



The care of elderly prisoners in French prisons

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WORKSHOP « AGE APPROPRIATE SOLUTIONS »

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Elderly prison population

➤ a significant number of elderly persons in the french prison population

July 1, 2019	Number of inmates	Number of inmates > 60 years old	% / total same-sex population
men	69 130	2 685	3,9%
women	2 580	106	4,1%

➤ aging is earlier inside than outside prison : 50 years

- precarious living conditions before prison
- disadvantages social backgrounds,
- disability increased by life in prison : architectural barriers, lack of stimulation, generational conflicts, severity of chronic progressive pathologies.

July 1, 2019	50< <60 years old		60< <70 years old		>70 years old	
	number	% pop / total same-sex population	nbre	% pop / total same-sex population	nbre	% / total same-sex population
men	5 359	7,7%	2 054	3%	631	0,9%
women	261	10,1%	88	3,4%	18	0,7%

Elderly prison population

High proportion of 30-40 age group for all offences,

but 50-60 years old prisoners are largely convicted for serious offences: homicides and sexual assaults

Inmates breakdown function to offences and age

January 1, 2015	-16 years old	16 - 18 years old	18- 21 years old	21- 25 years old	25- 30 years old	30-40 years old	40-50 years old	50-60 years old	+ 60 years old	Total
Drugs	2	25	541	1635	2148	2963	1117	387	142	8960
premeditated homicides and murders	0	2	46	216	462	929	858	628	383	3524
Violences	5	82	1110	3432	3819	4217	2172	759	228	15824
Violations and other sexual assaults	1	9	129	480	754	1568	1846	1429	1033	7249
Involuntary homicides	0	4	126	366	691	1066	696	377	109	3435
robbery	5	30	562	1653	1690	1611	810	281	66	6708
Simple theft	11	52	619	1052	1138	1222	748	214	35	5091
others	3	9	214	606	941	1325	902	510	199	4709
Pimping	0	0	2	20	33	61	38	8	2	164
fraud	1	14	253	840	1060	1452	872	434	165	5091

Elderly prison population

- High proportion of long to very long sentences for the over 30s and more particularly for 40 - 50 and 50 – 60 age groups

Length of sentence function to age groups

January 1, 2015	-16 years old	16 -18 years old	18-21 years old	21-25 years old	25-30 years old	30-40 years old	40-50 years old	50-60 years old	+ 60 years old	Total
5 to 10 years	0	0	5	32	42	49	33	25	18	204
10 to 15 years	0	0	11	166	375	848	775	502	360	3037
15 to 20 years	0	0	5	58	213	575	643	506	292	2292
20 to 30 years	0	0	4	26	140	491	570	461	250	1942
For life	0	0	1	3	11	45	116	172	127	475

Elderly prison population

➤ Elderly persons are mainly placed in detention centers and central prisons

Central prisons	more than 40% of inmates	50- 60 years old	30%
		60-70 years old	10%
		More than 70 years old	2%
Detention centers	majority 15% of inmates	50-60 years old	8%
		60-70 years old	3%
		More than 70 years old	1%
	institutions for perpetrators of sexual offences : 45% of inmates	50-60 years old	25%
		60-70 years old	18%
		More than 70 years old	5%
Remand prisons	10% of inmates	50-60 years old	7%
		60-70 years old	2%
		More than 70 years old	1%

Of which 22 institutions (20 detention centers and 2 central prisons) house offenders of sexual offences.

The largest inmate-size institutions:

Central prisons

Saint Martin-de-Ré : 149
Ensisheim : 78

Detention centers

Caen : 203
Bapaume : 203
Muret : 193
Toul : 178
Mauzac : 166

A real-estate asset not suitable for older inmates

Prisons that house elderly detainees are heterogeneous:

- **old central prisons and detention centers: barracks or abbeys converted, that sometimes expanded in the 1970s and are difficult to meet current penitentiary standards, including accessibility.**
- **A large number of detention centers and some penitentiary centers, built in the 1980s and 1990s, better suited to penitentiary standards but still with accessibility problems.**

These facilities are frequently aging, lack space and have rarely been the subject of rehabilitations



double cell in Bar le Duc



Stairway in Ecouves



corridor in Caen

A real-estate asset not suitable for older inmates

- **Detention and penitentiary centers built from the 2000s till now, who meet penitentiary standards (example: showers in cells). Some of them comply with accessibility standards in force since 2003.**
- **Remand prisons covering all periods of the prison history. They have different levels of functionality and penal standards.**



1875
Saint-Martin-de-Ré

1990
Villeneuve les Maguelone



2016
Marseille Les Baumettes



The elderly inmate and the loss of autonomy

Studies conducted in Liancourt CP, in 2008 (prison dating back to 2004)

Evaluation of 99 inmates over the age of 50 (19% of the capacity of the detention center section)

Average age of respondents: 62 years old

Average length of incarceration: 12 years

77% followed by the medical team for various chronic diseases

64% only for domestic chores

19% in motor functions

15% in mental functions

2% in motor et mental functions. Severe level

Difficulties with :

