

Future EPO president Campinos stresses importance 'human resources matters'

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The future president of the European Patent Office, Antonio Campinos, has welcomed the open letter of the Union Syndicale Fédérale (USF), the federation of trade unions in the European Public Service, and written he is looking forward to cooperating with the USF, of which the EPO trade union SUEPO The Hague and Berlin are affiliates.

Campinos, currently Executive Director of the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), was elected last month by the Administrative Council of the European Patent Organisation and will start as president in July 2018. He is the successor of president Benoît Battistelli, whose term in office has been marked by years of deep social unrest (see [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for instance).

In his letter of 3 November 2017 to USF president Bernd Loescher, Campinos stresses a good relationship with the staff is important to him: 'In the different managerial positions on my career path, and especially in my current tenure as Executive Director of the European Union Intellectual Property Office, I have always prioritised human resources matters and have developed an open and fruitful relationship with the representatives of the staff and their associations. In this sense, I look forward to continuing the cooperation between the EPO and the Union Syndicale Fédérale once I take up my duties as president of the European Patent Office next year.'



The wording of the last phrase is important. Although Campinos writes he is looking forward to 'continuing the cooperation', over the last years such cooperation has been non-existent. Benoît Battistelli has never accepted the SUEPO as social partner and fired and downgraded several of its leaders. It is unlikely however that Campinos will say anything more in detail about his social plans and policy before he has taken over as president next year.

The European Public Service Union (EPSU, which the USF is affiliated to) has reacted positively to Campinos' letter. Jan Willem Goudriaan, EPSU General Secretary, [replied with a letter](#) stating:

'I read it as a start of a more constructive dialogue in which the issues that have been raised by the staff and their union can be addressed and dealt with. There are quite a few and you have inherited a rather unfortunate situation which included a hostile approach towards the union and its delegates. I wish the union colleagues and you a constructive and successful dialogue. And that this might be one of many successes for the Patent Office, the staff and you.'

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