

**Question for written answer E-003299/2020
to the Commission**
Rule 138
Clare Daly (GUE/NGL)

Subject: European Patent Organisation – disbandment of Audit Committee

The European Patent Organisation (EPOrg) is an intergovernmental organisation established under the terms of the European Patent Convention (EPC). Under the terms of Regulation (EU) No 1257/2012, increased co-operation between the EU and the EPOrg has been in progress since 2012 in the context of the EU's Unitary Patent project. Furthermore, although the EU is not a contracting party to the European Patent Convention, it has observer status on the Administrative Council of the EPOrg under the terms of Article 30 of the EPC.

1. Does the Commission agree that the EU has a legitimate interest in ensuring that governance mechanisms at the EPO are fit for purpose?
2. Is the Commission aware of and concerned by the circumstances relating to the disbandment of the EPO Audit Committee in June 2011, a Committee which had only been established two years previously?
3. Does the Commission agree that the establishment of the Audit Committee was meant to empower the Board of the Administrative Council to better control the EPO, and that the consequence of its disbandment was to return this key oversight function to a single person – the President of the Office, and is the Commission of the opinion that current governance mechanisms at the EPO, particularly those on financial and budgetary oversight, are fit for purpose, and correspond to international best practice?