

EN
E-002005/2024
Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(6.1.2025)

During the pandemic, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) monitored the national COVID-19 vaccination campaigns and made data regarding vaccination rates, efficacy, effectiveness, and safety of COVID-19 vaccines available. ECDC published two reports on the impact of COVID-19 vaccines on hospitalisations and deaths¹.

As part of the support provided during the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission developed a European Strategy for COVID-19 vaccines². However, the definition of health policies including for vaccination, has been and still is responsibility of the Member States, and public health measures such as the introduction of vaccination programmes are taken at the national level.

In this respect, the Commission supports Member States to achieve or maintain high vaccination coverage rates for public health reasons, not only for COVID-19, but for all infectious diseases for which a vaccine is available.

The Commission facilitates information sharing among Member States via the Health Security Committee (HSC) that met frequently during the COVID-19 pandemic³, and continues to meet regularly. The HSC issued an opinion with guidance for the Member States regarding respiratory diseases and related vaccination last year⁴. While the HSC can issue opinions and has a coordinating role, the Member States remain free to define their national vaccination policies.

¹ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/interim-analysis-covid-19-vaccine-effectiveness-against-hospitalisation-due-covid>

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/coronavirus-response/public-health/eu-vaccines-strategy_fr

³ https://health.ec.europa.eu/health-security-and-infectious-diseases/crisis-management/list-authorities-represented-health-security-committee/health-security-committee-reports_en

⁴ https://health.ec.europa.eu/publications/opinion-health-security-committee-preparing-winter-20232024-address-respiratory-infections-caused_en