

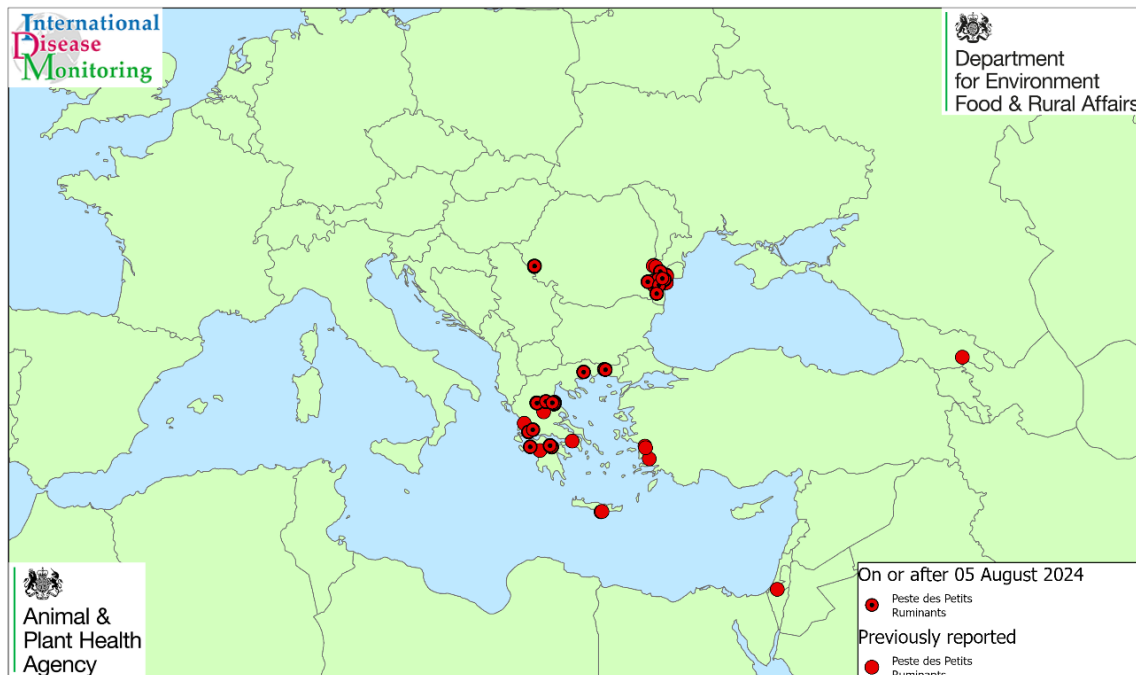
Updated Outbreak Assessment #4

Peste des Petits Ruminants in Greece and Romania

9 September 2024

Disease Report

Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) was detected for the first time in Greece in early July 2024 and then a week later in Romania. In our previous outbreak assessment dated 5 August 2024 ([PPR in Greece and Romania \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)), 35 outbreaks of PPR had been reported in Greece across most of the country, with 2 of those in the island of Crete. There were 46 outbreaks in Romania, all on the Black Sea coast in the east of the country except 1 near the border with Serbia. Since then (until 9 September 2024), the number of outbreaks in Greece has increased to 67 as reported to the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) although geographical spread has been limited and there have been no further detections in Crete. In Romania (until 9 September 2024), a further 21 outbreaks of PPR have been reported to WOA, again with limited geographical spread since our previous report on 5 August 2024. Of these, 15 were around Tulcea near the Black Sea coast and the other 6 outbreaks were in close proximity in the west of Romania on the border with Serbia (not discernible at resolution provided by the scale of the map below). The total number of outbreaks in Romania is 67 reported to WOA (to 9 September 2024).



Map Prepared by IDM

Date: 11/09/2024

Absolute Scale: 1:24,255,412

Peste des Petits Ruminants
January 2023 to September 2024
(WOAH Data Only)

0 450 900 1,350
Km

Situation Assessment

The first outbreak of PPR was detected in Greece on 8 July 2024. Since our previous report ([PPR in Greece and Romania \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) on 5 August 2024, there have been another 32 outbreaks of PPR reported in sheep and/or goats in Greece to WOA (to 9 September 2024). Of these, 2 were in the north-east in the region of Macedonia and Thrace, 19 were in the south-west in the region of Peloponnese, Western Greece and the Ionian Islands and a further 11 outbreaks were in the region of Thessaly and Central Greece (see map above). Herd sizes in the region of the Peloponnese, Western Greece and the Ionian Islands were typically around 100 to 300 head while in Thessaly and Central Greece there were some larger herds with up to 3,206 head. The 2 herds in the region of Macedonia and Thrace were smaller at 40 and 170 head of sheep. The most recent outbreak involved a herd of 150 sheep in the region of the Peloponnese, Western Greece and the Ionian Islands and detected on the 5 September 2024. There have been no further outbreaks near Athens nor the island of Crete and no spread north-west towards North Macedonia. The total number of outbreaks on WOA to 9 September 2024 is 67. Overall, it appears that while there have been more outbreaks in the last month, further substantial geographical spread has been contained. The number of notified outbreaks per week in Greece peaked at 17 in the week of 28 July 2024, falling week on week with just 2 in the week of 18 August 2024 (PAFF 2024a).

