

Results of the epidemiological wastewater surveillance of polioviruses in Slovenia

In 2024, Slovenia implemented epidemiological wastewater surveillance of polioviruses. Wastewater sampling is conducted quarterly at selected wastewater treatment plants, in accordance with the [Wastewater surveillance plan of polioviruses in Slovenia](#).

The last confirmed case of poliomyelitis in Slovenia occurred in 1978. Therefore, the primary objective of epidemiological wastewater surveillance of polioviruses in Slovenia is to detect any potential reintroduction of polioviruses into the country.

Monitoring results

Composite sample (for the area)	Results								
	4 th and 5 th Mar 2024	3 rd and 4 th June 2024	2 nd and 3 rd Sept 2024	2 nd and 3 rd Dec 2024	3 rd and 4 th Mar 2025	2 nd and 3 rd June 2025	1 st and 2 nd Sept 2025	1 st and 2 nd Dec 2025	2 nd and 3 rd Mar 2026
Central Slovenian region – Ljubljana ¹	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative
Central Slovenian region – other ²	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative
Primorska region ³	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	SL3* (WWTP Nova Gorica)	negative	negative	negative
Celje-Novo mesto region ⁴	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative
Eastern Slovenia region ⁵	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative	negative

¹ WWTP Ljubljana; ² WWTP Domžale-Kamnik, WWTP Kranj, WWTP Trbovlje, WWTP Litija in Šmartno pri Litiji, WWTP Zagorje; ³ WWTP Koper, WWTP Nova Gorica, WWTP Postojna; ⁴ WWTP Celje, WWTP Šaleške doline, WWTP Novo mesto, WWTP Brežice; ⁵ WWTP Maribor, WWTP Murska Sobota, WWTP Slovenj Gradec.

Interpretation of results

The monitoring plan covers 16 major wastewater treatment plants, representing 34.2% of Slovenia's population across all statistical regions. Microbiological analysis of wastewater samples **in March 2026 revealed no presence of polioviruses**.

* In the wastewater sample from the WWTP Nova Gorica (from the composite sample for the Primorska region), the presence of a Sabin-like type 3 (SL3) was confirmed in June 2025.

Sabin polioviruses are used in oral polio vaccines (OPV). OPV is still widely used in national routine immunization programs in many countries outside of Europe, particularly in Asia and Africa. As a result, vaccine-derived Sabin and Sabin-like polioviruses can often be detected in the population and in wastewater in areas where OPV is used for routine immunization, or in wastewater from areas where individuals recently vaccinated with OPV—who may be shedding the virus—are or have recently been present. The presence of SL3 in the wastewater at the Central Wastewater Treatment Plant Nova Gorica (CČN Nova Gorica) therefore did not pose a risk to public health, and no additional measures were necessary. However, it does demonstrate that Slovenia has a very sensitive and well-functioning system for epidemiological surveillance of polioviruses in wastewater.

Nevertheless, additional monitoring of polioviruses was carried out in wastewater samples from CČN Nova Gorica on June 17 and June 23, 2025. Polioviruses were not detected in these samples, suggesting that individuals vaccinated with OPV are no longer shedding the SL3 virus in the area of CČN Nova Gorica, or that such individuals are no longer present in this area.

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