

Factsheet

ECHA-14-FS-02-EN

Access to documents at ECHA - 2013 Key figures

The European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) is committed to making sure that the public has the widest-possible access to its documents. This factsheet looks at the main data related to the processing of access to documents in the Agency during 2013.

Access to documents is an inseparable part of our principle of transparency in proactively providing data on chemicals on our website. To this effect, the relatively low number of applications for access to documents submitted to the Agency in 2013 provides strong evidence that we have successfully fulfilled one of REACH's aims – providing information on chemicals.

While we remain keen to maintain this transparency, we must also ensure that the personal data and commercial interests of the data owners (usually industry) stays protected. Before any disclosure, we must endeavour to strike a balance between the values of individuals and our principle of transparency.

In 2013, we replied to all applications within the set time-limits. This was possible due to our cooperative approach with applicants who accepted our proposals to extend deadlines in the most complex cases.

2013

No. of received applications	59
No. of requested documents *	208

* The number of requested documents as presented in the request

APPLICATIONS RECEIVED IN 2013

Throughout the year, we received 59 initial application requests, amounting to 208 documents. On top of this, we also received three confirmatory applications. No complaints were lodged to the Ombudsman or to the Court of Justice of the European Union against our decisions on access to documents.

Most of the applications requested access to documents relating to the main REACH processes like registration (e.g. data sharing dispute documents, CSRs); evaluation (e.g. statements of non-compliance, testing proposals comments); and authorisation. We also received the first application relating to the Biocidal Products Regulation.

With regard to the applicants, 16 requests were submitted by NGOs, while law firms, industry and individuals each put forward 12 applications. Four applications came from academics and the remaining three applications were lodged by media.

DECISION-MAKING

In 2013, we answered to 54 initial applications, which amounted to 353 documents. These numbers include three initial applications received in 2012 and answered in 2013 and exclude seven pending applications received in 2013, which will be reviewed in 2014.

We answered all of the initial applications within the prescribed time-limits. The initial deadline means that a reply needs to be sent within 15 working days. Applications answered within the extended deadline had a reply sent within 30 working days. Usually, we extend the deadline if there are pending third-party consultations or if there is a large amount of requested documents. The final figure shows those requests for which we negotiated an extension above the 30-working day time-limit.

Out of 353 requested documents, 126 were fully disclosed, 148 partially disclosed and 79 refused.

In 2013, the most applied reasons, triggering either the documents to only be partially disclosed or the requests to be refused, have been the protection of commercial interests and intellectual property, and the protection of privacy and integrity of the individual.

IMPORTANT LINKS

Webform on ECHA's website

» <http://echa.europa.eu/access-to-documents-web-form>

Information on chemicals

» <http://echa.europa.eu/information-on-chemicals>

FURTHER READING

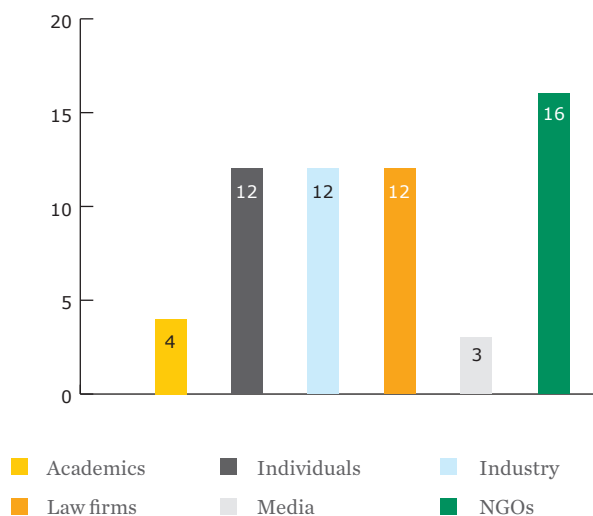
Access to documents Regulation

» <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2001:145:0043:0048:EN:PDF>

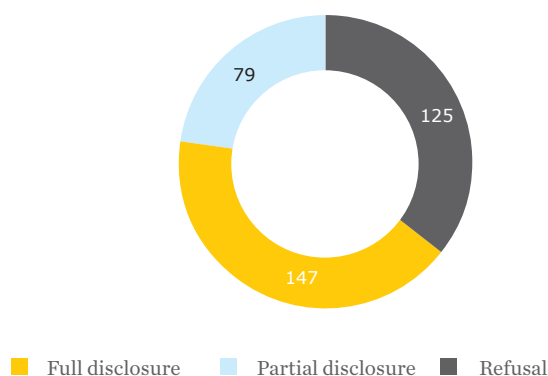
Decision implementing access to documents Regulation in ECHA

» http://echa.europa.eu/documents/10162/13604/mb_12_2008_final_implementing_rules_access_to_documents_en.pdf

Profile of the applicants in 2013



Outcome of the applications per document



Outcome of the applications per page	
Full disclosure	2 487
Partial disclosure	1 941
Refusal	1 061

Timing of the provided replies	
Applications answered within the initial deadline	47
Applications answered within the extended deadline	3
Applications answered within longer deadline following negotiations	4