

EU signs contract for new Spanish COVID vaccine

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The European Commission has signed a contract to allow EU member states to buy up to 250 million doses of a new COVID-19 vaccine developed in Spain, it said Tuesday.

The HIPRA vaccine has yet to be approved by the European Medicines

Agency (EMA), but if it gets the [green light](#) it would be the eighth to join the EU joint procurement programme.

The Brussels EU executive oversees a joint buying strategy that has secured 4.2 billion COVID vaccine doses so far, underpinning the bloc's immunisation strategy.

Contracts have already been signed with AstraZeneca, Sanofi-GSK, Janssen, BioNtech-Pfizer, Moderna, Novavax and Valneva, although the latter has suspended production.

The HIPRA vaccine, also known as PHH-1V, is protein-based and intended as a [booster shot](#) for adults whose immunity is receding after their first two or three shots.

The EMA has placed it on "rolling review" and is studying the results of laboratory and [clinical trials](#), with a view to possibly authorising its use later this year.

"With COVID-19 infections on the rise in Europe, we need to ensure maximum preparedness as we head into the autumn and winter months," EU health commissioner Stella Kyriakides said.

"The HIPRA vaccine adds yet another option to complement our broad vaccine portfolio for our Member States and citizens. An increase in vaccination and boosting is essential over the coming months."

Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez, speaking to reporters on a visit to Palma de Mallorca, seized on the contract as a sign that approval was imminent, declaring: "We have finally achieved this vaccine."

He hailed Brussels' confidence as a victory for "innovation and the [pharmaceutical industry](#) in our country" and for public research funding

from the national and Catalan governments.

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