

Stamcelmoord in Oekraïne?

Evert Mouw

2023-01-30

Stamcelonderzoek heeft veel toekomst. Stamcellen kunnen helpen om organen te herstellen, en dus ook om ouder te worden. Vandaag zag ik op Twitter een screenshot voorbijkomen van een BBC bericht uit 2006 waarin stond dat er mogelijk ook enkele pasgeborenen gedood zijn in Kharkiv, een stad in Oekraïne, om hun stamcellen te oogsten. Dat leek me een beetje al te spectaculair, maar gezien alle ellende, chaos, armoede, oorlog en corruptie in dat land ook niet per definitie onmogelijk.

Daarnaast spelen in voormalige Oostbloklanden ethische kwesties rond dit thema vaak iets anders. Ik kan me herinneren dat de docent anatomie in de snijzaal vertelde bij een stage in zo'n land aanwezig te zijn geweest bij een abortus die uitgevoerd werd door met een hamer een stalen pin door de schedel van de net uit de vagina tevoorschijn komende baby te slaan.

Een zoektochtje op internet leverde me diverse nieuwsberichten en namen op, waaronder enkele vragen en antwoorden in het Europese Parlement (EP). Kennelijk werd de zaak door meerdere hooggeplaatste personen serieus genomen. Ook de Raad van Europa (geen onderdeel van de EU) stelde destijds, in 2007, een onderzoek in. Op hun website (www.coe.int) kon ik er echter niets meer over terugvinden, ondanks het gebruik van meerdere *keywords*, waaronder ook de achternamen van betrokken personen. Ik had toch wel verwacht een verslag te vinden, alleen al om mogelijke verdachtmakingen van baby moord te ontkrachten. Het is mogelijk dat het me niet gelukt is het verslag te vinden, terwijl het er toch is. Maar ook in het antwoord van Ashton (EC) aan het EP in 2011 werd geen gewag gemaakt van zo'n verslag. Wel werd door Ashton gerefereerd naar een langlopend politie-onderzoek in Kharkiv. Mijn vermoeden is dat daar weinig uit gekomen is en gezien de huidige oorlog zal dat wel nooit meer opgeklaard worden.

Duidelijk is wel dat in Oekraïne al geruime tijd behandelingen worden aangeboden op basis van stamceltherapie, en dat stamcellen vanuit dat land ook hun weg vinden naar medische faciliteiten in het buitenland. Ook op andere biomedische terreinen is het land actief, naar verluidt mede ondersteund door uit Amerika afkomstige geldstromen. Enkele jaren terug, in 2019, stelde de *European Cooperation in Science and Technology* geld beschikbaar voor meer onderzoek naar stamcellen in Oekraïne.

E.e.a. lijkt aan te sluiten op het algemene plaatje waarin diverse Westerse partijen soms schimmige belangen najagen in het onstabiele Oekraïne. Van massale opkoop van landbouwgronden en biomedisch onderzoek tot politieke en militaire “advisering”. Mijn vermoeden is dat dit niet altijd synchron loopt met het Westerse publieke belang. Denk daarbij aan het verplaatsen van de landbouw naar Oekraïne, of riskant biomedisch onderzoek, of de economie schaden (oorlog), t.b.v. private belangen.

Voor mij persoonlijk heeft het op dit moment geen toegevoegde waarde dit onderwerp verder uit te diepen.

De nieuwsartikelen en EP-vragen heb ik als PDF opgeslagen en samengevoegd in één enkel PDF bestand:

`stamcelmoord_oukrajne.pdf`



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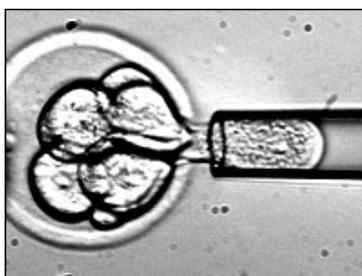
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Ukraine babies in stem cell probe

By Matthew Hill
BBC Health Correspondent

Healthy new-born babies may have been killed in Ukraine to feed a flourishing international trade in stem cells, evidence obtained by the BBC suggests.



There is heated debate about the ethics of using stem cells

Disturbing video footage of post-mortem examinations on dismembered tiny bodies raises serious questions about what happened to them.

Ukraine has become the self-styled stem cell capital of the world.

There is a trade in stem cells from aborted fetuses, amid unproven claims they can help fight many diseases.

But now there are claims that stem cells are also being harvested from live babies.

Wall of silence

The BBC has spoken to mothers from the city of Kharkiv who say they gave birth to healthy babies, only to have them taken by maternity staff.

In 2003 the authorities agreed to exhume around 30 bodies of fetuses and full-term babies from a cemetery used by maternity hospital number six.

One campaigner was allowed into the autopsy to gather video evidence. She has given that footage to the BBC and Council of Europe.

