



*Ministero della Salute*

# HPAI outbreaks in Italy

**Directorate General for Animal Health and veterinary medicinal products**



# HPAI H5N1 in Italy

## ✓ 38 HPAI outbreaks in poultry (21/04/2023)

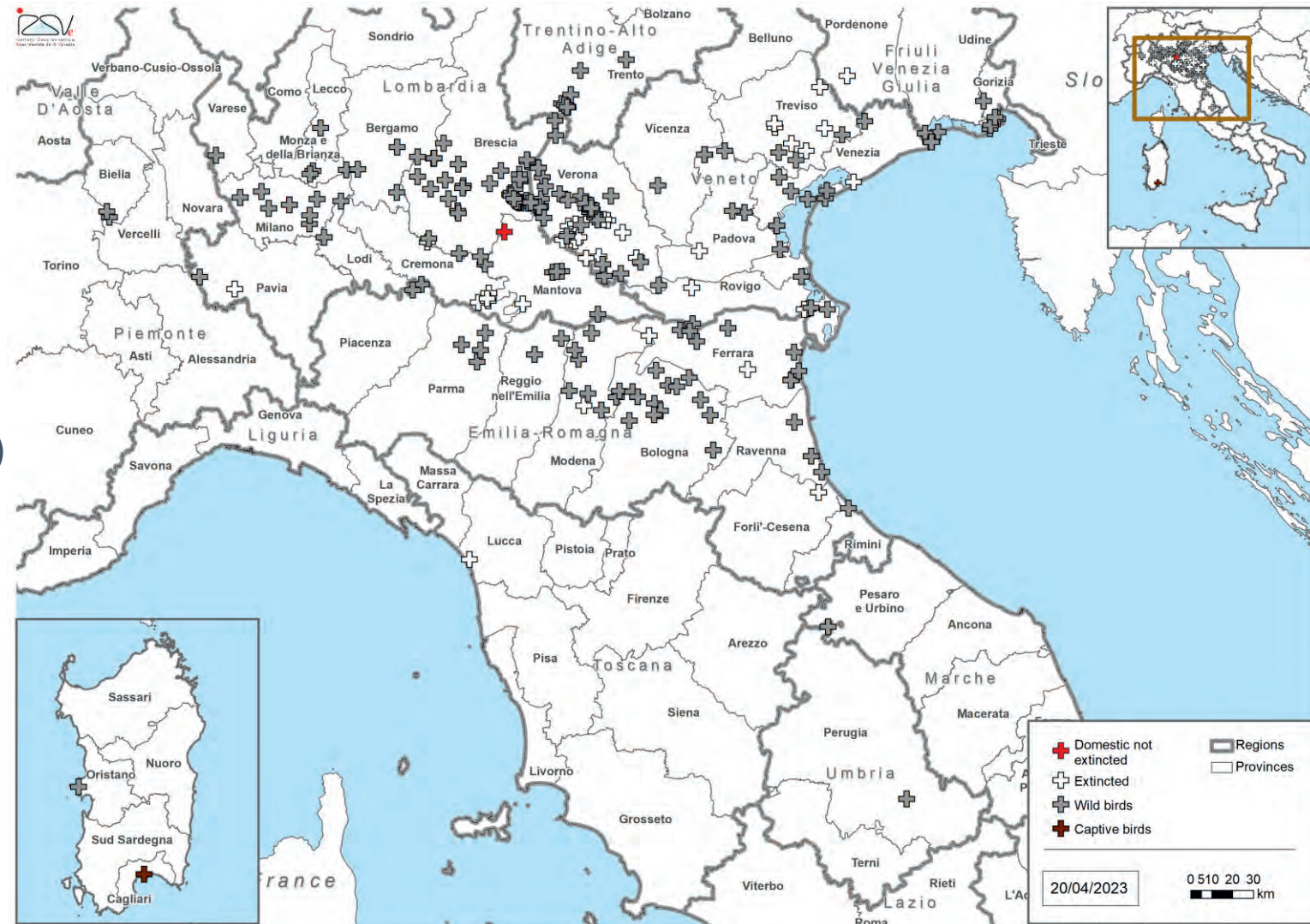
- 24 Veneto
- 8 Lombardia
- 4 Emilia Romagna
- 1 Friuli Venezia-Giulia
- 1 Toscana

