



**European Council**  
The President



SGS 21 / 003606  
**European Commission**  
The President

Brussels,

24. 08. 2021

Dear civil society representatives,

Thank you for your letter in which you outline the need to intensify support for securing COVID-19 vaccines in the Eastern Partnership region.

The Eastern Partnership region is an important partner for the European Union, which we supported since the start of the pandemic with bilateral grant support, regional assistance programmes, and macro-financial assistance in order to facilitate the long-term socio-economic recovery in the region.

We agree with you that the immediate priority has now shifted to ensure the adequate access of all of Europe to vaccines to fight back against the pandemic on our continent and to boost its resilience against future waves of COVID-19.

This is why we have been working to set up an EU-wide mechanism to share vaccines purchased by the Member States under the EU Advanced Purchase Agreements with third countries. The mechanism has two strands – on the one hand, vaccine sharing via the EU-funded COVAX Facility and on the other hand, direct donations or resales by EU Member States to countries of the Eastern Partnership.

As of today, we have received pledges of more than 100 million doses by the EU Member States and we are confident that this number will continue to rise. Much of it will reach the Eastern Partnership region via the COVAX Facility, but we very much appreciated the announcements by some EU Member States, that they will share vaccines with Moldova, Ukraine and Georgia, some of which have already been delivered. Our services have been instructed to facilitate this process for the EU Member States in order to scale it up and accelerate it.

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Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum Steering Committee

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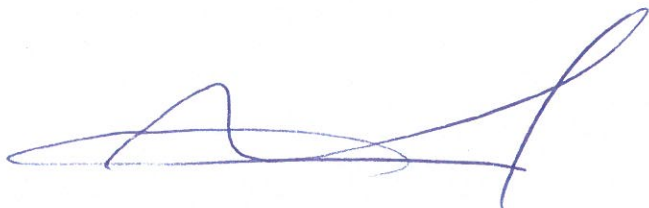
In addition, the support provided through a EUR 40 million EU-funded World Health Organization project since February is increasing the preparedness of each Eastern Partnership country for the delivery of vaccines and their administration, and we are seeing the first results of these efforts in the region. We believe the combination of these activities will very soon lead to an accelerated pace of the functioning of the EU Vaccine Sharing Mechanism in the countries of the Eastern Partnership, leading to increased vaccination rates.

Please rest assured that we remain focused on enabling all of our partners to have full access to vaccines so that by the end of this year, all of Europe will be protected from new outbreaks of the pandemic. We are looking forward to continuing to receive your valuable advice in the future.

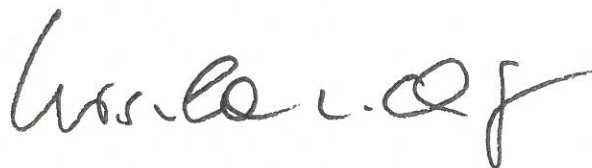
Yours sincerely,

For the European Council

For the European Commission



Charles MICHEL



Ursula VON DER LEYEN