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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(25.6.2025)

The Commission has not been informed by any national or European authority about intelligence indicating that COVID-19 originated in a laboratory.

The Commission closely monitors scientific studies on the origin of SARS-CoV-2 and supports the research of the World Health Organization (WHO)¹. The WHO's Global Study on the origins of SARS-CoV-2 suggests three possible zoonotic pathways for the introduction of the virus and concludes that the introduction through a laboratory incident is extremely unlikely². Furthermore, a 2023 scientific critical review concluded that the strongest evidence supports a zoonotic over a laboratory origin³.

The Commission and the Member States implement Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 on serious cross-border health threats⁴, and related Regulations that reinforced the EU's health security framework⁵. The Commission is currently drafting a Union Prevention, Preparedness and Response Plan (PPRP) to promote an effective and coordinated response to cross-border threats to health at Union level. Every three years, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), is to assess the implementation of the national PPRPs across all EU/European Economic Area (EEA) countries.

The ECDC is carrying out after-action reviews to learn from the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic⁶ and has issued guidance on public health and social measures for health emergencies and pandemics in the EU/EEA⁷.

In 2024, the Commission set up the Advisory Committee on public health emergencies, which, amongst others, advises the Commission on the formulation of response measures, including risk and crisis communication, in case of a public health emergency at Union level⁸.

¹ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/eu-statement-who-led-covid-19-origins-study_en.

² <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/origins-of-the-virus>, WHO-convened Global Study of Origins of SARS-CoV-2: China Part Joint WHO-China Study, page 9.

³ Alwine JC, Casadevall A, Enquist LW, Goodrum FD, Imperiale MJ. A Critical Analysis of the Evidence for the SARS-CoV-2 Origin Hypotheses. *mBio*. 2023 Apr 25;14(2):e0058323. doi: 10.1128/mbio.00583-23. Epub 2023 Mar 28. PMID: 36897098; PMCID: PMC10127682.

⁴ Regulation (EU) 2022/2371 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 on serious cross-border threats to health and repealing Decision No 1082/2013/EU OJ L 314, 6.12.2022, p. 26–63.

⁵ Regulation (EU) 2022/2370 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 November 2022 amending Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 establishing a European centre for disease prevention and control (OJ L 314, 6.12.2022, p. 1–25), Regulation (EU) 2022/123 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 January 2022 on a reinforced role for the European Medicines Agency in crisis preparedness and management for medicinal products and medical devices (OJ L 20, 31.1.2022, p. 1–37), and Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2372 of 24 October 2022 on a framework of measures for ensuring the supply of crisis-relevant medical countermeasures in the event of a public health emergency at Union level (OJ L 314, 6.12.2022, p. 64–78).

⁶ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications-data/lessons-covid-19-pandemic-may-2023>.

⁷ European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. Public health and social measures for health emergencies and pandemics in the EU/EEA: recommendations for strengthening preparedness planning. Stockholm: ECDC; 2024.

⁸ Regulation EU 2022/2371, Article 24.