



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

HARNESSING DATA

**ENDING ARBITRARY
IMMIGRATION DETENTION**

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2023



GLOBALDETENTIONPROJECT

THE GLOBAL DETENTION PROJECT

The Global Detention Project (GDP) is committed to ending arbitrary and harmful migration-related detention practices around the world, and to ensuring respect for the fundamental human rights of all migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. To achieve this, we seek to:

- Increase public knowledge and awareness of immigration detention policies.
- Expand coverage of immigration detention by human rights monitoring bodies and other international agencies.
- Expand partnerships with local and international civil society organisations working to end arbitrary and harmful immigration detention practices.
- Strategically target research and advocacy so that it effectively challenges arbitrary and harmful detention laws and policies.

Front cover image:
Protestors call for the release of refugees detained in the
Park Hotel Immigration Centre in Melbourne, Australia.
12 February 2022 © Alamy

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1. ABOUT THE GLOBAL DETENTION PROJECT

Around the world every day, hundreds of thousands of people are detained because they fled conflict or hardship, or were trafficked overseas by criminal gangs. Although typically not charged with crimes, detained migrants and asylum seekers may be locked up indefinitely, often without access to legal assistance or any means to communicate with the outside world.

GDP Explains

WHAT IS IMMIGRATION DETENTION?

The deprivation of liberty of non-citizens for reasons related to their migration status.

Governments increasingly resort to detention to penalise and deter migrants and asylum seekers—even if officials refuse to recognise it as a form of punishment. This underscores a critical aspect of immigration detention: while criminal prisons are intended to prepare people for re-entry to society, immigration detention has no such reform agenda. Instead, it is a tool whose core purpose is to ensure that people are permanently removed from society, which makes them particularly vulnerable to abuse.

Many people arrive in detention having suffered severe trauma, requiring critical care to treat severe health needs. For many, the bewildering

fact of being placed in a prison-like cell—in some cases indefinitely or with no specified endpoint—without being charged with a crime is inexorably harmful, both physically and psychologically. For vulnerable groups like children, the elderly, pregnant and nursing women, trafficking victims, and stateless persons, the harms of detention can be even more acute.

The Global Detention Project (GDP) is committed to ending arbitrary and harmful migration-related detention practices around the world, and to ensuring respect for the fundamental human rights of all migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. To achieve this, we seek to:

- »»» Increase public knowledge and awareness of immigration detention policies.
- »»» Expand coverage of immigration detention by human rights monitoring bodies and other international agencies.
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WHERE ARE MIGRANTS, REFUGEES, AND ASYLUM SEEKERS DETAINED?

Migration-related detention has spread to nearly every country on the globe. Types of facilities vary greatly from country to country, but they can include dedicated immigration detention centres, prisons, jails, police stations, airport hold rooms, border camps, as well as ad hoc sites like hotels, school rooms, and shipping containers.



The Global Immigration Detention Observatory

At the heart of the GDP is the “Global Immigration Detention Observatory.” This is a collaborative initiative with partner organisations, researchers, and human rights practitioners in every corner of the world, whose central objective is to promote immigration detention reforms through research, data development, analysis, and reporting. The project seeks to ensure that local detention conditions receive global attention, while helping inform advocacy initiatives at the international level with on-the-ground realities and needs.

Central to the Observatory is our interactive database—a unique and comprehensive online tool for documenting immigration detention laws, practices, and policies in all countries using a shared, comparative framework that is based on international human rights laws. It is designed to enable advocates and researchers to develop a clear understanding of gaps in countries’ efforts to uphold their human rights commitments, assess how different detention systems compare and contrast, develop data-driven advocacy messages, promote transparency in the treatment of detainees, and produce targeted reports for human rights monitoring bodies.

2. LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT

Policy-makers, scholars, and advocates often obsess over detention numbers: How many people were detained last year? How many more people are being detained now? How many are detained in a given detention centre? But there is another statistic that receives much less attention: how many people die in immigration detention? It is striking that this grim—though fundamentally important—piece of data often gets overlooked, especially as the reports of detainee deaths become increasingly common.

