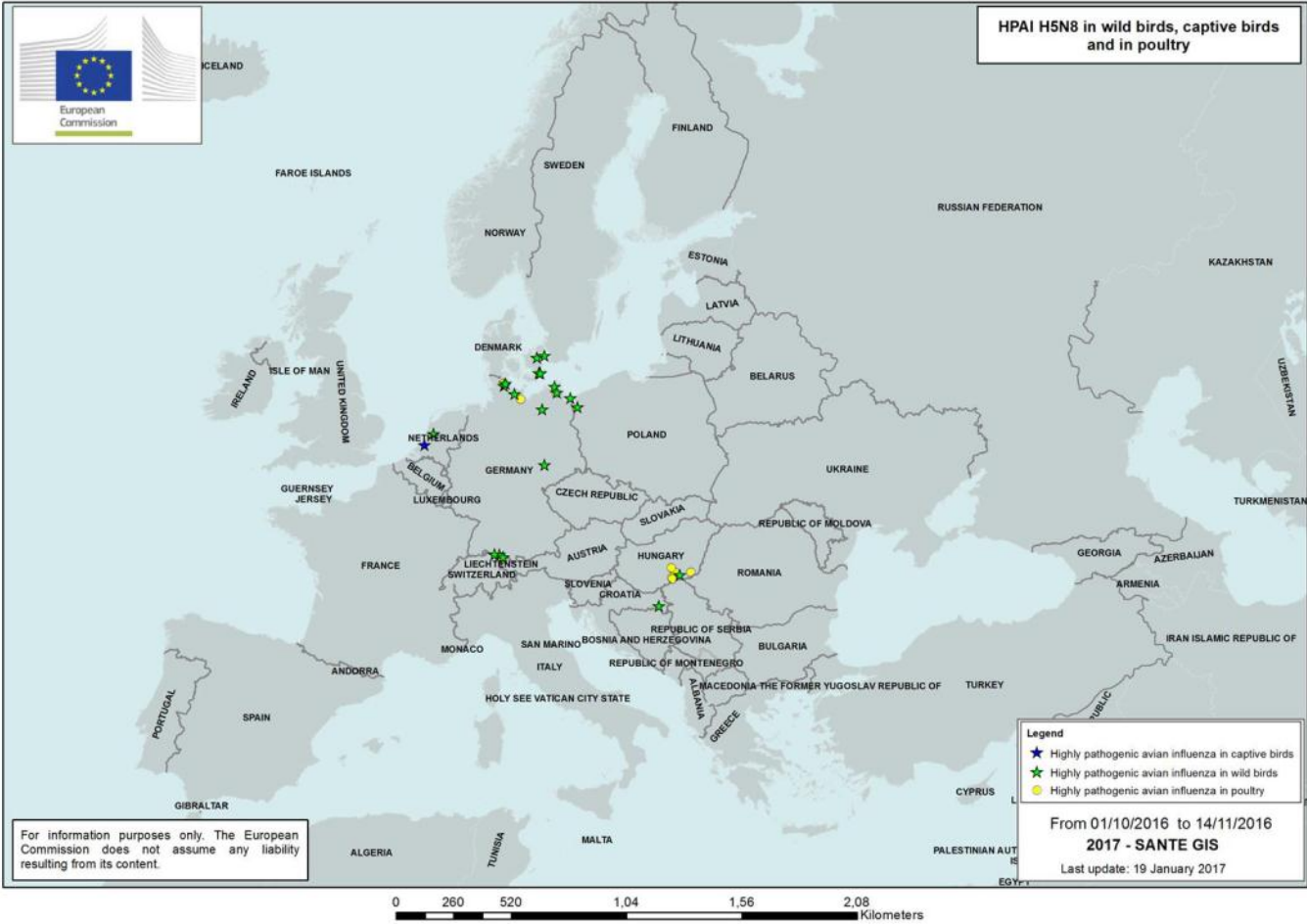
October 2016



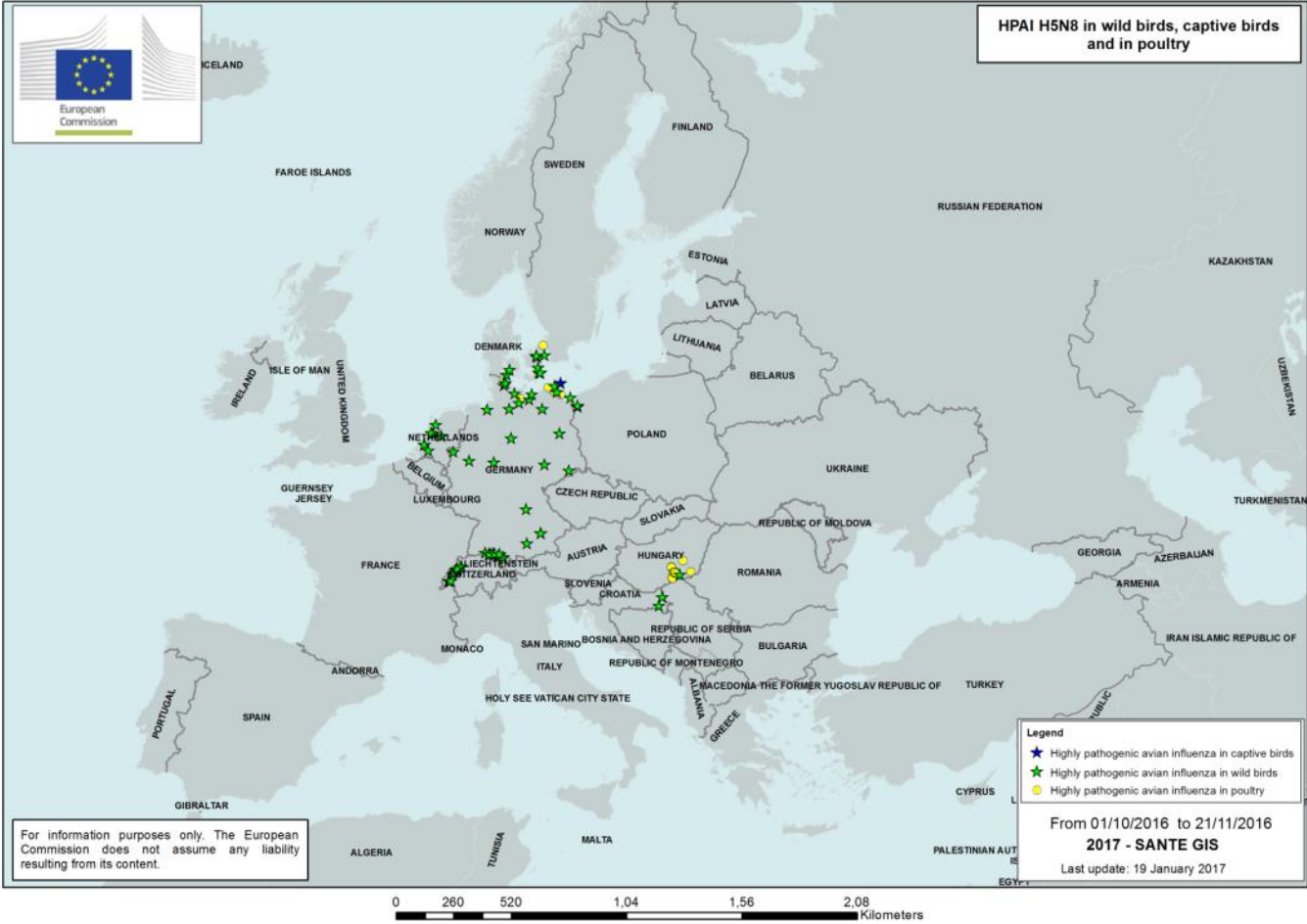
1 Oct – 7 Nov 2016



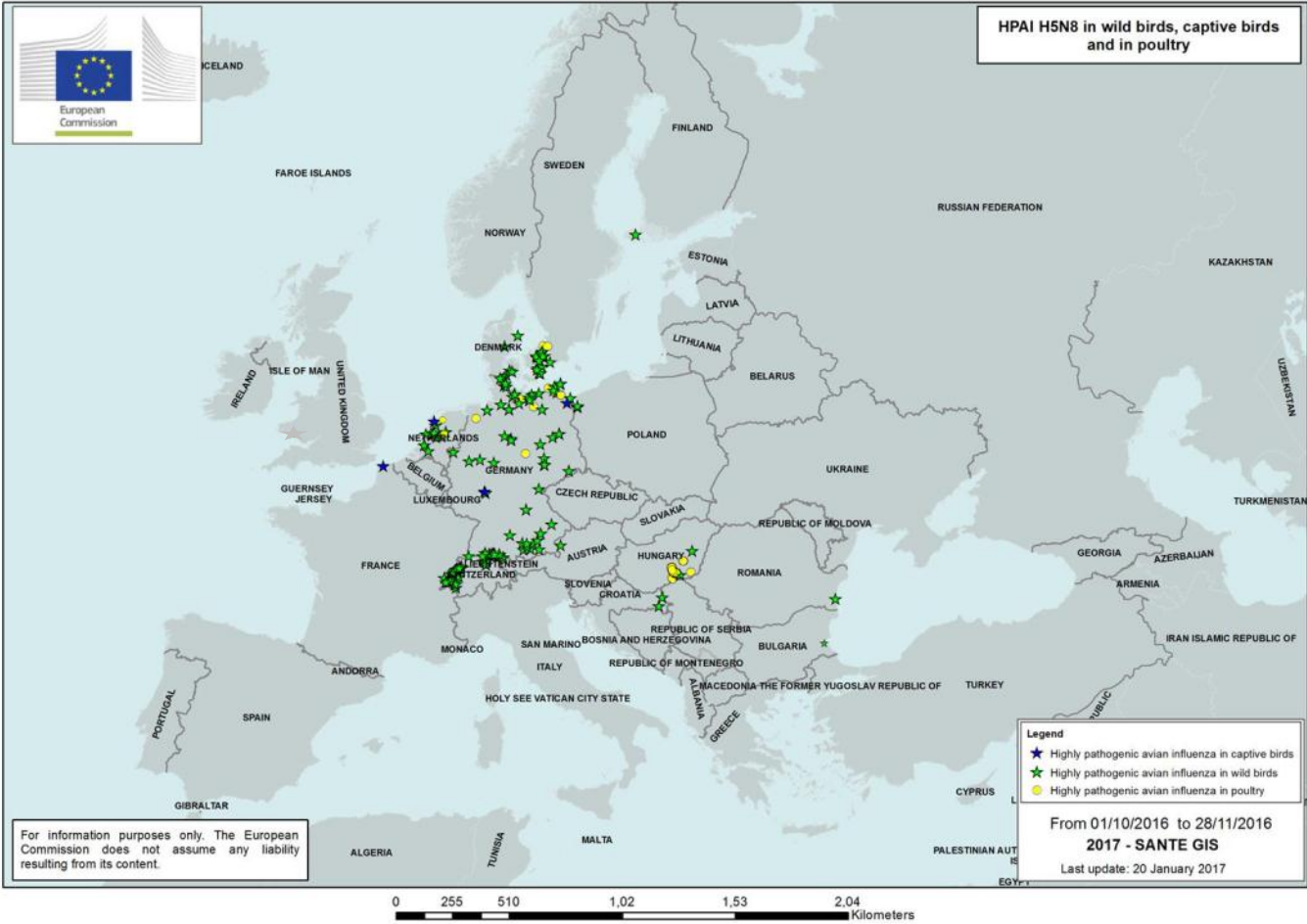
