

**Voluntary Report** – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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**Report Name:** EFSA Report Documents European Spring 2021 Avian Influenza Epidemic

**Country:** European Union

**Post:** Brussels USEU

**Report Category:** Pest/Disease Occurrences, Poultry and Products

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**Report Highlights:**

With 3,555 recorded High Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) infections in 27 European countries and involving 22.4 million poultry birds, the spring 2021 HPAI epidemic was one of the largest recorded in Europe. The epicenter of the epidemic was situated in Germany and Poland. A May 31, 2021 scientific report from the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) documents this HPAI epidemic country by country, highlighting the need for farmers to maintain strict biosecurity measures to keep the disease away from farm flocks. HPAI-related import bans from affected European Union (EU) member states (MS) resulted in decreased EU poultry exports.

A [Scientific report](#) from European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), published on May 31, 2021, describes the February-May 2021 European High Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) season as “*one of the largest and most devastating HPAI epidemics ever occurred in Europe.*” The 2020-2021 HPAI epidemic counts 3,555 detected infections in 27 European countries (22 EU MS, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom), involving 22.4 million poultry birds. The epicenter of the HPAI epidemic appears to have been in Germany and Poland, with the former country detecting the largest number of infections in wild birds (603) and the latter the largest number of outbreaks in farm flocks (297). During this period, sixteen different HPAI genotypes were found, indicating a high level of virus reassortment. The annex to the report details the chronology of the AI detections and measures taken country by country. The authors of the report highlight the need for strict biosafety controls on farms given this severe HPAI epidemic. More information on AI can be found on a dedicated European Commission [webpage](#).

In economic terms, the impact of this HPAI epidemic on the EU poultry market remained limited, except in Poland, where poultry production in 2021 is forecast to decrease by 12 percent compared to 2020. Poultry consumption in 2021 is expected to keep up, certainly in comparison with past European HPAI epidemics during which human casualties induced public scares and significant drops in poultry consumption. Nevertheless, EU poultry exports decreased significantly following the HPAI findings as many poultry importing countries banned imports from affected EU MS (See GAIN report [European Union: Poultry and Products Semi-annual](#)).

**Attachments:**

No Attachments.