

## **FREIE WÄHLER – FREE VOTERS criticize attacks on fundamental rights at the European Patent Office in Munich / Schmidt: The Government must act – now.**

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Gabi Schmidt - [landtagsabgeordnete.eu](http://landtagsabgeordnete.eu)

(BPP) The FREIEN WÄHLER, the FREE VOTERS, are renewing their serious accusations against the management of the European Patent Office (EPO) in Munich. According to Gabi Schmidt, Deputy at the Landtag, the Regional Government, and member of the Bavarian Landtag Europe Committee, large numbers of staff members have been complaining for years about harassment and attempts at intimidation. “It’s the same story – no adequate means of exerting any control over the despotic rule of EPO President Benoît Battistelli. Because the EPO is an institution outside any state, German labour law does not apply there. But we can no longer tolerate the fundamental rights of the staff being trampled underfoot – and right in the heart of the capital of Bavaria.”

Schmidt is demanding that the State Government takes action on Thursday at the Plenary Meeting of the Landtag, within the scope of the possibilities open to it, to end the harassment of the staff at the European Patent Office: “We can no longer stand idly by while 3,700 employees are at the mercy of the despotic actions of the man at the top.” Schmidt criticizes in particular the internal investigation unit, set up by the President without any basis for entitlement or empowerment, the intrusive monitoring of the staff in the event of illness, and the assault on core areas of staff union activities by the Office management.

“It is the EPO Administrative Council which should be keeping the management under control. Germany has a seat on the Council, with a vote, and, one way or another, the EU Commission enjoys observe status”, is one of Schmidt’s criticisms. But up to now nothing has

improved: “Last December the Administrative Council itself realised that the stipulations it had formulated for the Office management with regard to the social situation had not been implemented in the slightest – and, yet again, nothing has happened.” Schmidt. Landtag Deputy from Uehlfeld in Central Franconia, is aiming today, as part of the Plenary Session debate, to achieve action in support of the EPO staff by the State Government, on both a national and European level.

Source: fw-landtag.de