Question for written answer E-000046/2021
to the Commission
Rule 138
Engin Eroglu (Renew)

Subject: COVID-19 vaccines

The EU as a whole has a strong market power and is therefore, at least theoretically, better able to negotiate COVID-19 vaccine procurement and in particular to secure supplies for smaller and poorer countries.

How exactly is competence shared between Member States and the EU — is the EU alone responsible for vaccine purchases, or does the EU rely on additional purchases by Member States?

Who in the Commission has ultimate responsibility for decisions on the vaccine strategy — the Commissioner for Health or the President of the Commission?

The EU has been much slower in rolling out vaccination than other countries. In some cases, vaccine approval is faster in other countries (which of course may also be an indication of an insufficient evaluation of vaccines), but in some cases vaccination seems to be better organised outside the EU[1].

It is striking that the EU has so far secured vaccines from six manufacturers, of which only one has been approved[2]. Some are expected to be approved at the earliest by the end of 2022. However, the EU ordered only 300 million doses of the already approved Biontech vaccine, which with two doses per vaccination is enough for only 150 million vaccinations. Mathematically, this corresponds to only one third of EU citizens.

What are the possibilities for the Commission to purchase additional doses of vaccines?

[1] https://ourworldindata.org/covid-vaccinations
[2] https://ec.europa.eu/info/live-work-travel-eu/coronavirus-response/public-health/coronavirus-vaccines-strategy_de