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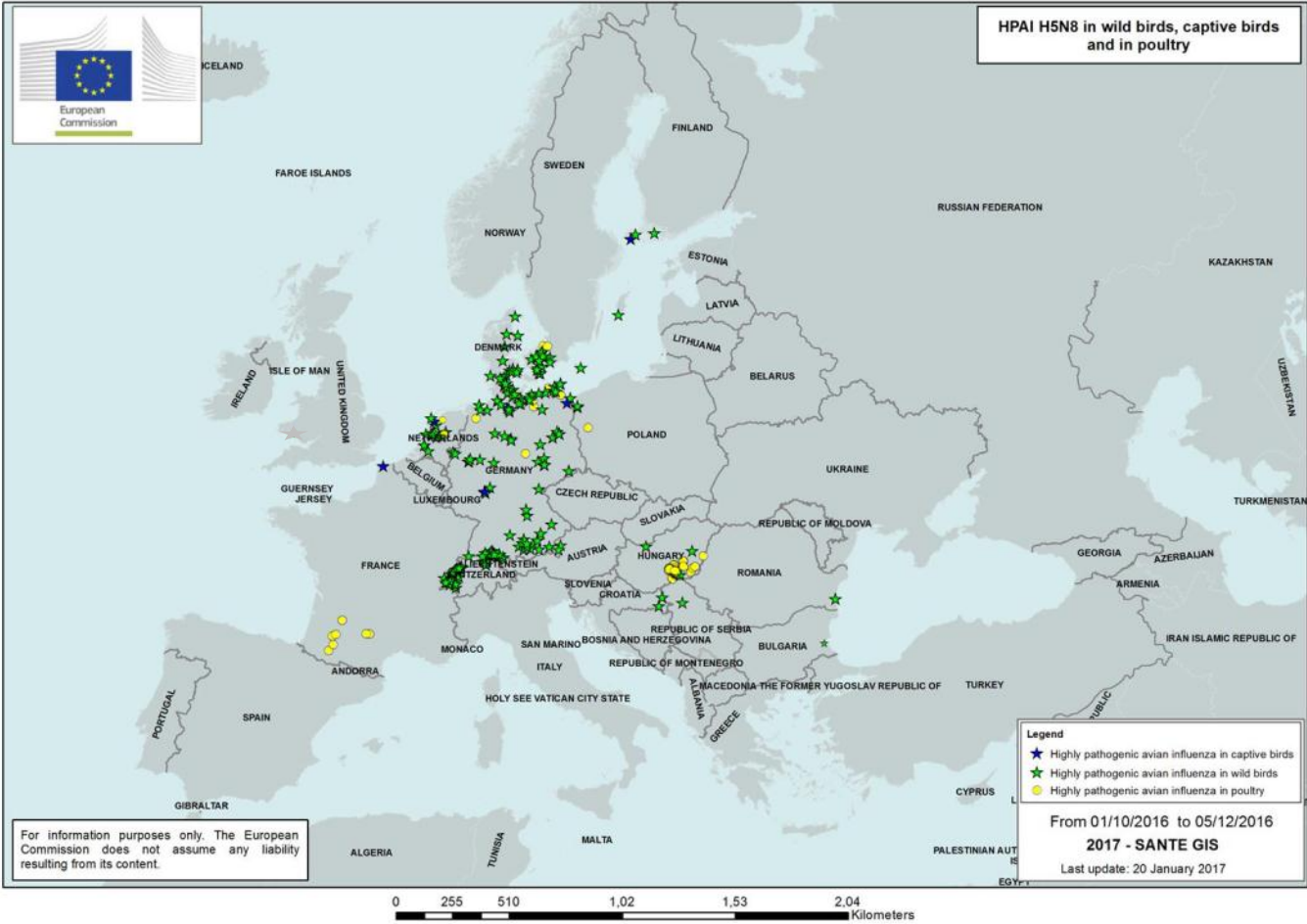
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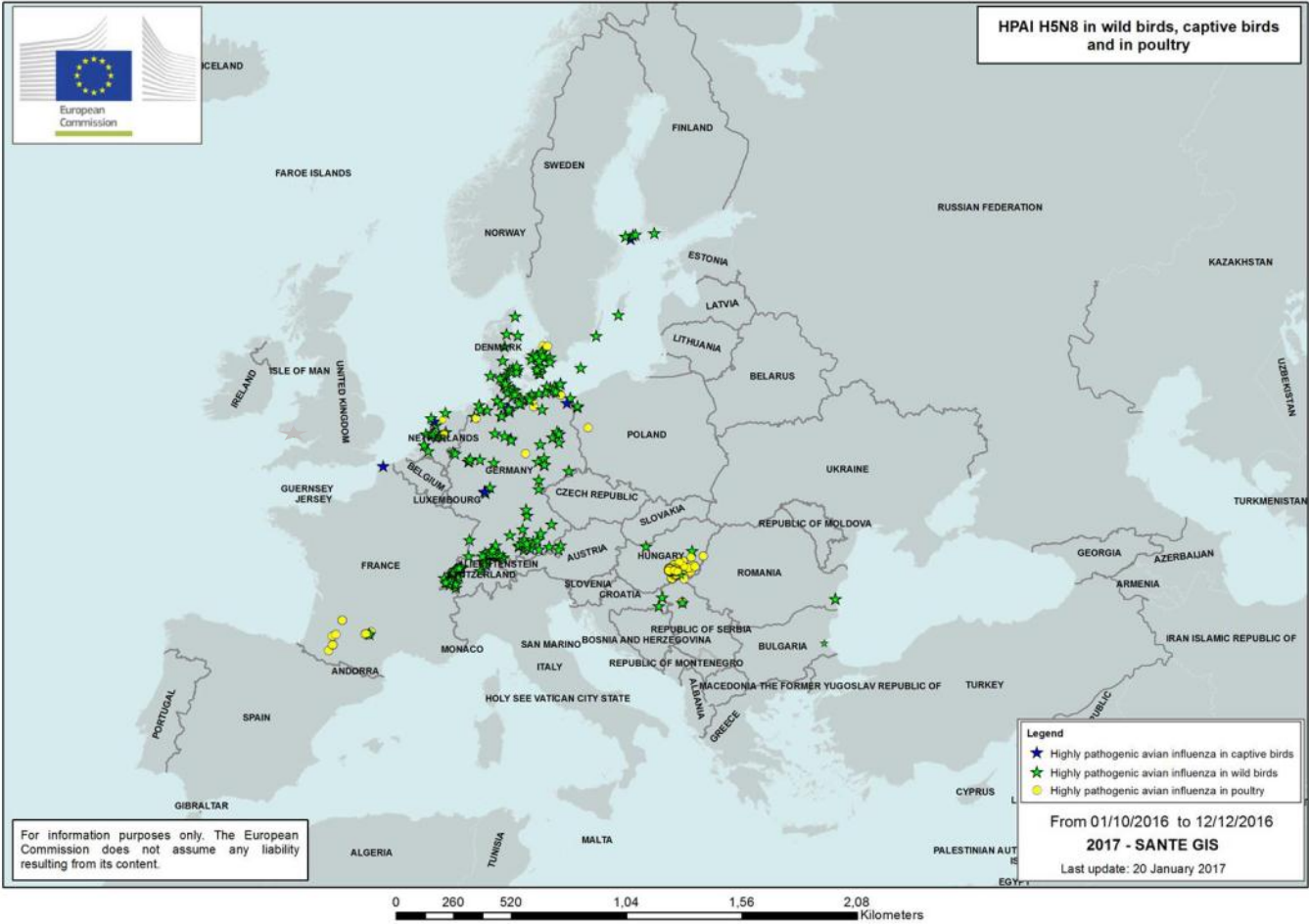
