

Slovakia eyes using Russia's Sputnik V; waits for results

9 May 2021



In this March 1, 2021, file photo, Russia's Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine arrives at Kosice Airport, Slovakia. Russia's boast in August that it was the first country to authorize a coronavirus vaccine led to skepticism because of its insufficient testing on only a few dozen people. Slovakia's government is still set to discuss possible use of Sputnik V with Russia after the coronavirus vaccine was successfully tested in a Hungarian lab. Slovakia's Health Minister Vladimir Lengvarsky said he will talk with his country's experts and "the Russian side about the further development on this issue." (Frantisek Ivan/TASR via AP, File)

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Hungary offered Slovakia assistance in inspecting the Russian-made vaccine after the Slovak State Institute for Drug Control said it had not received enough information about the Russian jab from its

producer to be able to assess its benefits and risks.

The regulator also said the doses it received from Russia differed from those under review by the European Union's medicines authority.

The Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), which markets Sputnik V abroad, called the findings "[fake news](#)." It said Slovakia's drug regulator had tested the vaccine in a laboratory that is not part of the EU's official network of approved labs.

The RDIF welcomed the results of the Hungarian tests and said it asked the Slovak drug regulator to apologize "for spreading incorrect information about Sputnik V."

In the meantime, Russian experts have also been also testing doses of the Sputnik V vaccine it delivered to Slovakia. Lengvarsky said he was waiting for the results of those tests and Russian approval for its use before he makes any further decisions.

Slovakia would be only the second EU nation after Hungary to use Sputnik V, which has not been authorized by the European Medicines Agency.

A secret deal for Slovakia to purchase 2 million Sputnik V shots orchestrated by then-Prime Minister Igor Matovic triggered a [political crisis](#) in March that resulted in the Slovak government's collapse.

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APA citation: Slovakia eyes using Russia's Sputnik V; waits for results (2021, May 9) retrieved 5 September 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-05-slovakia-eyes-russia-sputnik-results.html>

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