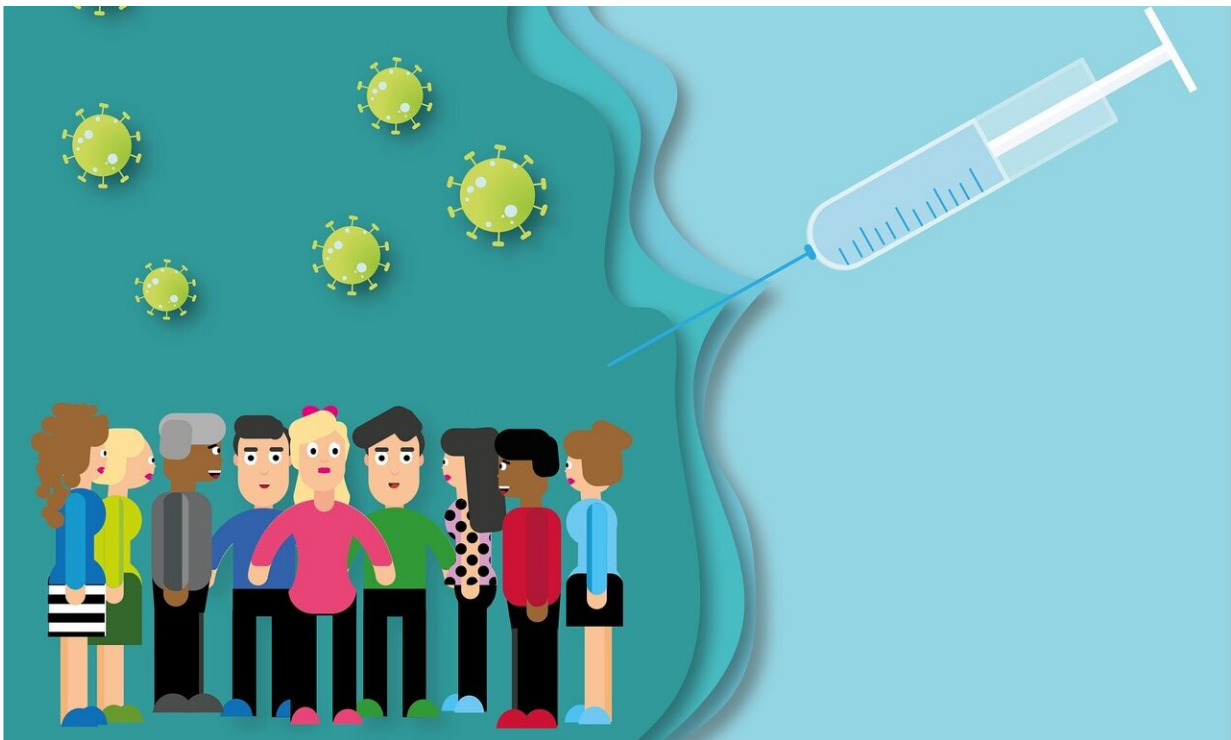


EU to have received 107 mn vax doses by end of week

March 31 2021



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European Union member states will have received a total of 107 million doses of coronavirus vaccine by the end of this week, a European Commission spokeswoman said Wednesday.

Deliveries for the first three months of the year are made up of 67.2

million doses from BioNtech/Pfizer, 29.8 million from AstraZeneca, and 9.8 million from Moderna, the commission said.

The overall figure was revised down dramatically after the Anglo-Swedish pharma giant AstraZeneca slashed the number it was providing from a contracted 120 million doses.

The production shortfall has contributed to a stuttering start to the EU's vaccination campaign that has seen the bloc lag behind countries including the United States, Britain, and Israel.

Deliveries are expected to pick up considerably in the second quarter of the year, with the commission saying it should receive at least 300 million doses by the end of June.

That figure should include 55 million shots of the single-dose Johnson & Johnson jab, which officials hope will help speed up vaccination rates.

EU chief Ursula von der Leyen insists the 27-nation bloc remains on course to meet a target to inoculate 70 percent of adults "by the end of summer".

That is despite it being set to miss another stated ambition to have 80 percent of over-80s and health workers vaccinated by the end of March.

The shortfall in deliveries from AstraZeneca has led to a row with Britain, as both sides scramble to ensure they get doses.

Von der Leyen warned last week that the bloc would ban drug firms exporting vaccines until they made good on promised deliveries to the EU.

There have also been calls from five member states led by Austria for

some doses to be redistributed within the EU over fears of shortfalls in some capitals.

On Tuesday, Austria said it had become the latest EU country to open talks with Russia about securing deliveries of its Sputnik V vaccine.

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