

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001401/25
to the Commission
Christine Anderson (ESN)
(7 April 2025)**

Subject: Lack of transparency on allegedly manipulated EMA vaccine documents and implications for public trust and foreign interference

In December 2020, the European Medicines Agency (EMA) was the target of a cyberattack in which internal emails and confidential documents relating to COVID-19 vaccine evaluations were stolen, allegedly altered, and selectively leaked. The EMA has since confirmed that the perpetrators:

- manipulated emails and other documents, including through altered titles, selective aggregation, and out-of-context presentation;
- did so explicitly in a way ‘which could undermine trust in vaccines’ ⁽¹⁾;
- released content during a critical phase of public debate and political pressure around vaccine approvals.

Despite this, the EMA and the Commission have not disclosed the specific alterations made or provided any analysis of the potential impact on public perception, citing the risk of spreading misinformation. Meanwhile, credible sources have pointed to foreign state actors as likely culprits, yet the EU has not publicly attributed responsibility.

In this context, can the Commission clarify:

1. Why has no public review been conducted of the manipulated content, given its relevance to vaccine trust and democratic accountability?
2. Has the Commission deliberately withheld attribution of the attack for diplomatic or political reasons?
3. Does the Commission consider it acceptable that no factual account of the alleged document manipulation has been made public to date?

Submitted: 7.4.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(14 July 2025)**

The Commission would like to stress that the European Medicines Agency (EMA) cyberattack in 2020 was successfully contained without affecting the evaluation and approval of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics.

The EMA swiftly launched a full investigation, in close cooperation with the Dutch police, the Cybersecurity Service for the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies (CERT-EU) and Europol, the EU agency for law enforcement cooperation. The law enforcement investigation did not confirm the identities of the suspects involved in this criminal attack.

The EMA remains vigilant and has subsequently further strengthened its defensive cybersecurity capabilities to be better prepared for cyberattacks.

The EMA has also published a wealth of information about the evaluation of COVID-19 vaccines, including the clinical data submitted for assessment and the detailed assessment reports. The cyberattack did not impact the integrity of the data that were assessed by the EMA.

The Commission and the EMA would like to stress the importance of consulting reliable information sources and refer the public to the documents published on the EMA website.

The EMA will continue releasing documents to the public in line with its legal obligations and its transparency policy.

¹ <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/news/cyberattack-ema-update-5>.