In its report, the Council describes a general culture of trafficking of children snatched at birth, and a wall of silence from hospital staff upwards over their fate.

The pictures show organs, including brains, have been stripped - and some bodies dismembered.

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A senior British forensic pathologist says he is very concerned to see bodies in pieces - as that is not standard post-mortem practice.

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It could possibly be a result of harvesting stem cells from bone marrow.

Hospital number six denies the allegations.

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Stem cell baby deaths probe 'too close to the truth', claims investigator

Bojan Pancevski in Vienna

17 December 2006 • 12:01am

A Ukrainian investigator looking into claims that new-born babies were killed to harvest their stem cells and internal organs says she was removed from the case after demanding that the inquiry be extended to all Ukraine's maternity hospitals.

Irina Bogomolova, who works in the chief prosecutor's office in the capital, Kiev, claims she was taken off the case because she came too close to the truth while investigating allegations made by women who claim their babies were taken away from them immediately after birth.

She said: "I was sacked for political reasons. I demanded an investigation into all maternity wings in hospitals across Ukraine and I was relieved of duty after making that demand.

"A trade in stem cells exists here... I suspect there is a lot of bribery going on, right up to highest levels.

"Pregnant women, especially from rural areas, are very vulnerable targets as they will obviously believe whatever the doctors tell them. It's easy to take their babies from them and tell them they died or were born dead due to complications."

The Council of Europe is to investigate allegations that newborn babies, and fetuses, have been killed to provide stem cells and internal organs for controversial medical and cosmetic treatments.

Officials of the Strasbourg-based human rights organisation are to travel to Ukraine in February to investigate the role played by some of the country's research centres and maternity hospitals in the international trade.

The council launched an inquiry in 2004 when several mothers accused hospitals of snatching their newborn babies to harvest their organs and tissue for the booming new industry of rejuvenation treatments, as well as treatments of illnesses such as Parkinson's disease and cancer. The treatments cost up to £12,000 in the Ukraine, but much more in western countries.

The inquiry was abandoned for lack of firm evidence, but is to be reopened after fresh allegations in the press. A BBC report on the subject, claiming that healthy babies may have been killed, is to be broadcast tonight on Radio 4.

Ruth-Gaby Vermot-Mangold, a Swiss MP who is a member of the Council of Europe's parliamentary assembly, and who previously investigated reports of missing babies, said: "I have obtained reliable information, from mothers and other sources about five cases of newborns that

went missing ... I believe the mothers were telling the truth. I am more inclined to believe the babies were stolen for the purpose of adoption in the West." Some 300 mothers who claim to have suffered the same fate are represented by the All-Ukrainian Federation of Families with Many Children. In 2003 its head, Tetyana Isayeva Zaharova, gave Council of Europe investigators a video which was said to show babies' bodies partly dismembered so that stem cells and organs could be removed.

The stem cell swindle: the foetus factories: Radio 4, 5pm

The babies who are murdered to order

By MATTHEW HILL
Last updated at 08:53 18 December 2006

The plastic bag looks as if it contains meat. But then a right leg is taken from it and placed surgically on the morgue table, followed by the left one. Then the torso. The head follows, a gaping cavity where the brain used to be.

But it is only when the gloved hand of the pathologist examines the tiny fingers of a baby aged about 30 weeks that the full horror of what I am witnessing sinks in.

This shocking scene was captured on video at post-mortem examinations carried out on behalf of Ukrainian mothers who claim their babies were stolen from them at birth.

The film was shown to me by an incredibly brave charity worker called Tatyana Zhakarova, who represents up to 300 families who believe their healthy babies were deliberately targeted at a maternity hospital in the Ukraine's most easterly city of Kharkiv.

The babies, believes Tatyana, were taken at birth to have their organs and stem cells harvested as part of a sickening but highly lucrative international trade.

Certainly, the Ukraine has become the main supplier of the global stem cell trade.

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Officially, the cells are taken from aborted fetuses with the mothers' consent, but according to Tatyana, there could also be hundreds of babies stolen to order, to feed demand for stem cells from around the world.

Can she be right? Alarmed by her claims, I decided to launch my own investigations for a special BBC report, to be broadcast tomorrow.

My inquiries took me around the world, from a private clinic in the Caribbean to the desolate back streets of the Ukraine. What I uncovered is a disturbing tale involving claims of murder, conspiracy . . . and a sickening new beauty treatment.

The first hint I had of these allegations arose months ago during a conversation with one of the UK's foremost experts on stem cell research.

Dr Stephen Minger, from Kings College, London, is a distinguished medical researcher who believes stem cells hold the key to finding a cure for some of our major diseases.

These tiny cells, which first divide within an embryo, have the ability to transform themselves into any type of tissue. But it's their potential as a future treatment for conditions such as muscular dystrophy and Parkinson's disease that really excites Dr Minger.

