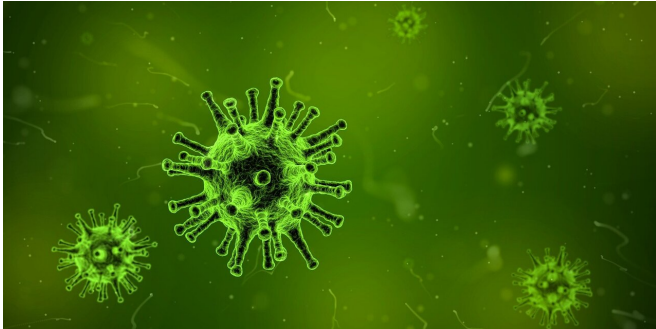


Germany says ready to use Russian vaccine if approved by EMA

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The German government said Friday that it would be open to using the Russian-made Sputnik V coronavirus vaccine once it had been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

"EMA approval—which Sputnik does not yet have—would provide the opportunity to use the [vaccine](#) in inoculation campaigns in Europe, and it would then also be worth considering for Germany," said Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesperson Steffen Seibert.

He refused to be drawn over France's accusation against Moscow of using the jabs as a "propaganda" tool.

Last week, Merkel herself directly referred to Sputnik jabs and said Germany "should use any vaccine that has been approved" by the EMA.

A spokesman for the [health ministry](#) echoed the same sentiment on Friday, saying that "all vaccines are welcome if they have been approved by the EMA".

The EMA this month launched a rolling review of Sputnik V, a key step towards it being approved as the first non-Western coronavirus jab to be used

across the 27-nation bloc.

Yet Sputnik has faced criticism in Western countries, and French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Drian accused Russia and China on Friday of using their jabs to gain influence abroad.

"In terms of how it is managed, it (the Sputnik V vaccine) is more a means of propaganda and aggressive diplomacy than a means of solidarity and health aid," Le Drian told France Info radio.

His comments were swiftly dismissed by Moscow.

"We absolutely disagree with the fact that Russia and China are using the coronavirus pandemic and vaccines as tools of influence," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

Russia registered Sputnik V in August, ahead of large-scale clinical trials, prompting worries among many experts over the fast-track process.

Later reviews have been largely positive, with leading [medical journal](#) *The Lancet* publishing results showing it is safe and more than 90 percent effective.

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