

**Priority question for written answer P-002930/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Disinformation on the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus and dealing with disinformation in the COVID-19 situation

Germany is guided by the assessments of virologist Prof. Dr Christian Drosten in its attempts to evaluate the SARS-CoV-2 virus situation in political terms. Drosten works at the Charité Berlin hospital and also heads the Virology Department of Labor Berlin, Europe's largest hospital laboratory.

According to an announcement made in May 2020, Drosten used supposedly scientific methods to refute claims that the virus had originated in a laboratory in China and was artificial in nature. In doing so he contradicted a well-known Nobel Prize winner.¹

Drosten later received Germany's Order of Merit for his insights into the occurrence of infection and communicating these to the public by the use of innovative formats.²

However, recent media reports talk of an increasing realisation that the virus emerged from a laboratory in China, which in turn contradicts Prof. Dr Drosten's idea.³

1. What information has the Commission received about the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus? When and from whom was it received?
2. Against the background of the Action Plan against Disinformation, what does the Commission estimate the consequences of the current disinformation on the origin of the SARS-CoV-2 virus on the EU's policies and society to be?
3. What action does the Commission take on becoming aware that what it may have hitherto classified as information is in fact disinformation?

¹ https://www.focus.de/gesundheit/news/unsinn-drosten-widerlegt-labor-theorie-und-buegelt-nobelpreistraeger-nieder_id_11983555.html

² <https://www.ndr.de/nachrichten/info/Steinmeier-verleiht-Drosten-das-Bundesverdienstkreuz,bundesverdienstkreuz142.html>

³ <https://www.merkur.de/welt/corona-ursprung-wuhan-labor-studie-vorwuerfe-gain-of-function-vertuschung-manipulation-90782457.html>