

**Question for oral answer O-000030/2025**

**to the Commission**

Rule 142

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**Subject:** GPS interference on the flight of Commission President von der Leyen – media disinformation and distorted facts

On 31 August 2025, a number of media outlets reported that the plane carrying Commission President Ursula von der Leyen from Warsaw to Plovdiv was severely affected by GPS interference supposedly caused by Russia. According to these reports, the interference fully jammed the plane’s GPS system, forcing pilots to delay landing by an hour and land manually using paper maps<sup>1</sup>.

The Commission confirmed the incident and said that it was ‘aware of the threats and intimidation that are a regular component of Russia’s hostile behaviour. However, incidents such as this only reinforce the commitment to ramp up defence capabilities and support for Ukraine.’ The Commission also said that Bulgarian authorities suspected ‘blatant interference by Russia’<sup>2</sup>.

New data from renowned flight tracking portal ‘Flightradar24’ contradicts this version of events: It shows that the aircraft transponder signal consistently transmitted a good NIC value, indicating the quality and consistency of the navigation data. Contrary to the media reports, the aircraft did not have to delay landing by an hour, but only by 11 minutes. The Dutch website ‘Feit of fake’ also analysed radio communications recorded on liveatc.net. These revealed that the crew asked air traffic control to switch to radio-based systems (VOR and ILS). Landing was then initiated using these ground-based and GPS-independent navigation aids. The pilots would not have had to resort to paper maps<sup>3</sup>. The airport director, Krasimir Peshev, also confirmed that the landing had not caused any concern<sup>4</sup>.

Despite the lack of clear evidence that the GPS interference was caused by Russia, Prime Minister Rosen Zhelyazkov initially stated that Bulgaria would not be investigating the incident<sup>5</sup>. He later went back on that statement, conceding that there was no evidence of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ft.com/content/3c330f87-71c4-4db9-8259-f5c132c1f0d3>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tagesschau.de/ausland/europa/leyen-flugzeug-gps-100.html>OK

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.n-tv.de/politik/GPS-Angriff-Neue-Details-zu-Flug-mit-von-der-Leyen-an-Bord-article26005129.html>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.welt.de/politik/ausland/article68b73352cf48f30f34294946/Russland-unter-Verdacht-Neue-Details-zur-GPS-Stoerung-beim-Flug-mit-Ursula-von-der-Leyen.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://de.euronews.com/2025/09/03/nach-gps-ausfall-bei-von-der-leyen-nato-will-gegen-russische-storsender-vorgehen>

prolonged GPS interference<sup>6</sup>.

1. Why did the Commission publicly confirm the GPS interference, even though it was already clear at that time that fake news was being spread by numerous media outlets, and why did it fail to correct these false narratives?
2. What concrete evidence does the Commission have of Russia's responsibility for the GPS interference?
3. What is the Commission's view of the fact that, according to Bulgaria, there is no evidence of prolonged GPS interference after all?

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Lapses: 18.12.2025

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/09/09/examining-contradicting-claims-of-russian-gps-jamming-targeting-von-der-leyens-flight>