



**World Health  
Organization**

Western Pacific  
Philippines

# Germany supports the Philippines with first 844,800 COVID-19 vaccine doses via COVAX

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The Philippines today welcomed 844,800 AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine doses from the German Government through the COVAX Facility.

The doses comprise the first delivery of more than 1.6 million doses from Germany, and will play a vital role in supporting the country's ongoing fight against COVID-19. Team Europe is a lead contributor, supplying close to €3 billion to the COVAX Facility to help secure at least 1.8 billion doses for 92 low and lower middle-income countries, including the Philippines. The European Union has exported half the vaccines produced in Europe to other countries, which is the same amount as it has delivered to its citizens.

The latest arrival brings the Philippines' total available doses to 89,474,100, with more than 24.3 million from the COVAX Facility.

The Department of Health (DOH), the World Health Organization (WHO), and UNICEF said this timely addition of German-donated vaccine doses is particularly important in protecting our most vulnerable citizens as the country moves into a period of events where gatherings and mobility will increase.

This includes All Saints' Day and the Christmas season. Typhoon season has already begun, which brings greater risk of COVID-19 transmission should people need to relocate. Schools will soon see the reintroduction of face-to-face learning. Filipinos returning from overseas will join their families around the country for the holidays.

"The additional vaccine doses from Germany through the COVAX Facility complements the country's existing capacity as the vaccination strategy shifts from priority groups towards the general population," said Health Secretary Dr Francisco T. Duque III. "We, however, emphasize the importance of vaccinating our senior citizens and people with underlying health conditions who are more vulnerable to contracting severe COVID-19."

"We are grateful to our development partners, donors, on-ground implementers, local government units and everyone making the vaccine deployment program possible," Secretary Duque III added.

Acting Deputy of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany Mr Alexander Schmidt highlighted the strong solidarity and partnership between Germany and the Philippines.

"Today we are happy to donate 844,800 vaccine doses to the Philippines, distributed through the COVAX vaccine platform. This donation underlines our conviction that no one is safe until everyone is safe. International solidarity and multilateralism are the tools and principles guiding Germany's actions in this unprecedented pandemic. The fight against the pandemic needs all of our joint efforts. We already see the positive impact of these efforts and the COVAX initiative."

"To minimize the likelihood of a new surge of COVID-19 cases, WHO continues to advocate for a risk-based approach as non-pharmaceutical interventions are adjusted and calibrated with the decreasing transmission," said WHO Representative to the Philippines Dr Rabindra Abeyasinghe.

"We also recognize there are several regions in the country experiencing high COVID-19 transmission rates. These regions have low vaccination coverage, including among vulnerable elderly people. As increased quantities of vaccines become available, WHO urges authorities to continue to prioritize and vaccinate the elderly and other vulnerable groups, such as indigent people, those deprived of liberty and people from geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. This can successfully occur during a wider roll out of vaccination to other groups," said Dr Abeyasinghe.

The vaccine doses from Germany will also form a layer of protection for children who have been at home since the pandemic started. As mobility measures ease, children will stand to benefit through time outdoors and safe interaction with their peers.

“The sooner we end the pandemic together, the better it will be for every Filipino child. COVID-19 vaccination is part of a larger strategy to strengthen health systems for children and their families, and ramp up support to ensure their safety and mental health,” UNICEF Philippines Representative Ms Oyunsai Khan Dendevnorov said.

DOH, WHO, and UNICEF emphasized that while vaccines are one critical way citizens can halt the spread of COVID-19, the public, even fully vaccinated people, must continue to wear face masks and face shields, and practice proper hand hygiene, physical distancing, as well as ensuring indoor ventilation. These simple actions are important in keeping us all healthy and safe.

### **About COVAX**

COVAX, the vaccines pillar of the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator, is co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and the World Health Organization (WHO) – working in partnership with UNICEF as key implementing partner, as well as civil society organizations, vaccine manufacturers, the World Bank, and others.

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