As we were drafting this annual report, terrible news broke that 40 migrants and asylum seekers had died in a Mexican detention centre, burned alive because their jailers fled without unlocking their cells as a fire engulfed the building. This news followed closely on the heels of other deaths in detention in various countries; for instance, in Thailand, where Aziz Abdullah, a 49-year-old Uyghur asylum seeker who had

been in detention for nine years after fleeing China, died because Thai immigration officials refused to provide him proper medical attention (or just simply release him!).

The brutal truth is that people have died in immigration custody—whether in detention or during arrest or deportation—in countless countries across the globe, including in key destination countries. In the United States, the ACLU and other advocacy groups have documented how the “fatal neglect” that immigration officials show detainees has led to dozens of deaths in detention in recent years. In Canada, Amnesty International reports that even though the country detains only a tiny fraction of the number of migrants as the U.S., deaths per capita among detainees is several times higher, prompting one scholar to write: “Deaths in detention in Canada are numerous, but occur largely in the shadows, shrouded within secretive and unaccountable systems.”



People mourn and demand information in the wake of the Ciudad Juarez fire in Mexico, 28 March 2023 © Alamy

Lack of health care is not the only culprit. Desperation, fear, unbearable uncertainty, lack of hope—all rife in detention centres across the globe—are also to blame. A report in the Guardian found that during 2022 alone, asylum seekers awaiting deportation at UK detention centres were “physically prevented from taking their own lives or self-harming on 18 occasions.” Some people succeed, like Frank Ospina, a detainee from Colombia at the Colnbrook Immigration Removal Centre near Heathrow Airport, who took his life on 26 March 2023. A few weeks later, in April 2023, a Tunisian man hung himself at the much-criticised Favra Detention Centre in Geneva—not far from the GDP’s office—only a few months after learning that he was to be deported. Sadly, this list could go on interminably ...

The brutal truth is that people have died in immigration custody—whether in detention or during arrest or deportation—in countless countries across the globe.

At the GDP, we have long sought to document individual cases of deaths and suicides in detention. But since last year, the issue has taken on increasing prominence in our thoughts and work. This has been spurred in part by our collaboration with the World Health Organisation aimed at developing a global review of evidence on health provision and health impacts in immigration detention, which you can read more about in this Annual Report (see: **IN FOCUS: Health Care in Detention**). Among our key findings was that despite evidence pointing to widespread deaths in detention, human rights monitoring bodies often fail to systemically solicit or document evidence about deaths in their reports about immigration detention practices.

This is one of the reasons the GDP exists: to help fill the gaps in our knowledge about the impact of immigration detention to empower calls for change.

In 2023, the GDP launches a new Strategic Plan, which is infused with the urgency to prevent people from dying or being harmed in detention. A notable feature of the new Strategic Plan is our emphasis on more effectively channelling our extensive documentation and analyses about immigration detention into advocacy. This emphasis is succinctly phrased in our new mission statement:

The Global Detention Project works to achieve a world free of the arbitrary detention of migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. We combine investigative research and human rights advocacy to end harmful migration-related detention practices, to enhance protections for at-risk and vulnerable groups, and to ensure that all non-citizens are treated with dignity and respect.

We look forward to working with our partners across the globe in the months and years ahead to implement a shared vision of protecting migrants from harm and ending arbitrary immigration detention.

Michael Flynn
Executive Director



Sahar Okhovat
President of the Board



3. IMPACT AROUND THE WORLD

CANADA: In 2022, four Canadian provinces announced they will stop using prisons for immigration detention. The GDP has played an important role raising awareness in the country about the inherent human rights violation of placing migrant detainees in criminal prisons, and our reports have been widely cited in the Canadian press.



SWITZERLAND: We hosted partners from around the globe for “Geneva advocacy weeks,” which included organising meetings with UN agencies, strategising with other Geneva-based NGOs, and dialoguing with country missions (p.15).



