



#### European Chemicals Agency to open in Helsinki in June

The new European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) is expected to open in Helsinki on June 3. Ahead of the event, environmentalists stressed that the ECHA should assure the implementation of REACH, the EU chemicals regulation that entered into force one year ago after almost a decade a fierce debate.

The opening of the ECHA marks the beginning of the obligation for companies to provide health and safety information on industrial chemicals. However, the environmental groups Friends of the Earth Europe stressed that REACH registration only applies to around 30,000 of the more than 100,000 known chemicals.

By this autumn, ECHA is expected to prepare a "candidate list" for substances of very high concern that will be subject to legal actions such as bans. Industry will be obliged to apply for permission for their use and consumers will have the right to obtain more information on the eventual presence of these substances in the products they buy.