**+ 7**  
from January

## ✓ 215 HPAI outbreaks in wild birds (21/04/2023)

- 79 Lombardia
- 63 Veneto
- 41 Emilia Romagna
- 16 Trentino - Alto Adige
- 10 Friuli – Venezia Giulia
- 2 Sardegna
- 2 Umbria
- 2 Piemonte

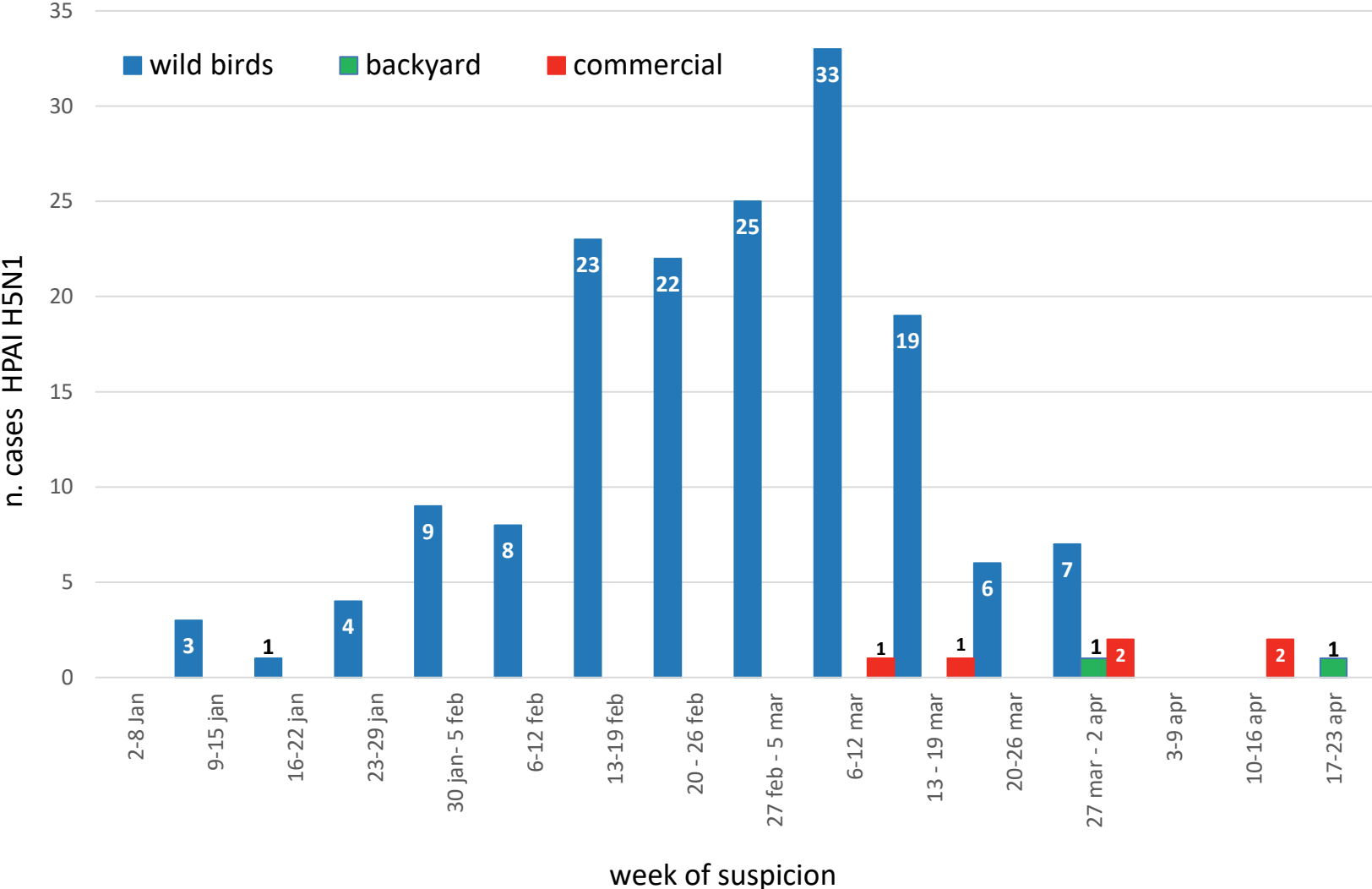
**+ 160**  
from January



# Number of weekly HPAI H5N1 cases in poultry and wild birds from January 2023 to date

A notable **increase** of cases in **wild birds**, particularly in **gulls**, was observed since **January**

Since the beginning of **March 8** outbreaks were confirmed in **poultry**, mainly **commercial**



