



Sheep pox and goat pox in Greece

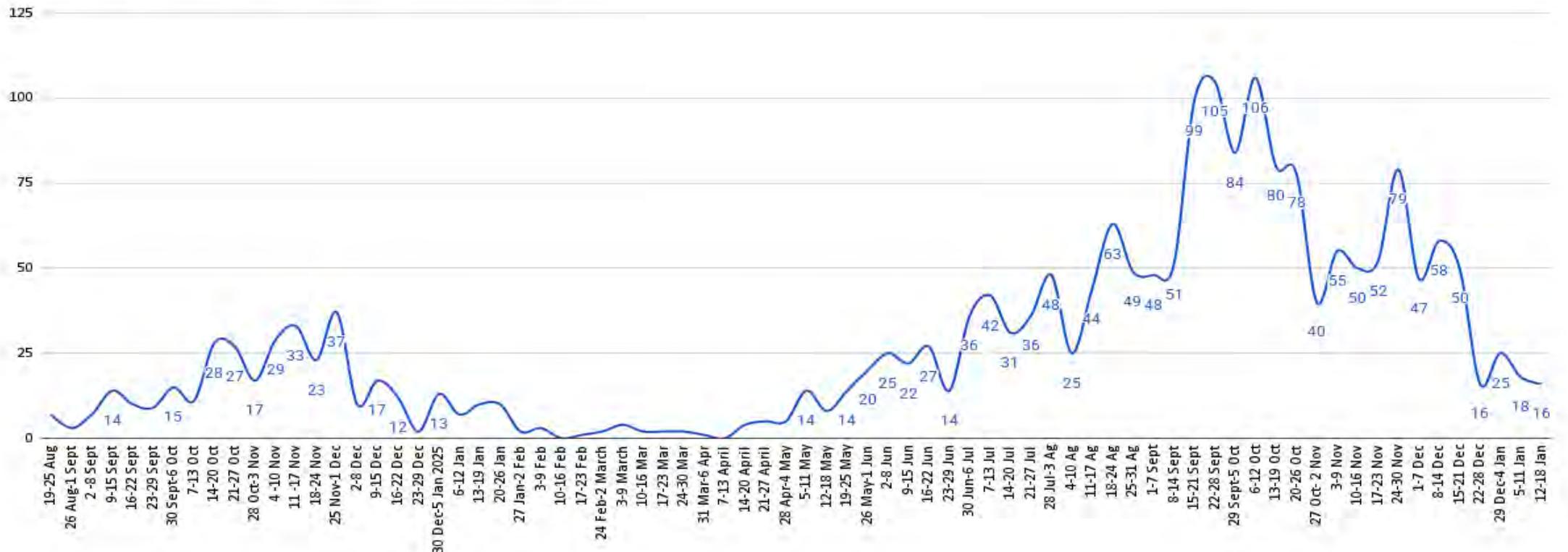
Ministry of Rural Development and Food
Directorate General of Veterinary Services
Animal Health Directorate

Update on the Epidemiological Situation

The epidemiological situation in Greece, from the first outbreak of Sheep Pox to date:

- Total number of confirmed Sheep and Goat Pox virus outbreaks August 2024 – 18th January 2026: **2061**
- Total number of animal culled: **472.98258**

