

## Poland praised for anti-swine flu strategy

Created: Wednesday, March 31 2010

**The Council of Europe has praised Poland's Health Minister Ewa Kopacz for her strategy against the swine flu virus.**



The council's Committee on Social, Health and Family Affairs said that the Health Ministry's decision not to order any A/H1N1 vaccines, **in spite of pressure** from pharmaceutical companies and health organizations, was correct.

Ewa Kopacz (right) who went to Paris to explain her government's response to the flu virus - which the World Health Organisation was wrongly predicting would turn into a full blown pandemic across Europe - said that Poland had considered buying an anti-flu vaccine but terms proposed by pharmaceutical companies were unacceptable.

Poland's Health Minister said that thanks to the anti-swine flu strategy adopted in Poland fewer fatal cases of the virus were reported and **the virus was less virulent than in other countries.**

Paul Flynn, who wrote the Council of Europe report, called the decision "an act of courage" and stressed that other countries spent millions of euro on vaccines.

Former head of the French Red Cross Prof. Marc Gentilini said that Poland can serve as an example of how to handle the threat of an A/H1N1 pandemic.

The Health Ministry's decision not to buy anti-flu vaccines was fiercely criticized in Poland during the outbreak. Ombudsman Janusz Kochanowski even threatened to sue Ewa Kopacz over the government's policy. **(mg/pg)**