


United Arab Emirates Immigration Detention Data Profile

	Quick Facts	
	Immigration detainees (2018)	Not Available
	Detained asylum seekers (2018)	Not Available
	Detained minors (2018)	Not Available
	Immigration detention capacity (2018)	Not Available
	Persons expelled (2017)	Not Available
	International migrants (2019)	8,587,256
	New asylum applications (2019)	1,642
Number of immigration detainees on a given day (2018)	Not Available	

NOTES ON USING THIS PROFILE

- Sources for the data provided in this report are available online at: <https://www.globaldetentionproject.org/countries/middle-east/united-arab-emirates>
- "Observation Dates" indicate the timeframe statistical data correspond to or other data were last validated. More than one statistical entry for a year indicates contrasting reports.

STATISTICS

Detention, expulsion, and incarceration statistics

		Observation Date			Observation Date
Total number of immigration detainees by year	Not Available	2018	Number of immigration detainees on a given day	Not Available	2018
Top nationalities of detainees	Not Available	2018	Number of persons granted alternatives to immigration detention	Not Available	2018
Number of detained asylum seekers	Not Available	2018	Total number of detained minors	Not Available	2018
Number of detained unaccompanied minors	Not Available	2018	Number of detained accompanied minors	Not Available	2018
Number of detained stateless persons	Not Available	2018	Number of apprehensions of non-citizens	Not Available	2018
Immigration detainees as a percentage of total international migrant population	Not Available	2018	Estimated total immigration detention capacity	Not Available	2018
Number of dedicated long-term immigration detention centres	Not Available	2017	Estimated capacity of dedicated long-term immigration detention centres	Not Available	2017
Number of dedicated medium-term immigration detention centres	Not Available	2017	Number of immigration offices	7	2018
Number of transit facilities	Not Available	2017	Number of criminal facilities	Not Available	2017
Number of ad hoc facilities	Not Available	2017	Number of persons removed/returned (voluntary returns and deportations)	Not Available	2017
Number of deportations/forced returns only	Not Available	2017	Percentage of persons removed in relation to total number of people placed in removal procedures	Not Available	2017
Criminal prison population	9,826	2014	Percentage of foreign prisoners	87.8	2014
Prison population rate (per 100,000 of national population)	104	2014			

Demographics and immigration-related statistics

		Observation Date			Observation Date
Population	9,900,000	2020	International migrants	8,587,256	2019
	9,121,167	2016		8,313,000	2017
	9,157,000	2015		8,095,000	2015
International migrants as a percentage of the population	88.4	2017	Estimated number of undocumented migrants	Not Available	2018
	88.4	2015		Not Available	2017

Refugees	1,242	2019	Ratio of refugees per 1000 inhabitants	0.1	2016
	1,164	2018		0.05	2014
	888	2017			
	895	2016			
	424	2015			
	417	2014			
Total number of new asylum applications	1,642	2019	Refugee recognition rate	100	2014
	615	2016			
	506	2016			
	261	2014			
Stateless persons	20,000	2017			
	0	2016			

DOMESTIC LAW				
LEGAL TRADITION				
Legal tradition	Name		Observation Date	
	Muslim law			
	Customary law			
LAWS AND REGULATIONS				
Constitutional guarantees?	Yes/No	Constitution and Articles	Year Adopted	Last Year Amended
	Yes	Constitution of the United Arab Emirates - Constitutional Amendment No. (1) of 1996. Articles 26 and 40.	1971	1971
LAWS AND REGULATIONS				
Core pieces of national legislation	Name		Year Adopted	Last Year Amended
	Federal Law No (13) for 1996 Concerning "Aliens Entry and Residence" Amending some provisions of the Federal Law No (6) for 1973 relating to immigration and residence		2007	2015
LAWS AND REGULATIONS				
Additional legislation	Name		Year Adopted	Last Year Amended
	Federal Law No. 15 of 2017 On Domestic Workers		2018	
	UAE: Federal Law No. 8 of 1980 Issuing the Labour Law (amended by Law No. 14 in 1999)		1980	1999
	Federal Law No (3) of 1987 on Issuance of The Penal Code			1987
Federal Law on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings No. 51 of 2006.		2006		

GROUNDS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE IMMIGRATION-RELATED DETENTION			
Immigration-status-related grounds	Name		Observation Date
	Detention for unauthorised entry or stay		2018
	Detention of unauthorised persons by executive discretion		2018
	Detention to prevent unauthorised entry at the border		2018
CRIMINALIZATION OF IMMIGRATION-RELATED OFFENCES			
Does the country provide specific criminal penalties for immigration-related violations?	Fines	Incarceration	Observation Date
	Yes	Yes	1996
	Yes	Yes	1973
CRIMINALIZATION OF IMMIGRATION-RELATED OFFENCES			
Grounds for criminal immigration-related detention/incarceration and maximum potential duration of incarceration	Grounds for Incarceration	Maximum Number of Days of Incarceration	Observation Date
	Unauthorized entry	90	2018
	Unauthorised stay	120	1973
CRIMINALIZATION OF IMMIGRATION-RELATED OFFENCES			
Has the country decriminalized immigration-related violations?	Has the country decriminalized immigration-related violations?		Observation Date
	No		2018
LENGTH OF DETENTION			
Maximum length for administrative immigration detention in law.	Number of Days		Observation Date
	No Limit		1996
	120		1973
MANDATORY DETENTION			
Mandatory detention	Filter	Name	Observation Date
	Yes	All apprehended non-citizens who do not have proper documentation	1996
EXPEDITED REMOVAL AND RE-ENTRY BAN			
Re-entry ban	Name		Observation Date
	Yes		1973

