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Answer given by Mr Várhelyi
on behalf of the European Commission
(24.8.2026)

The Commission is committed to high standards of transparency and accountability. COVID-19 vaccination is estimated to have saved millions of lives. The first year of vaccination alone was estimated to have halved the number of COVID-19 deaths across the world, resulting in 14 to 20 million lives saved¹.

The COVID-19 vaccines were authorised by the Commission following a scientific assessment of their quality, safety and efficacy and a recommendation for authorisation by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use (CHMP). Based on these recommendations, the Commission prepared the decisions authorising the vaccines and consulted the Member States in the Standing Committee on Medicinal Products for Human Use before adoption. The vaccines were indicated for the prevention of serious disease caused by SARS-CoV-2 infection and not specifically authorised for the prevention of virus transmission.

Real-world studies carried out afterwards, including large numbers of vaccinated people, concluded that COVID-19 vaccines can reduce the transmission of the virus². Nonetheless, the effectiveness of the vaccines in preventing transmission was shown to be variable depending on time and country, reflecting the virus strains in circulation and the measures in place to reduce transmission. Information on COVID-19 vaccines and treatments is publicly available on EMA's website³.

In line with Article 168 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, while the organisation and delivery of health services and medical care is primarily a national competence, the Commission plays an important role in supporting, coordinating and complementing national action in the field of public health.

¹ Global impact of the first year of COVID-19 vaccination: a mathematical modelling study - The Lancet Infectious Diseases [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099\(22\)00320-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/laninf/article/PIIS1473-3099(22)00320-6/fulltext).

² Study references can be found on the EMA webpage 'COVID-19 vaccines: key facts': <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/human-regulatory-overview/public-health-threats/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/covid-19-medicines/covid-19-vaccines-key-facts#common-misunderstandings-and-false-claims-65639>.

³ <https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/human-regulatory-overview/public-health-threats/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/covid-19-medicines>.