



## 8<sup>th</sup> International White Stork Census 2024

### Preliminary results



Picture by NABU/CEWE/Klaus Lowitz

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**The 8th International White Stork Census in 2024 is a joint project of NABU (BirdLife Germany) and BirdLife International. NABU coordinates the cross-national censuses by compiling and analysing the overall results.**

### Status of Data analysis

We received positive responses to our call for participation in the census from 55 countries throughout the white stork's range. So far (June 4, 2025), final results have been received from 41 countries. Preliminary counts are available from additional seven countries.

Six countries have not yet submitted data, including countries with large white stork populations such as Poland, Lithuania and France. Spain will take part in the census in 2025. Bulgaria and Russia need two years for their surveys. Nevertheless, we can present preliminary results based on the available data. A discussion of the results will follow once the overall final results of the census are in.

### Results

An overview of the current results of the 8th International White Stork Census is presented in Fig. 1 and Tab. 1. For the countries highlighted in yellow, only preliminary results are available. These are either reports of preliminary data by the national census coordination, data from 2023 (Iran) or our own extrapolations based on partial census data already available (Algeria, Estonia).

For Algeria, the population is extrapolated from the dataset of the last nationwide census in 2004 and new surveys (2024) in two departments (Tebessa and Batna). Comparison with the results

from the two departments in 2004 show a population increase of about 500%. Extrapolated to the whole country, we assume that the population has increased from 6,600 HPa in 2004 to around 33,000 HPa, although this still needs to be verified. Similarly, we have extrapolated the figures for Estonia from the results of sample areas and these also need to be confirmed by the national coordination.

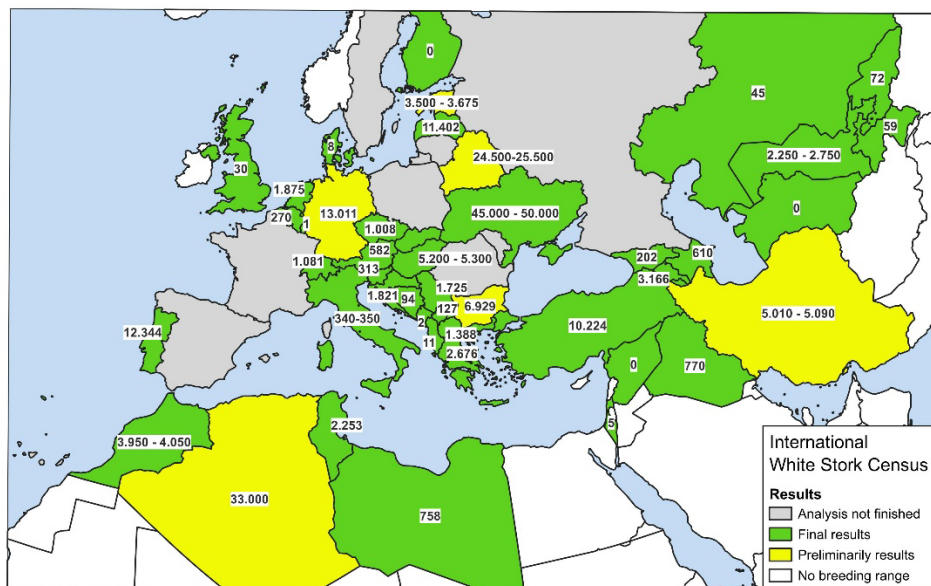


Fig. 1) Results of the 8<sup>th</sup> international White Stork Census in 2024. Number of breeding pairs (HPa) per country. Not shown is the small breeding population of South Africa, which consisted of only two breeding pairs in 2024.

The counts of the 8th International White Stork Census add to our knowledge of the worldwide distribution of the species. Libya participated in the International White Stork Census for the first time in 2024. The census revealed a population of 758 white stork pairs in the northeast of the country, in the provinces of Al-Jabel and Al-Akhder. Previously, it was assumed that there were only a few pairs in Libya (about 25 HPa in 2004).