In Greece all measures in EU Reg 2020/687 are being implemented (PAFF 2024a). These include zoning, total stamping out of all animals in the affected flocks, sanitary burial or incineration of carcasses, animal movement control within zones, prohibition of dispatch outside the infected Regional Unit, cleaning and disinfection of the farms, enforcement of biosecurity measures at farms, slaughterhouses and commercial activities, and surveillance of all herds within the Surveillance and Protection Zones.

The first outbreak of PPR in Romania was detected on 15 July 2024. Since our previous outbreak assessment ([PPR in Greece and Romania \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)) on the 5 August 2024 there have been a further 15 outbreaks reported to WOA in the east of Romania near to the Black Sea (see map above). Of these, 3 are in the south in Contansta, 1 is slightly further west in Ialomita and 10 are more to the north in Tulcea. In addition, there have been 6 further outbreaks in sheep in Clopodia in the west of Romania near the border with Serbia. This brings the total number of PPR outbreaks in Romania to 67 (to 9 September 2024). Although some outbreaks in the east around the Black Sea coast are within 30 km and 50 km respectively of the borders with Moldova in the north and Bulgaria in the south, there has been no marked geographical spread of PPR in Romania since our previous outbreak assessment on the 5 August. According to the Animal Disease Information System (ADIS 2024) there have been 67 outbreaks of PPR in Romania (to 2 September 2024) in agreement with data on WOA. Based on data for 60 outbreaks of PPR in Romania in 39 days, 37 outbreaks were in backyard premises, 15 were in small commercial farms and 8 were on big commercial farms (PAFF 2024b).

Control measures in Romania include checks on compliance with the movement ban, appropriate biosecurity measures for people coming into contact with animals and for vehicles (PAFF 2024b). Additional measures include traffic controls to detect illegal movements of sheep and their products and awareness campaigns. It is interesting to note that the number of outbreaks reported per week increased more rapidly albeit starting a week later in Romania than in Greece (PAFF 2024c).

Transport of infected livestock is the main risk factor for PPR transmission (EFSA 2015) although experts consider that it is possible that semen, oocytes as well as embryos obtained from PPR virus-infected animals can contain the infectious pathogen (EFSA 2022) albeit with large uncertainty. No livestock or germinal products are entering Great Britain from the affected areas. Experts also consider that it is possible that PPR virus can be spread through movement of animal products including fresh meat, offal, raw milk and animal by-products (EFSA 2022). Thus, it is assumed here that products of animal origin and meat may present a small risk. In our previous outbreak assessment on the 5 August 2024 the risk level for Great Britain was increased from negligible to **very low** due to the rapid increase in the number of outbreaks, the large geographical jumps detected both in Greece and Romania, and the likelihood of more outbreaks (based on the anticipated trajectory at that time point), together with the possibility of illegal entry of products of animal origin. Since our previous outbreak assessment, there has been no further marked geographical spread in either country and the rate of more outbreaks appears to have levelled off. In response and to safeguard the sheep and goat populations of Great Britain from PPR, Defra announced on 21 August 2024 strict new controls suspending personal imports of certain sheep and goat commodities such as meat, cheese and milk products (Defra 2024). Specifically, it is no longer permitted to bring sheep and goat meat and meat products, or sheep and goat milk and milk products that have not been produced and packaged to commercial standards from the EU, EFTA states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), the Faroe Islands and Greenland. Additionally, commercially produced and packaged sheep and goat milk and milk products are not permitted from Greece or Romania. These measures will remain in place until PPR no longer presents a risk to Great Britain through the import of those products. The epizootic is ongoing and while imports from Greece and Romania have been stopped, spread could occur to neighbouring EU countries from which packaged sheep and goat meat can still be imported into Great Britain. The risk level for entry of PPR to Great Britain is therefore maintained at **very low**.

Conclusion

Although both Greece and Romania have reported more outbreaks of peste des petits ruminants (PPR), there have been no further reports of large geographical spread in either country.

Since our previous outbreak assessment on the 5 August 2024 (to 9 September 2024) there have been 32 more outbreaks in Greece taking the total to 67 and 21 more outbreaks in Romania taking the total to 67.

In our previous outbreak assessment (5 August 2024), the risk level for entry of PPR to Great Britain was increased from negligible to **very low**. Transport of live infected animals is the main risk factor for spread of PPR although germinal products and products of animal origin including meat and milk may present a small risk. Although there are no data to suggest any imports of live animals and germinal products to Great Britain, and the import into Great Britain of unpackaged meat products and milk from Romania and Greece is now banned, the emergence of PPR in the Black Sea basin is still a developing situation and there could yet be spread to other EU Member States. The risk of PPR introduction to Great Britain as a result of these outbreaks in Romania and Greece is therefore maintained at **very low**.

We will continue to monitor the situation, as this is an important exotic disease which will be a concern for Europe in terms of its ability to spread and its impact on livestock and the economy.

Authors

Dr Paul Gale

Megan Arter-Hazzard

Dr Sonny Bacigalupo

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Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

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PAFF (2024c) [Peste des petits ruminants in the EU \(Greece- Romania\). Epidemiological situation and measures at EU level \(europa.eu\)](#)



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Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at iadm@apha.gov.uk