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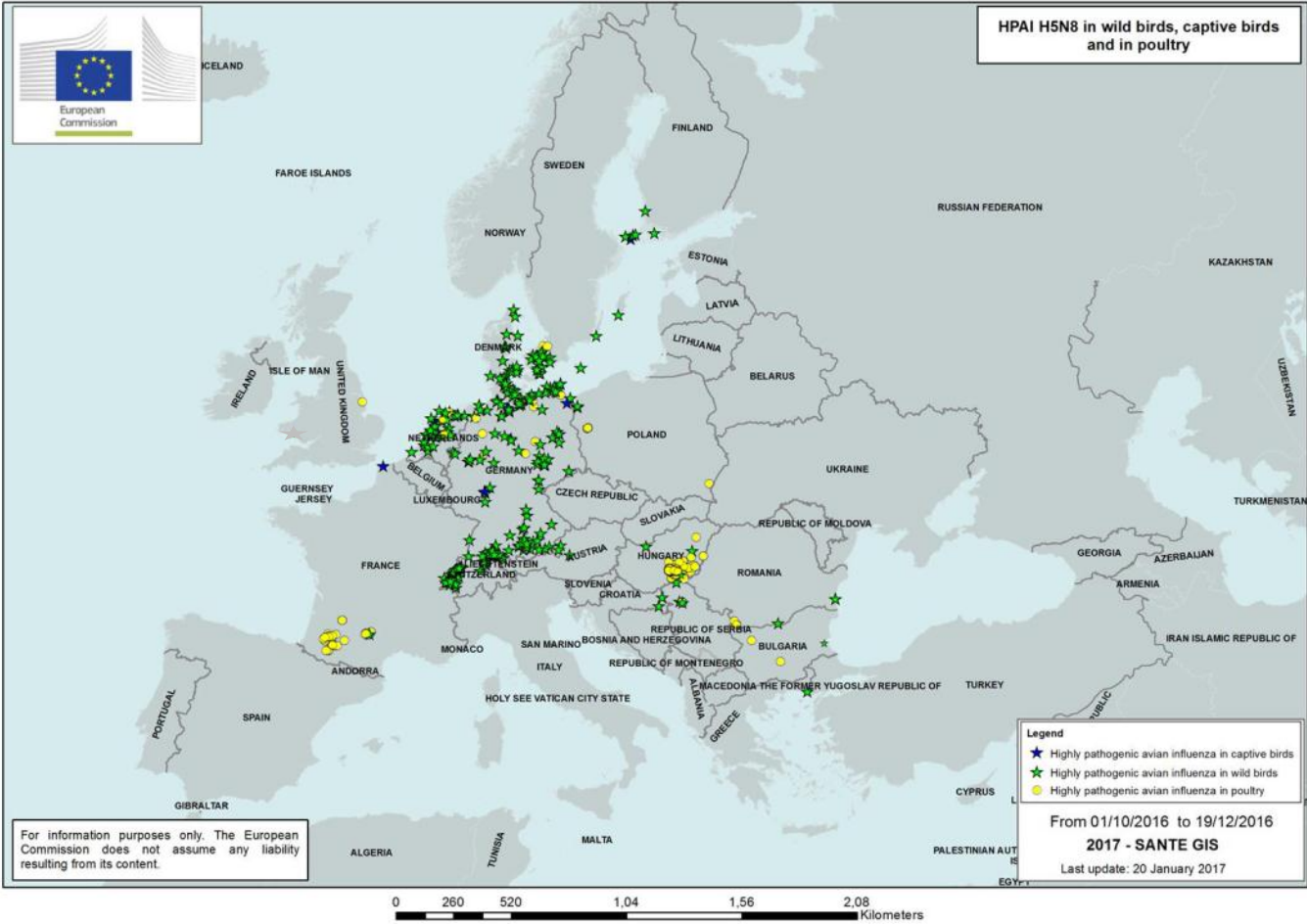
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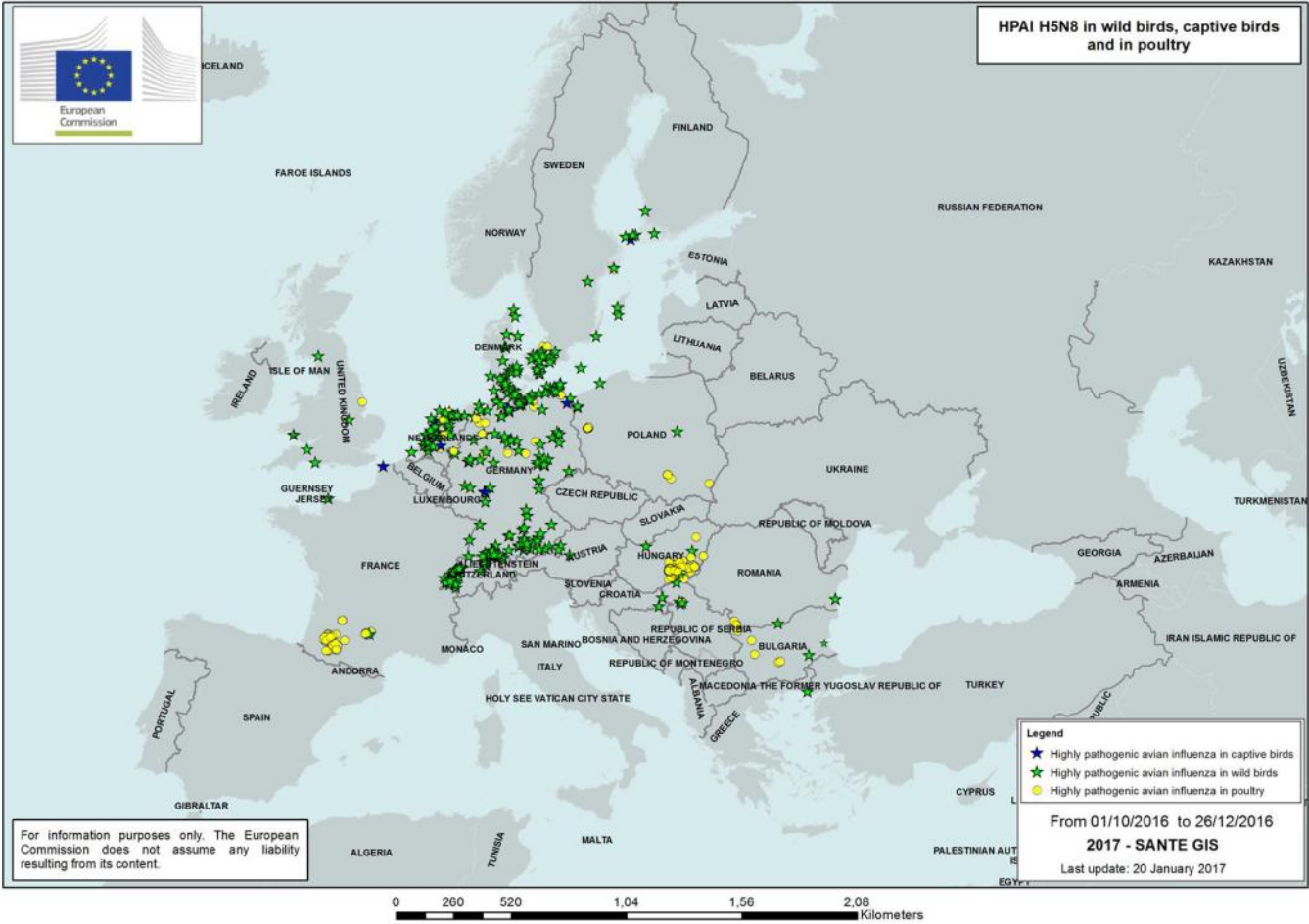