# HPAI H5N1 in poultry: distribution and type of affected farms

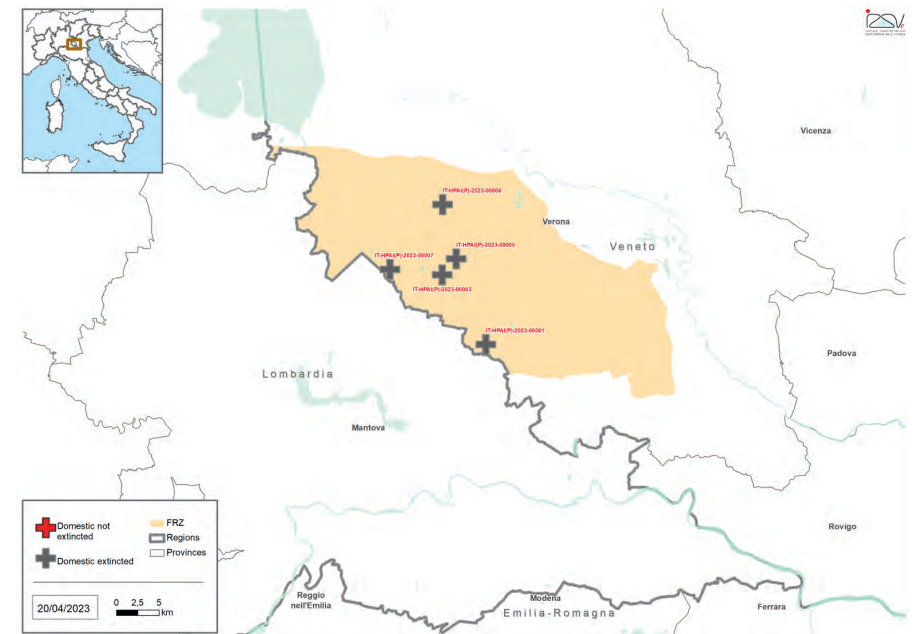
	Province	Backyard/Multispecies	Laying hen	Meat turkey	Total
EMILIA-ROMAGNA	Forlì -Cesena			1	1
LOMBARDIA	Brescia	1			1
TOSCANA	Lucca	1			1
VENETO	Verona		2	3	5
Total		2	2	4	8

# HPAI H5N1 in wild birds: distribution and species affected since January

REGION	SPECIES	No. positivity
EMILIA ROMAGNA	<b>Black-headed gull</b>	<b>18</b>
	Eurasian buzzard	2
	Peregrin falcon	2
	Common kestrel	1
	Eurasian oystercatcher	1
	Eurasian collared-Dove	1
LOMBARDIA	<b>Black-headed gull</b>	<b>58</b>
	Laridae (unidentified)	3
	Peregrin falcon	4
	Common kestrel	1
	Common Wood-Pigeon	1
	Grey heron	1
	Little egret	1
	Tawny owl	1
	Anatidae (unidentified)	1
FRIULI- VENEZIA GIULIA	Mute swan	5
PIEMONTE	<b>Black-headed gull</b>	<b>2</b>
TRENTINO - ALTO ADIGE	<b>Black-headed gull</b>	<b>16</b>
VENETO	<b>Black-headed gull</b>	<b>38</b>
	<b>Yellow-legged gull</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>160</b>

# Key features observed in poultry outbreaks

- mainly **diagnostic outbreaks** (after laboratory confirmation during pre-movement testing, monitoring plan)
- in several of the outbreaks identified since January, unusual disease behavior has been reported in meat turkey and laying hen characterized by
  - **low mortality,**
  - **very low prevalence of infection**
  - **no significant change** in production parameters such as feed and water intake and egg production
- within the farms sampling gave **patchy positive results** in the **sheds**, with **re-samplings** which **sometimes** may give **negative** results
- **positive birds** were mainly restricted to carcasses and not all pooled samplings tested positive.
- **surveillance** in the areas at highest risk has been reshaped including dead birds collected in different places of the holding and over several days (**weekly bucket sampling**).

