

## Report to the federal Parliament Affordable Access To Justice

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In its report to the federal Parliament, the Belgian Court of Audit has examined whether the second-line legal aid for people with low incomes and the new tax reduction for legal expenses insurance result in more effective, qualitative and affordable access to justice.

The Court found that the public funding of both measures does not lead to the expected result, on the one hand because of the limited success of the tax reduction and the failure to reach the target group, and on the other hand because of the inadequate control of second-line legal aid expenses by the bodies provided for by law (bar associations, orders of lawyers and FPS Justice) and the limited reporting to the Minister of Justice. Consequently, there is a real risk of inefficient and improper use of public funds.

According to the Court, the government cannot implement a new funding model for second-line legal aid as long as the quality of the (internal) controls by the bodies designated by law and an additional external control by the government are not guaranteed. Moreover, for economic reasons, it is necessary to consider adjusting the calculation of second-line legal aid allowances and evaluating the use of legal expenses insurance.

The report *Affordable Access To Justice* is now available (in either French or Dutch) on [courtofaudit.be](http://courtofaudit.be).