

Russia Accuses Slovak Watchdog of Sputnik V 'Sabotage,' Demands Return of Vaccines

Slovakia's drug watchdog said the batch it received was not the same as well-reviewed test batches.

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Slovakia, one of Europe's hardest-hit countries by the pandemic, received 200,000 doses of the Russian vaccine on March 1. **Sergei Kiselyov / Moskva News Agency**

Sputnik V's official Twitter account on Thursday accused the Slovak Drug agency SUKL of a "disinformation campaign" against the Russian vaccine after the watchdog said the batch of 200,000 vaccines the country received differed from those reviewed by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the medical journal The Lancet.

On Wednesday, media reported that SUKL told the country's Health Ministry it had been unable to evaluate the risks and benefits of Sputnik V due to a lack of data and inconsistencies in dosages. SUKL on Thursday [said](#) that on top of the lack of data it believed the batch

delivered to Slovakia was not the same as the test batches.

“SUKL has launched a disinformation campaign against [#SputnikV](#) and plans additional provocations. The statement from SIDC that the batch of Sputnik V delivered to Slovakia does not have the same characteristics as the vaccine described in The Lancet is fake news,” Sputnik V’s official account tweeted. The vaccine has yet to be approved by the EU.

“All Sputnik V batches are of the same quality and undergo rigorous quality control at the Gamaleya Institute,” the account said.

Related article: [Slovakian Drug Institute Unable to Evaluate Sputnik V ‘Due to Lack of Data’](#)

According to the developers of Sputnik V, SUKL tested the vaccine in a laboratory that was not part of the EU’s Official Medicines Control Laboratory, which was “in violation of an existing contract and an act of sabotage.”

The Twitter account also said that the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), which financed the production of Sputnik V, sent a letter to the Slovakian authorities on Wednesday asking for the return of the vaccine “due to multiple contract violations so that it can be used in other countries.”

Slovakia, one of Europe’s hardest-hit countries by the pandemic, received 200,000 doses of the Russian vaccine on March 1. The purchase spurred the small Central European country into a political crisis and led to the resignation of Prime Minister Igor Matovič after his coalition partners accused him of acquiring the vaccine without their approval.

Matovič, who is now Slovakia’s Finance Minister flew to Moscow on Thursday for talks about the Sputnik V spat.

According to Sputnik’s Twitter account, RDIF CEO Kirill Dmitriev “held a productive meeting with the Vice Prime Minister of Slovakia Igor Matovič.”

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