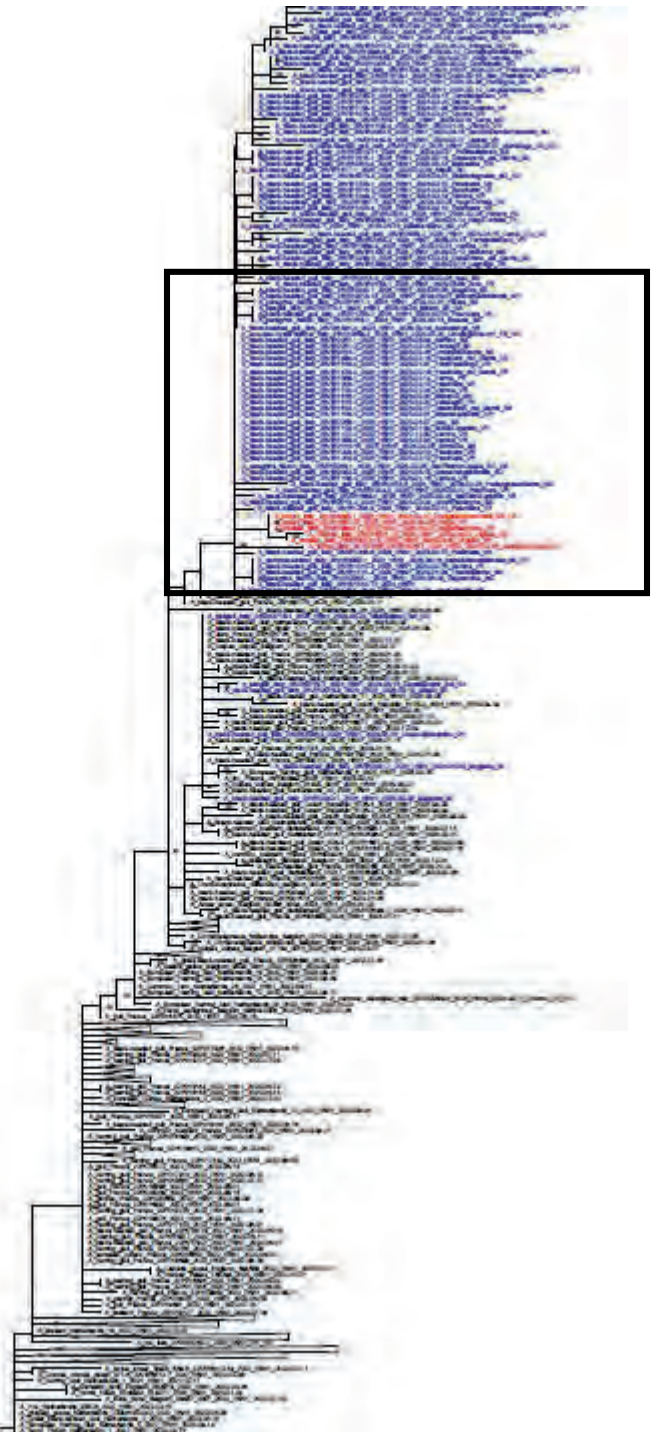


## **HYPOTHESIS OF THESE «SPRING OUTBREAKS»**

The virus that circulated extensively in the wintering black-headed gulls could have passed to other non-migratory wild species (herons, egrets, sedentary gulls, ibises, etc.), usually seen in rural areas and poultry farms.

Seek confirmation in targeted surveillance activities in the wild birds in the coming months.

# HA phylogenetic tree



Clade 2.3.4.4b



From the phylogenetic analysis it is confirmed that viruses responsible for the outbreaks in poultry since March 2023 derive from wild birds, being the level of similarity of the poultry viruses with those found in gulls in Italy (shown in blue in the box) of 99.8-99.9%. Despite the high homology of the viruses, no evidence of secondary spread was found except for the two outbreaks in layers. Contacts with the same wild reservoir circulating in the affected area is the most likely hypothesis so far.

# Control measures: establishment of a Further Restricted Zone (FRZ)

A FRZ has been established until 2 May 2023 and will be amended according to the evolving epidemiological situation





# Measures applied within the Further Restricted Zone

- Census of industrial poultry holdings
- Birds shall be kept inside closed buildings and measures should be taken to reduce the risk of direct/indirect contacts with wild birds
- Enforcement of increased biosecurity measures (vehicles, personnel, etc.)
- Gathering of domestic birds for fairs, exhibitions and live-bird markets are banned
- Pre-movement clinical inspection and virological testing (Ministerial Provision n. 0009342-05/04/2023)
- All holdings which birds reached the end of the cycle or production career, must be sent to the slaughterhouse without delay
- Re-stocking of meat turkey farms is prohibited



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Thanks for your kind attention