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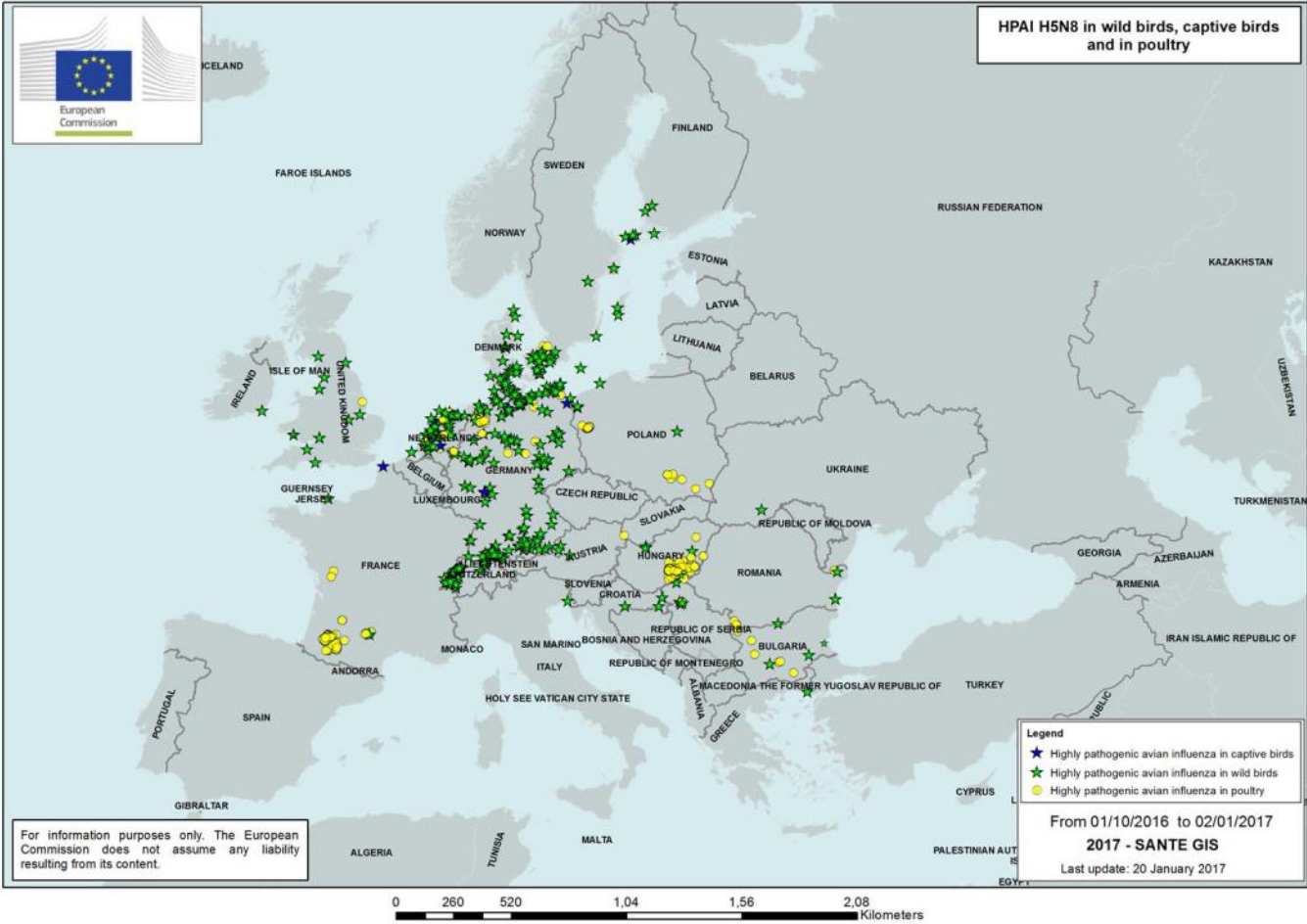
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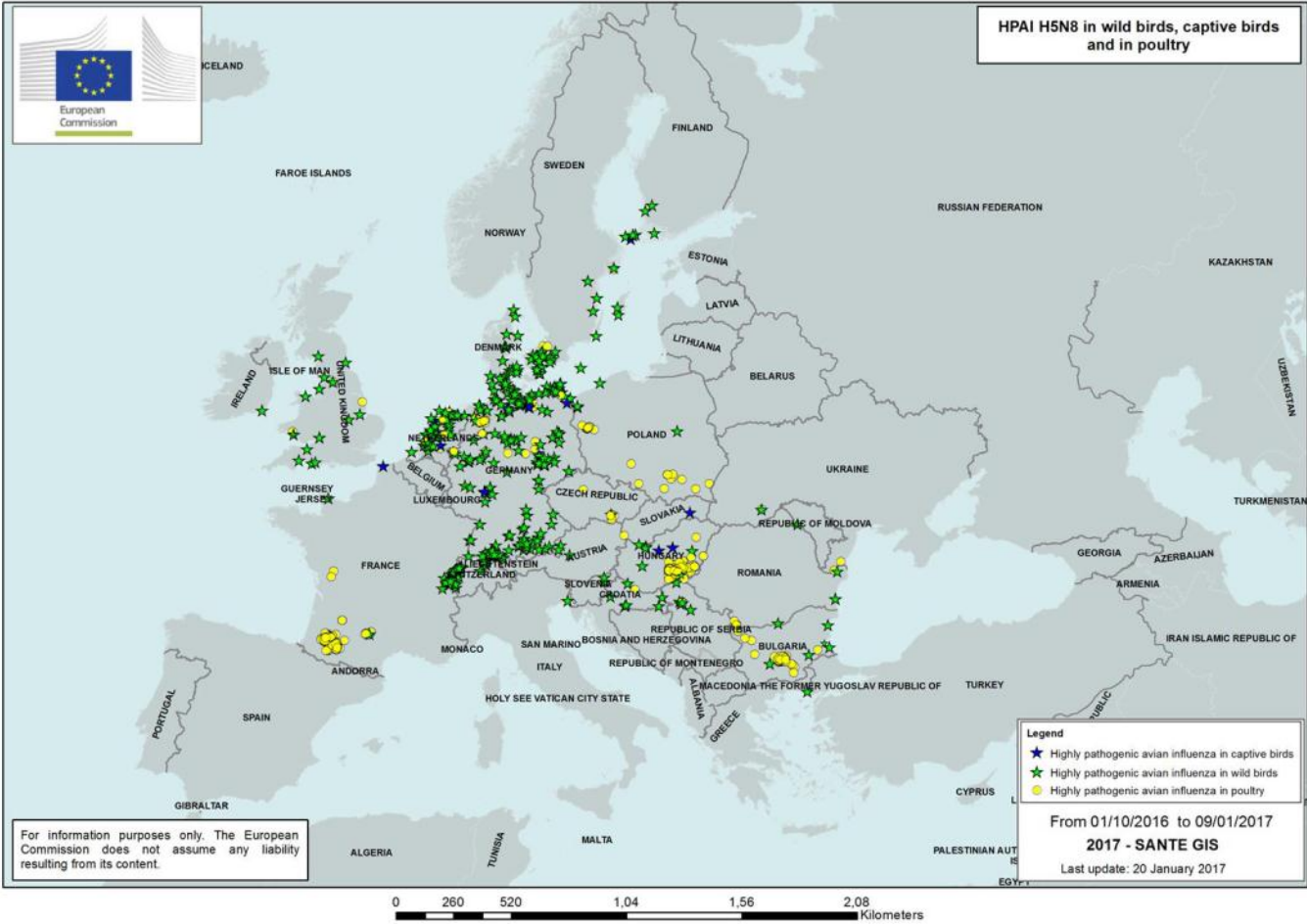
1 Oct – 26 Dec 2016



