



# GLOBALDETENTIONPROJECT

## **Physical Fences and Digital Divides:**

A GDP Investigation into the Role of Social Media in the  
Context of Migration Control

Presentation by Tom Rollins & Michael Flynn



## GDP Mission

The Global Detention Project (GDP) is a non-profit organisation based in Geneva that promotes the human rights of people who have been detained for reasons related to their non-citizen status. Our mission is:

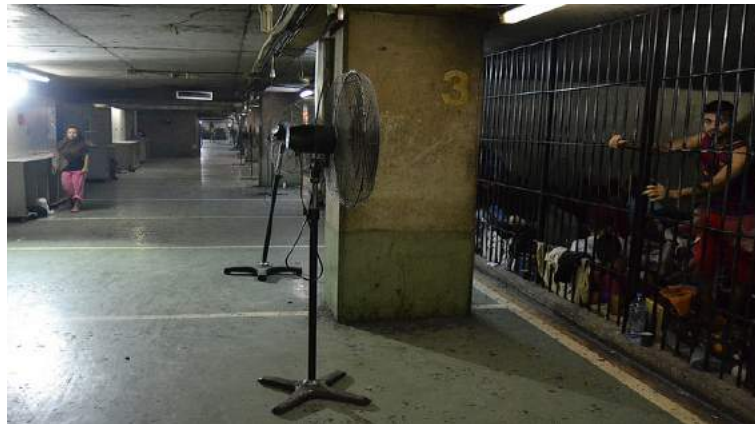
- To **promote the human rights** of detained migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers
- To **ensure transparency** in the treatment of immigration detainees
- To **reinforce advocacy** aimed at reforming detention systems
- To **nurture policy-relevant scholarship** on the causes and consequences of migration control policies

