

Romania limits use of AstraZeneca vaccine to under 55s

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Romania on Saturday received a first batch of the AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine, which which the authorities say will be administered only to those between 18 and 55 years old.

It joins a growing number of countries to restrict the use of the

AstraZeneca jab, although the EU medicines watchdog has approved it for all adults.

The shipment to Romania contained 81,600 doses.

"This month we should have a total of 600,000 doses. People can start making appointments on February 10," Prime Minister Florin Citu told reporters after receiving a second jab.

The AstraZeneca vaccine is only the third to be approved by the EU after those developed by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna.

Romania, a country of 19 million inhabitants, has set an ambitious goal of vaccinating some 10 million people by September.

Since the December launch of a vaccination programme, it has given over 450,000 people at least one dose.

Asked if Bucharest had started negotiations for Russia's Sputnik V [vaccine](#) or China's Sinovac, Citu said simply "No".

Instead, he said, Romania could itself produce one of the vaccines developed by Western pharmaceutical companies.

While the number of [coronavirus](#) infectious has dropped in the past few weeks, Romania has been hard-hit by the pandemic, reporting 18,748 deaths so far from over 740,732 cases so far.

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