

Press release – COVID-19 vaccination: MEPs call for EU and global solidarity



In the plenary debate on Wednesday with the Portuguese Presidency and Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, MEPs commented on the state of play of the EU's COVID-19 vaccination strategy.

Many members emphasised that the EU had made the right key decisions, especially on the collective European approach to vaccination and on standing up for its citizens' rights by putting safety first and enforcing EU liability rules.

President von der Leyen defended the EU's choice to order vaccines

collectively, the need for global solidarity and the decision not to take any shortcuts on the safety and efficiency of vaccines. Lessons must be drawn from past mistakes, she acknowledged, as “we are still not where we want to be in the fight against the virus”.

Solutions to exit the crisis must be found in the spirit of solidarity, between member states as well as at global level, MEPs underlined. The EU has a responsibility for the rest of the world and must ensure vaccines are fairly distributed across the globe, they added, reiterating that “nobody is safe until everybody is safe”.

Members acknowledged that the EU underestimated the challenges of vaccine mass production and that concrete measures to ramp up production must now be taken as a matter of utmost priority. Many MEPs urged the Commission to enforce existing contracts and at the same time support member states in their vaccine deployment strategies.

In order to build citizens’ trust in the vaccination efforts and avoid disinformation, the EU must “tell the truth”, some MEPs pointed out. In this respect, many recalled the need for transparency with regard to contracts, as well as for comprehensive and clear data on vaccines rollout at national level.

Taking into account the large amounts of public money invested, several MEPs also called for increased parliamentary scrutiny of the implementation of the vaccines strategy.

Watch the video recording of the debate [here](#). Click on the names below for individual statements.

[Ana Paula Zacarias](#), Portuguese Presidency

Ursula von der Leyen, European Commission President ([1st part](#), [2nd part](#), [3rd part](#))

[Manfred Weber](#) (EPP, DE)

[Iratxe García Pérez](#) (S&D, ES)

[Dacian Cioloş](#) (Renew Europe, RO)

[Marco Zanni](#) (ID, IT)

[Ska Keller](#) (Greens/EFA, DE)

[Beata Szydło](#) (ECR, PL)

[Manon Aubry](#) (The Left, FR)

Background

On 12 January 2021, MEPs [quizzed the Commission](#) on the latest developments regarding COVID-19 vaccines. A debate in plenary followed on 19 January

focusing on the global EU strategy for COVID-19, while the Commission published an [updated action plan](#) to step up the fight against the pandemic on the same day.

During the [plenary debate in January](#), MEPs expressed broad support for the common EU approach to fighting the pandemic and called for complete transparency regarding contracts and deployment of COVID-19 vaccines.