Epidemiological curve. August 2024 to January 18, 2026

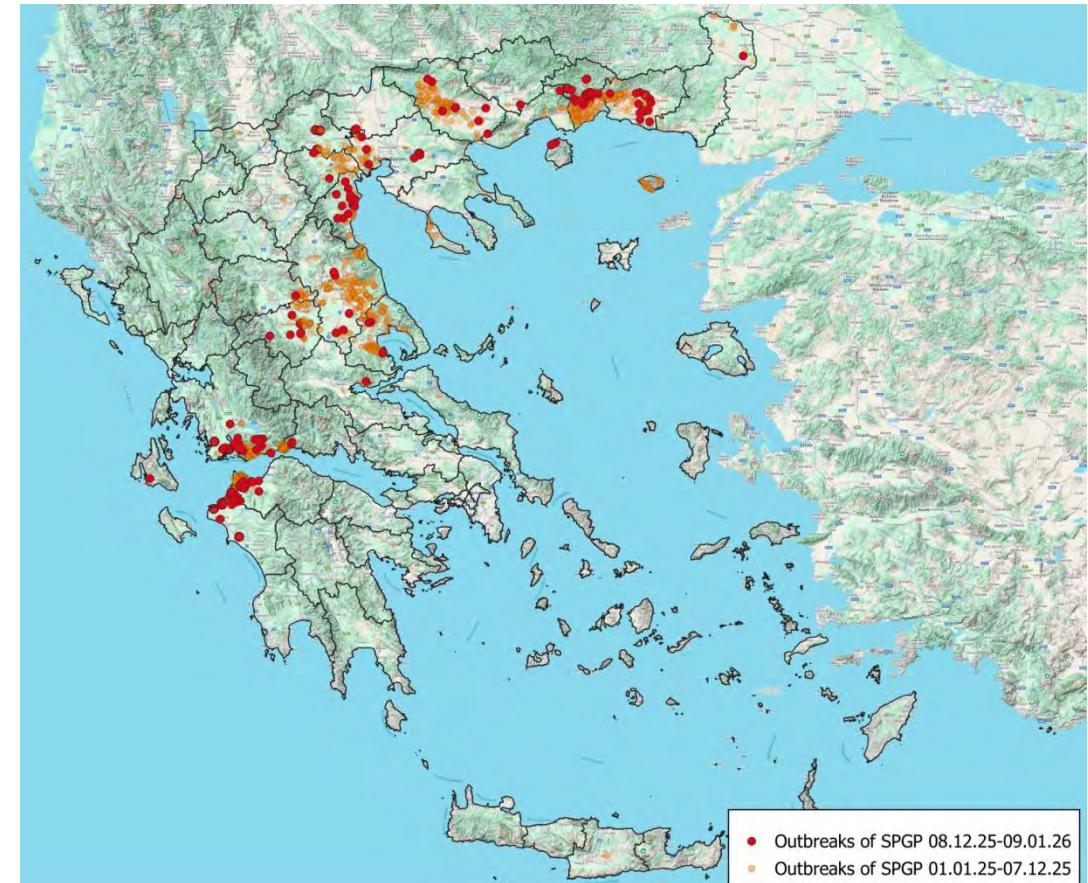
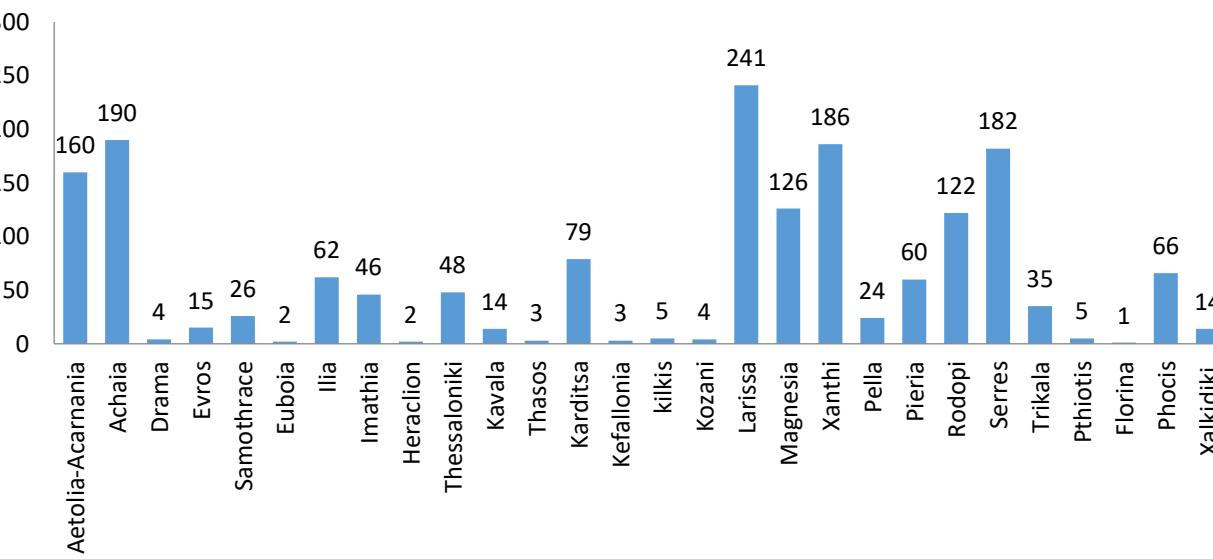


