
COVID-19 Coronavirus: European Commission introduces “reciprocity and proportionality” for vaccine exports. Faster approvals by EMA for variants

Reciprocity and proportionality: these are the new criteria introduced by the European Commission today for the authorisation of vaccine exports under the transparency and authorisation mechanism. According to Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, the EU has “an excellent portfolio of different vaccines” and has “more than enough doses for the entire population”, but “we have to ensure timely and sufficient vaccine deliveries to EU citizens”. While we are facing the third wave of the pandemic and “not every company is delivering on its contract”, von der Leyen said, the EU “continues to export vaccines at large scale to dozens of countries”. But “open roads should run in both directions”. Also regarding vaccines, von der Leyen announced the approval by the Commission of measures enabling EMA to “fast-track regulatory approval of updated vaccines to tackle new variants”. The rationale for this is that “faster approval means more vaccines in circulation and more Europeans protected from the virus”. Hence these are “fast and flexible solutions to fast-track approvals, without compromising on safety and efficacy”, explained Commissioner for Health, Stella Kyriakides. The Commission proposed to allocate an additional €345.2 million from the EU budget to finance COVID-related initiatives, such as the ability to sequence new COVID-19 variants through the Health Emergency Preparation and Response Authority (HERA) Incubator or the introduction of the Digital Green Certificate to facilitate free movement across the EU.

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