UKRAINE: Working with a consortium of research and media outlets, we drew urgent international attention to the plight of migrants trapped in Ukrainian detention centres amidst the Russian invasion, many of whom were eventually released (p.16).



TAJIKISTAN: We reported on the arbitrary detention of Afghan refugees in Tajikistan—a country often overlooked for its migration enforcements practices—for our newly updated blog, the Global Immigration Detention Monitor (p.22).

TÜRKIYE: The GDP helped spur critical public attention about EU support for Turkey’s detention practices, including a report in Al Jazeera, which reported that the EU-Turkey refugee deal led “to an increase in detentions and summary deportations of refugees and asylum seekers, according to the Geneva-based research centre Global Detention Project.” (Al Jazeera, January 2022) (p.23).



MALAYSIA: We highlighted the indefinite detention of thousands of Rohingya refugees in the country’s detention centres, which block access to both UNHCR and civil society groups. As of May 2022, some refugees had been confined in Relau Detention Centre for more than two years.



MEXICO: With 9,630 page views, Mexico’s “Mexicali Estacion Migratoria” was our most viewed detention centre during 2022. Other Mexican detention cites are also amongst our most visited pages. We respond to dozens of assistance requests every month from family members of detainees, many from Cuba and Central America (p.21).



MOROCCO: In a submission to the Universal Periodic Review, the GDP and GADEM called on Morocco to cease indiscriminate raids, arbitrary detentions, and mass expulsions of migrants and refugees from the country, where crackdowns have resulted in deadly violence, including the deaths of 23 migrants in December 2022 trying to enter the Spanish enclave of Melilla.



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES: Working with Migrant-Rights.org, we shed light on the case of 2,500 Afghan refugees arbitrarily and indefinitely detained in the UAE’s “Emirates Humanitarian City,” where many have been subjected to grave abuses.



BOTSWANA: Following input from the GDP and our partner Lawyers for Human Rights, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention called on Botswana to stop automatic and indefinite detention of irregular migrants, who are held in appalling detention conditions (p.18).



AUSTRALIA: We published our most detailed report on Australia to-date—providing a thorough overview of one of the world’s most severe and punitive immigration detention regimes.



PERU: Spurred by a joint submission from the GDP and several partners in Peru, the UN Committee on Migrant Workers pressed Peru on reports of arbitrary and collective expulsions, a rarity in South America where immigration detention is generally not used.



4. INVESTIGATING DETENTION

Investigative research and rigorous data development lie at the heart of the Global Detention Project's work. We investigate where and in what conditions countries detain migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, and we document this information in our database and on our website so that anyone can easily access our findings—helping to ensure greater transparency surrounding detention policies and practices worldwide. With many countries expanding their domestic detention regimes, as well as supporting detention and interdiction beyond their borders, this work is more important than ever.

A Global Data Repository

During 2022, we documented detention practices worldwide, logging more than 5,100 data entries covering **143 countries and 450 detention centres**. To-date, we have recorded more than 2,300 detention centres, as well as observations regarding detention practices for every country on the globe. This enormous wealth of information stands us in the unique position of being able to provide insights regarding the evolution of detention practices over time, as well as comparative analyses between countries and regions.

A key recent focus has been low- and middle-income countries that are under pressure from wealthy countries to block the movement of migrants and refugees, and which have ramped up their detention capacities—often without proper oversight or safeguards. With the help of local Observatory partners reporting on national detention systems, we published reports on detention practices in several countries, including Turkey, Qatar, Egypt, India, Zimbabwe, and Botswana.

To better support our documentation efforts, we made important changes to our database. Following a review of the system by different users including academics, students, migrant rights advocates, and practitioners, we completed a substantial overhaul of our database—introducing a host of new fields to allow us to



capture an even-greater level of detail across a broad range of topics, including an emphasis on capturing data related to health, which is based on recent collaborations with the World Health Organisation (see **IN FOCUS: Health Care in Detention**).

