

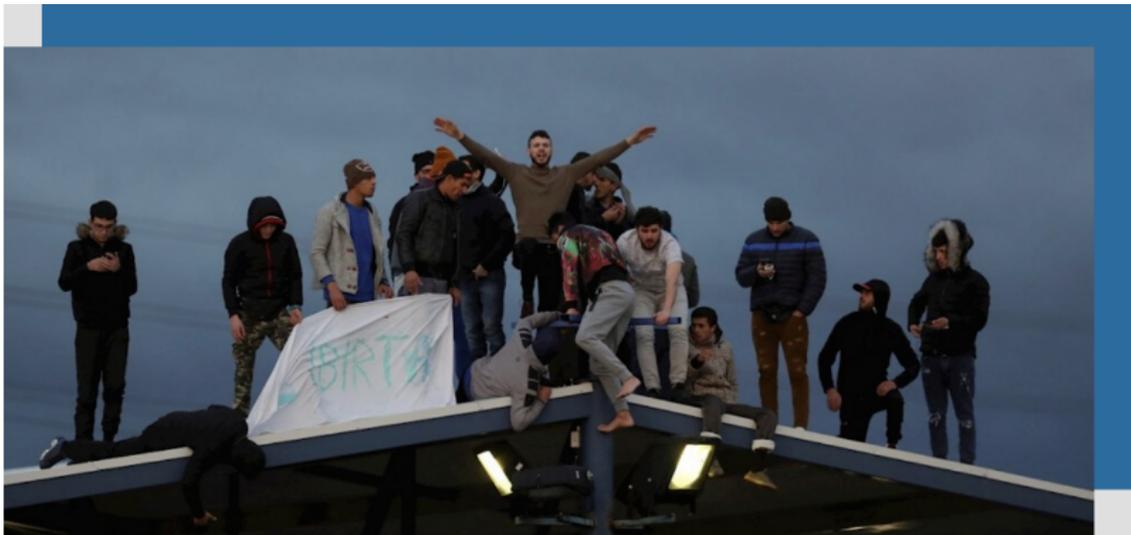


GLOBAL DETENTION PROJECT

May 2020 Newsletter

Welcome to the Global Detention Project's roundup of current research, publications, and events. For any questions about our content, please contact [admin \[at\] globaldetentionproject \[dot\] org](mailto:admin@globaldetentionproject.org)

OUR LATEST PUBLICATIONS



Immigration Detention in Spain: A Rapid Response to Covid-19

On 6 May 2020, Spain reported that for the first time in its history, its immigration detention facilities, “Foreign Internment Centres,” were empty. These centres had long been the target of activists, local politicians, and human rights bodies, who argued that they were unnecessary and abusive. The Covid-19 crisis, which shut down deportation flights, provided a final push. But enormous questions remain, including what is to happen to these facilities if the crisis eventually passes, how former detainees are being cared for, and what is being done to protect the thousands of people stranded in Spain’s Moroccan enclaves, where nominally “open” reception centres were placed under lockdown.

[Read the full report](#)

Immigration Detention in Argentina: A Paradigm Shift?

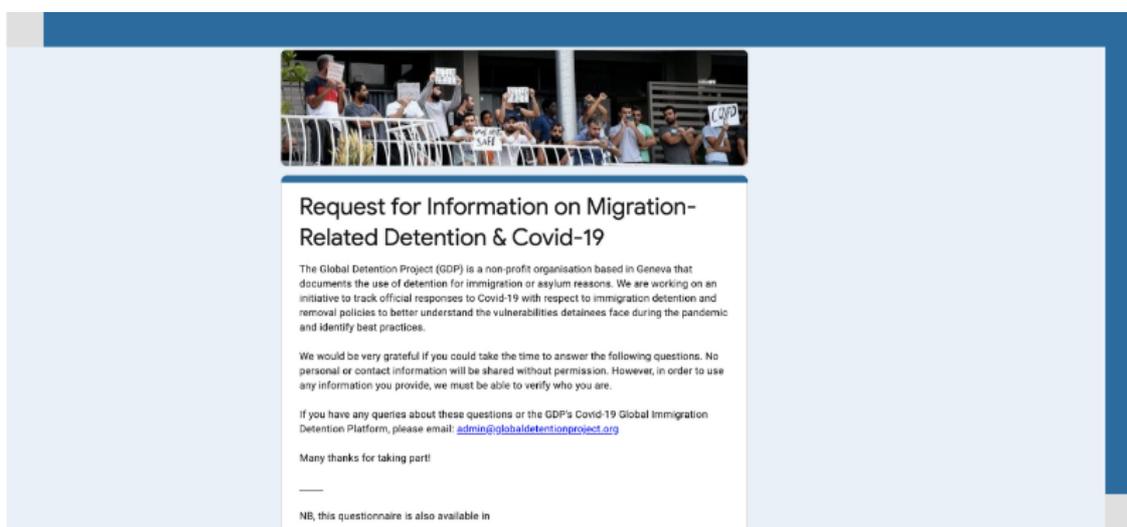
Argentina, like its South American neighbours, has traditionally de-emphasised detention and deportation in its immigration policies. However, in 2015 its posture changed dramatically after a conservative government took office, which pushed through several restrictive policy reforms and announced the opening of the country’s first specialised immigration detention centre. A new administration that took office in 2019 has criticised some of these reforms, suggesting a change of course. Although the country began implementing measures in March 2020 to safeguard staff and inmates in the country’s prisons against Covid-19, it is unclear whether any specific measures have been taken with respect to those detained for immigration reasons.

