

Prison Service
Youth Court Protection Service

Young Offender Institutions

(Établissements Pénitentiaires pour Mineurs – EPM)



Education at the heart of prison



MINISTÈRE DE LA JUSTICE

In 2007/2008, seven prison institutions designed specifically to accommodate 60 young offenders, aged between 13 and 18, will be erected near to Paris, Lille, Lyon, Marseille, Nantes and Toulouse.

While these young offender institutions (EPMs) incorporate prison security requirements, they also place education at the heart of the care they give these young inmates, with one objective: to prepare them for life after prison. In so doing they satisfy the founding principles of European prison rules.

Education at the heart of EPM

Day to day, youngsters are consistently and continually offered support and assistance. Throughout the week and at weekends they follow an individual timetable of activities, drawn up with the help of a multi-disciplinary team.

A day in a detention centre runs from 7.30 a.m. until 9.30 p.m. and incorporates:

- 20 hours of learning and training over five days;
- Up to 40 hours of sporting, social and educational activity over the course of a week, including the weekend.



Classroom

The young inmates attend **general and technical educational programmes**. Learning (or relearning) basic skills is a crucial part of facilitating their social reintegration.

Each EPM has a "teaching centre" consisting of: 3 classrooms, a multimedia library, a multimedia room, 2 workshops and 3 multi-use rooms.

All activities are mixed sex. Youngsters work in small groups of about six on average.

Through **social and educational activities** the youngsters develop an awareness of artistic and cultural disciplines. They have use of a theatre, a visual arts room and a multimedia room.



Theatre

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Gym

Youngsters take part in **sporting activities**. They practise in a full sports centre (gym, weights room, playing field) and are taught by trained instructors.

Living quarters are split into six living units: five 10-person units for boys, one for 4–6 girls. Each unit contains one cell suitable for a disabled occupant, a relaxation room, a dining room where meals are eaten with the education team, and a kitchenette. A further unit receives new arrivals. The EPM is also equipped with a disciplinary area with a constantly changing regime.



Cell



Living quarters

The importance of visits and family ties

Maintaining family ties is an important part of the educational project. Guardians are kept involved with youngsters' lives in detention via regular updates on their behaviour, progress and any problems they are experiencing within the establishment.

Youngsters are able to communicate through visiting room telephones.



Family relationships benefit from open-plan visiting rooms where areas are reserved to receive very young visitors. Meetings may be scheduled for **late afternoon or at weekends** and families have an opportunity to meet with a **member of the multi-disciplinary team**.

Visiting rooms also contain private rooms for meetings with lawyers or other parties and a family therapy room.

Visiting rooms

Exemplary care provision

This new type of juvenile care provision is the result of increased collaboration between the Prison Service (AP) and the Youth Court Protection Service (PJJ). Almost 120 staff across both services are employed in each EPM where they work closely with a state education teaching team co-ordinated by a director of education. Staff are supported by a medical team.

A successful day-to-day care provision is dependent on interaction between PJJ tutors and AP prison officers.

True mentors to the youngsters entrusted to their care, they provide a link with the multi-disciplinary team and parents.

Together these professionals monitor the youngsters individually, encourage a better **relationship with the law**, and help them **to prepare for life outside**, since providing young inmates with educational support helps **to prevent them from re-offending**.

EPMs comply with European prison rules

EPMs fully comply with legislation relating to minors contained in articles 11-1; 11-2 ; from 35-1 to 35-4 of the prison rules adopted by France and all members of the Council of Europe on the 11th January 2006.

These institutions provide for:

- the total separation of youth offenders from adult offenders;
- access to education;
- access to social, psychological and educational services, leisure programmes or similar activities, in as much as open-air activities are available to the youngsters.



Perspective view of the courtyard

Security is a key concern

EPMs are part of the Prison Service (AP).

As such, security is of paramount importance, and is achieved primarily through the presence of **a large adult staff**.

The facility's architecture offers the widest possible views; this allows staff to keep youngsters under almost continual surveillance.

A 6-metre high wall (without a watchtower) and cameras complete the security measures.

Exterior view, the prison has been specially designed to be **in harmony with its surroundings**.

Contact details for the institution:

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Young offender institutions (EPM) and institutions with a juvenile wing

The opening of 420 new places dedicated to young offenders will allow to close 27 juvenile wings in remand prisons, that is to say 430 places. In order to accommodate youngsters in prisons all over France and to facilitate family ties, 600 renovated places will be maintained on the whole French territory.