He is one of many reputable experts who fear their research into this field is being given a bad name by companies making a fast buck out of untested stem cell therapies.

Dr Minger told me he found out about the trade in stem cells from aborted Ukrainian fetuses two years ago, when he was invited to meet doctors from a controversial clinic in Barbados.

called the Institute For Regenerative Medicine (IRM), the firm wanted Dr Minger to lend his endorsement to its therapies.

The firm's website boasts IRM is "dedicated to excellence in stem cell therapy for the remediation of diseases resulting from tissue damage and/or the effects of aging". But its claims are treated with scepticism by experts.

The clinic's method of treatment involves injecting patients with stem cells taken from babies aborted between seven and ten weeks old.

It is a technique, says Dr Minger, that has no credible research to back it up, and that raises disturbing questions about how the cells have been 'harvested'.

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"The problem is, I am not sure how the cells are prepared," he says. "A six-week-old embryo can be just 1cm from head to foot, so it's difficult to dissect tissue from it. They may just homogenise the whole embryo." That's a polite way of saying that the aborted babies could have been liquidised.

Dr Minger was especially troubled that as well as offering unproven therapy to patients with degenerative diseases - at up to £10,000 a time - the clinic was running a lucrative sideline in offering stem cell treatments to reverse the effects of ageing.

The firm boasts that such treatment can lead to everything from improved fitness and a better sex life to greater mental capacity and enhanced sleep patterns.

"I find it very distasteful that they are used for beauty treatments," says Dr Minger. "As far as I can tell from what's been published, a lot of people go to this clinic in Barbados feeling a bit run down, or that their skin has just lost some elasticity, and they are getting 'smoothies' or perk-me-ups."

The stem cells used in these techniques are bought by IRM from the Ukraine. They are said to be taken from aborted foetuses, with the mothers' consent. But could there be a link with the Ukrainian mothers who believe their babies were deliberately taken from them?

I travelled to Barbados to speak to one of IRM's senior doctors, Shami Ramesh.

Initially, I feared my journey was in vain. As I approached the 170-year-old colonial building where the clinic is based, I found the gates were padlocked - I was told by Dr Ramesh that I would have to come back in January.

But eventually I managed to persuade him to come to my hotel, where he said he could show me evidence of two studies that proved the treatments work.

This "proof" turned out to be one study of a single patient with motor neurone disease and another of eight cardiac patients. The numbers were too small for proper analysis and the data had not been published in any reputable peer-reviewed journal.

But Dr Ramesh's faith in the treatment was striking. "Foetal stem cells work," he said. "If patients were not getting value for money they would not be coming back to us for second and third infusions."

Then our conversation turned to the main part of my inquiry:

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how could he be certain the stem cells the clinic was using had indeed come only from aborted fetuses in the Ukraine - a country where there's very little regulation over issues like consent from donors.

Was it possible that the cells had, in fact, been harvested from fullterm babies without any consent from the parents?

Dr Ramesh denied any knowledge of babies being sacrificed for stem cells. He said he had faith in the Institute of Cryobiology in Kharkiv, the source of the stem cells used by the Barbados clinic, but added that "maybe in the future we will go and check it out".

I decided to travel to the Ukraine myself to see what sort of guarantee the Institute could offer about the source of its stem cells.

Once there, I made several attempts to interview the head of the Institute, Dr Valentin

Greshenko, to put my concerns to him, but he refused. So my inquiries took me instead to Maternity Hospital Number Six, which stands in what my translator told me nervously was the "criminal area" of Kharkiv.

It was at this hospital, in 2002, that a young woman called Svetlana Plusikova gave birth to a baby girl. The 26-year-old agreed to meet me in a derelict fairground nearby, set in a leafless forest. She was too scared for me to come to her workplace.

Svetlana told me that after a relatively straightforward pregnancy, she gave birth without any complication. "It happened very, very quickly - the doctors didn't say anything."

It was only much later that she was informed the child had been stillborn. "They told me my child had already been dead inside me for five months."

Svetlana was unconvinced. Surely if her baby had been dead for so long, she would have suffered a miscarriage. And why was the dead infant not shown to her? It had been whisked away so quickly she didn't even have a chance to hear if it cried.

She has her own theories as to what happened. "I think she was stolen. If she was dead I should have been allowed to see her. I think a lot of young mothers like me lost their children, but right now nobody turns to the police."

Certainly, Svetlana is not alone in her suspicions. I met Dimitry

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and Olena Stulnev in their two-room flat nearby. I arrived during a power cut and started to interview them by candlelight. There, with tears running down her face, Olena told me about her own experience in

Maternity Hospital Number Six.

"I gave birth to a healthy girl," Olena told me. "She was crying and moving her hands and legs. I was shown the baby. After that the girl was taken away. They told me everything was OK and I could see her the next day."