- **daily life: feeding, washing, dressing, using the toilet,...**
- **mobility :walking indoor, using stairs, walking outside, climbing on bunk bed,...**

recommendations:

❖ **For most inmates :**

- Adapting the fonctionnality of living spaces
- Stimulating inmates for daily living and activities

❖ **For some inmates :**

- Perform necessary medical and paramedical interventions
- Deliver assistance by carers while awaiting sentence adjustment

❖ **For one or two inmates:**

- Transfer to medical structure and then obtain suspension of sentence for medical reasons

The elderly inmate and the loss of autonomy

❖ Consequences of the ageing on the inmates:

- Potential danger because of other inmates (abuse, violence, greeds attracted by retirement pension, generational conflicts, etc.)
- Live his or her sentence away from other inmates (isolation, lack of activity, etc)
- Seeking help from officers who can hardly meet their expectations (extra workload, lack of competence, authority report to be retained, etc)

The creation of specific prisons for elderly is not a solution because it leads to isolation

❖ Legislation and regulation for the care of elderly detainees:

Prison law 2009 :

- Intervention of life assistants for detainees with loss of authonomy (long procedures, partners difficult to mobilize , refractory life assistants to intervene in prison, etc)
- Parole for detainees over 70 (long process)
- Suspension of sentence for the great sick (long process)

The care for elderly or disabled detainees by fellow prisoners is a common solution but which raises questions such as the transfer of responsability or the danger for the helped or the helping inmate in cases of blackmail or racketeering.

Actions in terms of real-estate

❖ The construction of prisons with accommodations for elderly prisoners with a loss of autonomy

The example of the future prison in Troyes-Lavau



Actions in terms of real-estate

❖ The construction of prisons with accommodations for elderly prisoners with a loss of autonomy

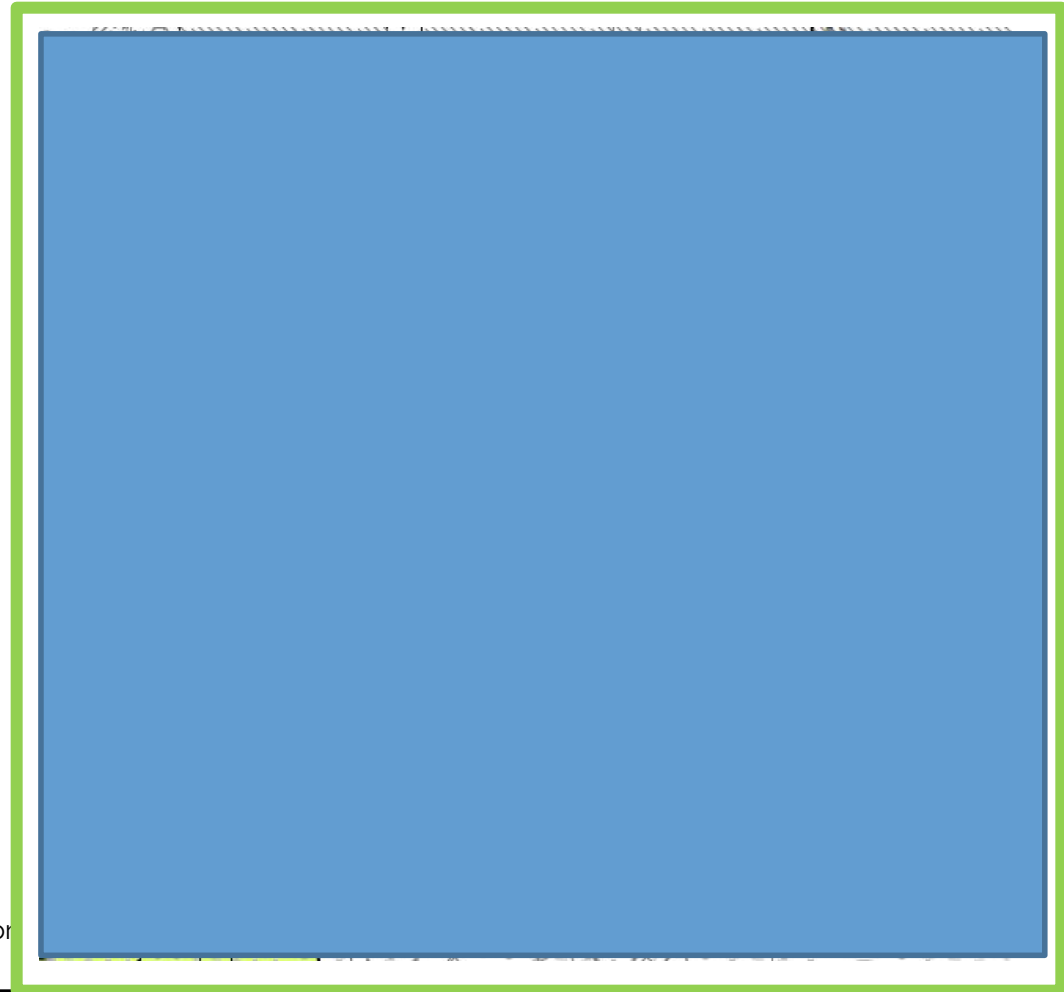
(according to the 2010 regulation for the accessibility of disabled persons in new prisons)