Great Britain is now also part of the white stork's range. In 2024, a total of 30 HPa bred in the country, which originated from a reintroduction project in southern England.

The small breeding population in South Africa, which in 2024 consisted of only two pairs, is not shown in Fig. 1.

## Trends since 2014

The population trends for the past 10 years so far are calculated for 40 countries (Fig. 2). In 15 countries, a very strong population increase (>100%) was observed. In 18 countries, the population increase was between 10% and 100%. In Hungary, Croatia and Portugal, the white stork population remained stable (-10% to +10%).

The number of breeding pairs decreased in only four countries compared to 2014. The population decline in the northeast of the range is particularly noteworthy. In Finland, breeding has ceased again (one pair in 2014), and in Estonia and Latvia, the number of breeding pairs has decreased by 18% and 28% respectively since 2014. The final results from the neighbouring

countries of Lithuania, Poland and Russia are awaited with great interest, to see whether the negative trend is also present in these countries

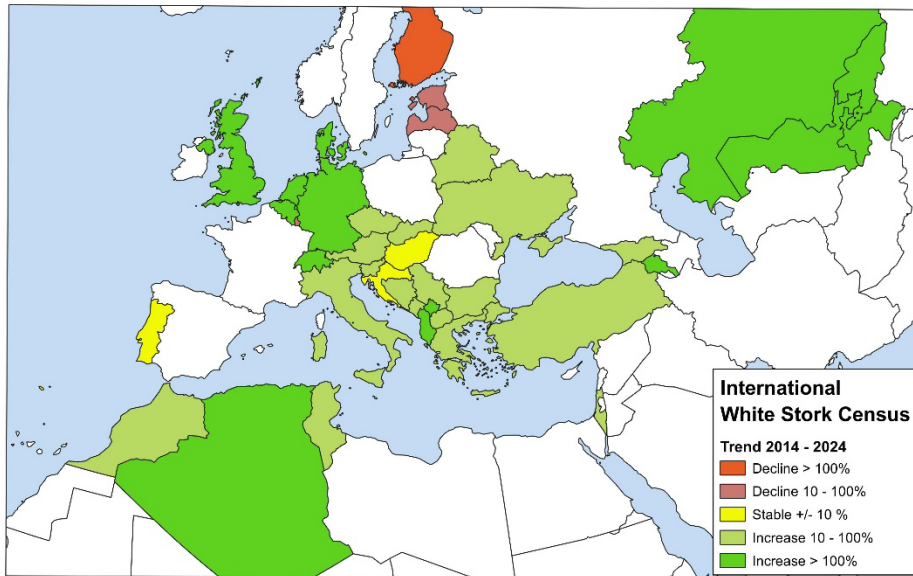


Fig. 2) Population trends of the national White Stork breeding populations between 2014 und 2024 across the birds breeding range

## World Population

Based on the available results, the world population of white storks in 2024 can be extrapolated to approximately 330,000 pairs (HPa). For those countries from which no results are yet available, the population figures from 2014 were used for the current extrapolation. At the time of the 7th International White Stork Census in 2014, the world population was estimated at 265,000 to 280,000 pairs. This indicates a 21% increase in the world population of white storks in recent years.

Tab. 1) Results of the 8<sup>th</sup> international White Stork Census in 2024 across the participating countries (data received until 04.06.2024). The division into regional populations follows SCHULZ 1999.