But that never happened. Olena was told the following day that her baby had died. But when she asked what had caused the death, the answers were inconsistent. "They told me three stories. One, she didn't have enough air to breathe; two, the lungs didn't open; and three, that her heart failed."

The couple tried in vain to find out what really happened, but the more they investigated, the firmer the doors were shut in their faces.

So she contacted a charity campaigner named Tatyana Zhakarova, from the Federation Of Families With Many Children, who took up the case on her behalf.

Tatyana discovered many more infants had died at the hospital in similarly odd circumstances. And after intensive lobbying, the authorities eventually agreed to have the tiny bodies of around 30 babies exhumed and examined.

Tatyana showed me the video she had been allowed to record of the post-mortem examinations that followed. The gruesome film shows the carcasses of babies, some of whom were full-term, with their organs and brains missing. Neurones in infants' brain are a rich source of stem cells.

Another body shown in the video is so badly dismembered it has to be put together piece by piece, like a jigsaw. Dismemberment is not standard autopsy practice and could, according to experts, indicate stem cells were harvested from bone marrow.

The post-mortem examination conclusions were profoundly disturbing. But Tatyana is now living in fear that the authorities are trying to silence her.

Her 20-year-old son went missing in October in mysterious circumstances, and she fears he may have been killed in revenge for her campaign to uncover the truth.

The Ukrainian authorities deny any conspiracy and refute

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claims that there is a trade in stem cells taken from stolen babies.

However, alarmed by the whole stem cell issue, the Council Of Europe is now carrying out its own investigation into the Ukrainian mothers' claims.

The Council's interim report talks of a "culture of trafficking of children snatched at birth and a wall of silence from hospital staff upwards over their fate".

As part of the second stage of the inquiry, the council will no doubt want to talk in detail to staff at Maternity Hospital Number Six. But whether they will get any answers is another matter - as I discovered when I tried to speak to the hospital authorities myself.

It was a grim scene. As I waited for hours at Maternity Hospital Number Six, heavily pregnant women in maternity smocks wandered past me in its dark corridors, along with the occasional elderly midwife.

Paint was peeling off the walls and there was a strong smell of antiseptic. Eventually, I was granted five minutes with the chief doctor, Larysa Nazarenko.

She was visibly uncomfortable as I set up my camera - her eyelids blinking rapidly as she stood behind her desk. "The children are not lost," she told me. "They are not stolen - that's just somebody else's illusion."

Who, she asked, had put these ideas in this young mother's head?

"It's about money," I said, "about stem cells. About Westerners paying a lot of money for stem cells from babies. And claims that cells from their brains are taken for treatment by various organisations."

"There is no such therapy," she said. "No work in this hospital is connected with the use of cells. This is the wrong address. I deny everything." Then I was ordered to leave.

Dr Nazarenko may have to spare more time to speak to Council Of Europe officials in February, when they will return to Kharkiv to continue their investigation.

The wall of silence is crumbling. And it may yet reveal a very ugly side to the global beauty business.

Matthew Hill's full report, The Stem Cell Swindle, can be heard on Radio 4 tomorrow at 5pm.

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Death for dollars?



Rebecca Grace
AFA Journal staff
writer

February 2007 – In the Ukraine, investigators are exploring the possibility that healthy infants and preborns were killed for stem-cell experimentation. It is speculated that the babies' organs were extracted after allegedly being stolen from mothers by staff at Maternity Hospital Number Six in the eastern city of Kharkov.

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) claims to have a video showing the autopsy examination of 30 infants and fetuses that were exhumed from a cemetery used by the Ukrainian maternity hospital. The video was also turned over to the Council of Europe who is now carrying out its own investigation as a response to about 300 families who are coming forward with charges against the hospital for allegedly taking and killing their newborns.

Pictures from the autopsies reveal tiny dismembered bodies with missing organs and brains. Since dismemberment of bodies is not a standard post-mortem practice, it is likely the babies were harvested for the high amounts of stem cells in their brains and bone marrow.

It is a recognized practice in the Ukraine, the stem-cell capital of the world, to take stem cells from aborted fetuses with the mothers' consent. Due to the increasing worldwide demand for stem cells, it is possible healthy newborns are now being used to feed this demand. These healthy babies mysteriously "die" following a successful birth.

Such is likely the case for Ukrainian couple Dimitry and Olena Stulnev who had their baby at Maternity Hospital Number Six.

"I gave birth to a healthy girl," Olena said. "She was crying and moving her hands and legs. I was shown the baby. After that the girl was taken away. They told me everything was OK, and I could see her the next day."

Olena never saw her baby again. She was told the next day that her baby was dead and given conflicting stories as to the reason for the child's death. The couple began investigating the death of their child but got nowhere. The more they pried, the less information they got.

Even today, Ukrainian authorities and hospital staff remain tight-lipped about the suspected use of newborns for stem-cell research.

According to investigative reporter Matthew Hill, "The Ukrainian authorities deny any conspiracy and refute claims that there is a trade in stem cells taken from stolen babies."