- Creating specific « vulnerable » units within living quarters
- Accommodation wing preferably on the ground floor
- Adequate number of cells for disabled persons (with adapted furniture and household equipment)
- Appropriate and sufficient activity rooms
- Proximity to some key support functions: health unit and visiting area
- Dedicated courtyard



healthcare cell

Troyes -Lavau prison
« vulnerable » unit, ground floor



Actions in terms of real-estate

❖ Implementation of the accessibility actions for existing prisons (Ad'ap)

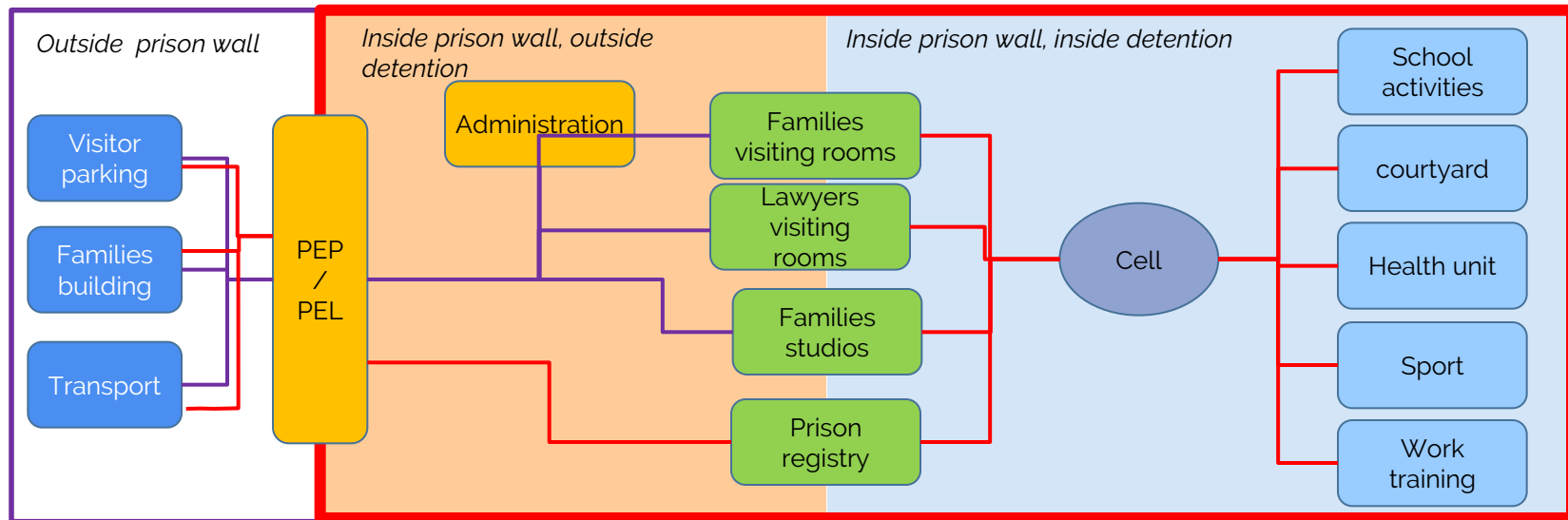
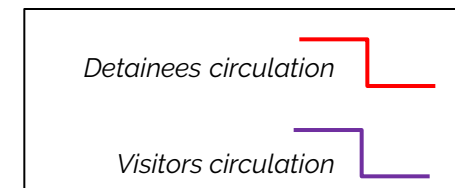
(according to the 2016 regulation on the accessibility of disabled persons in existing prisons)

- **upgrading 162 prisons from 2018 to 2025, for an amount of 54 M€**
- **3 areas:**

- **spaces outside prison wall**
- **spaces inside prison wall, outside detention**
- **spaces inside prison wall and inside detention**

accessibility improvements including:

- whole common premises,
- upgraded stairways and elevators,
- accessible cells (1percent of the capacity)



Actions in terms of real-estate

❖ The creation of specific units for people with loss of autonomy, in existing prisons the example of BEDENAC:

A detention center with an open-door regime for detainees at the end of their sentence and with sentence less than 5 years:

- Creation of a « support and autonomy » unit
- outdoor pathways easily accessible by disabled inmates
- **Configuration and composition of the unit**
 - 21 cells of 18 square meters ,
 - Single-storey unit,
 - Laundry,
 - Activity rooms,
 - Common room (library and meal)
 - Private courtyard (tables to eat outside if necessary, raised vegetable garden, petanque field)
- **Localisation and proximity**
 - Contiguity with health unit (single-storey unit)
 - Health unit with large opening hours (from 8 am to 6 pm).



Courtyard with meadow



Access to the building from the main traffic



Actions in terms of real-estate

the example of BEDENAC: « support and autonomy » unit plan