Transparency Initiative

A critical barrier to our documentation efforts, however, is the fact that all too often, states attempt to shield their detention practices from scrutiny by failing to provide details about who they lock up and where, and by denying observers access to detention facilities. This creates conditions that some have been described as “black boxes”: hidden from the eyes of the world, detainees can simply disappear into systems where their treatment goes without challenge, exposing them to grave rights abuses.

We think that transparency of immigration detention practices is crucial for both promoting change and protecting immigration

Transparency of immigration detention practices is crucial for both promoting change and protecting immigration detainees. We therefore submit targeted questions to governments around the world.

5,198
data entries

2,308
detention centres documented to date

143
countries updated

3,846
data entries by Observatory partners

450
detention centres updated

30
joint information requests

detainees. We therefore continue to submit targeted questions and freedom of information requests to government agencies and official monitoring bodies—often in collaboration with local partners—in an attempt to shine a light on secretive detention systems. In 2022, we issued 30 joint information requests to countries including Botswana, Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia,

Qatar, and Turkey. These requests sought information such as the number of persons detained or arrested for immigration reasons, up-to-date lists of facilities used for immigration detention purposes, information regarding the treatment of vulnerable groups, and updates on legal reform efforts.

IN FOCUS: HEALTH CARE IN DETENTION

There is broad recognition that immigration detention is intrinsically harmful to the health and well-being of detainees. Migrants and asylum seekers often suffer extreme trauma during their migration journeys. Deprived of their liberty, often with no set end to their confinement, detainees' experience of detention exacerbates pre-existing trauma, leading to new physical and psychological harms. Deaths, suicides, and self-harming are far too common in detention, spurred by the fear and hopelessness endemic in immigration detention, as well as by inadequate mental and other health care provision and prolonged detention in poor conditions.

Since 2021, the GDP has worked closely with the World Health Organisation's Health & Migration Programme on a range of projects aimed at improving both evidence and responses to health problems in immigration detention settings. We drafted a chapter exploring health-related issues in detention for the WHO's first ever global on refugee and migrant health, released in 2022. The WHO subsequently contracted the GDP to undertake a global evidence review of health-related indicators in immigration detention, which led us to develop a unique methodology for recording data on health provision and outcomes in detention settings with a view to establishing standards of care as well as a comprehensive framework for documenting immigration detention health indicators globally.

Among the key issues included in the framework—which we organised according to two overarching pillars, health provision and health outcomes—are the availability of medications and medical professionals in detention centres; the provision of health and risk screenings before, during, and upon exit from detention; access to specialist care, including for particular at-risk groups such as children and victims of trafficking; reports of deaths and suicides; barriers to adequate health, including lack of transparency and the impact of conditions of detention; and the role of private actors.

The research project, which has been undertaken in collaboration with colleagues from Oxford's Border Criminologies, has shown that there is a severe lack of publicly available data and information concerning levels of health care provided to detainees in most countries across the globe. However, there is evidence indicating that immigration detention is consistently harmful to all people subject to it—not just children, women, and torture victims—which raises challenging questions with respect to promoting detention-related public health standards, especially proposals that are issued by normative bodies like UN human rights mechanisms and the WHO. If a policy is inherently harmful, then there are arguably no "best practices" to promote, only harm-reducing ones.



A male detainee stands in Otay Mesa Detention Center's mental health ward © Alamy

“The excruciating uncertainty migrant detainees often face as a result of the interminable lack of resolution of their cases, bewilderment over why they appear to be locked in prisons and the lack of clarity over how long they may be detained can have a severe effect on their mental health and well-being.”

Global Detention Project in: World Health Organisation, 'World Report on the Health of Refugees and Migrants', 2022

Documenting Data on Health Provision and Outcomes in Detention Settings



5. HUMAN RIGHTS: MAKING AN IMPACT LOCALLY AND GLOBALLY

Migrants and asylum seekers are detained in the Melilla Temporary Stay Facility, having crossed the fence from Morocco. 2 March 2022 © Alamy



Headquartered in Geneva, the capital of the international human rights system, the GDP's strategic focus emphasises building connections between local realities and global processes. We seek to ensure that abusive detention practices and trends get international attention; that national policies and laws respect international human rights principles; that global initiatives and agendas respond to on-the-ground needs; and that international human rights mechanisms have domestic impact.

