

Question for written answer E-003340/2025
to the Commission
Rule 144
Christine Anderson (ESN)

Subject: Is President von der Leyen avoiding unscripted questions?

During her recent visit to Iceland, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen held a joint press conference with Prime Minister Kristrún Frostadóttir in Reykjavík, where an Icelandic journalist challenged her over reports that all questions had to be submitted in writing a day in advance¹.

The journalist ended with the pointed remark ‘are you unable to answer unscripted questions?’ The President, momentarily taken aback, replied ‘the last part of your question is not known to me’, implying that she was unaware of any such demand. This exchange has since raised questions about transparency, press freedom and the President’s communication practices.

In this context, can the Commission state:

1. On how many occasions since the beginning of President von der Leyen’s mandate in 2019, and in which locations, have Commission staff or representatives of the President required journalists to submit questions in advance of a press conference?
2. Was the reported demand in Reykjavík initiated by Commission staff or by the Icelandic authorities, and what written record exists of this request?
3. What concrete measures will the Commission adopt to ensure that journalists are always able to ask unscripted questions in press events involving the President, and will the Commission commit to publishing clear rules of engagement for all such events?

Submitted: 1.9.2025

¹ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/iceland/european-commission-president-ursula-von-der-leyen-visits-iceland_en?s=212; <https://youtu.be/ZbRByYJPBkA?t=1175s>.