## GDP Map of Detention Sites

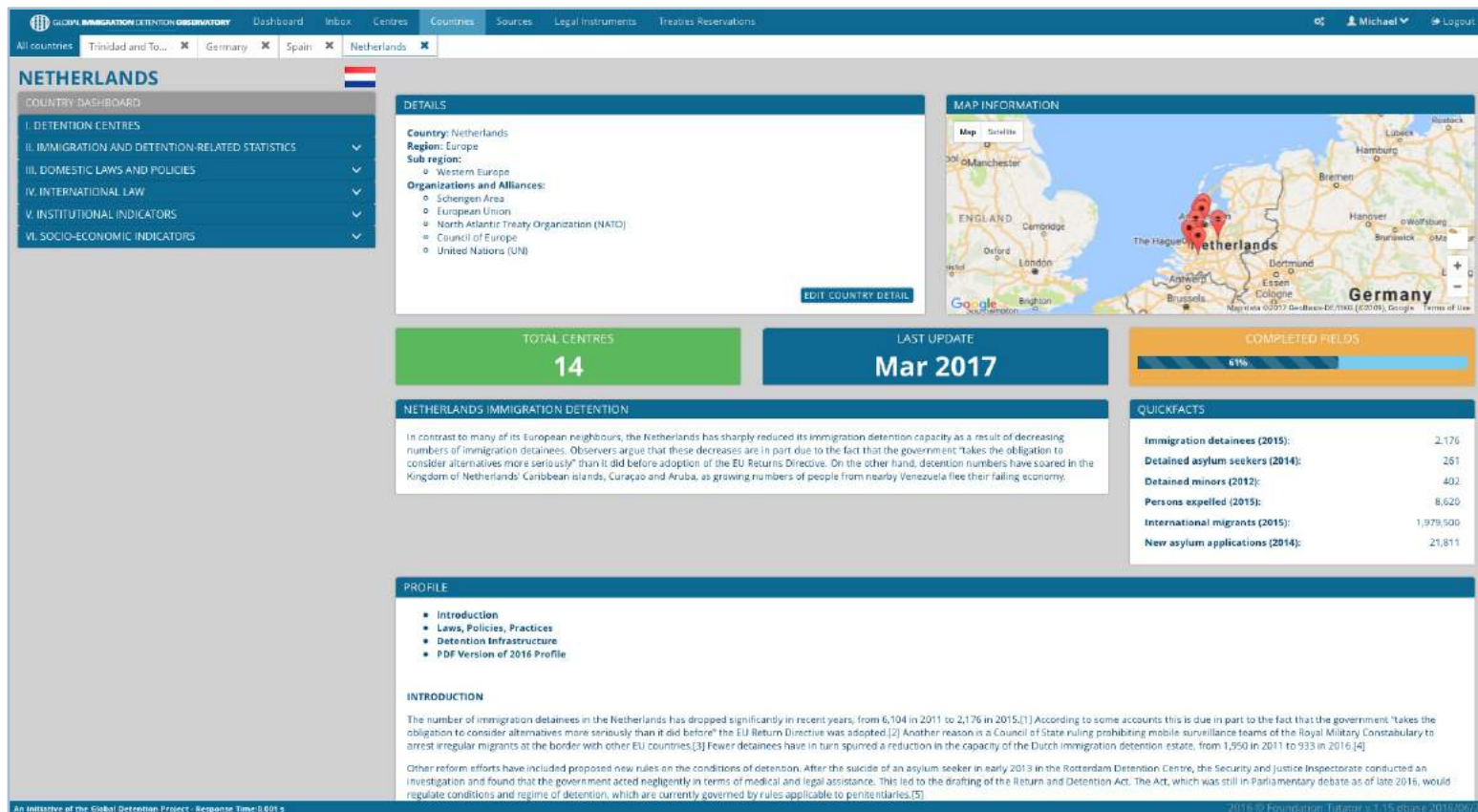




## Detention Centers around the World



# GDP DATABASE: The Global Immigration Detention Observatory





## Border crisis in Latvia?

Despite having only a very small number of unauthorized entries, Latvia calls the situation at its borders with Russia and Belarus "alarming" and has begun constructing a multi-million Euro border fence.

[See detention profile.](#)



### Featured Publications



#### When Is Immigration Detention Lawful? The Monitoring Practices of UN Human Rights Mechanisms: Global Detention Project Working Paper No. 21

Working Papers | Izabella Majcher and Mariette Grange | February 2017

The authors describe the normative framework governing immigration detention established in core international treaties and discuss how human rights bodies apply this framework when reviewing states' policies and practices. Their assessment of the impact and implementation of fundamental norms reveals gaps in the international protection regime and highlights how states' responses to this regime have shaped contemporary immigration detention systems.

[Read more](#)




### GDP News & Activities

Submission to the UN Committee on Migrant Workers: Algeria  
March 2017

In this submission the Global Detention Project raises questions about the extent of criminal prosecution in Algeria of undocumented migrants, details about the locations of detainees, and...



# SOCIAL MEDIA



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MAPPING THE USE OF  
DETENTION IN RESPONSE  
TO GLOBAL MIGRATION

GLOBAL DETENTION PROJECT

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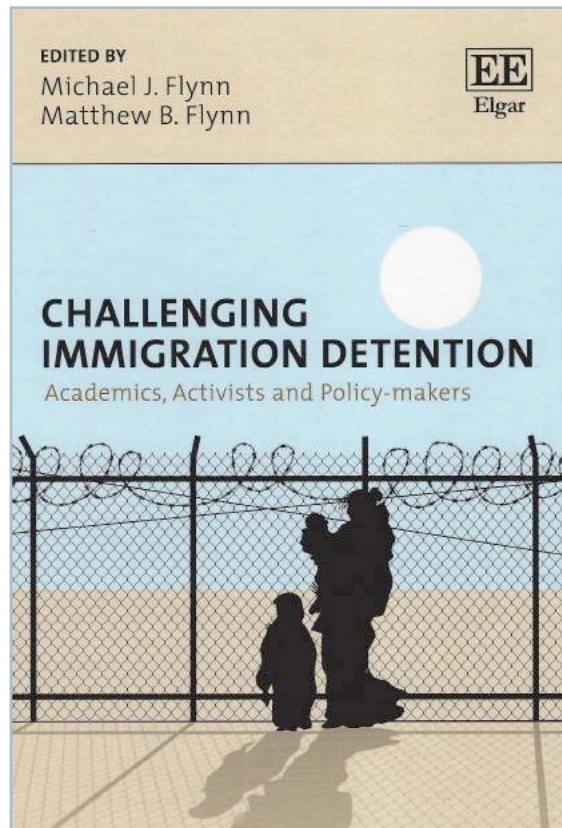
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**SAUDI ARABIA**  
ISSUES RELATED TO  
IMMIGRATION  
DETENTION

**MIGRANT-  
RIGHTS.ORG**

Joint Submission to the Universal Periodic Review

of the Human Rights Council

31<sup>st</sup> session, November 2018

Submitted in March 2018



 **GLOBALDETENTIONPROJECT**

**HARM REDUCTION IN IMMIGRATION DETENTION:**  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF DETENTION CENTRES IN FRANCE,  
GERMANY, NORWAY, SWEDEN, AND SWITZERLAND

October 2018

Commissioned by the Norwegian Red Cross





## “Physical Fences and Digital Divides”



 GLOBALDETENTIONPROJECT

### PHYSICAL FENCES AND DIGITAL DIVIDES

A GLOBAL DETENTION PROJECT INVESTIGATION INTO THE ROLE OF  
SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION CONTROL

#### PART I: EXPOSING THE "CRISIS"

May 2018



 GLOBALDETENTIONPROJECT

### PHYSICAL FENCES AND DIGITAL DIVIDES

PART II: "WHY WOULD YOU GO?" CASE STUDIES OF SOCIAL  
MEDIA USE IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

OCTOBER 2018



# “Re-imagining Digital Tech in an Age of Immigration Control

“

## **Part III of “Physical Fences and Digital Divides” (Dec 2018)**

- How to use social media and other online resources to reduce hardship in migration journeys, and in particular in the context of detention and migration control?
- GDP experience with Facebook and online database of detention centres
- Other recent initiatives: TechFugees, AppCID (Eve Lester/New South Wales Aliens Hub for Technology and Innovation)

