



SPGP Expert Mission to Greece

EU VET Initiative

14 - 16 May 2025

PAFF Committee, 21st May 2025

Terms of reference:

In response to SPGP epidemiological situation in Greece

Providing on-the-spot assistance

- most suitable SPGP control and eradication measures
- scientific, technical, managerial aspects

Experts: Luis Romero (ES) – Tsviatko Alexandrov (BG)

Places visited during the mission

Day 1.

- *Meeting with the Central and Local Veterinary Authorities (Offices of Local Authority in Poligyros, Chalkidhiki).*
- *Field visit to one unaffected sheep holding and one slaughterhouse in FRZ.*

Day 2.

- *Field visit to 2 infected sheep holdings.*
- *Meeting with 3 affected farmers.*

Day 3.

- *Final meeting with Central and Local Authorities (Offices of Local Authority in Thessaloniki).*



Day 1



Unaffected sheep holding FRZ (14th May)



Slaughterhouse FRZ (14th May)

Day 2



Infected sheep holding 1 (15th May)



Infected sheep holding 1 (15th May)



Burial site of carcasses (15th May)



Day 2



Infected sheep holding 2 (15th May)



Infected sheep holding 2 (15th May)



Silage stored at Infected sheep holding 2 (15th May)

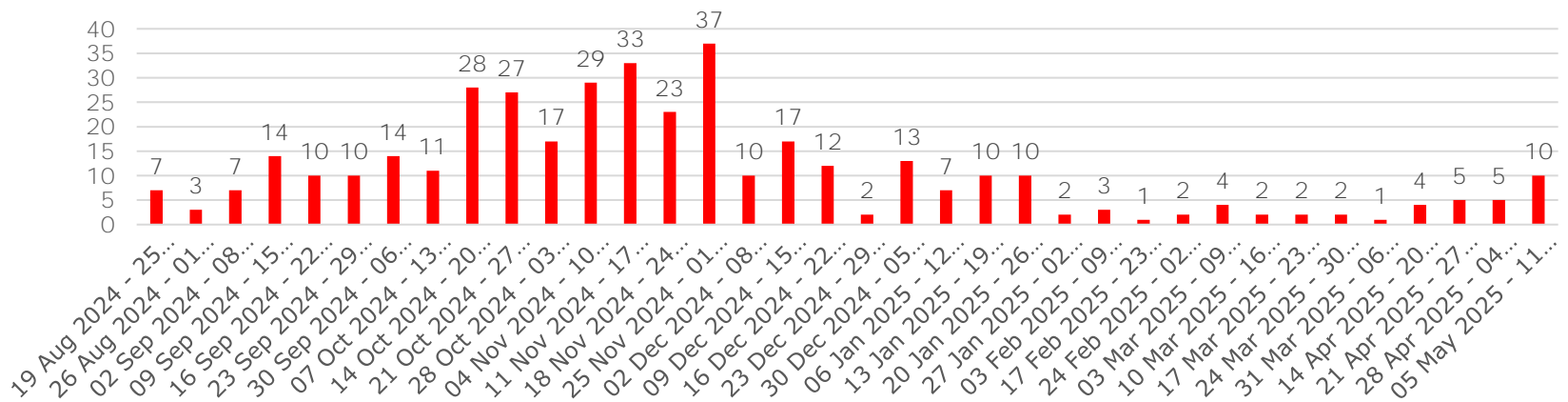
