

# **Move by Administrative Council aims at ‘Social Dialogue’ within European Patent Office**

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In the ongoing conflict at the European Patent Office (EPO), the executive management and the staff representation body Suepo look set to abide by the wishes of the Administrative Council and start getting together again.

This was the aim behind a resolution adopted by the Council at its meeting, which EPO President Benoît Battistelli is also said to have agreed to, according to a spokesperson from the inter-state patent authority speaking on Thursday to the Deutsche Presse-Agentur. The key issue in the resolution is to press ahead with the social dialogue at the EPO rapidly, as well as reviewing and reforming disciplinary procedures. On Thursday there was initially no-one available at Suepo to make a comment.

Battistelli has been at the top of the inter-state authority for five and a half years, and is pushing for reforms. These include tightening up on working practices and monitoring performance and time off, something which has prompted a great deal of criticism from the staff representation organization. The EPO recently officially recognized the FFPE-EPA, a union in the European public service sector, although this is said to represent far fewer EPO employees than Suepo, which so far has not been officially recognized.