2017 discharge: European Chemicals Agency (ECHA)

2018/2198(DEC) - 31/01/2019 - Supplementary non-legislative basic document

Having examined the revenue and expenditure accounts for the financial year 2017 and the balance sheet as at 31 December 2017 of the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA), as well as the Court of Auditors' report on the annual accounts of the Agency for the financial year 2017, accompanied by the Agency's replies to the Court's observations, the Council recommended the European Parliament to give a discharge to the Executive Director of the Agency in respect of the implementation of the budget for the financial year 2017.

The Council welcomed the Court's opinion that, in all material respects, the Agency's annual accounts present fairly its financial position as at 31 December 2017 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended, in accordance with the provisions of the Agency's Financial Regulation, and that the underlying transactions for 2017 are legal and regular in all material respects.

Nevertheless, the following observations were made:

- ***financial management***: while welcoming the progress made by the Agency through ex-post verifications to check the claimed size of smaller companies, the Council urged the Agency to rapidly address the considerable verification backlog and to improve the process to recover the administrative charges invoiced to companies who have declared the wrong size. The Council acknowledged that the accuracy of the fee calculation is based on the verification of the declared volumes of chemicals, which is under the solely responsibility of Member States' national enforcement authorities. Therefore, it encouraged the Agency to continue its efforts to ensure the collection of the appropriate level of fee income. The Council is concerned about the mismatch between the Agency's expenditures and revenues, as well as the expected drop in revenues from 2019 onwards. It calls on the Agency to take corrective measures to reduce administrative expenditure;

- ***Brexit***: the Council invited the Agency to continue measuring the possible future decrease of part of its revenues resulting from the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU.