

Press Release

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Joint press release

Council of Europe / EU Delegation of the European Commission to Turkey

Inauguration of Elazığ E-type model prison fulfilling European standards

Strasbourg, 17.01.2007 - A model prison in Elazığ, Turkey, will be inaugurated on 18 January 2007 in the presence of Minister of Justice Cemil Çiçek, Michael Vögele of the EC Delegation to Turkey and Roberto Lamponi, Director for Legal Co-operation of the Council of Europe. The remodelled prison is part of a €10.7 million EU-funded project, the Judicial Modernisation and Penal Reform Programme, which supported the reform process in the area of judiciary and penal system in Turkey.

The programme, implemented jointly by the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Justice of Turkey sought to enhance Turkish compliance with European standards within the scope of the EU accession process. The model E-type Prison of Elazığ, together with a similar prison in Uşak, is now functioning in line with international norms and European standards.

The development of human resources, the establishment of a modern prison management system in compliance with the European standards, and the improvement of physical conditions in the prison system have been the main aims of the programme. The governors and the staff of Elazığ prison have undergone specific training to create a model for replication in the entire penal system. Special importance has been attached not only to the physical conditions within the prison but also to the attitudes and behaviour of employees.

Workshops, the creation of facilities for social activity and the successful implementation of an "Anger Management Programme" have already considerably reduced disciplinary offences and the need for extra security measures. Significant progress has been made within the Prison Management component of the programme in improving prison management.

Concrete tools such as a "Prison Management Manual" for prison governors and a "Prison Doctors Handbook" for medical staff have been developed. Handbooks on prison rules and the rights of prisoners have been published in Turkish, English, German and French to be distributed to both Turkish and foreign prisoners. Equipment and tools have been procured for the delivery of vocational training to inmates in Elazığ.

Based on this successful experience, the Turkish government is planning to disseminate the results of this project throughout the country to ensure that the Turkish penal execution system is broadly in line with modern European standards.

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