Country	2024	Notes	Source data
<b>South western core population</b>			
Portugal	12.344		F. Moniz, Cempa 2025
Spain		Census in 2025	
<b>North western peripheral population</b>			
Belgium	270		W. Faveyts, Oolevaar Observatie Initiatief, 26.-09.2024
Denmark	8		H. Skov, DOF, 08.07.2024
Germany	13.011	Preliminary	NABU BAG Weißstorchschutz
France			
Netherlands	1.875		B. Goffin, Sofon, Stork, 10.12.2024
Sweden			
Switzerland	1.081		M. u. P. Enggist, Storch Schweiz, 12.10.2024
Liechtenstein	60		G. Willi, Bot. Zool. Gesellschaft Liechtenstein, 18.08.2024
Luxemburg	1		P. Lorge, natur&mwelt, 25.11.2024
UK	30		L. Vaughan-Hirsch, Knepp Wildland Foundation, 29.08.2024
<b>Eastern core population</b>			
Finland	0		BirdLife Suomi
Estonia	3.500 - 3.675	Preliminary	M. Leivits, Envr, 14.10.2024
Latvia	11.402		A. Gaile and A. Priedniece, LOB, 11.02.2025
Lithuania			
Austria	522		E. Kerner-Ranner, BirdLife Österreich, 07.03.2025
Poland			
Russia			
Slowakia	1.470		M. Fulin, BirdLife Slovensko, 14.10.2024
Slovenia	313		D. Denac, DOPPS, 25.11.2024
Czech	1.008		G. Dobruská, CSO, 12.12.2024
Ukraine	45.000 - 50.000		V. Hryshchenko, USPB, 03.02.2025
Hungary	5.200 - 5.300		P. Lovász, MME, 25.11.2024
Belarus	24.500 - 25.500	Preliminary	I. Samusenko & A. Chernomorets, Institute of Zoology, 01.04.2025
<b>south eastern peripheral population</b>			
Albania	11		F. Bego, PPNEA, 17.08.2024
Bosnia-Herzegovina	94		D. Kotošan, Nase Ptice, 23.08.2024
Bulgaria	6.929	Preliminary	S. Stoychev, BSPB, 14.02.2025
Greece	2.676		G. Drosopoulos, HOS, 12.11.2024
Croatia	1.821		T. Mikuska, Croatian Society for Birds and Nature Protection, 18.11.2024
Italy	340 -350		M. Gustin, LIPU, 27.05.2025
North Macedonia	1.388		S. Nakev & M. Veleviski, MES, 28.11.2024
Moldova			
Romania			
Serbia	1.725		K. Milošević, Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia, 04.02.2025
Montenegro	2		N. Novović, CZIP, 25.11.2024
Kosovo	127		Q. Maxhuni, KOS, 09.02.2024
Turkey	10.224		O. Onmus, 19.07.24
<b>Maghreb population</b>			
Algeria	33.000		A. Si Bachir, University Batna 2, 25.09.2024
Morocco	3.950 - 4.050		O. Himmi, Mohammed V University in Rabat, 10.12.2024
Tunisia	2.253		H. Azazaf, AAO, 04.09.2024
Lybia	758		K. Etabey, LSB, 05.09.2024
<b>Westasian easturopean population</b>			
Armenia	3.166		L. Aghajanyan, NABU Armenia, 11.12.2024
Azerbaijan	610		E. Sultanov, AOS, 04.02.2025
Georgia	202		N. Budagashvili, Sabuko, 02.07.2024
Iran	5.010 - 5.090	Data from 2023	M. Kolnegari, Iran's Birds and Power Lines Committee, 25.10.2023
Iraq	770		L. Ali, Nature Iraq, 10.09.2024
Syria	0		N. Ghazal Asswad, SSCW, 20.05.2025
Israel	5		Y. Perlman, SPNI, 16.09.2024
<b>Central asia (Ciconia c. asiatica)</b>			
Usbekistan	2.250 - 2.750		R. D. Kashkarov, UzSPB, 28.10.2024
Tadjikistan	59		Nurali Rahimov, NBCUT, 10.09.2024
Kazakhstan	45		S. Sklyarenko, ACBK, 15.07.2024
Kirgisistan	72		T. Asykulov, Kyrgyz Wildlife Consenation Society, 28.10.2024
Turkmenistan	0		E. Rustamov, Hunting and Fishing Society of Turkmenistan, 21.09.2024
<b>South Africa</b>			
	2		L. Underhill, University of Cape Town, 10.10.2024

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