2015 discharge: European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

2016/2182(DEC) - 27/04/2017 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament decided to **grant discharge** to the Executive Director of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) in respect of the implementation of its budget for the financial year 2015.

The vote on the decision on discharge covers the closure of the accounts (in accordance with Annex IV, Article 5 (1) (a) to Parliament's Rules of Procedure).

Noting that the Court of Auditors has stated that it has obtained reasonable assurances that the Agency's annual accounts for the financial year 2015 are reliable and that the underlying transactions are legal and regular, Parliament adopted by 512 votes to 106 with 2 abstentions, a resolution containing a series of recommendations, which form an integral part of the decision on discharge and which add to the general recommendations set out in the resolution on performance, financial management and control of EU agencies.

These recommendations may be summarised as follows:

- **Agency's financial statements**: Parliament 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**: It 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. Parliament 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.

Parliament 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**, it 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.

Parliament 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.

Communication: Parliament welcomed the improvement of the way in which information on chemicals is presented on the Agency's website, which helps companies and consumers to make more use of it. It noted that the discussion platform between the Agency and non-governmental organisations is a useful forum for discussing the main issues of interest to civil society.