

Updated Outbreak Assessment #9

Peste des Petits Ruminants in Europe

14 April 2026

Disease Report

Since the last outbreak assessment on 22 December 2025, 6 outbreaks of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) in Europe have been reported to WOA. Of these, 4 outbreaks were reported in Croatia between 2 January 2026 and 20 February 2026, with both sheep and goats affected. The 2 additional outbreaks were reported in Albania during February and April 2026, also affecting small ruminant mixed herds. These outbreaks have occurred in countries previously known to be affected by PPR. This indicates that the disease may still be circulating in these regions, despite control measures implemented by relevant authorities. Though, the number of reports in Albania is significantly fewer than in the interim period between the previous 2 outbreak reports. These reports however, have occurred close to the borders of other neighbouring countries, namely North Macedonia and Greece, increasing the risk of incursion into these territories. However, the risk of disease incursion to Great Britain and neighbouring territories remains at **very low (very rare but cannot be excluded)**.

PPR is a viral disease with [high morbidity and mortality](#), mainly affecting small ruminants. [Symptoms of PPR](#) include sudden onset of depression, fever, discharges from the eyes and nose, sores in the mouth, difficulty breathing, cough, foul-smelling diarrhoea and death. PPR has several differential diagnoses including the eradicated disease rinderpest, FMD (foot and mouth disease), bluetongue, CCPP (Contagious Caprine Pleuropneumonia) and Orf. Younger ruminants, especially sheep, often show more severe symptoms than older individuals, who may only exhibit symptoms when co-infected with other pathogens. This suggests that not all affected individuals may exhibit clinical signs of the disease. Furthermore, it indicates an underlying possibility of subclinical spread ([EURL](#), [see previous assessment](#)).

