

Report to the federal Parliament

Catering Operations in the Federal Government Departments



In its report to the federal Parliament, the Court of Audit examines the various types of catering within the federal government departments. It concludes that cost control and budgetary transparency measures are not guaranteed at this stage. The Court recommends to the government departments to coordinate their efforts in order to define a coherent and economical catering policy for the benefit of the federal civil servants.

Catering consists of about 13,500 meals a day, for which the estimated annual cost of nearly 38 million euros is to be borne by the federal State. It is carried out either by the federal government departments directly or through a non-profit association or a commercial company.

Fedorest is an administrative agency with accounting autonomy that was created in 2008 to rationalize catering activities in the federal government departments. It is responsible for managing catering facilities and using resources in a more economical way. However, it has remained limited to the Ministry of Finance, on which it depends. The other departments whose staff have access to the restaurants of Fedorest do not yet fund their activities.

The production cost of meals supplied by Fedorest remains high. This is mainly due to expenses related to a long-lasting overstaffing. Moreover, Fedorest does not comply with the procurement procedures with regard to food purchase.

An analysis of catering suppliers other than Fedorest concludes that the cost control measures are imbalanced. There is also a lack of transparency as to the total cost borne by the federal State and the public procurement regulations are not sufficiently complied with.

Overall, the catering within the federal government departments lacks supervision. The way it is currently operated does not offer adequate guarantees of equal treatment, cost control and transparency.

The ministers in charge replied to the Court of Audit.

The report on the “Catering Operations in the Federal Government Departments” is available in French and Dutch on www.courtofaudit.be.