Update on the Epidemiological Situation: 01 December 2025 to 09 January 2026

Total number of outbreaks: 1726

Total number of animals culled: 372.753

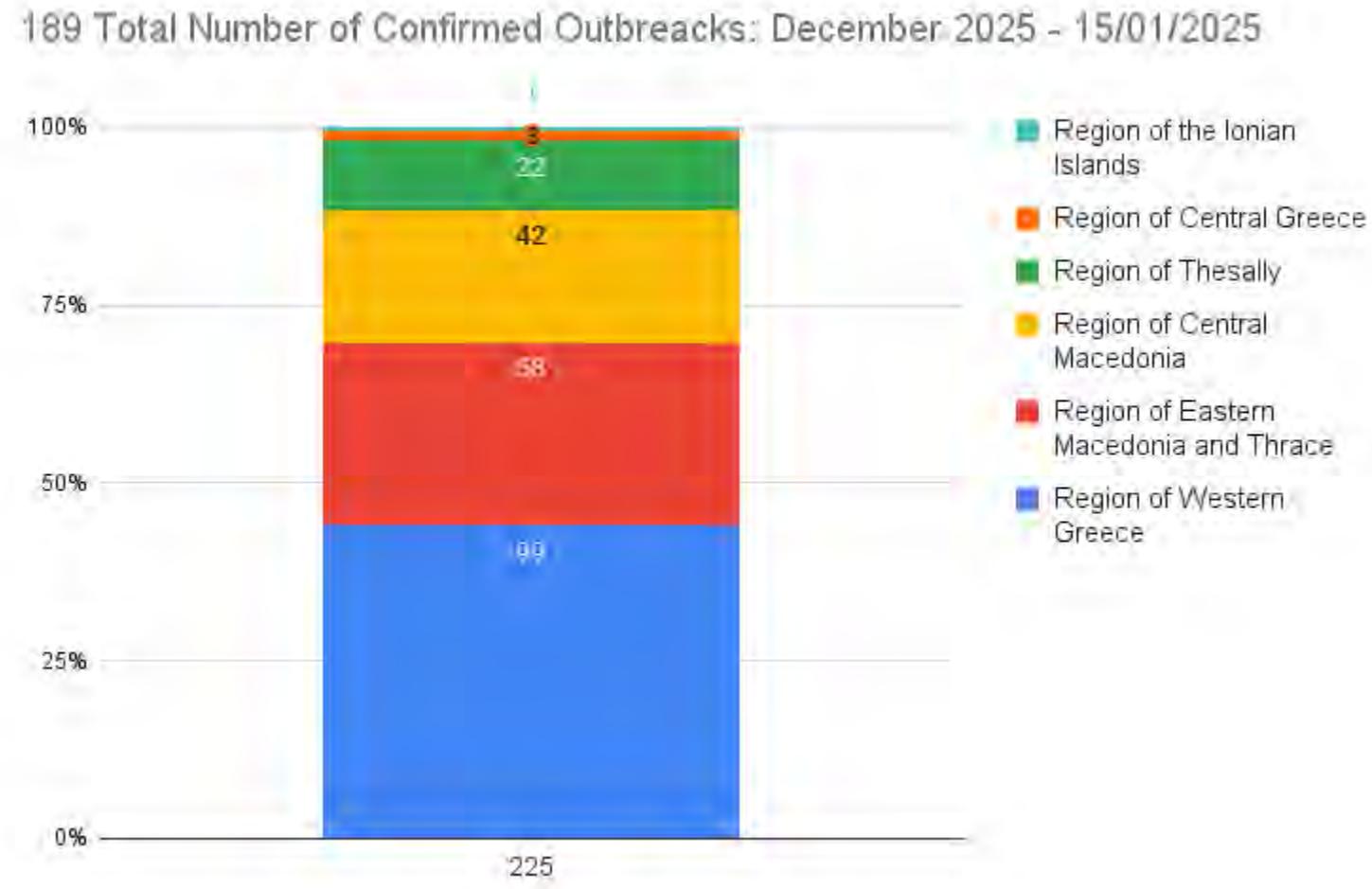
Outbreaks of SGP per R.U: 01.01.2025 - 09.01.2026



Current Epidemiological Situation

Reference Period: December 2025 - present

- During the period 01 December 2025 - 14 January 2026, a total of 189 outbreaks of sheep and goat pox have been confirmed across the country.
- The highest number of outbreaks was recorded in the Region of Western Greece (82), followed by the Regions of Eastern Macedonia & Thrace (50) and Central Macedonia (34).
- In contrast, the Region of Thessaly (19) shows a clear downward trend.



