

Hungary approves second Chinese-made COVID-19 vaccine

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Hungary has approved a second Chinese-made coronavirus vaccine as well as an Indian-made version of the AstraZeneca jab, officials said on Monday, meaning the country now has eight approved vaccines.

"In recent days the Hungarian regulator the National Institute of Pharmacy and Nutrition (OGYEI) approved a further two vaccines: CanSino and Covishield," Chief Medical Officer Cecilia Muller told a daily [coronavirus](#) briefing.

Covishield is a brand name for the [vaccine](#) developed by the University of Oxford and the Anglo-Swedish pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca for use in India and much of the developing world.

The EU's regulator has so far approved four jabs, but only the versions made in the West, meaning drugs such as Covishield have to be approved separately.

Last month, Hungary became the first EU nation to start using China's Sinopharm vaccine.

The CanSino jab, marketed as "Convidecia", was approved by China's drug authority last month.

Hungary now has eight vaccines to choose from—four already approved by the EU, alongside two from China, one from India and Russia's Sputnik V.

Five of these are already being rolled out.

With Prime Minister Viktor Orban regularly criticising the bloc's common drug procurement policy over slow deliveries, Hungary was the first EU member to break ranks by allowing emergency use of Russian and Chinese vaccines.

In January a government decree authorised the fast-track granting of approvals for vaccines if they have already been approved in certain non-EU countries or administered to at least one million people.

Hungary's vaccination rate is now one of the highest in the EU, with almost 1.6 million—around 16 percent of the population—having received at least one jab by Monday, according to official data.

"We are confident that, as the (vaccines) palette grows, we can, of course, increase the amount and, as far as possible, provide the population with the opportunity to vaccinate as widely as possible," the government's press office told AFP Monday.

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