

Serbia starts vaccination with Chinese-made Sinopharm

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Serbia launched on Tuesday a mass COVID-19 vaccination campaign and became the first European country to use the Chinese-made Sinopharm jab.

"It is the only way to return to normal life," said Health Minister Zlatibor Loncar, the first who received the vaccine.

"These are all very safe vaccines," Loncar said as the state-run RTS television carried his vaccination live at the virology institute in Belgrade.

There is no reason for concern regarding their safety, he stressed.

Serbia received on Saturday one million doses of the Sinopharm vaccine.

It is the third [coronavirus](#) jab used by the Balkan nation, after Pfizer-BioNTech and Russia's Sputnik V.

President Aleksandar Vucic announced earlier Tuesday the start of the mass vaccination campaign and said jabs will be administered at

some 300 locations in Serbia's biggest cities.

Vucic is to be inoculated with the Sinopharm vaccine at the weekend.

Serbia secured nearly 1,055,000 doses of the three jabs and agreed on the delivery of additional six million doses, Prime Minister Ana Brnabic said.

AFP data based on official sources show Serbia is the first European country to administer the Sinopharm vaccine.

The European Union-candidate country, which has also close economic and political ties with Moscow and Beijing, started vaccination with Pfizer-BioNTech jabs on December 24—with Brnabic receiving it.

It later imported Russian Sputnik V jabs.

Sinopharm says its [vaccine](#) is 79 percent effective against the novel coronavirus.

Another Chinese-made jab, Sinovac's CoronaVac, was rolled out in Turkey last week.

Serbia has registered nearly 380,000 infections and more than 3,700 deaths from the novel coronavirus.

By mid-January, some 20,500 people—residents of retirement homes and health sector employees—have been vaccinated in the country, official figures show.

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