SOCIAL MEDIA in DETENTION: The Case of Behrouz Boochani

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Naaman Zhou

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Fri 5 Oct 2018 09:02 BST

f t e

4,349

This article is over 1 month old

Behrouz Boochani wins Anna Politkovskaya award for Manus Island writing

Iranian Kurdish refugee recognised for documenting Australia's offshore detention



▲ Behrouz Boochani has written regular diaries of his experiences in detention on Manus Island. Photograph: Jonas Gratzner for the Guardian

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## TECHFUGEES Guiding Principles

1. Start with displaced people (#HumanCenteredDesign)
2. From refugees to Techfugees (#Empowerment)
3. Don't collect data for data's sake! (#DataGovernance & #Transparency)
4. Sharing is caring (#OpenSource)
5. Because we are all in this together (#InclusiveTech)
6. Good intentions are great to start with but sustainability is the key to real impact (#Sustainability)
7. Integration isn't just a refugee issue, but a political problem too (#HumanRightsBasedApproach)
8. Remember: Tech is just a tool (#NoSolutionism)

PHYSICAL FENCES AND DIGITAL DIVIDES



# HUNGER STRIKE

We, the trapped people at Karmouz jail in Alexandria, Egypt for over 100 days, and due to suffering from the lack of care by international organizations and human rights foundations, announce an open hunger strike as an attempt to draw world attention to our plight which is a part of Syrian and Palestinian Syrian refugees' tragedy. The hard conditions and fall of war in Syria have forced us to flee to Turkey by the sea seeking for a place in Europe that provides human conditions of a decent life. However, we were victimized and used by the mafia of illegal immigration.

We were forced by arms to land down the Egyptian coast to be treated as prisoners within conditions that are far from human life which led to aggravation of the crisis and the spread of physiological and psychological diseases among us. Due to the deterioration of our situation we have found no mean rather than this peaceful way to express our demand of instant coordination between the concerned parties to provide us access to European countries as our families' members are available there.

Please deliver our call to all concerned parties:

1. UNHCR headed by the high commissioner António Guterres
2. UNRWA' commissioner-general Pierre Krahenbuhl
3. International Committee of the Red Cross
4. Amnesty International
5. Human Rights Watch
6. UNICEF
7. Embassies of European Union

# KARMOOZ REFUGEES

## PHYSICAL FENCES, DIGITAL DIVIDES

### InfoAid

<http://appsforrefugees.com/infoaid/>

An app developed by Hungarian volunteers at the height of the "refugee crisis," it provides news reports focused on migratory/border developments in Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Croatia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Slovenia. Updates tended to rely on the <https://newsthatmoves.org/> website (no longer active). Clearly, because of its historical/geographical focus, the app is now very outdated and doesn't appear to have been updated for some time. A 22 March 2017 Facebook post stated that the app was being "rehailed" and would hopefully be back in "new and improved form" soon (no date specified).

### Alarmphone/Watch the Med

<http://www.watchthemed.net/>

Born out of a range of European/Euro-Mediterranean activist networks before 2015, Alarmphone is ostensibly a 24-hour phone-line for migrants in distress at sea to call—an alarm, not a rescue line, as the site is keen to stress. Staff maintain shifts to monitor developments at sea, and field calls from migrants in distress. Alarmphone's network includes refugees and migrants either as staff, key informants, or shift workers. It also uses physical (print) awareness-raising on top of an online presence that, for example through Facebook, publishes audio/visual materials in various languages including French, Arabic, West African, and Horn of Africa languages.

### Ankommen

[ankommenapp.de/](http://ankommenapp.de/)

An Android/iOS app actually designed by the German government for newly arrived refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants to help navigate the arrival, asylum, and integration process. It is available in Arabic, English, Farsi, French, and German, and does not require an internet connection. The app developers have said Ankommen will be regularly updated, although this has sometimes resulted in a top-down (rather than human-centred design) approach, such as when the social customs section was updated with information about gender equality in the wake of the Cologne attacks on New Year's Eve 2016.

### Gherbtna

<http://8rbtba.com/>

Created by Syrian refugee Mojahed al-Akil, Arabic-language app and site Gherbtba (meaning "our exile") targets Syrians in Turkey with information on everything from news from within Syria, job offers, registration requirements for Syrian students in local universities, or regulations regarding residency documents. Designed by and for refugees, Gherbtba provides some memorable lessons about the importance of human-centred design in the refugee/tech world as opposed to the string of outdated or since defunct open-source websites developed top-down since the advent of the "refugee crisis."



## PHYSICAL FENCES, DIGITAL DIVIDES





Factors that vary use of social media, ICTs and other technologies during migration:

- Age
- Nationality
- Literacy/education rate
- Socio-economic/class dynamics in origin country
- Internet and ICT penetration rates in origin country
- Pre-existing awareness of migratory risks on given route
- Smuggling modus operandi on a given route
- Distance
- Individual vs. collective migratory aspirations



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