"No work in this hospital is connected with the use of cells," Dr. Larysa Nazarenko told Hill. Nazarenko is the chief doctor at Maternity Hospital Number Six.

Although speculations are being disputed by those accused of committing these atrocities, Hill thinks the silence will be broken in February when the Council of Europe returns to Kharkov to continue its investigation of what has already become a horrifying insight into the stem-cell controversy.

“One of the things that we have been concerned about for years is the fact that, by pushing embryonic stem-cell research, we’re looking at a situation that is bound to use human beings as fodder for the experiments,” said Dr. Janice Crouse, director of the Beverly LaHaye Institute at Concerned Women for America (CWA).

Bioethicist Wesley Smith believes the demand for hundreds of millions of eggs and stem cells will lead to fetal farming.

“In order to get the millions and millions of eggs that would be required, poor women in Bangladesh, in Congo, in other destitute nations would be seen by biotechnologists as so many egg farms ripe for the harvest,” Smith explained. “This commoditization of human life is pernicious. ...”

Sadly, it appears to be motivated by big business and financial gain.

For example, the allegations of the stolen Ukrainian babies come only months after Family News in Focus reported women in the Ukraine were being paid \$200 to abort their babies for the acquisition of stem cells. More specifically, according to Smith, the women were paid to get pregnant for the sole purpose of aborting the babies at eight weeks gestation so the stem cells could be used for an anti-aging beauty treatment.

The Institute for Regenerative Medicine (IRM) in Barbados uses such a treatment that supposedly improves one’s fitness, sex life, mental capacity and sleeping patterns. IRM buys its stem cells used in the treatment from the Ukraine.

The treatment involves injecting clients with stem cells from seven- to ten-week-old aborted babies. But now there is reason to question a possible link between this or other treatments and the missing Ukrainian babies.

Whether the stem cells are taken from aborted or birthed babies, “Destroying innocent life to meet a business demand for stem cells is an unconscionable bioethical breach,” said Wendy Wright, CWA president.

“The entire concept of the human being as a product is coming into vogue,” Smith added, “and it should be a great concern to everyone.”

BBC News, 12/12/06; www.wesleyjsmith.com, 12/12/06; www.dailymail.co.uk, 12/15/06; www.citizenlink.org, 12/18/06; www.cwfa.org, 12/20/06

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Trade in stem cells and organs from newborn children killed in Ukraine

10.5.2007

> [Answer in writing](#)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2644/07

by Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE)

to the Commission

According to a BBC report, stem cells and organs removed from newborn children who have been killed are being traded in Ukraine. Ukrainian mothers report that in 2002, in a clinic in Kharkiv, their newborn children were taken from them and that they were told, with the flimsiest of explanations, that the children had died. However, the parents were not allowed to see the bodies. In 2003, on the authorities' orders, the bodies of a number of newborn children were exhumed from one of the hospital cemeteries. It emerged that organs and, presumably, stem cells too had been removed from them. According to a Ukrainian NGO, more than 300 newborn children could have been killed between 2001 and 2003 for the same purposes. In the meantime, the Council of Europe itself is investigating these incidents.

1. Does the Commission know about these incidents? Have stem cells and organs from newborn children been brought into EU Member States from Ukraine? Can the Commission confirm that there is trade in organs and stem cells?
2. The Council of Europe has pledged support for Ukraine in clearing up these cases. Will the Commission offer its support, too, to the Ukraine authorities?
3. Does the Commission know about similar cases in other European states? If so, which?
4. There have also been reports that, in Ukraine, there is trade in stem cells removed from aborted fetuses. Can the Commission confirm that?
5. Should it be confirmed that stem cells and organs are being traded, will the Commission act to stop that trade?

OJ C 45, 16/02/2008

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Answer given by Ms Ferrero-Waldner on behalf of the Commission

4.7.2007

> [Written question](#)

Allegations of stem cells and organs having been removed from new born children who would have been killed for that purpose have been reported several times — by the BBC in December 2006 and by Euronews in 2004.

So far, information available to the Commission, which has been obtained, among others, from human rights Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Ukraine (including in Kharkhiv, the city where the events allegedly happened), has not been able to provide secure confirmation of these reports.

For information, the Honourable Member should also note that on 14 December 2006, the Ukrainian Health Ministry stated that no evidence could be found to support the media reports and informed that a criminal investigation had been launched to inquire into the alleged improper fulfilment of professional duties by staff of maternity hospital number 6 in Kharkiv. On 18 December 2006, the Prosecutor's General's Office denied the information provided by the BBC article.

The Commission will continue to follow this matter very closely. The respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, starting with the right to life, is at the basis of the relationship between the EU and Ukraine and enshrined in the EU-Ukraine Partnership and Cooperation Agreement and in the EU-Ukraine Action Plan. Ongoing cooperation of the Commission with the Ukrainian authorities aims at strengthening the capacity of the Ukrainian institutions to guarantee the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this context, the Commission will continue to monitor very closely the respect of these rights by the Ukrainian authorities and actors.

