

# Surveillance report

## Overseas outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease

Prepared by: Gastrointestinal and Zoonotic Team

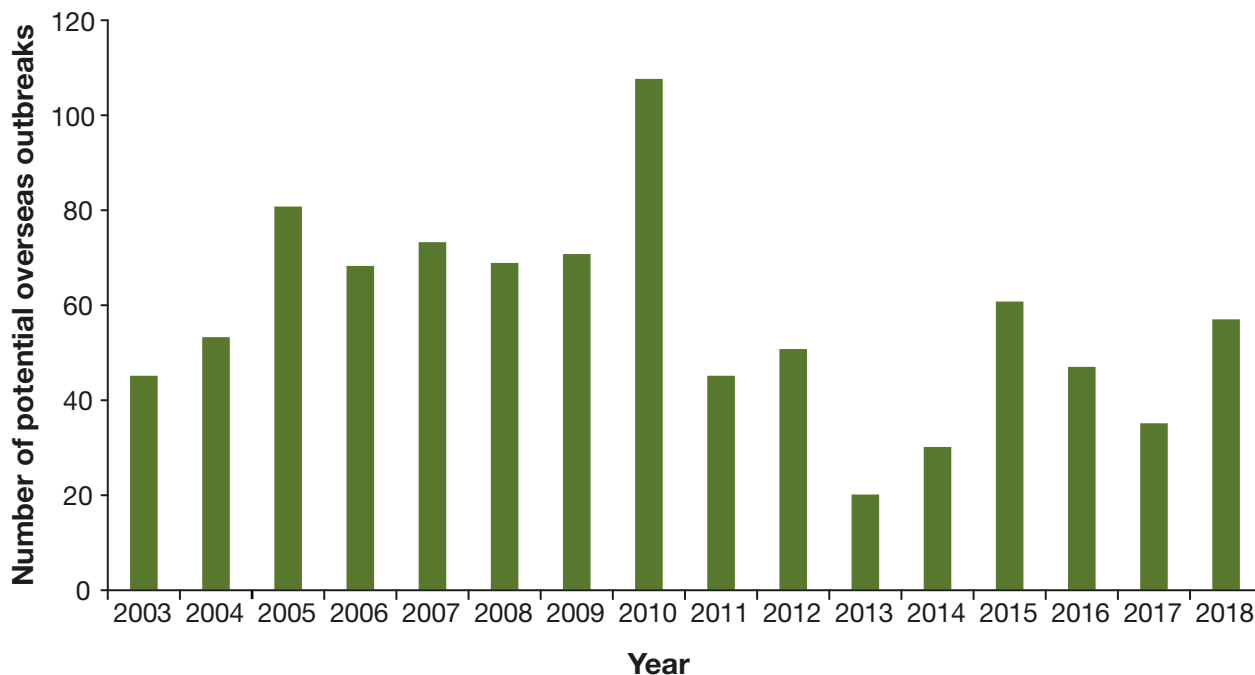


This report presents information from the surveillance system that HPS uses to collect and disseminate information on potential outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease believed to have been acquired abroad. A potential outbreak of infectious intestinal disease occurring abroad is defined as two or more confirmed cases of infection or at least one confirmed case where others are alleged to have been ill. Such outbreaks are usually reported to HPS by the NHS Board Health Protection Teams. They may also, however, be identified by the reference laboratories. This is particularly the case where phage types or molecular profiles rarely seen in Scotland are involved and/or where the individuals affected are resident in disparate regions of Scotland.

Information on the organism responsible, number positive, number of others suspected to be affected, country, town/resort, hotel or other accommodation, catering (full board/half board/self catering) holiday start and end dates, date of first onset, tour operator, flight details (if applicable) and any other relevant information is disseminated by HPS to the NHS Board public health teams in Scotland, so that other linked cases can be identified. Where possible information is also sent directly to the national surveillance centre in the country where infection is thought to have been acquired, enabling them to facilitate any investigations or control measures they believe to be necessary. Where HPS does not have direct contacts with the country concerned information is copied to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for onward circulation to the relevant country. After the initial information has been disseminated, if additional cases are identified in Scotland or additional information becomes available, this information is passed to the relevant national surveillance centre in order to facilitate local investigations.

