



SÉMINAIRE

PRISON CONDITIONS AND RECIDIVISM: EVIDENCE FROM FRANCE

**13 January 2026
Lemma - 4 rue Blaise Desgoffe,
75006 Paris. Salle Maurice Desplas**

The next LEMMA seminar will host Benjamin Monnery. He is an Associate Professor of Economics at Paris Nanterre.

His research interests lie in law and economics, economics of crime, political economy, and microeconometrics.

Abstract: This paper investigates the effect of prison conditions on risk of recidivism, following the universe of prison releasees in France from 2016 to 2019. Using a rich set of public and hand-coded information on all correctional facilities, prison conditions are considered both at the prison-level (e.g. overcrowding, suicide rates, geographic isolation) and at the individual level (e.g. access to work programs), allowing for a deeper understanding compared to prior research. Exploiting the binding geographical assignment of convicts to prisons, our results suggest a small beneficial effect of soft, reentry-oriented prison conditions on recidivism in France.