Day 3

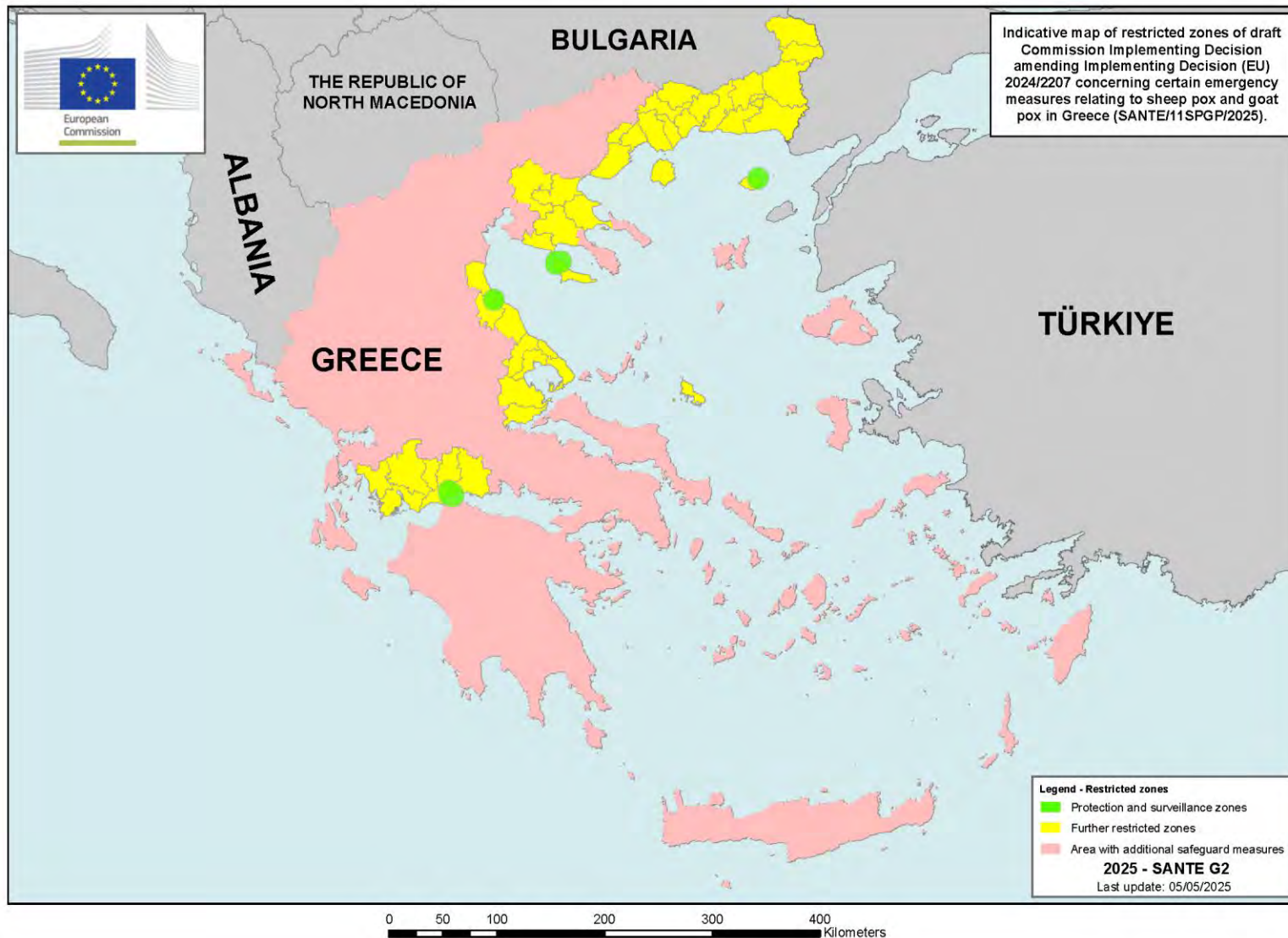


Epidemiological background and current situation

- Since August 2024 a total of 394 SPGP outbreaks have been detected in Greece and 118.000 animal have been culled (peak on October-December).
- A new increase of outbreaks has been observed during last month, probably related with animal movements in Easter Season.

Number of new SPGP outbreaks per week from Aug 2024 until 11 May 2025





All measures foreseen in Reg. (EU) 2020/687 and the National Contingency Plan are implemented:

- **Zoning:** PZ (3Km), SZ (10Km) and FRZ
- **Stamping out** of all animals in the affected flocks
- **Sanitary burial** of carcasses
- **Animal Movement Control within the zones**
- **Prohibition of the dispatch** outside the affected RU's of live animals as well as semen, ova, embryos, animal-by-products, hides and skins.
- **Cleaning and disinfection** of the farms
- **Enforcement of biosecurity measures** regarding farms, slaughterhouses and commercial activities (a cycle of training for farmers has been concluded and another one is foreseen).
- **Surveillance of all herds within the SZ and PZ** (up to five cycles).