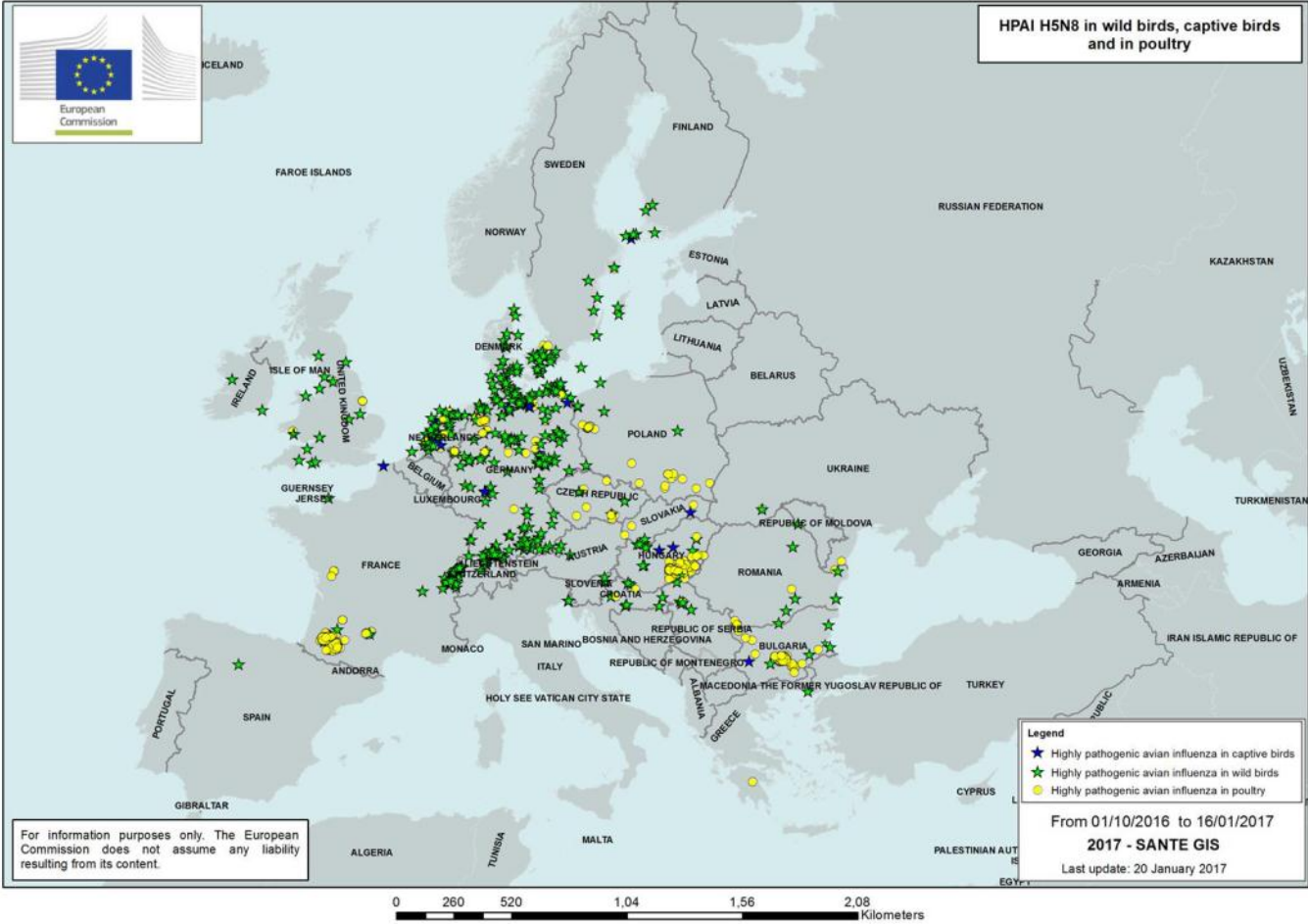
1 Oct – 2 Jan 2017



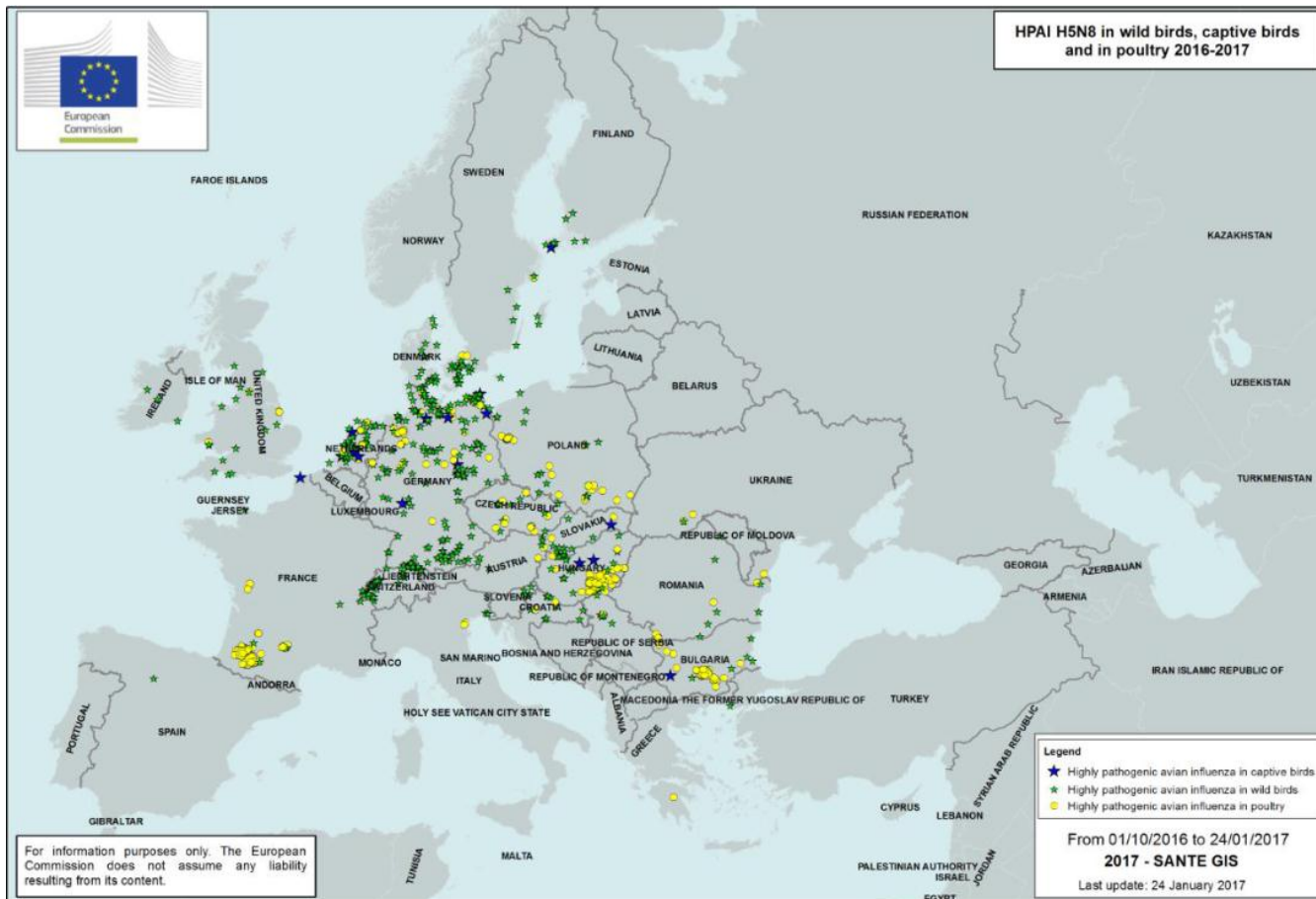
1 Oct – 9 Jan 2017



1 Oct – 16 Jan 2017



1 Oct – 24 Jan 2017



Species infected across Europe

Wild birds - 38 different species

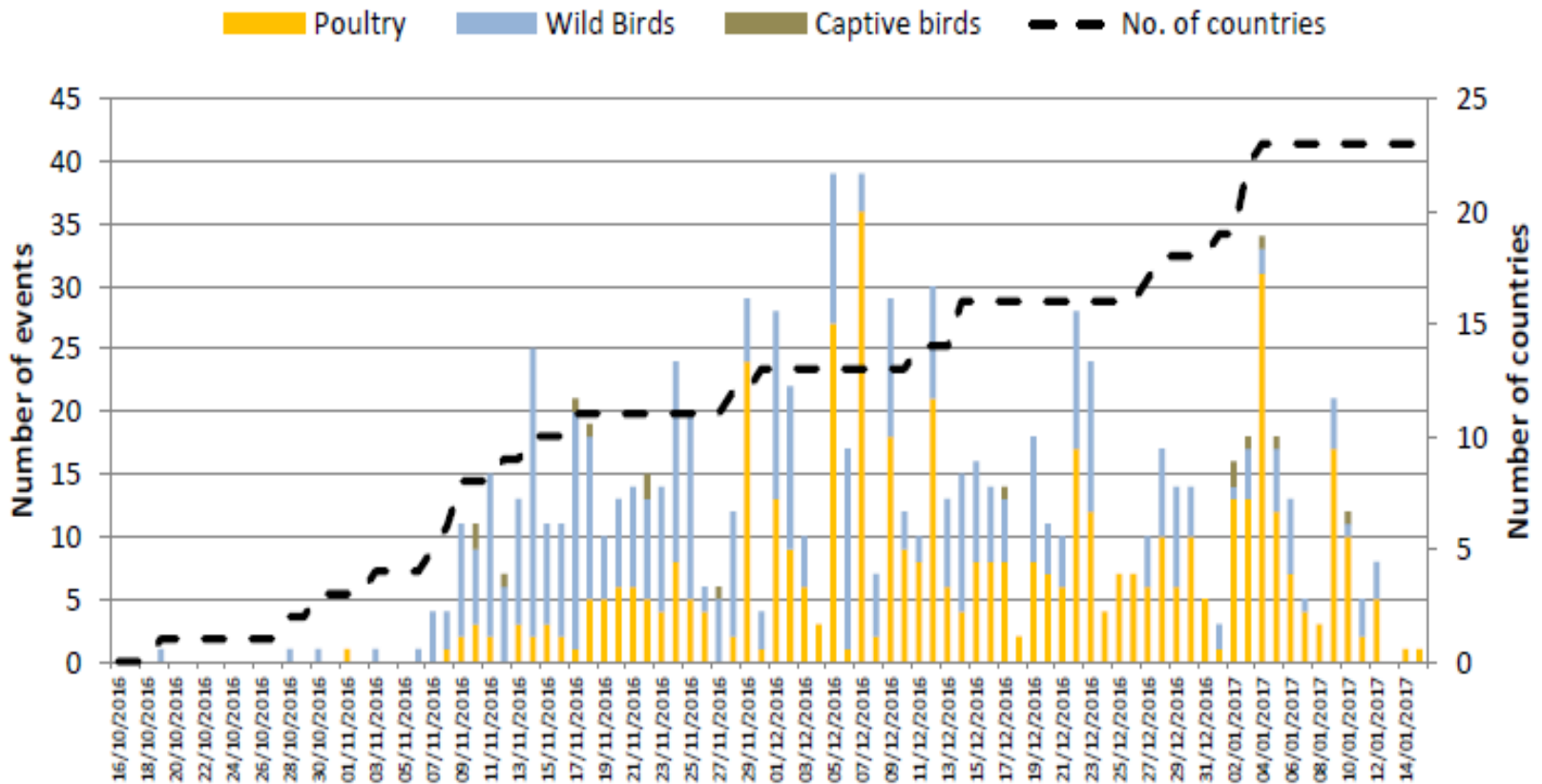
- **Ducks (40%):** Tufted (15% of all reports); widgeon; mallard; teal; pochard; goldeneye; eider; shelduck
- **Gulls:** Black-headed; Herring; Great Black-backed; Common tern;
- **Other Waterfowl:** geese (greylag, canada, brent), coot; moorhen; heron; swans (mute and whooper); cormorant;
- **Waders:** green sandpiper; grebe; curlew;
- **Birds of Prey:** White tailed eagle; common buzzard; peregrine falcon; eagle owl; northern hawk
- **Corvids:** Crows; magpie; hooded crow; raven;

Captive birds

- swans; goose; pelican; emu; white stork
- Harris hawk

Poultry, Wild Bird and Captive Bird cases in Europe

Date 16/01/2017



Policy response

- Avian Influenza Prevention Zone
 - from 6th December until 28th February
 - Housing or separation from wild birds, where practicable
- Separately Poultry Gathering ban from 20th December
 - Pigeons and other captive birds gatherings continue
- Increased wild bird surveillance
- No shooting ban, Falconry able to continue
- Guidance:
 - Biosecurity requirements
 - Backyard flocks biosecurity and welfare
 - Game birds
- Enforcement challenges
 - Local authorities and Egg Marketing Inspectors
 - Robust enforcement process
 - Industry help to drive up compliance
 - Clear messaging to backyard flock keepers
- Free range
 - 12 weeks grace period until 28th February
 - Applies to Eggs and poultry meat
 - Netherlands asked European Commission for a derogation to extend this grace period

Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

How to keep your birds safe from Avian Influenza (bird flu)

Avian Influenza, also known as bird flu, is a disease that affects all types of poultry including chickens, ducks and geese. A severe strain of the disease, H5N1, has recently been found in wild and captive birds in the UK. This guide is designed to help keepers of small flocks of poultry look after their birds while there is a prevention zone in place.

How bird flu spreads

Bird flu can be passed from wild birds to poultry, causing birds to fall ill and die. It can be transmitted directly from bird to bird or via the environment, for example in wild bird droppings. To reduce the risk of bird flu spreading from bird to bird there is currently a legal requirement for all birds to be housed or otherwise kept separate from wild birds. This means if you keep poultry, including chickens, ducks or geese, even as pets, you must take action to prevent contact with wild birds and protect them from the potentially fatal disease. Risks to human health are very low and bird flu does not pose a food safety risk.

Protecting your poultry

Where possible, move birds into a suitable building, like a shed or outbuilding adapted to house them, or a new temporary structure like a lean-to or a polytunnel. Put netting over coverings to stop wild birds getting in and remove any hazardous substances. It is your responsibility to ensure your birds' welfare while indoors and keep them calm and comfortable.

