

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004827/25
to the Commission
Gerald Hauser (Pfe)
(4 December 2025)**

Subject: Childhood vaccines and possible link to autism

On 19 November 2025, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the supreme health authority of the US, put out a new statement. In it, the CDC stated that although previously it has been categorically claimed that vaccines do not cause autism, this has not been scientifically proven, as existing studies cannot completely rule out a possible link between infant vaccines and autism. In the past, however, the CDC, other health authorities, specialists and ‘fact checkers’ had pushed the opposite stance to prevent vaccine hesitancy. Studies pointing to such a link have been disregarded by the health authorities for years. The US Department of Health and Human Services has now launched a comprehensive assessment of the causes of autism, including potential biological mechanisms and causal links.

1. Do the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) and the Commission intend to reach out to the CDC and the US Government to jointly investigate possible causal links?
2. Why were studies that pointed to a link between childhood vaccines and autism disregarded for so long?
3. In future, given the current state of medical research, will doctors be breaching their legal duty of disclosure by not informing parents of a possible risk of autism associated with vaccines?

Submitted: 4.12.2025

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(23 February 2026)**

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) provides comprehensive information on childhood vaccination, including on questions surrounding the claim on autism ⁽¹⁾.

Vaccines authorised for use in the EU undergo rigorous safety evaluations before being approved by the EU and national regulatory authorities.

Once vaccines are in use, regulatory bodies in the Member States and the European Medicines Agency continue to monitor their benefit-risk profile.

This includes detection and management of any new safety concerns ⁽²⁾. No safety signals linking vaccines to autism have been detected.

Further, the ECDC has been coordinating independent multi-country studies on the effectiveness of vaccines and their impact since 2007, and these studies are continuing through the Vaccine Monitoring Platform ⁽³⁾.

Many large-scale studies were conducted across the world to investigate the claim that vaccines cause autism, following a small study from 1998 that was since retracted and the two main authors discredited ⁽⁴⁾. The studies found no link between vaccines and autism ⁽⁵⁾. Based on scientific evidence, vaccines do not cause autism.

This has also been recently reaffirmed by the World Health Organisation Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety ⁽⁶⁾. The latest analysis from this global expert committee has found that, based on available evidence, no causal link exists between vaccines and autism spectrum disorders.

Any side effects of vaccines are transparently described in the Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC) for healthcare workers and accessible to vaccine recipients.

⁽¹⁾ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/infectious-disease-topics/related-public-health-topics/immunisation-and-vaccines/faq-children>.

⁽²⁾ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/infectious-disease-topics/related-public-health-topics/immunisation-and-vaccines/vaccine-monitoring>.

⁽³⁾ <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/about-ecdc/partners-and-networks/eu-institutions-and-agencies/vaccine-monitoring-platform>.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://www.bmj.com/content/342/bmj.d22>.

⁽⁵⁾ Example studies: Jain A, Marshall J, Buikema A, Bancroft T, Kelly JP, Newschaffer CJ. Autism occurrence by MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine status among US children with older siblings with and without autism. JAMA. 2015 Apr 21;313(15):1534-40. doi: 10.1001/jama.2015.3077. Erratum in: JAMA. 2016 Jan 12;315(2):204. doi: 10.1001/jama.2015.17754. PMID: 25898051; Hviid A, Hansen JV, Frisch M, Melbye M. Measles, Mumps, Rubella Vaccination and Autism: A Nationwide Cohort Study. Ann Intern Med. 2019 Apr 16;170(8):513-520. doi: 10.7326/M18-2101. Epub 2019 Mar 5. PMID: 30831578; Di Pietrantonj C, Rivetti A, Marchione P, Debalini MG, Demicheli V. Vaccines for measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella in children. Cochrane Database Syst Rev. 2021 Nov 22;11(11):CD004407. doi: 10.1002/14651858.CD004407.pub5. PMID: 34806766; PMCID: PMC8607336; Gidengil C, Goetz MB, Newberry S, Maglione M, Hall O, Larkin J, Motala A, Hempel S. Safety of vaccines used for routine immunization in the United States: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://www.who.int/news/item/11-12-2025-who-expert-group-s-new-analysis-reaffirms-there-is-no-link-between-vaccines-and-autism>.

There is no change in the recommendations for childhood vaccination in the EU.
