

Preliminary Outbreak Assessment #6

Sheep and goat pox in Europe

23 June 2025

Disease report

Romania has reported six outbreaks of sheep and goat pox (SGP), which are the first reports in the country. Since our last assessment, Bulgaria and Greece have continued to report outbreaks of SGP to WOA (World Organisation for Animal Health). Since then, Bulgaria has reported three outbreaks of SGP, and Greece has reported 91 outbreaks. [Previous preliminary outbreak assessments](#) (POAs) are available online.



Figure 1: Map showing sheep and goat pox outbreaks from 1 January 2025 to 23 June 2025. Points with a black dot inside occurred on or after 16 May 2025.

Situation assessment

SGP is a viral disease that generally only affects sheep and goats. Usually, the disease is transmitted by direct contact between animals in pens, in groups, or at

gatherings; for example at pasture or at markets. It can also be transmitted through inhalation of aerosols of saliva, nasal, respiratory and conjunctival secretions. Transmission by indirect contact with contaminated environments and fomites, including wool and hair is possible, but less frequent than direct transmission (Sprygin et al. 2019). Indirect transmission through contaminated vehicles, bedding, fodder or animal products (such as wool) is also possible. Virus is abundant in skin lesions and scabs and is viable for months in the environment (Kitching 2004; Bowden et al. 2008). SGPV can also be transmitted mechanically by biting insects such as stable flies (Bhanuprakash et al. 2006).

This assessment is an update to the situation in Europe, previously reported in [May 2025](#).

Romania

On 16 June 2025, Romania reported two outbreaks of SGP, having never reported the disease before. The outbreaks were near to each other, in Teleorman county which borders Bulgaria in the south. One outbreak was on a farm premises with 490 sheep, the other was on a backyard premises with mixed herd of 241 sheep and goats. On 23 June 2025, Romania reported four further outbreaks of SGP to WOA. Of these, two were on backyard farms housing 237 and 340 sheep, respectively and the other two on backyard farms housing mixed herds of 210 and 395 sheep and goats, respectively. From WOA, five of the outbreaks were in close proximity to each other and the remaining outbreak around 6km away from these.

[According to media reports](#), the disease was initially detected during routine checks. Measures were introduced to limit the spread of the virus, including slaughtering all animals from the affected premises and proper disposal of the carcasses, as approved by the National Environmental Guard and the Teleorman Water Management System. [Grazing in the affected area has been prohibited for at least a week](#) (europafm.ro). Additionally, a 3km protection zone and a 10km surveillance zone have been established and movement restrictions introduced. Epidemiological investigations and surveillance in surrounding counties have begun (puterea.ro).

Bulgaria

Three outbreaks have been reported in Bulgaria since our last report on 15 May 2025. In Haskovo province in the south of the country, one outbreak was on a farm with 201 sheep and goats, and one outbreak was on a backyard premises with 11 sheep. The third outbreak was on a farm premises with 183 sheep in Burgas province in the south-east. The last outbreak of SGP in Burgas occurred in September 2023.

These outbreaks bring the total in Bulgaria to four since May 2025, and follows a period of three months earlier this year with no reports. Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2025/948 was introduced on 15 May to help reduce further spread of the disease and was in place until 7 June 2025 ([PAFF presentation](#)). Measures included movement restrictions, clinical examinations within the PS and SZ, and enhanced passive surveillance and biosecurity.

Greece

Greece has reported 91 outbreaks since the last report on 15 May 2025. The majority of the outbreaks have been on farm premises with sheep herds (67 outbreaks), with 24 outbreaks on farm premises with mixed herds of sheep and goats. Herd sizes for these outbreaks were not listed.

The recent outbreaks have occurred in clusters throughout the south of the country, in areas such as Xanthi (27 outbreaks), Larisa and Magnisia (20 outbreaks), Fokida and Aitoloakarnania (35 outbreaks), and Chalkidiki (8 outbreaks).

Between 14 and 16 May 2025, an EU-VET mission took place in the Chalkidiki region of Greece ([PAFF presentation](#)). The points raised that Greece is working on after the visit include; compulsory PCR pre-testing for movement of animals in restricted zones, PCR pre-testing in high-risk areas, drafting detailed procedures for the repopulation of establishments, creating cleaning and disinfection checklists for trucks transporting live animals, and running training sessions (with 2 planned in May 2025).

Türkiye

According to [ADIS summaries](#), Türkiye reported two outbreaks of SGP in May 2025. According to [media reports](#), these occurred in Değirmenlik village and İskele center in the north of the island of Cyprus ([bugunkibris.com](#)). The introduction of the virus was [attributed to uncontrolled animal movements without permission](#) ([kirbristurk.com](#)). To control the situation, [a quarantine was imposed and emergency vaccination initiated on 27 May](#) ([bugunkibris.com](#)). As of 30 May, the [media reported](#) that 18,000 ruminants on 156 premises had been vaccinated ([kibrispostasi.com](#)).

Conclusions

This is the fourth incursion of SGP into a European Union Member State in recent years. Spain, after experiencing its first SGP outbreak since 1968 in September 2022, was declared SPGP free in November 2023. Greece reported its first SGP outbreak in October 2023 and Bulgaria reported the presence of the disease in September 2024. The source of the outbreaks remains unknown.

Great Britain already has restrictions in place regarding trade in sheep and goats and their products from Romania, as a result of outbreaks of peste des petits ruminants outbreaks. This includes live animals, germplasm, raw milk and products, untreated wool and hair and fresh skins and hides. There have been no imports of live sheep or goats, fresh or chilled skins or hides or germplasm from Greece, Türkiye and Bulgaria. Greece and Bulgaria are currently restricted due to previous SGP outbreaks and Great Britain does not trade with Türkiye in any relevant commodities. Additionally, due to the FMD situation in Europe, from [12 April 2025](#) it has been illegal for travellers to bring cattle, sheep, goat, and pig meat, as well as dairy products, from EU countries into Great Britain for personal use (personal imports) with very [limited exemptions](#). Live animals, germinal products and untreated

wool, hair, skins and hides are not permitted for personal import under separate rules.

Based on the distance of these outbreaks from UK, commercial import restrictions and EU wide restrictions regarding personal imports, the risk of introduction of SGP to the UK through all pathways is currently considered to be **LOW**. We will continue to monitor the situation.

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