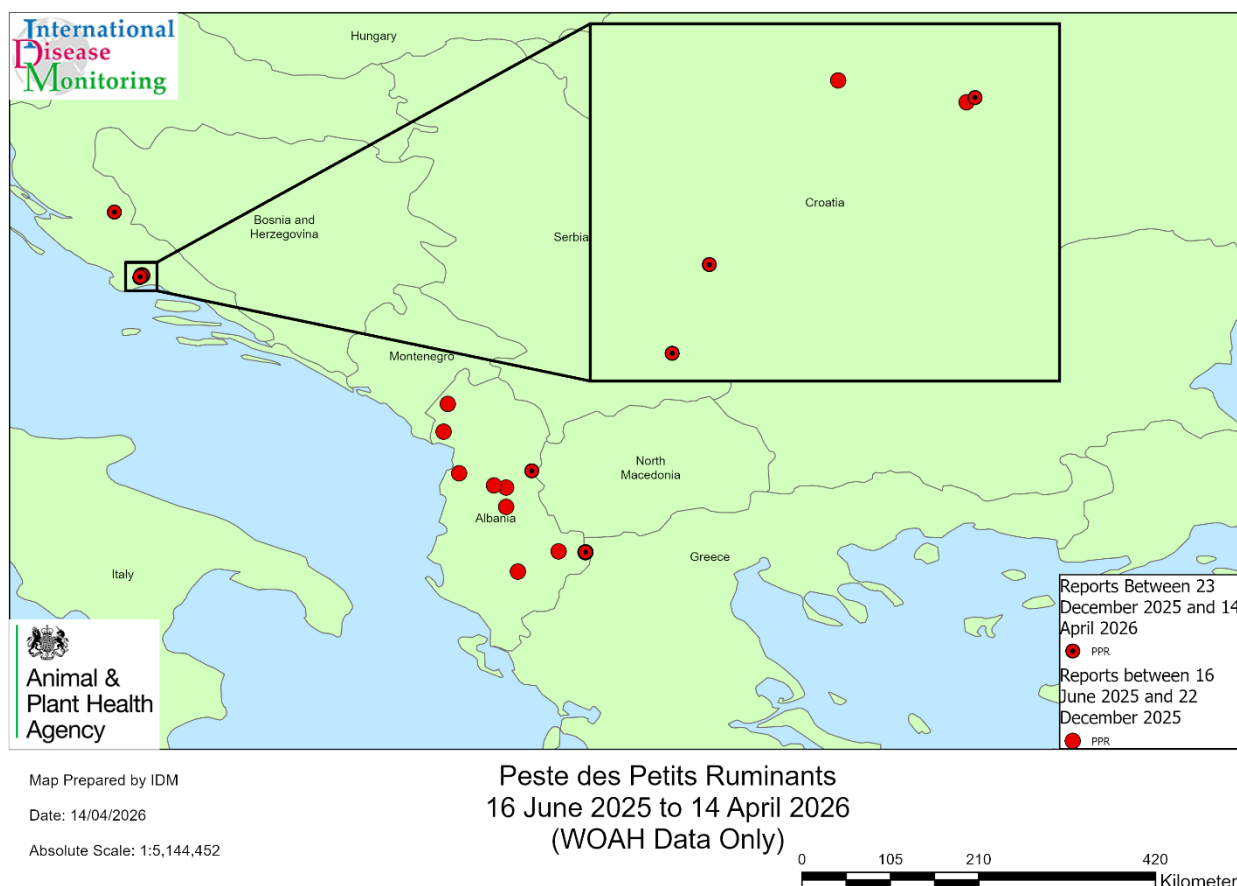


Figure 1. Map of PPR outbreaks reported to WOA in Europe between 16 June 2025 and 14 April 2026.

Situation Assessment

Albania

Since our last update on 22 December 2025, Albania has reported 2 additional PPR outbreaks in the country. The first of which occurred on 20 February 2026 on a farm in Progër, close to the Greek and North Macedonian borders, housing a mixed herd of sheep and goats ([World Organisation of Animal Health-WOAH](https://www.woah.org/), see Figure 1). This was deemed to be part of the same outbreak that began on 3 July 2025. Of a herd of 81,13 goats at the premises tested PCR-positive for PPR. Whole-herd culling was performed as a preventative measure. The second outbreak was [reported](#) on 1 April 2026 affecting a farm containing a mixed herd of sheep and goats, in addition to a population of wild boar which may provide an additional route of disease transmission between ruminant populations. No information is available however as to whether wild boars on the premises were tested, or how many were present. As of the writing of this report, 48 goats out of a susceptible population of 207 individuals on the farm have tested positive for PPR. Infection was confirmed using RT PCR on the sampled population. This outbreak occurred in the Maqellarë region, further north than the aforementioned outbreak, which once again borders North Macedonia.

Disinfection, movement control, disposal of animal products, disposal of carcasses, quarantine, traceability, and zoning have all been implemented as control measures. However stamping out controls have yet to be applied to the second incident, though has been [planned to be implemented](#) as of 1 April 2026.

Greece has reported to WOAAH that they have not had any additional cases of PPR in the country [since late 2024](#). North Macedonia has never officially reported an outbreak of the disease. In response to the proximity of PPR however, authorities in North Macedonia and Kosovo have increased biosecurity measures to prevent potential incursions. For instance, increasing border controls and [nationwide preparedness](#). The Food and Veterinary Agency of Kosovo (AUVA), in coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, [have prohibited sheep and goat imports from Albania](#). Stricter monitoring on border controls have been implemented, with authorities informing local farmers to “keep their herds under supervision and avoid any contact with the herds of farmers from Albania”. Other control measures have put in place in these border districts, including ceasing unnecessary animal movements, immediate reporting of clinical signs, limited contact of herds with other animals, and increased biosecurity on farms, such as no purchasing livestock without a known health status ([Gazeta Express](#)). According to media reports on 8 April 2026, 10 tonnes of sheep and lamb skin originating from Albania were seized by North Macedonia’s official veterinarians of the Food and Veterinary Agency (AHV), at the Qafasan border crossing ([Republika.mk](#), [Fokus.mk](#)). It has also been reported that due to these increases in PPR incidents in southern Europe, many European vets are calling for stricter surveillance and biosecurity measures to be implemented ([Reussir.fr](#)).

Recent religious festivals that took place on or around the outbreak on 1 April 2026, may have led to an increased movements of small ruminants in the region. Eid-al-Fitr and Easter both occurred during this period. A recent demographic census suggested 60% of the population, or higher, were likely to participate in these events ([KoSSev.info](#)). Thus, large numbers of animals and animal products may have also been circulated to accommodate these cultural and religious festivals. This may have contributed to spread of the disease.

Research has implicated that informal trade networks operating across the Balkans create a significant disease transmission risk. Unmonitored movement of small ruminants in transit areas often bypass local veterinary controls and can link border regions to wider regional animal flows ([Uber 2026](#)). Eid-al-Adha is set to take place during the end of May 2026. This has the potential to provide a window of increased transmission risk, as animals are moved between rural and urban markets. We will continue to monitor the situation in these affected areas.

