

Quarter of Europeans have had a Covid-19 jab

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A quarter of the European Union's population have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine jab, prompting EU chief Ursula von der Leyen to say the bloc is on track to have 70 percent of adults immunised by late

July.

The milestone showed that Europe was now surging ahead in vaccinations following a lacklustre first-quarter rollout that was starved of doses because of a shortfall in deliveries by AstraZeneca.

As of mid-Tuesday, 25.1 percent of the EU's [population](#) of 446 million had received at least one injection, according to an AFP tally collated from official health figures from each EU country.

"Vaccination is gaining speed across the EU: we have just passed 150 million vaccinations," von der Leyen tweeted.

"A quarter of all Europeans have had their first dose. We'll have enough doses for vaccinating 70% of EU adults in July."

AFP's collected data show 112 million people in Europe had received at least one jab, with more than 153.8 million doses administered. At least 41.9 million people were fully vaccinated, amounting to 9.4 percent of the population.

The heightened pace means the EU can expect to see 70 percent of its 365 million adults immunised by late July.

That target has been brought forward two months, largely because of sped-up deliveries of the BioNTech/Pfizer vaccine, accounting for a large proportion of the jabs given in the 27 EU countries.

Poorer countries struggling

The EU has started [legal action](#) against AstraZeneca for falling far short of its promised delivery of doses.

It has thrown its weight behind the mRNA technology used by BioNTech/Pfizer, holding negotiations for an extra 1.8 billion doses of its second-generation vaccine to cope with variants, inoculate [older children](#), and to export to non-EU countries in need.

While the EU is now bounding forward with its vaccination programme, it still trails wealthy countries the United States and Britain in administering injections. All three invested funds last year to ensure access to promising vaccines.

The US has 31.9 percent of its population completely vaccinated. In Britain, it is 22.8 percent.

Israel, which has led the world, has 58.5 percent of its relatively small population fully vaccinated.

Poorer countries, by contrast, are struggling to get their hands on doses for their own populations, although the World Health Organization-backed Covax facility is working to bring them deliveries—mostly of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Supply of the AstraZeneca vaccine from India, which boasts the biggest [vaccine](#)-making plant in the world, has slowed as that country confronts a staggering surge in infections that has pushed its caseload over 20 million.

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