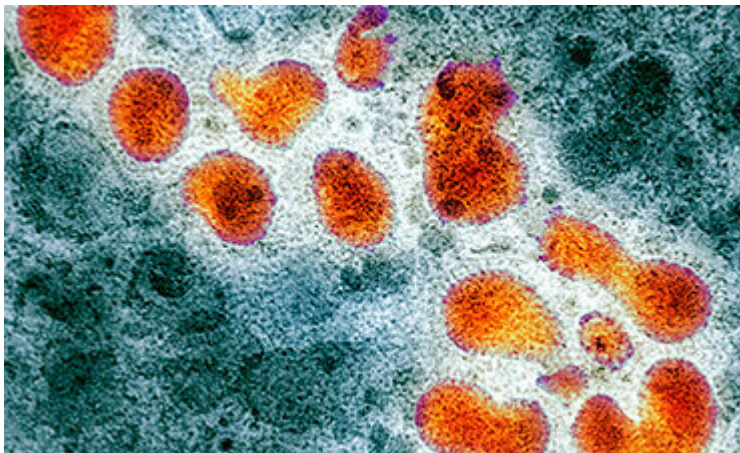


Avian influenza: EU on alert for new outbreaks



The warning follows outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) among wild and domestic birds in western Russia and Kazakhstan over the past few months. This region is a known autumn migration route for wild water birds heading to Europe.

Northern and eastern Europe are likely to be the most vulnerable to new outbreaks given past experience. When HPAI was detected in the same area of Russia in the summers of 2005 and 2016, epidemics followed in northern and eastern Europe. If the pattern is repeated this year, HPAI is expected to arrive in the same areas of Europe in autumn or winter. Subsequent spread to countries in southern and western Europe is also possible.

The alert is included in the latest update on avian influenza in Europe and beyond. The [new report](#) – which is compiled by EFSA, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the European Union Reference Laboratory for Avian Influenza – covers the period May to August 2020.

The report recommends that EU countries should:

- Take measures to detect suspected cases of HPAI promptly and increase biosecurity measures at poultry farms.
- Warn veterinary and wildlife health authorities of the likely risk of HPAI introduction, and urge them to carry out prompt testing of dead or sick wild birds.

Spread of the virus is likely to be triggered by a sudden and persistent fall in temperatures in central Russia and Kazakhstan. Several studies demonstrate that cold weather conditions led to the rapid westward expansion of the HPAI virus by infected migratory birds during the 2005-2006 and 2016-2017 waves.

The risk of transmission of avian influenza viruses to the general public in Europe remains very low. However, to minimise the risk of transmission to humans, people are advised not to touch dead birds without wearing appropriate personal protective equipment.



The criminal network risked the lives of hundreds of migrants while transporting them from France to the UK



The Hague, 30 September 2020

A major operation involving judicial and law enforcement authorities from Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, supported by Europol and Eurojust, led to the dismantling of a large network of criminals smuggling migrants in life threatening conditions across the English Channel.

Spanning several days starting from 28 September, the action involved law enforcement officers from the Belgian Federal Police, the British Home Office Immigration Enforcement, the Dutch Royal Marechaussée and, in France, the BMR (Brigade Mobile de Recherche) of Coquelles and OCRIEST (Office central de répression de l'immigration et de l'emploi d'étrangers sans titre AKA Central Office against illegal immigration and employment of undocumented workers), acting on rogatory commission from an investigating judge of the Lille JIRS.

12 suspects were arrested in the combined operation, including 2 in The Netherlands, 7 in France and 3 in the UK. The overall seizures during the two action days included 12 vehicles, 10 rubber boats and engines, 152 life jackets, a caravan, a boat trailer, jewellery, about €48 000 in cash, documents and mobile devices.

This investigation targeted a developing trend of migrant smuggling involving small boats across the English Channel. This criminal activity has escalated exponentially in the recent months with over 4600 irregular migrants detected since 2018 on the UK shores and increased interceptions in France. The successful action demonstrates the results that can be achieved through intensive cooperation and information exchange, which is essential to tackle this growing form of human trafficking.

Overloaded boats and rough weather

The organised crime group comprised mainly Iranian nationals living in France, the Netherlands and the UK. The network is believed to have made huge profits from smuggling migrants in small boats from the north coasts of France to the UK. The suspects organised their criminal activity through ties in different countries. Members of the criminal group purchased inflatable boats and engines from Germany and the Netherlands and transported them to the departure points. There, they were providing training skilled migrants on how to operate the boats while charging an average of €3000 per person for the crossings. Information gathered during the investigations provided

confirmation that the criminal organisation had facilitated the illegal sea crossing of a large number of migrants. Transporting migrants in overloaded boats, often in very difficult weather conditions on one of the busiest commercial shipping lanes in the world, endangered the lives of both the migrants and also the law enforcement officers conducting sea rescue operations.