Croatia

Croatia reported its first outbreak of PPR on 13 December 2025, with a second on 20 December 2025 ([see our last updated outbreak assessment](#)). Since the previous updated outbreak assessment on 22 December 2025, 4 additional PPR outbreaks have been [reported to WOAAH](#). The first of which was reported 2 January 2026 on a farm in Gračac, a region around 80km from the border of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Both goats and sheep

were present at this farm. Although seemingly geographically isolated from the rest of the outbreak cluster (see Figure 1), tests were undertaken at this premises via back-tracing of the second confirmed outbreak on 20 December. According to PAFF presentations, ([January 2026 PAFF Presentations - PPR - Croatia](#)) co-grazing had been confirmed between animals in this herd and those that had already tested positive. Tracing identified this premises as potentially infected and placed it under restrictions. Official supervision of veterinary inspection was also mandated from 20 December 2025 (WOAH). Out of a population of 72 individuals, samples were taken from 6 goats and 22 sheep using blood samples and nasal swabs. One swab from each species tested PCR positive. All goats sampled, in addition to 20 sheep, tested ELISA positive. As a result, the entire flock was culled, with depopulation, stamping out, and preliminary cleaning and disinfection conducted on 27 December 2025.

The remaining 3 outbreaks all occurred in Prgomet, a region in the South of Croatia, roughly 40km from the border of Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the same region as the initial outbreaks reported in December 2025. Reported to WOAHA on 9 January 2026, surveillance in the protected zone, previously established due to the earlier outbreaks, identified a farm as having probable contact with other infected animals. This was in the village of Trolokve. Out of a population of 30 individuals, 5 sheep and 16 goats were sampled (WOAH). PCR positive for PPR tests were found for 3 of the nasal swabs from the goats present. The next report happened on 22 January 2026. Details emerged from a farm containing sheep and goats in Splitsko-Dalmatinska, close to the other outbreaks in the area. This location held 16 goats and 19 sheep. One sheep tested positive for PPR, and the entire herd was preventatively culled to stop the spread of the disease in both instances.

The final of these outbreaks was reported to WOAHA on 20 February 2026. This was at an establishment holding 10 sheep located in village Bogdanovići, close to the initial incursion event. Due to an epidemiological link with this outbreak, all animals on the farm were preventively culled. Before this happened however, antemortem sampling was performed on the animals at the premises. PCR tests showed negative results on these additional swabs. However, blood samples were also taken, with 1 sample showing positive when an ELISA test was performed. This sample was sent to the European Union Reference Laboratories (EURLs) for additional testing. On 17 February 2026 EURL reported that the sample gave a positive result under Virus Neutralisation Tests (VNTs). VNTs, unlike ELISA which only detects if antibodies are present in the sample, shows positive if the antibodies, and thus the virus, are still functional, thus providing a more robust method of testing disease presence and prevalence ([Science Direct](#)). Similar disease control methods as employed in the abovementioned outbreak report from 2 January were employed for all these disease incidents in the country.

Although the latest report to WOAHA was in February 2026, the start of this outbreak was traced back to 17 December 2025. Tracing the other reports back to the initial start of their outbreak all showed dates between 1 and 2 weeks prior to official reports. Meaning that Croatia has not registered the start of any new outbreak since 13 January 2026.

According to [March PAFF presentations](#), Croatia lifted the northern restricted zone on 6 February 2026 and the southern restricted zone on 4 March 2026. Croatia plans to start efforts to regain PPR-free status from WOAAH in quarter 2 of 2026.

The source of this incursion into the country has yet to be established, though illegal transportation of animals or animal products is suspected.

Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Food Safety Agency (BFSA) has not issued any new alerts or confirmed cases of PPR during the period between outbreak assessment, with the last reported outbreak happening in 2024.

Greece

No new outbreaks of PPR have been reported by Greece's Ministry of Rural Development and Food since late 2024.

Hungary

The last reported outbreak of PPR in Hungary occurred in January 2025. As of 27 February 2026, the special measures for Hungary in relation to the trade of animals and related products to Great Britain, that applied from 1 February 2025, have been revoked. The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is satisfied that there is no reason to currently suspect the existence of PPR in Hungary, and that the restrictions on certain products originating from Hungary are no longer required. This further indicates that methods of control implemented in this region have been effective in mitigating the spread of PPR, and therefore connote a significant improvement on the disease situation, at least in respect to Hungary.