COVID-19 UPDATES

	Update Status	Observation Date
Latest Update	<p>The country's lockdown measures, including the temporary closure of hotels, have left many migrant workers out of work. Although UAE authorities have allowed repatriation flights to take place, many countries have refused to allow their own nationals to return. Migrant workers in the UAE also have higher numbers of COVID-19 cases, mainly due to their living conditions in labour camps and the impossibility of maintaining social distancing. After demonstrations outside the Pakistani Embassy in Abu Dhabi and Consulate in Dubai, the UAE government released 400 Pakistani prisoners in mid-April. These individuals had been jailed for minor offences and were repatriated on special flights. This measure was taken considering the COVID-19 pandemic. The International Campaign for Freedom in the United Arab Emirates (ICF UAE) subsequently called on UAE authorities to "release all prisoners of conscience immediately and unconditionally, particularly those held beyond their release dates and in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, during which prisoners remain one of the most vulnerable groups of people to the disease." Human Rights Watch denounced the poor conditions in UAE prisons on 10 June, calling authorities to reduce prison populations to allow for social distancing. The director general of correctional institutions announced on 24 May the release of some inmates in Dubai's main prison, in order to reduce the population during the COVID-19 outbreak. He confirmed that since the beginning of the pandemic, there are around 35 per cent fewer prisoners in the prison. Other protests were organized in early May by young migrants, in a labour camp near Abu Dhabi. Many have lost their jobs due to the pandemic and did not receive the payment of their wages.</p>	2020
	<p>Thousands of Ethiopian workers - including large numbers of domestic workers - were deported from the UAE (as well as Saudi Arabia) over the weekend (10-12 April). Deported on cargo planes, some were reported to be displaying symptoms of Covid-19, although none had been tested for the virus. According to the UAE government, they were vulnerable to spreading the disease and thus needed to be removed from the country. Ethiopia's Health Minister confirmed that thousands had been deported from both UAE and Saudi Arabia, and that the country expected thousands more to be returned in the next 15 days. As the UN Humanitarian co-ordinator for Ethiopia has said, "This is simply not the moment for mass deportations from a public health perspective. ... These mass deportations, without any pre-departure medical screening are likely to exacerbate the spread of Covid-19 to the region and beyond."</p>	2020
	<p>UAE authorities provide little information regarding where non-citizens are detained for immigration-related reasons. Some sources indicate that the country has operated at least one dedicated deportation facility, but detainees are also known to have been held in criminal prisons. Authorities announced on 23 March 2020 that all inbound, outbound, and transit flights would be suspended in the next 48 hours. Human Rights Watch called on UAE authorities to consider the conditional release of persons with underlying health conditions - such as HIV - as "Covid-19 ... poses a particularly serious risk to people who live in close proximity to each other, such as in prisons, jails, and immigration detention centres."</p>	2020

INTERNATIONAL LAW

Relevant international treaties and date of ratification

	Name	Ratification Year
International treaties	CAT, Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	2012
	CRPD, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	2010
	CTOCTP, Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children	2009
	CEDAW, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	2004
	CRC, Convention on the Rights of the Child	1997
	VCCR, Vienna Convention on Consular Relations	1977
	ICERD, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	1974
Ratio of relevant international treaties ratified		7/19

Relevant international treaties and date of ratification				
International treaty reservations	Name	Reservation Year	Observation Date	
	CAT Article 1	2012	2012	
Relevant international treaties and date of ratification				
Ratio of complaints procedures accepted	Number	Observation Date		
	0/5			
	0/5			
Relevant international treaties and date of ratification				
Relevant recommendations issued by treaty bodies	Name	Recommendation Excerpt	Recommendation Year	
	Committee on the Right of Persons with Disabilities	36. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that: (a) Detention and deportation centres are accessible to migrant workers with disabilities and that migrant workers with disabilities are provided with reasonable accommodation; [...]	2016	
Regional treaties, regulations, and directives				
Regional legal instruments	Name	Year of Ratification (Treaty) / Transposed (Directive) / Adoption (Regulation)		
	AC, Arab Charter on Human Rights	2008		
Non treaty-based international human rights mechanisms				
Visits by special procedures of the Human Rights Council	Name	Year of Visit	Observation Date	
	Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance	2009	2015	
	Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	2009	2015	
	Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children	2012	2015	
Non treaty-based international human rights mechanisms				
Relevant recommendations by UN Special Procedures	Name	Recommendation Excerpt	Recommendation Year	Observation Date
	Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children	§81(t). Ensure that victims [of trafficking] are not criminalized or penalized, including through detention for status-related offences and other crimes directly resulting from their situations as trafficked persons.	2013	2013
Non treaty-based international human rights mechanisms				
Relevant recommendations of the UN Universal Periodic Review	Recommendation Issued	Year Issued	Observation Date	
	No	2009	2017	
	No	2013		

INSTITUTIONAL INDICATORS

Governing structures				
Federal or centralized governing system	Federal or centralized governing system			Observation Date
	Federal system			2018
Governing structures				
Centralized or decentralized immigration authority	Centralized or decentralized immigration authority			Observation Date
	Centralized immigration authority			2018
Institutions responsible for immigration detention				
Custodial authority	Agency	Ministry	Ministry Typology	Observation Date
		Ministry of Interior	Interior or Home Affairs	2018
Institutions responsible for immigration detention				
Apprehending authorities	Name	Agency	Ministry	Observation Date
	Abu Dhabi Police	Police	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2018
	Dubai Police	Police	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2018
	Sharjah Police	Police	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2018
Foreign sources of funding for detention operations				
Does the country receive external sources of funding?	Benefitted from non-state funding sources?			Observation Date
	No			2018

More information about immigration detention in United Arab Emirates is available at the website of the Global Detention Project (www.globaldetentionproject.org)