OJ C 45, 16/02/2008

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Use of babies killed for stem cell treatment and organ trafficking in Ukraine

29.9.2011

> [Answer in writing](#)

Question for written answer E-008961/2011
to the Commission
Rule 117
Dan Jørgensen (S&D)

Many EU citizens travel to Ukrainian clinics each year to receive stem cell treatment for various illnesses such as cancer, sclerosis and Alzheimer's.

Questions have, however, been raised a number of times about the integrity of Ukraine's stem cell clinics. One of the allegations made is that a Ukrainian hospital in Kharkiv has induced the abortion of baby foetuses so that Ukrainian clinics can use the embryos for organ trafficking and experimental stem cell treatment. Two questions have already been put to the Commission on this matter ([E-3552/03](#) and [E-2644/07](#)).

In its answer to Question [E-2644/07](#), the Commission said that it did not know for certain to what extent these allegations were true, but that it intended to follow the matter very closely.

1. What action has the Commission taken to investigate the true facts of the case?
2. Has the Commission, in monitoring this issue, acquired any new information on the extent to which Ukrainian clinics have used aborted baby foetuses for stem cell treatment and organ trafficking?
3. Has the Commission, in monitoring this issue, acquired any new information on the extent to which Ukrainian clinics are using aborted baby foetuses for stem cell treatment and organ trafficking?
4. What does the Commission propose to do should it transpire that the Ukrainian clinics have used aborted baby foetuses for stem cell treatment?

OJ C 154 E, 31/05/2012

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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Ashton on behalf of the Commission

1.2.2012

> [Written question](#)

In October 2011 the EU Delegation in Ukraine contacted the Ukrainian Ministry of Health and Ministry for Family, Youth and Sports, as well as the Kyiv offices of Unicef and the World Health Organisation, but did not receive any concrete information on recent developments. Information received by the EU Delegation in Kyiv suggests that a police investigation into the Kharkiv case began five years ago but had not been definitively resolved.

At the meeting of the Joint EU-Ukraine Science and Technology Committee held in Brussels on 23 November 2011, the EU side raised the issue of stem cell treatment, and the Kharkiv allegations, with the Director of the Institute of Molecular Biology and Genetics, describing the concerns raised on this matter, including by European parliamentarians, and the need for further clarification.

The respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is at the basis of the relationship between the EU and Ukraine. The European Union intends to strengthen substantially its dialogue with Ukraine in this field under the Association Agreement currently being negotiated.

OJ C 154 E, 31/05/2012

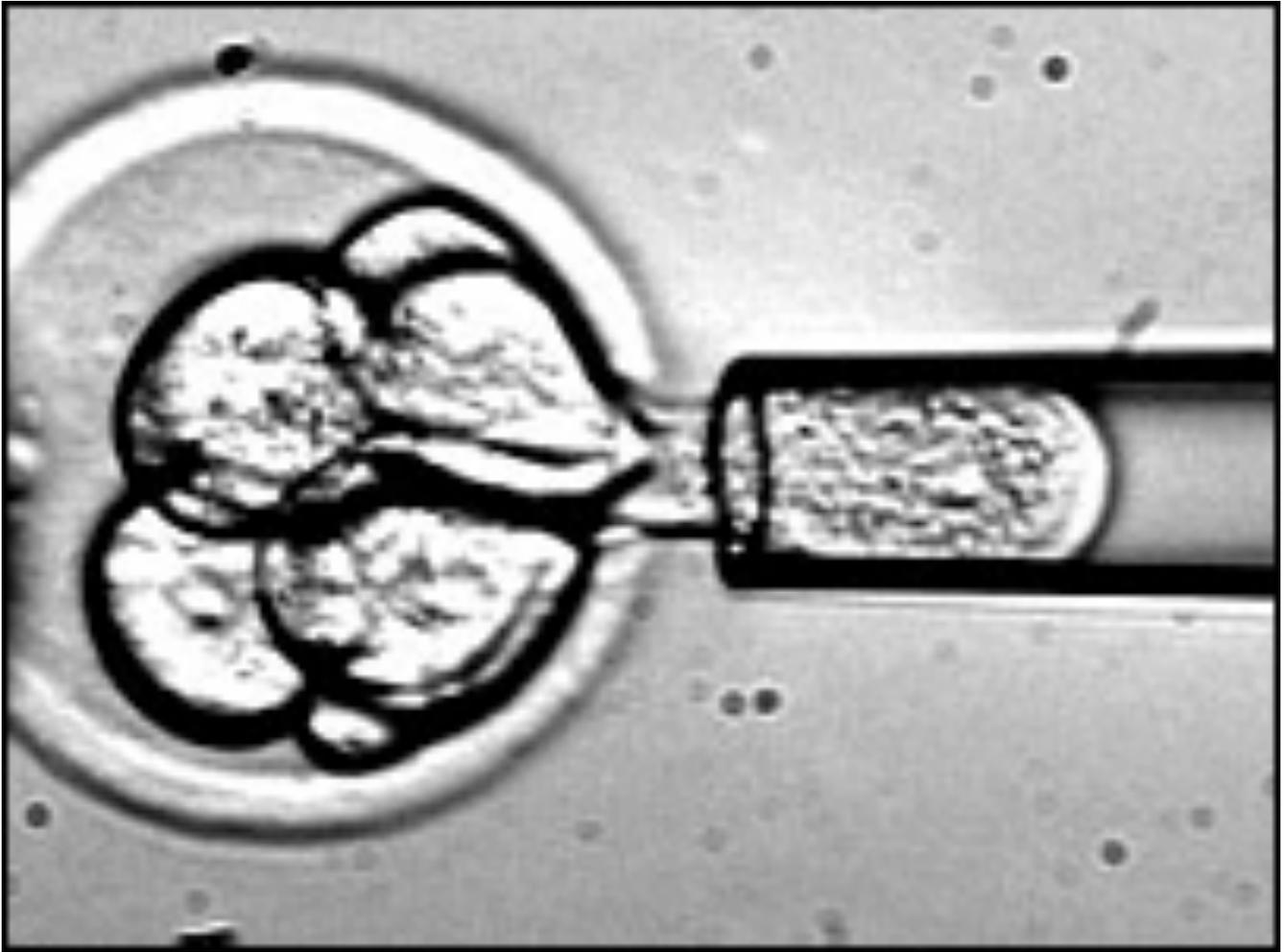
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GUEST THINKERS — AUGUST 16, 2010

