

# REDEMPTION THROUGH READING IN BRASILIAN PRISONS

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*Redemption through reading* is a [Brazilian Parliament](#) initiative that offers the chance to reduce part of the custodial sentence by reading. This measure, contained in the Law for Education in Jail, was approved in June 2011 and definitively issued 12 months later by the Ministry of Justice.

This Federal Decree arranges a 4-day-reduction of prison term per month if the detainee, during this period, manages to read a literary, classical, scientific or philosophical book and accomplishes to write a summary valued by an internal commission. The final examination changes according to the candidates' level of comprehension, in order to involve as many prisoners as possible, not only the literate ones. In this way they can obtain 48 days of term reduction per year

Catanduvas' jail in the State of Paraná first launched this project in 2009. [The same state](#) was also the first implementing this Federal initiative in October 2012. The results in this region are encouraging: after one year, in October 2013, prisoners involved were [2725](#), 15% of the population detained, and they are still increasing. At the same time the number of detainees studying in jail grew from 41% in April 2013 to 57% in December 2013. It's also interesting to notice that most readers are people with a definitive sentence.

*Redemption through reading* is only a part of the actions taken by the Brazilian Parliament to face up to the prisons' problem in the country, but it is remarkable for its innovative approach. Indeed, through a cut of the sentence, this measure could spur interest in studies even in those who usually don't mind it. This initiative is not only a smart low-cost measure to reduce population in jail, but it is also an important chance for the prisoner's personal growth, forming him to a better life. So a cut of the sentence obtained in this way can be appreciated like similar reductions planned for study and work, because the purpose is the same: correcting, no longer punishing.



## To know more

[Brazilian Ministry of Justice's website](#)  
[Paraná state's statistics on the project \(November 2013\)](#)  
[Article in word press](#)  
[Video in YouTube](#)  
[Brazilian TV focus on the initiative](#)  
[Reuters' article \(English\)](#)  
[ICN's article \(Spanish\)](#)