


SUMMARY FOR AN INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE

Report to the Walloon Parliament

Social Real Estate Agencies in the Walloon Region



The Belgian Court of Audit examined the Walloon Region's strategy, management and financing of the public housing policy carried out through the Social Real Estate Agencies (AIS's). This policy's management has largely been entrusted to the Walloon Housing Fund (FLW).

The 31 AIS's approved by the Minister for Housing and supervised by the FLW are non-profit organisations that act as intermediaries between low-income tenants and private homeowners. They encourage owners to rent their properties at below-market prices and, in return, take on the risks entailed by renting properties. As for the tenants, the AIS's provide them with social support.

The objective of expanding the housing stock managed by the AIS's by 6,000 units over the period 2019-2024 has not been achieved, with an increase of barely 1,803 units as at 1st January 2024.

For lack of any steering of the policy by the Region and given the insufficient quality and quantity of the data collected, the Region has no assurance that the resources allocated to this policy through the FLW actually enable the targeted households to have access to healthy housing at an affordable rent.

The Court points out that breaches of the AIS's management and approval standards have regularly been detected.

The payment deadlines laid down in the regulations are not being met. In addition, there is no guarantee that the Region's subsidy for rents has benefited tenants. Finally, a review of the extent to which the measures for carrying out works in the dwellings have been used shows that they are not as successful as expected.

The Court also notes that the supporting documents concerning the use of this aid contain errors and are insufficiently formalised, detailed and checked.

Based on these findings, the Court made 26 recommendations to the Minister for Housing, the administration and the FLW.