- If you keep several types of birds, house chickens or turkeys in separate enclosures from ducks and geese. Check the birds regularly to ensure they are healthy and have enough food, water and dry bedding.
- Keep the environment interesting to reduce the risk of feather pecking. Add fresh bedding, straw bales, perches and objects such as cabbages, scatter feed or grain on the floor and add grit to litter to encourage birds to scratch.
- Make sure birds have natural light where possible and are not permanently in the dark. Light should ideally follow typical day and night patterns.
- You may want to consider nutritional supplements in drinking water that can help keep birds calm.
- Skin parasites like red mite can be a problem in birds kept indoors and can make birds more irritable. Advice on controlling parasites can be obtained from your vet.

Reducing the risk of infection

If you don't have a suitable building to move your birds into, or the welfare of the birds would suffer if moved indoors, you must take sensible precautions to keep them away from wild birds. You should follow these steps to reduce the risk of infection via the environment, for example in wild bird droppings, even if your birds are inside.

- Keep food and water supplies inside where they can not be contaminated, feed birds inside and keep them away from standing water.
- Where birds remain outside, set up a temporary enclosure covered with netting that wild birds can not access.
- Minimise movement in and out of your birds enclosure and clean footwear before and after visits.
- Keep the area where your birds live clean and tidy, removing spilled feed.

Signs of Avian Flu

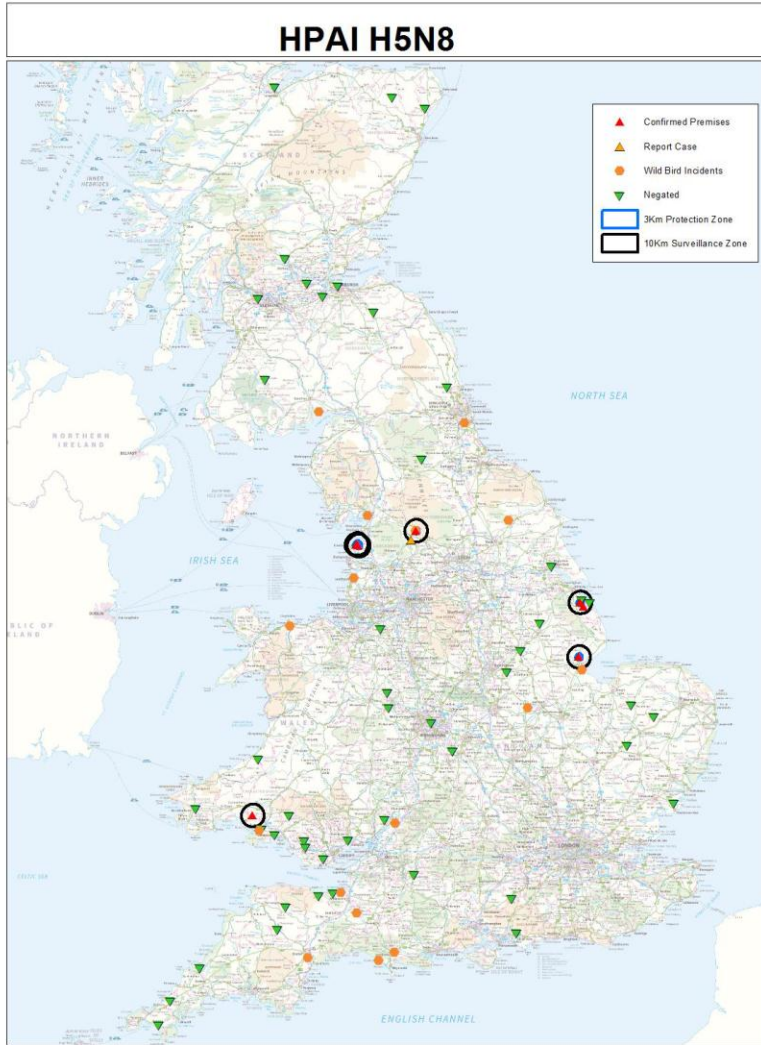
Signs include loss of appetite, swollen heads and respiratory problems. If you suspect bird flu call the Defra helpline on 03000 200 301.

Further information

Further details can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu

This information has been put together by Defra with the British Veterinary Association (BVA), Royal Veterinary College (RVC) and British Veterinary Poultry Association (BVPA). 6 January 2017

Cases in United Kingdom



- Wild birds
- Poultry
 - Commercial
 - Turkeys (housed)
 - Game birds (not housed)
 - Backyard flock

UK Wild bird findings

Carmarthenshire: 1 Wigeon

Dumfries and Galloway: 1 Peregrine falcon

Leicestershire: 1 Wigeon

Somerset: 1 Wigeon, 1 Buzzard

Lincolnshire: 5 Wigeons

Gloucestershire: 2 Greylag Goose, 1 White Fronted Goose, 1 Eurasian Wigeon, 1 Canada Goose

Merseyside: 2 Pochard, 1 Mallard, 1 Black Headed Gull, 1 Cormorant

Dorset: 10 Mute Swans, 1 Canada Goose

Devon: 1 Wigeon

Conwy: 1 Teal

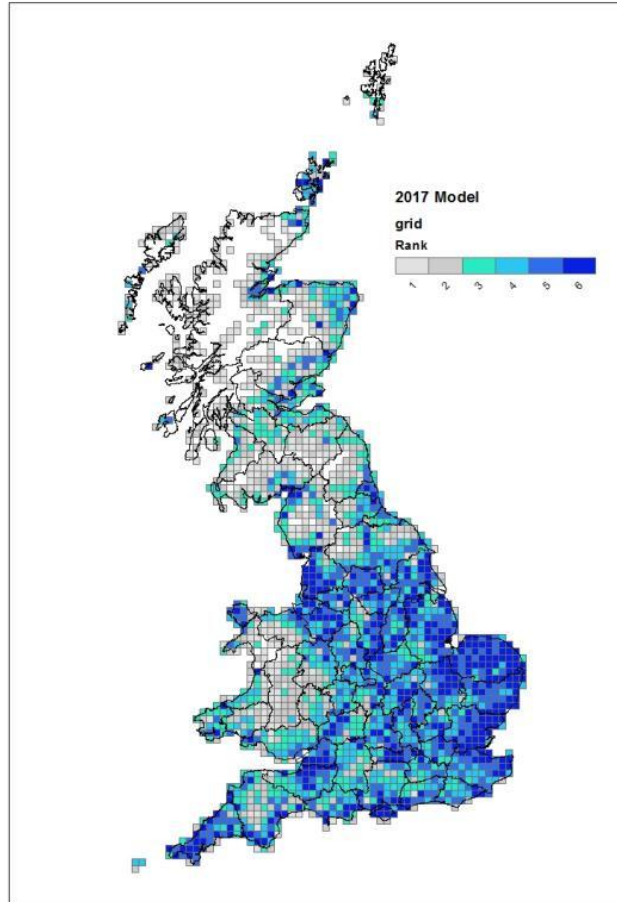
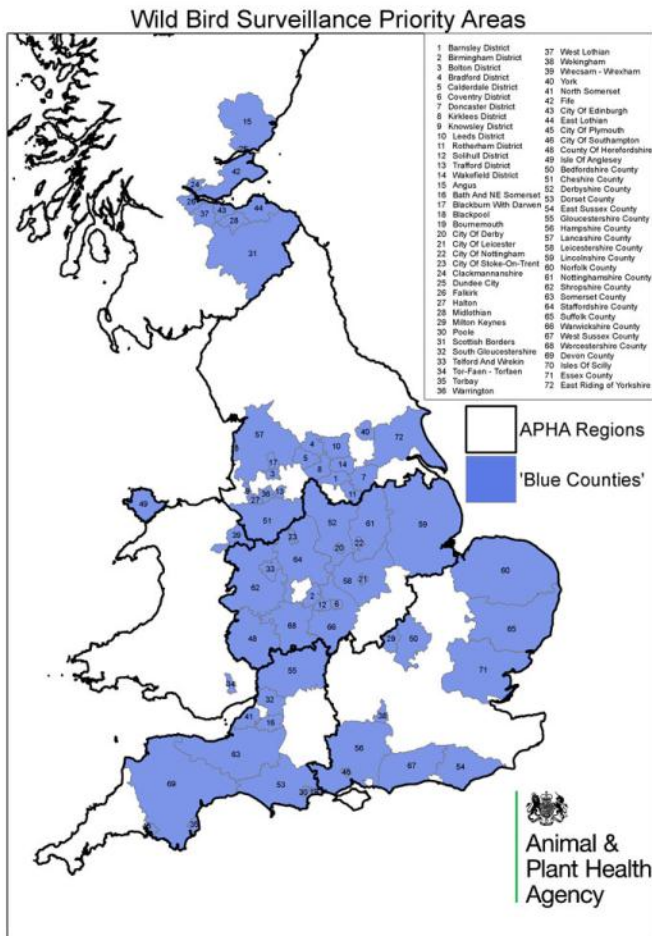
Lancashire: 1 Tufted Duck

