

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001186/25
to the Commission
Galato Alexandraki (ECR)
(20 March 2025)**

Subject: Differences between Member States in the treatment of sheep and goat plague

The recent outbreak of goat and sheep plague in Austria, linked to imports of sheep from Romania, led the Austrian authorities to immediately ban imports from countries with confirmed cases of the virus, such as Romania and Hungary. At the same time, additional requirements were imposed on imports from countries such as Greece and Bulgaria. By contrast, despite cases of sheep and goat pox having been identified in neighbouring countries, Greece has not implemented corresponding import bans. This raises questions about the uniformity of measures within the European Union and the effectiveness of the directives in terms of dealing with such epizootic diseases.

In light of the above, can the Commission say:

1. What are the official EU directives for dealing with cases of sheep and goat plague and pox in Member States or neighbouring countries?
2. Why do response measures differ among Member States, such as Austria and Greece, despite the existence of common directives?
3. How does the Commission ensure that measures are harmonised between Member States to prevent the spread of animal diseases and protect livestock farming in the EU?

Submitted: 20.3.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(10 June 2025)**

Control measures at EU level for sheep and goat plague, (also known as Peste des petits ruminants — (PPR)), as well as for sheep pox and goat pox (SGP), among many diseases, are laid down in Regulation (EU) 2016/429 ⁽¹⁾ and Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/687 ⁽²⁾. Certain measures differ between these diseases.

Upon occurrence of a disease in an area previously free from it, Regulation (EU) 2016/429 provides for the possibility to adopt temporary national measures, also restricting trade.

Additional EU emergency measures specific to the disease and the affected Member State have also been adopted ⁽³⁾. After their adoption, such emergency measures are harmonised in the EU and make the above national measures unnecessary, and restricting trade unjustified. The Commission is closely following this process to ensure proper implementation of EU legislation.

Those specific EU measures, in response to outbreaks of diseases like PPR and SGP in each Member State, are fine-tuned and tailor-made, taking into account various factors.

The Commission is constantly evaluating them, in cooperation with Member States, to be risk-based, proportionate, and best adapted to the particulars of each epidemiological event, at the time ensuring full compliance with the EU legal framework, while safeguarding both animal health and the internal market.

To support and ensure a coordinated implementation, the Commission works with Member States via the Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed, enables real-time disease reporting through the Animal Disease Information System, performs Commission audits, and deploys Veterinary Emergency Teams ⁽⁴⁾ where necessary.

⁽¹⁾ <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/429/oj>.

⁽²⁾ http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2020/687/oj.

⁽³⁾ Infection with Peste des petits ruminants virus https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-diseases/diseases-and-control-measures/infection-pestes-des-petits-ruminants-virus_en; Sheep pox and goat pox https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-diseases/diseases-and-control-measures/sheep-pox-and-goat-pox_en.

⁽⁴⁾ https://food.ec.europa.eu/animals/animal-diseases/veterinary-emergency-team_en.