Circular no 107821/25.04.2025 as regards movements of animals applicable until 03.06.2025

- ✓ No movements of small ruminants from the entire territory of Greece abroad until 30/09/2025 (ICD2025/716)
- ✓ All measures foreseen in Reg 687/2020 and CID fully apply to PZ, SZ and FRZ.
- ✓ Ban of movements of animals for participation in exhibitions.
- ✓ Movements of sheep and goats for fattening and production is allowed within the free zones under certain provisions.
- ✓ Risk based movements of sheep and goats for slaughter are allowed within the free Regions and RU to slaughterhouses within these Regions and RU. Transit of the vehicles through restricted zones is not allowed. For the remaining areas, provisions of 2020/687 apply.
- ✓ The measures apply until the 3rd of June 2025.

Critical points identified

- *Geographical location: border areas with country with non free status of SPGP, with intensive commercial flow (travelers, vehicles), drought of Evros river.*
- *Illegal movement of animals.*
- *Shared pastures and watering points.*
- ***Deficient C&D of vehicles (transporting animals, milk, feed...).***
- *Non-compliance with biosecurity measures.*
- *Increase of live animals trading in Eastern and tourist season.*
- *Wool shearing season.*
- *Congregation of livestock farmers at social events.*
- *Delay in notification of suspicions.*
- *Limited number of official veterinarians involved in SPGP eradication.*



Conclusions and recommendations for eradication of SPGP in Greece

- 1. The EUVET team recognise and highly acknowledge the dedication and professionalism of the limited number of official veterinarians involved in the SPGP control, on surveillance, outbreaks management, laboratory capacity, training, awareness campaigns, and many more activities.*
- 2. Measures implemented so far seem not to be sufficient: stricter and additional measures are needed to limit and restrict the virus spread.*
- 3. Pre-movement PCR test of saliva samples (pooles of 5 samples) depending on the epidemiological situation and risk of the animal movement (transhumance).*
- 4. Stronger legal enforcement rules (effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties) for unauthorized animal movements, as well as support in the field by police or other competent authorities.*

- 5. Ensure compliance with biosecurity measures in place in holdings and slaughterhouses. Special attention must be paid on C&D of trucks of dealers/transporters and milk collection, controlling and recording the C&D before and after every delivery.*
- 6. The grazing areas must be regulated to avoid overlapping and contact between different herds.*
- 7. Wool shearers should be carefully selected, approved and supervised by the competent authority, and provided with detailed biosecurity instructions. Records of the visits of wool shearers should be available by veterinary services.*
- 8. Further training and awareness campaigns on biosecurity should be carried out.*

- 9. Repopulation should be only allowed if the basic biosecurity requirements are in place and verified by the CA and the epidemiological situation is favourable. Adoption of SOP by CA.*
- 10. Detailed epidemiological surveys should be finalized to investigate the source of infection and modes of transmission (external expertise: STM or other mechanism).*
- 11. Disease awareness effort should be continued and reinforced all over the country to improve timely reporting of any suspicious and compliance with the control measures.*
- 12. In case of suspicious of TADs in small ruminants, SPGP, FMD and PPR should be tested for confirmation or rule out.*

13. Considering

- *the constant present of the disease since 2023,*
- *the limited number of official veterinarians involved in the SPGP control,*
- *the identified gaps in biosecurity,*
- *the possible underreporting of disease suspicious,*
- *the late detection of the disease in some cases,*
- *the possible illegal movement of animals,*
- *not clear evidence for the way of spreading in the territory,*
- *the stability of the virus,*
- *the observed relatively easy spread in newly affected areas,*
- *and that more outbreaks are expected,*

Implementation of a vaccination campaign against SPGP is highly recommended at least within the restricted zones. This decision should have the support of unions and associations of farmers, as well as the dairy industry.



The EU-VET team would like to thank all colleagues from Greece for their great support and help!

The working atmosphere during the mission was excellent. The colleagues from Greece gave all their support and assistance to facilitate a fruitful mission. The EUVET team wishes to thank all colleagues presents physically and online during our visits for their excellent contributions to the discussions that which were undertaken in a very open and transparent manner. Thank you so much for your hospitality!!!