

**Vanneste, Charlotte** (*National Institute of Criminalistics and Criminology*)

---

**Evolution of punishment in Belgium: An analysis of the main trends based on statistical information derived from different levels in the criminal justice process**

---

Evolution of punishment in Belgium: an analysis of the main trends based on statistical information derived from different levels in the criminal justice process. As it is the case in most European countries, Belgium has known an important increase in the prison population in the last two decades. Next to this evolution, the use of so called 'alternative' measures has also strongly increased during the last year. Recent legislative initiatives have, furthermore, induced major changes at the level of execution of sentences and measures. In the domain of juvenile justice, modifications have equally been introduced. In this contribution, an analysis of the major identifiable tendencies in this evolution on the level of punishment is presented, based on a statistical examination of the indicators thereto available on the different levels of the criminal justice process: police, prosecution, administration of justice, sentencing and execution of sentences. Special attention will be given to some key issues that stand out in the evolution of these evolutions.