

Head of European Affairs Committee participates in meeting “Building a European Health Union”

The head of Senate's Committee on European Affairs, Angel Tilvar, says Romania is still "at the bottom of the European rankings" in terms of the percentage of GDP allocated to health or patients' access to innovative medicines.

"Our country is still at the bottom of the European rankings in terms of the percentage of GDP allocated to health or patients' access to innovative medicines. It is outrageous that in the past 3 months the tragedies are repeated in Romanian hospitals, 8 COVID hospitals caught fire, dozens of people have lost their lives and no one is being held accountable," Tilvar said on Monday, during a video conference on "Building a European Health Union" alongside other heads of committees on European affairs from EU MS and the European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Stella Kyriakides.

According to a press release of the Senate sent to AGERPRES on Monday, the meeting presented the European Commission's measures to build a "European Health Union," in the sense of jointly addressing health crises, to ensure resilient systems, better preparedness and faster and more efficient response during current and future crises.

Angel Tilvar believes that "vaccination against COVID-19 is a crucial public health issue to fight the pandemic so that people's lives return to normal and feel safe again."

"People are interested in the vaccine being available in time, they want scheduling to be respect, compliance with the vaccination rate. (...) In order for the European citizens not to lose confidence in the European institutions and their efforts, the European Union must ensure faster access to vaccines and treatments for COVID-19, through systematic procurement and increased production capacity, to avoid competition between Member States caused by the lack or insufficiency of vaccines," Tilvar was quoted as saying.

The European Commission aims to vaccinate 70pct of EU citizens by the summer of 2021. If the current vaccination rate persists, the Union would reach only 15pct by the end of September. The European Union should step up its vaccination efforts five times in order to achieve this "ambitious" goal, as the European Commissioner called it, the statement signed by Tilvar said.

"In order to meet the Commission's requirements, our country should triple the number of daily doses of COVID-19 vaccine, vaccinating 89,429 people per day. At the current rate of vaccination, Romania could reach the goal proposed by the European Commission only in 2022. For Romania, like the other member states hoping to stop the pandemic by vaccinating the population depend indestructibly on the EU bloc, the EU's supply of COVID-19 vaccine doses is the true test of European solidarity and equity," reads the press release signed by the head of the European Affairs Committee of the Senate.