

**Synopsis :**

## **Prisons interior side**

France

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**This work depicts prison through different issues :**

### **The mothers imprisoned with their child**

At the nursery of the prison of Fleury-Merogis (region of Essonne, France), women are allowed to nurse their child as it is not considered a detainee until the age of 18 months.

### **The youth**

In this test prison for children, the wards can choose to wear either the uniform or a sweat suit. In May 2002, the number of prisoners had trebled since the January. The youngest detainee, Yacine, is 14 years old. Ali, a gang leader, comes and goes since he is 15 years old. According to him, "when you go to jail when you're young, you are bound to come back".

### **Religion**

The detention centre in Loos (region of Nord, France) is set in an ancient abbey. There are 360 prisoners. Three religions : Islam, Roman Catholic and Protestant Church (in decreasing order). Every week, a chaplain from each Church comes to celebrate Mass in a prayer room or in a chapel and meet the prisoners that wish to talk in their cells. The amount of churchgoer is low, except for the muslim during Ramadan. Some prisoners discovered religion while in jail. For all, church practice brings appeasement, escape, self-reflection and a rediscovery of true values.

### **Mental illness**

The Regional Medico-Psychological Services (SMPR) in Strasbourg is linked to the Establishment of Public Health (EPSAN) (region of Alsace, France).

This prison admits 650 prisoners though its capacity only allows 480 detainees. In 2004, 1652 people were put behind bars, 1234 people had visits, more than half had medical support in the SMPR. 10 % of the detainees are authentic psychotics.

### **The elderly people**

"My wife is ill, I'm afraid of her dying before I'm out". Michel, 68 years old, condemned to 12 years of imprisonment blurts out his anguish in a sob. In the Detention centre in Montmédy (region of Lorraine, France), there are 11 prisoners over 60 years old that have "their life behind them". In the French prisons, the number of prisoners over 60 years old trebled in the last 10 years.