

# EU squabbles over 10 million doses of Pfizer vaccine

April 1 2021

---



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

EU nations fell out Thursday over how to divide up 10 million extra doses of coronavirus vaccine with Austria, Slovenia and the Czech Republic refusing to help five struggling countries.

A deal was agreed late in the day to distribute nearly three million doses to "those most in need", said Portugal, which holds the rotating European Union presidency.

But Austria, Slovenia and the Czechs had insisted on receiving their full quota of vaccines under the general shareout system according to population, said a statement from the presidency.

A main group of 19 states including Germany, France, Italy and Spain had decided to show solidarity with Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia.

The five considered most in need will now get their full quota of 2,854,654 doses.

The large group will share out 6.66 million vaccines.

Two days of talks between ambassadors had failed to persuade Austria, Slovenia and the Czechs to help out.

In the end, Prague lost 143,000 after refusing a compromise, a European diplomat said.

Chancellor Sebastian Kurz boasted he had grabbed 199,000 doses for Austria instead of the 139,000 on offer.

"Chancellor Kurz has shown a lack of solidarity and abandoned" the five, the diplomat said.

"He's happy to write letters and drop his allies," he added.

Slovenia takes over the EU presidency on July 1 and the behaviour of its prime minister "sends a bad signal", one ambassador said.

The 10 million doses are an advance delivery from BioNTech-Pfizer of an order of 100 million doses scheduled for the third quarter of the year.

With a stuttering start to the EU's vaccination campaign that has seen the bloc lag behind the US, Britain and Israel, the European Commission on Wednesday said the bloc will have received a total of 107 million doses of [coronavirus](#) vaccine by the end of this week.

The total was revised down dramatically after the Anglo-Swedish pharma giant AstraZeneca slashed the number it was providing.

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.

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

Austria, which had led calls for a correction to the shareout mechanism over fears of shortfalls, on Tuesday said it had become the latest EU country to open talks with Russia about securing deliveries of its Sputnik V [vaccine](#).

© 2021 AFP

Citation: EU squabbles over 10 million doses of Pfizer vaccine (2021, April 1) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-04-eu-squabbles-million-doses-pfizer.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.