Romania

No new reports of PPR have been released by Romanian authorities since the outbreak confirmed on 5 March 2025 in Bihor county. Despite this, in December 2025 the European commission extended the trade ban on caprine and ovine animals from Romania to other member states of the European Union. Initially set to expire on 31 December 2025, the new expiration date was extended to 30 June 2026. Citing "ongoing uncertainty and the lack of information on the current epidemiological situation regarding infection with peste des petits ruminants virus in Romania", as their chief [rationale](#).

Implications for Great Britain

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. Experts also consider that it is possible that PPR virus can be spread through movement of animal products including fresh meat, offal, raw milk, raw milk products, untreated hair and wool, and untreated skins and hides ([EFSA 2022](#)). Thus, it is assumed here that products of animal origin and meat may present a small risk. The treatment of hair, wool, skins and hides mitigates the risk of PPR survival in these products.

There has been no trade in susceptible live animals with Croatia in 2024 or 2025 and Great Britain has had no live-animal agricultural trade with Albania in recent decades. There have been import restrictions on untreated wool and hair from sheep and goats from Albania since June 2025. Since December 2025, trade restrictions were introduced for Croatia for import of live sheep and goats, germplasm, raw milk and raw milk products (including colostrum) through updates to Great Britain's approved country lists. Similarly, restrictions on untreated wool and hair, and fresh and chilled untreated skins and hides have been introduced. Special measures introduced for Greece, Romania, and Bulgaria in 2024 on the trade of animals and animal products still remain in effect. ([Continuing the United Kingdom's trade relationship with Albania \(web version\) - GOV.UK](#), [Imports, exports and EU trade of animals and animal products: topical issues - GOV.UK](#)).

In addition to this, an [EU wide ban is in place for personal imports](#) of fresh meat, meat products, milk, dairy products, colostrum, colostrum products and certain composite products and animal by-products of ruminant and porcine origin. This is in response to multiple disease outbreaks across the EU. These special measures applied from 18 December 2025 until revoked or amended and replace earlier safeguard declarations.

While the spread of PPR close to the border of a previously unaffected European country is notable, there are limited implications for Great Britain from the recent outbreaks in Croatia and Albania due to the lack of trade and the controls already in place. The risk level for entry of PPR to Great Britain is therefore maintained at **very low**. Many previously affected countries have not reported any further outbreaks in recent months or have had restrictions based on PPR status removed. However, PPR is still spreading in Europe, and there could be more outbreaks in previously affected countries, or incursions to unaffected EU member states. There still remains a risk of illegal entry of products of animal origin.

Conclusion

Albania has reported 2 outbreaks of PPR since our last report on the European PPR situation. The proximity of these incidents to neighbouring countries, Greece and North Macedonia, a region that has had no new reported outbreaks since 2024, and another that has never had a reported outbreak respectively, may be of concern. The origin of these outbreaks is still unknown.

PPR is still circulating in Croatia, with 4 reports since our previous assessment. A new outbreak zone has established further north in the country. However, this has been linked to the same outbreak cluster in the south. That said, no new infected premises have been discovered since January 2026. Strict local and national biosecurity measures have been

implemented to help stop this spread. Restriction zones employed due to the late 2025 and early 2026 outbreak zones have now been removed, showing progress towards Croatia regaining a disease-free status. At this time, the origin of the outbreaks in Croatia is still unknown, although illegal animal or animal product movements are suspected.

Many other countries have shown significant improvement in their PPR disease status, with several having no reported outbreaks in over a year. Restrictions to trade of animals and related products from Hungary to Great Britain, implemented in early 2025, have been revoked. These updates in disease status and lack of new reports therefore imply a relative improvement in disease activity for these particular regions.

Transport of live infected animals remains the main risk factor for spread of PPR although germinal products and products of animal origin may present a small risk. Increased travel, informal trade routes, and illegal animal movements during upcoming and elapsed festivals in the Balkans, may also exacerbate the transmission risk in the area. Although there is no data to suggest any imports of live animals and germinal products to Great Britain from these affected areas, and reports have decreased in some countries, 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 new outbreaks in Croatia and Albania is therefore maintained at **very low (very rare but cannot be excluded)**.

We will continue to closely 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.

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