

March 9, 2021

Mrs. Stella Kyriakides
Commissioner for Health and Food Safety

Dear Stella,

We are grateful to the European Commission, yourself, and your team for the continuous efforts to increase the production and deliveries of COVID-19 vaccines from the producers that benefited from the EU ESI funding.

It is important to acknowledge that intensive dialogue with the vaccines producers, close supervision of the APA's implementation, and application of the EU export authorisation mechanism have increased the EU leverage over the producers. This set of means allowed the EU governments to benefit from a more stable, transparent, and predictable deliveries of the EU vaccines.

Also, we welcome the fact that it took just several days for the EU Member States to respond quickly to the urgent situation in Austria, Czech Republic, and Slovakia.

These developments encourage us to conclude that when needed, the EU can do better and the EU solidarity is reflected in real actions.

Meanwhile, to better deal with similar cases in the future, we see the need to base this kind of decisions on clear and transparent criteria, such as availability of vaccines, vaccination rate, incident rate, mortality rate and spread of new variants.

In this regard, we call on the European Commission to act proactively to set up a mechanism for the extraordinary circumstances that might justify exceptions to the pro rata distribution and temporarily advance the delivery to the Member States in most urgent need.

Furthermore, it is important to consider improving efficiency of our joint vaccination efforts and to further foster solidarity between the Member States by introducing a

re-distribution mechanism, should a situation arise where an unused surplus of delivered vaccines accumulates in any given Member State. This would be particularly relevant in cases when vaccines *use before date* may jeopardise viability of given vaccines.

While we support the general principle of pro rata distribution, we believe that creation of such a transparent mechanism for a temporary re-distribution of deliveries taking into account the extraordinary situations and actual use of vaccines would allow us to more efficiently use the vaccines produced and delivered at the EU level. It would also increase the vaccination uptake across the EU, catalyse faster vaccination, and thus contribute to decrease the burden of pandemics and slowing down the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Therefore, we invite the European Commission to engage proactively in the development of such a mechanism as soon as possible via the Vaccines Steering Board.

Sincerely,



Mr. Arūnas Dulkys
Minister of Health
of the Republic of
Lithuania



Mr. Daniels Pavļuts
Minister for Health
of the Republic of
Latvia



Mr. Tanel Kiik
Minister of Health and
Labour of the Republic of
Estonia