

First Pfizer vaccines packaged on French soil

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Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines were packaged for the first time on French soil on Wednesday, hailed by President Emmanuel Macron as an important step as the country seeks to ramp up its vaccination campaign.

"250 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines made in France in 2021:

that's our objective," Macron said on Twitter.

"It begins concretely from today with the first BioNTech-Pfizer vaccines produced on the Delpharm site at Saint-Remy-sur-Avre" east of Paris, he added.

However the vaccines were made in BioNTech's factory in Germany—they arrived in France on Tuesday.

Subcontractor Delpharm is charged with putting the vaccines into vials which will then be delivered to centres for distribution.

They are not destined just for France, with Delpharm telling AFP the country would receive its proportion of allocated doses among EU states—around 15 percent.

Another company will begin filing Moderna vaccines in central France in a few days, with the Johnson & Johnson and CureVac vaccines to follow soon after.

France's inoculation drive has been criticised as slow, with 14.2 percent of French people having received one or more doses, compared with 60.1 percent of Britons.

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