2015 discharge: European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

2016/2182(DEC) - 28/03/2017 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Budgetary Control adopted the report by Inés AYALA SENDER (S&D, ES) on discharge in respect of the implementation of the budget of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) for the financial year 2015.

The committee called on the European Parliament to grant the Executive Director of the Agency discharge in respect of the implementation of the agency's budget for the financial year 2015.

Noting that the Court of Auditors stated that it had obtained reasonable assurance that the annual accounts of the Agency for the financial year 2015 were reliable and that the underlying transactions were legal and regular, Members called on Parliament to approve the closure of the Agency's accounts. They made, however, a number of recommendations that needed to be taken into account when the discharge is granted, in addition to the general recommendations that appear in the draft resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies:

- **Agency's financial statements**: Members noted that the final budget of the Agency for the financial year 2015 was EUR 114 412 841 representing an increase of 0.26 % compared to 2014.
- **Legality and regularity of transactions**: Members stated that the Agency paid 50 % of the cost for after-school care of staff children in the European School in Helsinki. This contribution is limited to EUR 1 000 per child per year, amounting to approximately EUR 95 000 in 2015. Members took note that **this measure was not communicated to the budgetary authority** in the framework of the budget procedure. The Agency will communicate this measure to the budgetary authority in its 2018-2020 programming document. The Agency already updated the remarks on the relevant budget line by including the information about this measure in the first amendment to the Agency's 2016 budget.

Members also made a series of observations regarding budgetary and financial management, commitments and carry-overs, transfers, procurement and recruitment procedures, the prevention and management of conflicts of interests and internal audits and controls.

On the **prevention and conflicts of interests**, Members stated that the Agency has implemented a robust conflict of interest policy and a detailed anti-fraud strategy in order to contribute to a culture of high ethical behaviour among the staff and experts working for the Agency.

Lastly, Members took note that the Agency developed a new integrated regulatory strategy which brings all REACH and CLP processes together to reach the aims of relevant regulations, as well as the 2020 goals of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.