Strengthening of Official Controls

Delegation of Official Activities

Following the recommendations of the National Expert Committee for the Control and Eradication of Sheep and Goat Pox, the delegation of specific official veterinary activities was incorporated into Legislative Act (P.N.P.) 5251/2025 published on 20th November 2025.

In implementation of this legal provision, the Ministry issued Ministerial Decision No. 362534/2025, enabling the assignment of official activities—in accordance with Articles 31–33 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 and Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 2016/429—to authorized personnel for the control and eradication of sheep and goat pox.

This measure aims to enhance operational capacity, ensure timely implementation of control actions, and support the effective eradication of the disease in affected regions. The recruitment procedure regarding the administrative preparation is ongoing.



Legislative Act N. 5251/2025 provides for the recruitment of fixed-term (IΔOX) veterinarians, laboratory personnel and administrative staff, aimed at strengthening the operational capacity for the disease management.

Reinforcement of Veterinary and Support Personnel

The measure covers field activities, laboratory diagnostics, and administrative support, ensuring continuity and timely implementation of disease-control actions.

Recruitments are carried out under the fast-track procedures of Law 4765/2021, allowing for the immediate deployment of emergency personnel.

Deployment of Military Veterinarians – Ministerial Decision (Φ.454/169764 Σ.24506)

- Ministerial Decision Φ.454/169764 Σ.24506 sets out the conditions for the deployment of military veterinarians in Regional Units to address urgent and exceptional needs.
- The decision implements the mechanism foreseen in the Legislative Act 5251/2025, which allows the deployment of up to three (3) military veterinarians per Regional Unit, subject to service availability.
- Deployment is authorized for a period of up to six months, following a request from the relevant Region, submitted through the Ministry of Interior to the Ministry of National Defense.
- The procedure is ongoing by the Ministry of Defence for **24** military veterinarians in the most affected or high risk areas of the country.

Control and enforcement measures for sheep and goat pox management.

01 December 2025 – 14 January 2026

- Since 01 of December 2025 to 14 of January 2026, when nationwide inspections by the Hellenic Police commenced, **a total of 3777** checks have been carried out. The inspections identified **4 confirmed violations** and led to **4 arrests** for breaches of Article 285 of the Penal Code concerning disease-prevention measures, in conjunction with Law 4235/2014.
- Due to the Christmas holiday period and ongoing farmer protests that have led to the block of national roads, the number of official controls conducted during this time was relatively reduced.



Imposition of Financial Penalties – 2025 Overview

During 2025, a total of 110 violations were recorded, for which financial penalties amounting to 218.907 € were imposed, in accordance with Law 4235/2014.

- The sanctions concerned non-compliance with national and EU animal health legislation, particularly in relation to the control of notifiable transmissible diseases.
- Entry of animals into holdings without the required accompanying health certificates or movement documents.
- Reconstitution of a flock without prior approval from the competent veterinary authority, following compulsory culling due to sheep and goat pox.
- Illegal transport of products of animal origin.
- Unauthorized grazing (illegal grazing) in restricted or protected areas.

- Penalties were imposed following official controls carried out by the competent veterinary authorities.
- The enforcement of these penalties aims to ensure compliance, deterrence, and the protection of animal health, especially in the context of the ongoing sheep and goat pox epidemic.

IMPORTANT

Restocking in Disease-Free Areas: A pressing issue

- There is a lot of pressure to allow restocking in disease-free areas, under certain conditions ie Andros island (last outbreak 28.11.2024), Iraklion in Crete (last outbreak 06.02.2025), Florina (last outbreak 10.07.2025).
- Species Selection:
 - The responsibility for choosing the species for restocking (sheep vs. goats) rests exclusively with the Greek Competent Authorities.
 - The Commission maintains a cautious stance regarding the relative resistance of goats to SGP.

Restocking is still not allowed

EFSA contribution

- We would like to express our deep appreciation for the work performed by EFSA in such a short time period acknowledging the gravity of the epidemic and following our request for further evaluating the SGP evolution in our country.
- Special thanks to the European Commission for facilitating and accelerating the whole procedure and satisfying our request.
- The information received and reflected in the draft report EFSA is valuable and will allow us to explore the possibilities of the adoption of a possible future vaccination plan, assessing the impact of vaccination on the spread and eradication of SGP in our country.
- Still, there are some concerns from our side in regard of the study conducted that have been shared in a letter with both EFSA and the EU.

Thank You
For Your Attention