

Greek fires rage unabated for a week

August 25 2023



The wildfires are the biggest in the European Union this year.

Greek firefighters struggled on Friday to contain scores of blazes stretching nationwide—the largest fires in the European Union this year.

The biggest fire front was in the Evros region close to the Turkish border, near the northern port city of Alexandroupoli, where a mega

blaze that erupted on Saturday raged untamed.

"Unfortunately Evros is the most active part of all the fronts we are facing at the moment and perhaps the most difficult section that we will face today," fire department spokesman Yiannis Artopios told state television ERT on Friday.

The fire was consuming the Dadia forest, one of the major areas in Europe for birds of prey.

The Alexandroupoli wildfires are now the largest in the EU on record for 2023 and the second largest since 2000, according to the bloc.

The bodies of 19 people believed to be migrants, two of them children, were found in the area this week.

"At the moment there is no big active front on Mount Parnitha," near Athens, Artopios said.

A third large fire was still blazing in Boeotia, north of Athens, but the conditions were improved.

A shepherd lost his life in the fires in this area on Monday.

Authorities blamed arsonists for the multiple fronts that have emerged simultaneously in the country during the past few days.

Artopios said investigations into the arsons now involve the [national intelligence service](#) and the fire prevention department.

A very high [fire](#) risk is forecast on Friday for central Greece and Athens.

Fires had scorched more than 120,000 hectares (nearly 30,000 acres) of

land across Greece in 2023 until Wednesday, according to estimates from the National Observatory.

This year's burned [land area](#) is three times larger than the average annually since 2006, according to the European Observatory of Forest Fires.

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