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9 Russian Regions Still Waiting for Vaccine Rollout – Putin

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Putin estimated that 2 million Russians have received both doses of Sputnik V so far. **Kirill Zykov / Moskva News Agency**

All but nine Russian regions have begun administering coronavirus vaccines nearly two months into the country's nationwide vaccination campaign, President Vladimir Putin said Thursday.

Russia, the world's fourth-most affected country by Covid-19, launched the campaign in mid-January with senior officials forecasting 60% herd immunity as early as August.

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"Some Russian regions, I think it's nine, have not yet started vaccination," Putin was quoted as saying by the state-run TASS news agency.

He linked the delays to "problems with logistics, distribution [and] locations" and said the

Health Ministry is “actively working” with the Cabinet on bringing the vaccines to the remaining regions.

Putin estimated that 2 million Russians have received both doses of the two-dose vaccine so far, while another 2 million received the first dose.

Some 7.8 million doses of Sputnik V have entered civilian circulation as of Thursday, according to the head of medical quality control at Russia’s health watchdog Roszdravnadzor.

Recent public polling has shown growing vaccine hesitancy among the Russian population, with three out of five respondents saying they don’t want the Sputnik V jab.

Russia authorized Sputnik V months ahead of Western competitors in August, fueling concerns that it had done so ahead of mass safety and efficacy trials. A peer-reviewed study published in The Lancet last month said Sputnik V is 91.6% effective against symptomatic Covid-19.

Russia has since registered two other Covid-19 vaccines ahead of their mass clinical trials.

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