In 2018, information was circulated concerning 57 potential outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease in persons returning to Scotland from abroad. This was an increase when compared to the 35 potential overseas outbreaks reported in 2017. Between 2003 and 2018 the average number of potential overseas outbreaks was 57 but with considerable year on year variation (Figure 1).

**Figure 1:** Potential overseas outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease reported to HPS, 2003-2018.



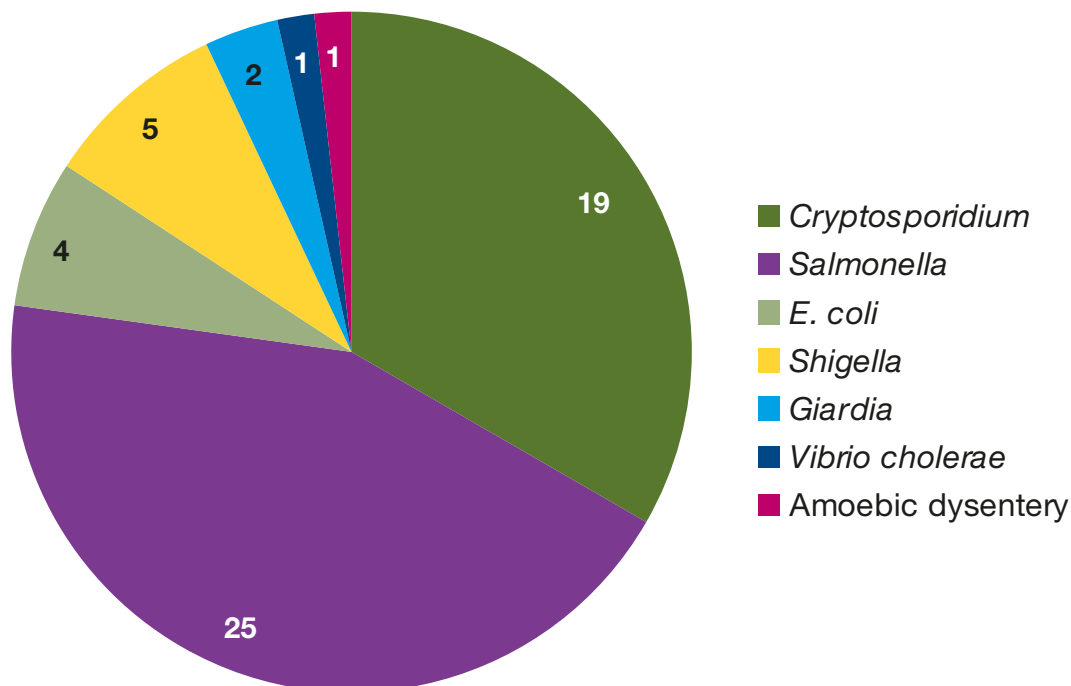
**Table 1:** Countries reported as associated with potential overseas outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease in 2018.

Country	Number of Outbreaks
Spain	17
Turkey	16
Mexico	6
Egypt	4
Cuba	3
Cyprus	2
Tunisia	2
Countries reported on one occasion	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>

In 2018, Spain (including the Balearic Islands) was the most frequently reported country, reflecting that it is the country with the greatest number of visitors (17 outbreaks; 29.8%). The second and third most frequently reported countries were Turkey (16 outbreaks; 28.1%) and Mexico (6 outbreaks; 10.5%) which is similar to that reported in 2017. In 2018, seven countries were each associated with one potential outbreak (Table 1).

*Salmonella* was the most frequently identified pathogen associated with potential overseas outbreaks in 2018 and was reported from 25 (44%) potential outbreaks (Figure 2). Since 2011 *Salmonella* has been the most frequently reported pathogen each year with the exception of 2015, when *Cryptosporidium* was the most frequently reported pathogen.

**Figure 2:** Pathogens associated with potential overseas outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease reported to HPS in 2018 (n=57).



#### NHS board abbreviations

AA Ayrshire & Arran	BR Borders	DG Dumfries & Galloway	GGC Greater Glasgow & Clyde
FF Fife	FV Forth Valley	GR Grampian	HG Highland
LO Lothian	LN Lanarkshire	OR Orkney	SH Shetland
TY Tayside	WI Western Isles		

### HPS Surveillance Report

**Published by:** Health Protection Scotland

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