

EU joins WHO's coronavirus vaccine access plan

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The European Commission said Monday it would participate in the World Health Organization mechanism to facilitate poor countries' access to coronavirus vaccines, offering 400 million euros (\$477 million) in guarantees.

Last month, the WHO sent a letter to its 194 [member countries](#) with a request to join the programme, called COVAX, aimed at providing global access to an eventual COVID-19 vaccine.

The aim is to encourage laboratories to manufacture sufficient quantities of vaccines and make sure they are available for developing countries.

"The Commission announces a contribution of 400 million euros to COVAX to help purchase future vaccines for low- and [middle-income countries](#)," said Ursula von der Leyen, the head of the EU's executive.

The move came after the Commission last week signed a first contract with the British pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca to enable the purchase of a vaccine on behalf of the EU's 27 member states.

In addition, Brussels is continuing to negotiate with other laboratories to reach similar agreements to secure millions of doses of possible vaccines for Europeans.

"Big thanks to the @EU_Commission for their contribution to the COVAX facility and for standing firm on their commitment to multilateralism," WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus tweeted.

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