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Parliament votes to shield influential MEP from justice

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The European Parliament has just voted to shield EPP MEP Angelika Niebler from being investigated by the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO) for allegedly misusing EU funds. As a result, Ms Niebler will maintain her parliamentary immunity, and the EPPO will be prevented from carrying out what it has been mandated to do.

Multiple [reports](#) have described credible allegations presented to the EPPO of Ms Niebler using parliamentary funds for private matters, such as paying her assistants to [chauffeur](#) her from her hometown of Munich to Brussels and Strasbourg, as well as to private and business appointments (including to the [airport for holidays](#), or to meetings of her CSU party leadership) not directly linked to her work as an MEP. These are ample grounds for the EPPO to investigate any potential misuse of taxpayer money.

Yet MEPs have chosen to stop the EPPO from doing so, by voting to keep Ms Niebler immune from investigations, a parliamentary privilege every MEP enjoys unless it is removed by vote.

Nick Aioassa, Director at Transparency International EU, said

“What MEPs have done today is tantamount to obstruction of justice of a criminal investigation. Parliamentary immunity is an important democratic safeguard to shield lawmakers from political persecution—yet one can hardly claim the European Public Prosecutor's Office is guilty of that. Where the facts could be laid bare, MEPs have chosen to hide them, once more suggesting that they will look out for their own, instead of promoting the just application of the law. An end must be put to the culture of impunity that festers at the European Parliament.”

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