Close cooperation across the North Sea

The action is a result of a close cooperation between Belgium, France, the Netherlands and The United Kingdom since June 2020, supported by Eurojust and Europol. The initial information sharing lead to the creation of a Joint Investigation Team in September.

With the information sharing that took place during the first coordination meeting at Eurojust, the UK was able to react quickly and identify a linked domestic investigation. Following a period of intense negotiations facilitated by the respective National Desks at Eurojust, it was agreed that the UK would join the Joint Investigation Team, which facilitated this action day.

Frank Demeester, public prosecutor's office West-Flanders, human smuggling department, said: *"It is clear that organised crime groups, specifically in cases of illegal migration and human smuggling, are working on an international level. They are not bothered concerned by the boundaries between the different countries. That is why the four countries around the North Sea have to must work closely together to fight this type of criminality."*

By combining forces from the judicial authorities of The Netherlands, Belgium, France and the United Kingdom, we were able to put together all the pieces of the jig-saw puzzle very quickly and confront different members of the same OCG. In times rendered more difficult by COVID19, it was thanks to the Eurojust and Europol network and video conferencing that we could finalise all the necessary arrangements."

Europol supported the operation by facilitating the information exchange, organising operational meetings and providing analytical support with two intelligence analysts dedicated to this high priority case. On the action day, Europol set- up a Virtual Command Post to facilitate d the operational coordination and the real-time exchange of information between law enforcement officers on the ground in real time.

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ESMA Publishes Final Report for Guidelines on Internal Control

The purpose of these Guidelines is to communicate what ESMA considers to be the characteristics and components of an effective internal control structure within a CRA. The guidelines are structured according to two main parts, establishing:

- ESMA's views on the components and characteristics that should be present in a CRA to demonstrate a strong framework for internal controls; and
- ESMA's views on the components and characteristics that a CRA should evidence to demonstrate the effectiveness of internal control functions within such a framework.

ESMA conducted a public consultation on these Guidelines to gather the views of CRAs and other relevant stakeholders. A number of amendments and clarifications were introduced into the final guidelines to take into account the views expressed during this consultation.

Next steps

The Guidelines in Annex I will be translated into all official languages and published on ESMA's website. The Guidelines will apply from 1 July 2021.

EUIPO and ECN join forces to support young companies

September 30, 2020 [About the EUIPO](#)

EUIPO and ECN join forces to support young companies



Some entrepreneurs and start-ups, particularly at the early stages of setting up a business, find it hard to get the financial backing necessary to take their innovative ideas off the ground. Others, often due to lack of familiarity with the topic, fail to see the benefits of protecting intellectual property when deciding to take their business forward. To a large degree, the chances of success depend on the quality of the information SMEs have at their disposal.

In the quest to alleviate some of the issues young companies face, the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and the European Crowdfunding Network (ECN), have signed a collaboration agreement to help and support small and medium-sized enterprises (SME).

For the ECN, this collaboration is a good opportunity to promote crowdfunding as a viable means to boost entrepreneurship, social innovation and job creation. In addition, the EUIPO intends to maximise the outreach of the ECN's network to transmit the importance of IP rights (trademarks, patents, design, etc.) and to empower SMEs through knowledge about intellectual property protection.

The ECN is an independent professional crowdfunding association that supports its members in carrying out initiatives aimed at innovating, representing, promoting and protecting the European crowdfunding industry.

As part of its [Strategic Plan 2025](#), the SME Programme, under the 'Ideas Powered for business' brand aims to support and empower SMEs on their

business journey. The recently launched [‘Ideas Powered for business’](#) hub offers made-to-measure information for SMEs, as well as the possibility to [sign up for free personalised legal advice](#) on their intellectual property questions.

Both organisations are committed to providing the tools and the necessary know-how to support SMEs in their business journey through training models, joint webinars and events.

Tag: [#ipexcellence](#)

[EU-UN new agreement for mutual support in peace operations and c](#)

30/09/2020 – 10:04

Videos

29 September 2020, New York—The United Nations and the European Union signed an agreement today in the margins of the 75th session of the General Assembly to enhance cooperation and strengthen collective response in peace operations and crisis management.