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Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
(9.10.2024)

Regulation (EU) 2017/625¹ establishes the framework for the performance of official controls on animals and goods entering the Union to verify compliance with Union rules, in particular in the areas of food safety and animal health. It provides that no consignments of animals coming from third countries can be introduced into the EU territory without being presented at the designated border control post of first arrival into the Union, where all consignments of animals must be inspected by official veterinarians. The Regulation obliges the competent authorities to have sufficient suitably qualified and experienced staff so that official controls are performed efficiently and effectively. The Commission carries out audits and inspections aimed at monitoring the implementation and enforcement of Union law on live animal imports.

The list of countries authorised to import ovine and caprine animals to the EU is limited to six countries, where no case of Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR) has been reported so far. According to currently available statistics, no consignments of sheep or goats have been imported into the EU from non-EU countries in 2024. Therefore, there are no grounds for concluding that more veterinary staff would need to be deployed at the external border due to this disease incursion.

The Commission is not aware of any specific request by Greece for increased EU support for the border checks made over the last five years.

¹ Regulation (EU) 2017/625 ('Official Controls Regulation') of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law, rules on animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection products (OJ L 95, 7.4.2017, p. 1–142, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/625/oj>)