Our partnerships with local advocates are a cornerstone of this effort. Our partners work with us to build data and information, they are the focus of our engagements with international monitoring bodies, and they ground our work in an intimate understanding of the plight of detainees.

Holding States to Account

In 2022, we made important progress in developing impactful submissions to international human rights monitoring bodies—stepping up our efforts to bring urgent situations and ongoing violations in specific countries to the attention of UN human rights bodies and mandate-holders, and to demand change.

Where possible, we prepared submissions jointly with local civil society organisations to ensure that we accurately reflected realities on the ground and provided the most up-to-date information possible. We issued **14 submissions covering 10 countries to 8 different rights mechanisms**, including the UN Committee on the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture.

To ensure key issues and concerns received the scrutiny they deserved, we facilitated partners' participation during the review

process, enabling them to speak directly to treaty body committees and representatives. Together, we also tracked recommendations issued by rights mechanisms and closely monitored how these were being implemented by the countries under review. One such example was our work with the Lebanon-based MENA Rights Group, assessing the extent to which Lebanon has taken on board the recommendations issued by the UN Human Rights Committee in 2018, and enacted necessary reforms.

Helping CSOs Engage with Human Rights Monitoring Mechanisms

As well as jointly submitting information to international human rights mechanisms, we work closely with our Observatory partners to strengthen their understanding and capacity so that they can engage directly with international human rights monitoring mechanisms to raise issues relating to immigration detention.

To achieve this, in 2022 we launched our first Geneva advocacy visits. Welcoming to Geneva four Observatory partners (Migrant-Rights.org (covering the Gulf States), the Migration and Asylum Project (India), the International Refugee Rights Association (Turkey), and Lawyers for Human Rights (covering southern Africa)), we facilitated in-person meetings so that they could observe how UN human rights mechanisms work and strengthen their skills in strategic engagement with them, as well as build relationships that will assist them in future advocacy. Visits were strategically timed to coincide with key human rights events like the 4th cycle review of South Africa under the UPR Working Group, and the 51st session of the UN Human Rights Council. For some of our partners, the visits to Geneva were an opportunity to build on their existing experience of engaging with the UN human rights mechanisms; for others, it was a new area of engagement and the Geneva visit provided an excellent introduction into how the UN human rights bodies operate.

We also hosted interactive webinars to help participants learn how to harness the UN human rights system to challenge abusive and arbitrary detention practices in their countries, and to better understand the cross-cutting impact of immigration detention. We held two webinars in 2022, attracting hundreds of participants from around the world, including government representatives, policy-makers, civil society, NGOs, activists, academics, and students. The first explored the relevance of the UN Convention on the Rights of all Migrant Workers and their Families to promoting protections for migrant detainees, and the second examined the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) and the role that its bodies (the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and National Preventive Mechanisms) play in preventing torture and ill-treatment in detention.

“
Face-to-face meetings with special procedures and treaty body secretariats allowed us to ask questions specific to our context, and to begin building a relationship with these entities that will be advantageous for future advocacy efforts.
 ”



*Rima Kalush,
Migrant-Rights.org*

IN FOCUS: UKRAINE - CHALLENGING DETENTION AMIDST WAR

In March 2022, we received a series of worrying reports about terrified migrants who remained locked in an immigration detention centre in Ukraine, trapped amidst Russia's escalating invasion of the country. The information that we received indicated that there were several dozen people in Volyn Detention Centre—an EU-funded facility located in northeastern Ukraine, 130km from the border with Belarus—including migrant workers and international students from Pakistan, India, Eritrea, Sudan, and Afghanistan. They were growing increasingly desperate, particularly as the nearby city of Lutsk had been hit by Russian shells.

