

Report to the federal Parliament

HR policy in penitentiary services - Organisation and performance



The Court of Audit examined how the HR policy measures aimed at improving the functioning of penitentiaries were being developed and implemented.

The investigation showed that the introduction of a new work regime was compensated by the granting of a new allowance to the penitentiary personnel. Due to labour market difficulties, slow statutory recruitments and high absenteeism rates, staff shortages cannot be tackled. Despite their positions of power, guards are therefore more often recruited on a contractual basis and their training comes under pressure. As workers frequently have to replace absent colleagues, the total annual leave backlog has increased to 560.000 days. The mandatory assessment of the guaranteed minimum service, introduced in 2019 under pressure from the Council of Europe, has not yet been carried out.

The Court of Audit recommends that the Minister for Justice should implement the targeted reforms (career development for guards and escort officers, additional investments in training, granting of performance-related bonuses, etc.), limit precarious contractual employment and immediately start the assessment of the guaranteed minimum service.

The report *HR policy in penitentiary services - Organisation and performance* is available (in either French or Dutch) on the Court's website (www.courtofaudit.be).