CONFUSION OVER “UKRAINE BABIES FOR STEM CELLS” PRESENTS NIGHTMARE SCENARIO FOR PUBLIC OPINION

Matthew C. Nisbet

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BBC NEWS CAPTION: "There is heated debate about the ethics of using stem cells"

What's wrong with this picture and caption?

As the BBC reports the horrifying discovery that healthy babies in the Ukraine may have been killed for body parts, including stem cells derived from bone marrow, the news organization also runs a photo and tagline implying that the scandal involves embryonic stem cells.

Even more confusion is featured at conservative news sites like [LifeSite.Net](#):

■ Ukraine has long heralded itself as a leader in modern science's embryonic stem cell

Ukraine has long heralded itself as a leader in modern science's embryonic stem cell quest. BBC News reports that video footage they obtained suggests that the Ukraine is no longer meeting the demand with just embryonic stem cells but is now also killing newborn babies to harvest cells from their more developed bodies. ✕

The horrific revelation presents a potential nightmare scenario for research advocates. Both the public and the mainstream news media are likely to confuse the difference between this scandal and the debate over using stem cells from discarded embryos.....*and conservatives are going to have a field day, working overtime to amplify the confusion.*

Stem cell advocates, scientists, and political leaders need to get out in front of this story by calling reporters, getting on TV and radio news, and issuing press statements condemning the Ukraine practice, but drawing a clear, bright line difference between the scandal in the Ukraine and the research going on in labs here in the United States and abroad.

■
This event is likely to have a bigger impact than the Korean cloning scandal. There is enough drama and sensationalism to carry this story in the news for days, if not weeks. Already, the story is the banner headline at the **DrudgeReport** meaning that it will make media waves over the weekend.

The BBC report also eludes to video. *The release of the footage will likely only magnify media and public attention.*

The Ukraine story resonates strongly with President Bush's narrative that embryonic stem cell research '**crosses a moral threshold, or boundary,**' and therefore research, no matter how responsible and careful should be tightly controlled and limited in scope. It also introduces a "Pandora's box" interpretation: ethically questionable research has mutated into a Frankenstein's monster which can't be controlled. Both frames are powerful latent meanings that if connected to real events can lead to a strongly negative public reaction.

The story also fits with a larger narrative arc about the former Soviet Union as a lawless out-of-control society, home not only to rogue KGB assassinations but also "rogue science."

Nazi science, Soviet science....all the historical allusions will be applied.

This focusing event could *be bad, very bad* for public opinion.

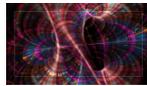
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Stem cell research in Ukraine is funded by the European Cooperation in Science and Technology

Stem cell research in Ukraine is funded by the European Cooperation in Science and Technology

7.04.2019 |



Cell technologies are one of the most promising directions in modern medicine. Most of the Nobel Prizes of the last decade have been awarded for the achievements in molecular and cell biology.

In developed countries, more and more grants from government and nonprofit organizations are allocated annually to stem cell research.

