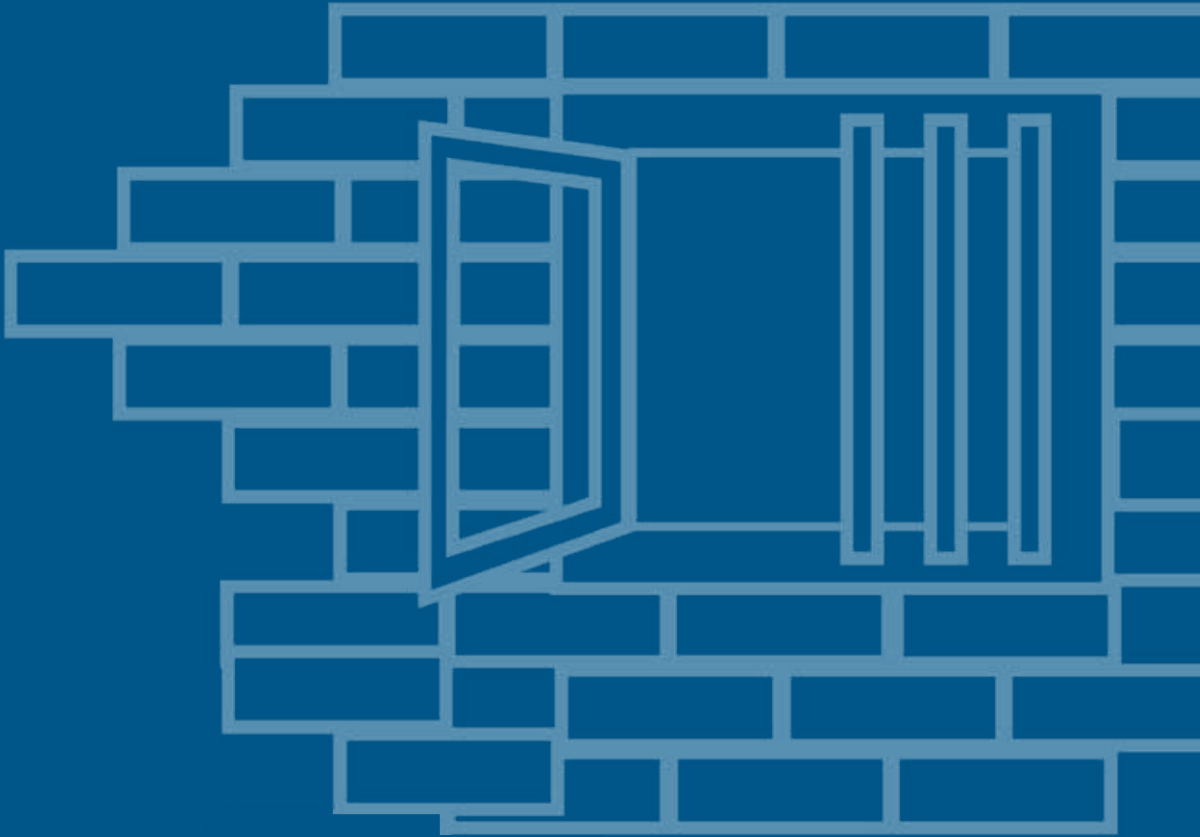




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Crimes and Penalties in Israel

Theory and Application

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Can a State Reduce the Number of Prisoners? Can Israel Learn from the French Penal Reform?

Abraham Tennenbaum¹, & Ron Soffer²

Can the state reduce the number of its prisoners? Can this be done regardless of the level of crime? A French penal reform came into effect in August 2014. The main focus of the reform is to define policies designed to reduce the number of prisoners. The fundamental assumption of this reform is that prison is costly and inefficient and should be used only as a last resort. The reform eliminates minimum sentences, giving judges

discretionary power to suggest alternative options to imprisonment. Our goal in this article is to describe the reasons for reform, the main principles underlying the reform and the alternatives to imprisonment that it offers. We will also try to examine what is known about its success/failure. Finally, we will try to understand what can be learned from the reform and its implications to the situation in Israel.

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