

As countries line up for Russia's vaccine, not everyone is buying it



“Trust me. It’s safe.” Photo: Alexy Nikolsky/Sputnik/AFP via Getty

Not to be outdone by Pfizer’s big announcement, Russia’s state-run Gamaleya Research Institute announced Wednesday that its Sputnik V vaccine is 92% effective.

Why it matters: Experts have criticized the lack of transparency around the vaccine and the haste with which the Kremlin approved it, but several countries are lining up to gain access.

- Hungary is the first EU country to announce a plan to buy it, per the FT. It expects a sample within the next week or so, and it’s in “advanced negotiations” for a larger order.
- Russia has already sold doses to Brazil, India, Mexico, and Egypt, per WSJ. It also plans to make the vaccine available to countries in its neighborhood, like Kazakhstan.
- The Philippines plans to join clinical trials for the vaccine, with President

Rodrigo Duterte even saying he would be injected himself.

- Russia has discussed the distribution of its vaccine with a number of other countries, including Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

Yes, but: The rhetoric from Moscow has been far out in front of any evidence that the vaccine is safe, effective, and can be developed at a sufficient scale to be distributed around the world.

The bottom line: “Why is Russia doing this? It’s the international vaccine race. They want to be seen to be keeping up with their competitors in other countries,” John Moore, a vaccine researcher at Cornell, told Science. “It’s clearly a rushed out announcement. But it doesn’t mean it’s wrong.”

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Source:

<https://www.axios.com/russia-claims-vaccine-92-percent-effective-5b1c900b-af95-4b97-8e84-d017fc099c10.html>

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