Tyne & Wear: 1 Blackheaded Gull

North Yorkshire: 1 Buzzard

Lancashire: 1 Greylag Goose

Risks to wild birds and poultry



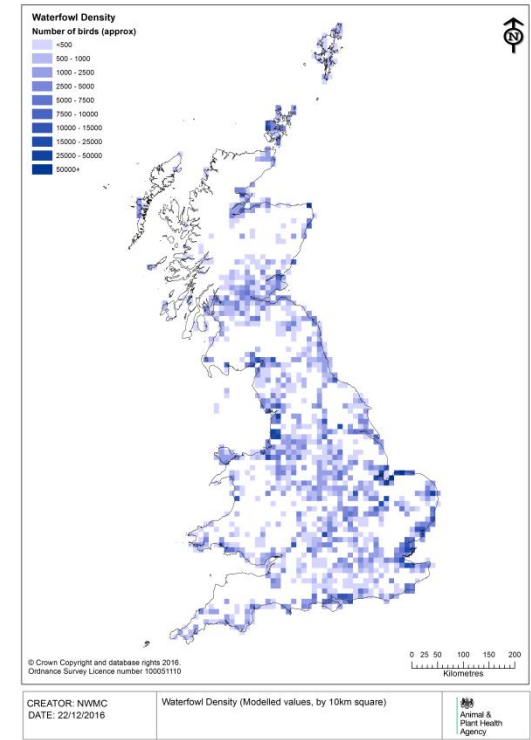
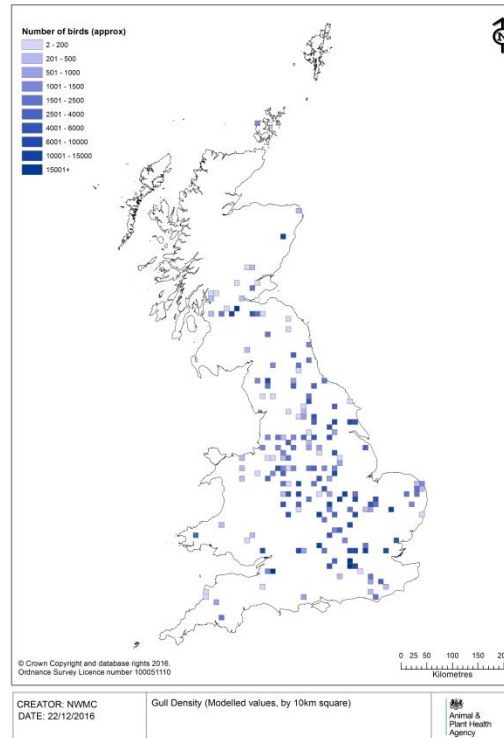
- “blue counties”: the risk areas identified for the poultry and wild bird surveys with both wild birds and high density poultry

Risks to wild birds and poultry



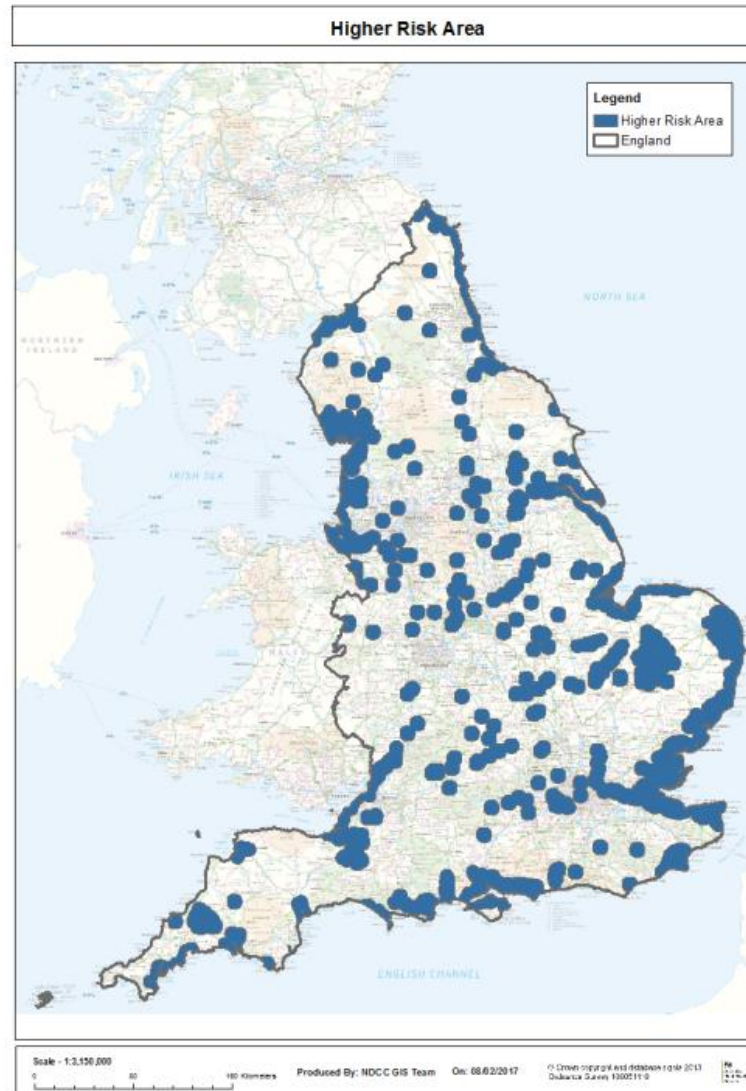
Important Bird Areas for migratory birds

Gull roosts



Wild waterfowl annual count (BTO data)

Higher Risk Areas



Expected measures from 28th Feb, subject to review and based on current risk levels

1) Minimum Biosecurity Requirements (Mandatory for all keepers)

[separation of species, preventing contact with wild birds, ensuring feed / bedding is not contaminated]

2) Best Practice Biosecurity Requirements (Commercial keepers with more than 1000 birds only)

[use of zones, limit access to essential personnel, cleansing and disinfection between zones, record keeping]

3) Separation of poultry & other captive birds from wild waterfowl & gulls (Mandatory for all keepers)

3 A) Total Housing – applicable in all areas

3 B) Total Netting / Covered Runs / Aviaries – applicable in all areas

3 C) Supervised Access to enclosed outdoor areas not permissible in 'higher risk areas'

'Supervised' Access to outdoor areas

- Special Biosecurity Measures being introduced
- Outside areas must be fully fenced
- Birds must not be allowed to roam freely beyond the minimum range requirements.
- Ponds and areas of standing water must be covered / netted
- Streams and wet or boggy areas should be fenced off
- All practical steps must be taken to deter wild waterfowl and gulls from accessing these outdoor areas (ranges)
- Birds must not be fed or watered in these outdoor areas
- Action needed now:
 - to check and clean outdoor areas
 - keep wild birds away until flocks go out
 - Guidance available on gov.uk

Key Points

- Direction of travel – renewed AI Prevention Zone from 28th Feb with new, targeted requirements
- Housing will remain an option for all keepers, but will not be mandatory for most – c.75% of premises
- Higher Risk Areas where either mandatory housing or total range netting covering c.25% premises
- Decision in late February, based on veterinary risk assessment
- Disease control paramount, this is not a return to business as usual
- Free range status will be impacted for some keepers in the HRA
- Continued owners responsibility for on site biosecurity and welfare
- Take steps now – guidance is available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)
- Talk to your veterinarian

Key Information

Rolling news article

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-bird-flu-in-winter-2016-to-2017>

Avian Influenza guidance

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu>

General licence for Gatherings

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bird-gatherings-licences>