



Vaccines Europe



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## News Release

### Three priorities to urgently increase access to COVID-19 vaccines

**25 February 2022** - Innovative biopharmaceutical companies are at the forefront of the global effort to develop and manufacture safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines and treatments. Today, over 12 billion doses of vaccines have been produced, and more than 60 percent of the world's population have received at least one dose.<sup>1</sup> Getting as many people as possible vaccinated remains critical to our pandemic response. Even in the face of new variants, including most recently Omicron, current vaccines show continued protection from infection and significant effectiveness against hospitalization and death. For those people who do contract COVID-19 or are at-risk, several approved treatments are now an important and integral part of combatting COVID-19.

Whilst significant progress has been made, COVID-19 vaccines are still not reaching equitably all priority populations worldwide. In [May 2021](#), the innovative biopharmaceutical companies publicly committed to continue working with governments, international institutions, and non-governmental organizations to address vaccine inequity. Over the past six months, governments that have significant domestic supplies of COVID-19 vaccines have increasingly shared them with low- and lower-middle-income countries and vaccine manufacturers have continued to further ramp up production, including through voluntary licensing and technology transfer across several continents. By the end of January 2022, COVAX delivered its first billion vaccine doses.<sup>2</sup> In addition, over 3 billion doses have been delivered to low- and lower-middle-income countries. Moving forwards, we expect that a significant number of doses will continue to be delivered to low- and lower-middle-income countries.

Our collective efforts are materializing, but to achieve an improvement in vaccine equity, manufacturers, **governments, international institutions, and other non-governmental organizations must redouble efforts to support countries as they mobilize to execute national vaccine rollouts** and remove barriers to the **efficient distribution and administration of vaccine doses, so that they reach those who need them most.**

To support this endeavor, innovative biopharmaceutical companies will continue to work with all relevant stakeholders on the following three overarching priorities and supporting activities:

#### **STEP UP SUPPORT FOR COUNTRY READINESS TO ROLL OUT COVID-19 VACCINE DOSES:**

- Work collaboratively with governments and established procurement mechanisms, such as COVAX and the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT), to improve COVID-19 vaccine demand forecasting, alignment of deliveries and donations, distribution and administration, particularly in low- and lower-middle income countries;
- Continue engaging and sharing information with COVAX and other relevant organizations to ensure countries have better visibility of COVAX deliveries and donations;
- Provide timely information to assist with regulatory system streamlining and appropriate flexibilities to smooth the path for the reallocation of doses, and enable swift approval of new COVID-19 vaccines and manufacturing facilities;

<sup>1</sup> <https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.unicef.org/supply/stories/covax-1-billion-vaccines-delivered>



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- Continue to increase confidence in vaccines and vaccination programs, particularly by countering misinformation, providing timely vaccine effectiveness and safety data, and supporting adequate no-fault compensation programs;
- Continue to encourage governments to expand the number of vaccinators in countries to be able to rapidly deploy supply.

#### **CONTRIBUTE TO EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF COVID-19 VACCINE DOSES:**

- Continue to work with governments that have significant supplies of COVID-19 vaccines to improve dose sharing with low- and lower-middle-income countries in a responsible and timely way, through COVAX or other efficient established mechanisms such as AVAT;
- Expend every effort to make uncommitted COVID-19 vaccine doses available with urgency to prioritized populations in low- and lower-middle income countries through COVAX or other efficient established mechanisms;
- Work with relevant authorities to facilitate recognition of an extension to the COVID-19 vaccine shelf-life and batch-level extensions in line with ongoing studies looking at the stability of vaccines, to avoid vaccine wastage;
- Encourage the elimination of remaining trade and regulatory barriers to support cross-border supply and free flow of goods, raw materials, services, and personnel needed for COVID-19 vaccine manufacturing, distribution, and administration;
- Support efforts that tackle supply chain and logistic bottlenecks to increase vaccination rates.

#### **CONTINUE TO DRIVE INNOVATION:**

- Continue to prioritize research to develop the next generation of COVID-19 vaccines that can provide long lasting and strong protection against variants of concern, and address logistical issues in storage, delivery, and administration;
- Urge governments to guarantee unhindered access to pathogens (samples and sequences) of any COVID-19 variants to support the rapid development of potential new vaccines and treatments;
- Continue to optimize production of vaccines, without compromising safety and quality, including through existing and additional voluntary collaborations with partners that can produce significant quantities.

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**The Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry ([ABPI](#))** exists to make the UK the best place in the world to research, develop and use new medicines. We represent companies of all sizes who invest in discovering the medicines of the future. Our members supply cutting edge treatments that improve and save the lives of millions of people. We work in partnership with Government and the NHS so patients can get new treatments faster and the NHS can plan how much it spends on medicines. Every day, we partner with organisations in the life sciences community and beyond to transform lives across the UK.

**The Biotechnology Innovation Organization ([BIO](#))** is the world's largest trade association representing biotechnology companies, academic institutions, state biotechnology centers and related organizations across the United States and in more than 30 other nations.

**The European Federation of Pharmaceutical Industries and Associations ([EFPIA](#))** represents the biopharmaceutical industry operating in Europe. Through its direct membership of 36 national associations, 39 leading pharmaceutical companies and a growing number of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), EFPIA's mission is to create a collaborative environment that enables our members to innovate, discover, develop and deliver new therapies and vaccines for people across Europe, as well as contribute to the European economy.

**The Latin American Federation of the Pharmaceutical Industry ([FIFARMA](#))** represents 16 researched based biopharmaceutical companies and 11 local associations that work every day in a changing environment to advance science for the benefit of patients. We believe that health is the engine of our region.

**The International Council of Biotechnology Associations ([ICBA](#))** is a coalition of non-profit, national biotechnology trade associations formed to promote public understanding of, and to advocate for, public policies that support the growth of the innovative biotechnology industries. The ICBA represents the global voice of the industry in international fora with the goal of promoting continued innovation in the human health, agriculture, and industrial and environmental sectors.

**International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations ([IFPMA](#))** represents research-based pharmaceutical companies and associations across the globe. The research-based pharmaceutical industry's 2 million employees research, develop and provide medicines and vaccines that improve the life of patients worldwide. Based in Geneva, IFPMA has official relations with the United Nations and contributes industry expertise to help the global health community find solutions that improve global health.

**The Japan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association ([JPMA](#))** is voluntary association comprising 73 research-oriented pharmaceutical companies. JPMA has been contributing to advancing global healthcare through the development of innovative ethical drugs facilitating sound development of the pharmaceutical industry through proactively establishing policies and recommendations in response to globalization and enhancing public understanding of pharmaceuticals.

**The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America ([PhRMA](#))** represents the country's leading innovative biopharmaceutical research companies, which are devoted to discovering and developing medicines that enable patients to live longer, healthier and more productive lives. Since 2000, PhRMA member companies have invested more than \$1 trillion in the search for new treatments and cures, including \$91.1 billion in 2020 alone.



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[Vaccines Europe](#) was created in 1991 to provide a voice for the vaccine industry in Europe. The group represents vaccine companies of all sizes operating in Europe, and currently includes all the major global innovative and research-based vaccine companies, including small and medium-sized enterprises.

**The Association of Research-based Pharmaceutical Companies ([VFA](#))** is the trade association of the innovative pharmaceutical industry in Germany. It represents the interests of 47 world's leading manufacturers and more than 100 subsidiaries and affiliated companies in health, research and economic policy. The members of the VFA up about two-thirds of the German pharmaceutical market and employ approximately 80,000 employees in Germany. 19,000 of whom work in research and development.