

**Question for written answer E-002279/2025
to the Commission**
Rule 144
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Subject: Azerbaijan: the Ilham Aliyev regime and repression of media freedom

There have been several crackdowns on press freedom in Azerbaijan in recent years, with an intensification in the final months of 2024.

This unprecedented repression has essentially wiped out local independent journalism. Independent media in Azerbaijan and international human rights organisations have accused the government of arresting journalists for their work and creating a regulatory environment that makes it almost impossible for them to operate legally.

The accusation is always the same: allegedly undeclared imports of foreign currency into the country, in the form of cash or subsidies from abroad. The authorities seem to exploit the fact that independent media receive foreign funding, via legally obtained subsidies, to accuse journalists of economic crimes aggravated by high treason against the state.

Against this backdrop, the EU imports more than 7 % of its natural gas from Azerbaijan and intends to double this amount by 2027, in order to reduce imports of Russian gas.

In light of the above, how will the Commission manage to expand energy cooperation with Azerbaijan while also ensuring that the response to the recent imprisonment of journalists in Azerbaijan is heard?

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