[Read the full report](#)

Can Covid-19 End Immigration Detention?

While some governments quickly realised the challenges Covid-19 poses in prisons and adopted measures to protect incarcerated populations, many countries have paid scant attention to those held in immigration detention facilities. In an article for *Border Criminologies*, the GDP discusses how the pandemic has helped reveal an awkward truth about migration-related detention: That detainees in immigration custody often do not enjoy the same rights as people who are prosecuted for committing crimes. However, with Spain and other countries taking far-reaching steps to empty their detention centres in the face of the pandemic, could we be witnessing a critical turning point in the development of this practice? [Read the full article.](#)

NEWS + ACTIVITIES



Request for Information on Migration-Related Detention & Covid-19

The Global Detention Project (GDP) is a non-profit organisation based in Geneva that documents the use of detention for immigration or asylum reasons. We are working on an initiative to track official responses to Covid-19 with respect to immigration detention and removal policies to better understand the vulnerabilities detainees face during the pandemic and identify best practices.

We would be very grateful if you could take the time to answer the following questions. No personal or contact information will be shared without permission. However, in order to use any information you provide, we must be able to verify who you are.

If you have any queries about these questions or the GDP's Covid-19 Global Immigration Detention Platform, please email: admin@globaldetentionproject.org

Many thanks for taking part!

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NB, this questionnaire is also available in

Covid-19 Multilingual Survey

As part of our efforts to monitor how states are responding to the Covid-19 pandemic in their detention and deportation procedures, the GDP has set up a brief online survey addressing key questions. If you have information that you would like to share, you can access our survey [here](#). It takes just a few minutes to complete, and is currently available in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Russian](#), and [Chinese](#) (Arabic coming soon).

UN Human Rights Treaty Bodies During the Covid-19 Pandemic

As a result of Covid-19, in-person sessions of the UN human rights sessions have been [postponed until at least June](#). However, with some authorities employing the pandemic as a reason to step back from certain key rights commitments, it is vital that treaty bodies undertake many of their mandated activities. The GDP joined more than 30 other NGOs in issuing a joint letter to the chairpersons of UN human rights treaty bodies and High Commissioner Michelle Bachelet highlighting the urgent need for treaty bodies to remotely monitor States' compliance with their treaty obligations during the crisis. "Together, we believe important work can continue and encourage the UNTBs to undertake their mandated activities remotely where feasible." [Read the joint NGO letter.](#)

GDP ON THE RECORD



[“US Detention and Release Policies Fatally Flawed.”](#) D. Kerwin, *Center for Migration Studies*, May 2020.

[“Migrants in Detention Centre go on Hunger Strike in Fear of Coronavirus,”](#) E. Volkmann, *AI Monitor*, April 2020.

[“Thailand's Outbreak Spike Exposes Conditions in Migrant Detention Centre,”](#) J. Chia, *Thai Enquirer*, April 2020.

[“Human Rights Watch Submission to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Kuwait,”](#) *Human Rights Watch*, May 2020.

[“COVID-19: Human Rights-Based Reflections on Displacement and Disease,”](#) M. Scott, *Raoul Wallenberg Institute*, May 2020.

[“Covid-19 Global Immigration Detention Platform: Update on Russia,”](#) *ADC Memorial*, April 2020.

[“The ABA Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) Task Force,”](#) *American Bar Association*, April 2020.

[“Covid-19: Impact on Children's Human Rights Across the World,”](#) *Together - Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights*, April 2020.

[“Covid-19 Open Letter to the Australian Government,”](#) *Academics for Refugees, Doctors for Refugees, and Librarians for Refugees*, April 2020.

[“Union: DHS Cutting Workers' Leave Over Border Security Concerns,”](#) B. Woodruff Swan and D. Lipman, *Politico*, April 2020.

[“The Security Apparatus, Federal Magistrate Courts, and Detention Centers as Simulacra: The Effects of Trump's Zero Tolerance Policy on Migrants and Refugees in the Rio Grande Valley,”](#) T.M. Garrett, *Politics & Policy*, 2020.

[“Female Asylum Seekers: A Critical Attitude on UK Immigration Removal Centres,”](#) M. De Angelis, *Social Policy and Society*, 19(2), 2020.

[“La detenzione dei migranti non si ferma di fronte alla pandemia \[The Detention of Migrants Does Not Stop in the Face of the Pandemic\]”](#) G. Zandonini, *Open Migration*, April 2020.

[“Qatar: une plongée dans l'enfer des travailleurs immigrés \[Qatar: A Dive into Immigrant Workers' Hell\]”](#) *Mr Mondialisation*, May 2020.