An indicator of the competitiveness of Ukrainian science in the field of cell technologies can be considered the fact that Ukrainian cryobank, the co-founder and a member of the Association of Cryobanks – Institute for Cell Therapy recently has received a grant from the European Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST).

The European Cooperation in Science and Technology (headquartered in the city of Brussels (Belgium) integrates competent academical, clinical and industrial centers for basic research of perinatal tissues (umbilical cord, placenta) and promotes translational research, i.e. being on stage of introduction into health care system. For almost 50 years the European Cooperation in Science and Technology has been funding the most promising research projects from the budget in the framework of the European Union programs, including Horizont 2020.

The Institute of Cell Therapy is involved in the implementation of the international project COST action CA17116 on placental stem cells.

Established in 2013, the Association of Cryobanks of Umbilical Cord Blood and Other Human Tissues and Cells in Ukraine is a unique professional association of licensed biobanks, scientific and medical centers, working in the field of cryopreservation and stem cell research. The Association of Cryobanks promotes the development of biobanking in Ukraine within the legal framework and provision of quality services on the cryoconservation of cord blood components, the placenta, umbilical cord and other tissues and cells.

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Address

01025, Ukraine,
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Ukraine should destroy 'high-threat' pathogens, WHO says

By [Nicoletta Lanese](#) published March 11, 2022

The measure would prevent potential spills, the agency says.



A picture taken on May 8, 2021 shows a sign of the World Health Organization (WHO) at the entrance of their headquarters in Geneva (Image credit: FABRICE COFFRINI / Contributor via Getty Images)

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommended that Ukrainian public health labs that handle infectious agents destroy any "high-threat pathogens" to prevent potential spills during the ongoing [Russian invasion](#), the agency [told Reuters](#) on Thursday (March 10).

The WHO previously worked with Ukrainian public health labs to establish security protocols aimed at preventing the "accidental or deliberate" release of such pathogens, the agency told Reuters in an email. "As part of this work, the WHO has strongly recommended to the Ministry of Health in Ukraine and other responsible bodies to destroy high-threat pathogens to prevent any potential spills," the email read.

The agency also advised all affected parties "to reach out for technical assistance as needed," regarding the safe and secure disposal of any pathogens.

The WHO did not specify when this recommendation was issued, whether the recommendation had been acted upon yet, or which specific pathogens would need to be destroyed, Reuters reported. Ukrainian officials in Kyiv and the embassy in Washington, D.C., did not respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

Public health labs in Ukraine and elsewhere work with pathogens and toxins in order to understand their inner workings; their impact on [humans](#) and animals; their modes of transmission, if relevant; and the ways in which their damaging effects might be countered with medical treatments. Ukraine's labs are supported by the U.S., European Union and the WHO, according to Reuters.

The WHO email made no mention of pathogens that could potentially be used for biowarfare, which Russia has long claimed are present in Ukrainian labs that receive U.S. support, Reuters reported.

Specifically, earlier this week, Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova repeated Russia's long-standing claim that the U.S. operates a biowarfare lab out of Ukraine, [Reuters reported](#) on March 9. Zakharova claimed that Russian forces had discovered documents in Ukraine that provided evidence of the Ukrainian health ministry ordering the destruction of samples of [plague](#), cholera, anthrax and other pathogens before Feb. 24, the start of the invasion. The U.S. and Ukraine have both denied these claims.

"Russia has been going on about the labs in Ukraine for some years now. I have seen no evidence to support Russia's claims," Dr. Alastair Hay, professor emeritus of Environmental Toxicology at the University of Leeds, [told the Science Media Centre](#), an organization that provides expert comments from scientists on timely issues and science-related news.

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Following Zakharova's statement, Dmitry Chumakov, a Russian deputy United Nations (UN) ambassador, repeated her accusation on March 9, [The Associated Press \(AP\) reported](#). Then, Russia made a formal request that the UN Security Council meet to discuss the "military biological activities of the U.S. on the territory of Ukraine." The council scheduled said meeting for Friday morning (March 11).

"This is exactly the kind of false flag effort we have warned Russia might initiate to justify a biological or chemical weapons attack," Olivia Dalton, spokesperson for the U.S.

Mission to the United Nations, said March 10, according to the AP. "We're not going to let Russia gaslight the world or use the UN Security Council as a venue for promoting their disinformation."

The WHO, who again works with Ukrainian labs, previously stated that "they are unaware of any activity on the part of the Ukrainian government which is inconsistent with its international treaty obligations, including on chemical weapons or biological weapons," UN spokesman Stéphane Dujarric said on March 10, according to the AP.

"Developing the agents Russia alleges Ukraine is working on would be a clear violation of the Biological Weapons Convention," Hay told the Science Media Centre. "The U.S. is actually trying to beef up the convention and make it fit for purpose ... So, it would be highly unusual for the U.S. to be doing what Russia claims."

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