After verifying the reports, we reached out to key mechanisms and actors like the UN Human Rights Special Procedures (Special Rapporteurs and Working Groups), UNHCR, IOM, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture, and several concerned Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), calling for the

detainees to be released and assisted to find safety. We highlighted important international legal standards that protect civilians, including in detention, during situations of ongoing warfare. Important among these is Additional Protocol 1, Article 58C, of the Geneva Conventions, which requires all parties to a conflict to take necessary measures to protect civilians under their control from the effects of the war.

As one of the first international organisations to raise the alarm about the ongoing detention of migrants inside Ukraine, the GDP's reporting was soon picked up by other media and human rights organisations, including the independent investigative media outlet, Lighthouse Reports, which teamed up with Al Jazeera and Der Spiegel

to produce a series of articles highlighting the detainees' plight. GDP staff members were interviewed and cited in these pieces. We also worked closely with Human Rights Watch (HRW), which was carrying out its own research into the situation and which made use of our resources and documentation in its own series of reports.

By mid-2022, the GDP learned that many of the detainees we had raised concerns about had been released from detention. Some of them had been able to contact their embassies and were evacuated to safety, although refugees from countries like Ethiopia and Eritrea who were unable to turn to their governments for help, faced greater challenges.

Towards the end of 2022, however, the GDP was once again contacted by migrants detained in Volyn. This time the profile of the detainees had changed—we were told that the majority of the detainees were from the surrounding region,

such as ethnic Tatars, Dagestanis, Russians, Azerbaijanis, Armenians, and Uzbeks, who were fleeing political and religious persecution in their countries and would face threats to their lives and safety if returned.

The GDP again raised the alarm with international UN organisations, human rights monitoring bodies, and media outlets that Ukraine was continuing to detain migrants in the midst of ongoing warfare. Of particular concern at the time was the proximity of the Volyn centre to the Belarus border, where Russian and Belarussian troops were reported to be amassing with rumours of an imminent land invasion. We urged the international community to take urgent action and to call on Ukraine to cease detaining migrants during an ongoing conflict and release all those currently detained. We were encouraged to learn that two of the individuals who contacted us were subsequently released and assisted by UNHCR to find safety.

“

There is no justification for keeping migrants and refugees in administrative detention in situations of active warfare.

”

Michael Flynn (GDP Executive Director), interviewed by The Guardian, April 2022



In a screenshot of a video shared with the GDP, detainees can be seen at the Volyn Detention Centre, March 2022

It is vitally important that while the ongoing invasion and bombardment of Ukraine is taking place, migrants and refugees being held in immigration detention facilities are immediately released and allowed to seek safety elsewhere, or to escape the country. They should not be held in detention during ongoing warfare where their lives and safety could be seriously endangered.

We would like to urge you to urgently raise the plight of migrants and refugees in immigration detention with the Ukrainian authorities and to seek their immediate release.

Global Detention Project, Urgent Communication, March 2022

An aerial view of Francistown Centre for Illegal Immigrants © Google Earth



IN FOCUS: ASSESSING BOTSWANA'S TREATMENT OF IMMIGRATION DETAINEES

Like many of its neighbours in southern Africa, Botswana often emphasises security rationales in its treatment of undocumented non-citizens. Migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers are detained in Dukwi Refugee Camp and the Francistown Centre for Illegal Immigrants (FCII)—a facility which is akin to a prison. Observers have highlighted the abusive and abysmal conditions in both sites; however to-date there has been limited international scrutiny of Botswana's treatment of immigration detainees.

In 2022, in partnership with our Observatory partner Lawyers for Human Rights, and their Botswana-based partners (Skillshare Botswana and Bosa Bosele Training College), we produced our first review of the country's detention practices which we presented to both the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) prior to their country visit in June 2022, and to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) ahead of its periodic review of Botswana. In particular, we noted the detention of children in FCII, the discriminatory

treatment of certain nationalities within detention centres, and the appalling conditions of detention.

Our briefing prompted the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to visit both facilities—leading the WGAD to express serious concerns regarding the country's punitive approach towards migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Urging Botswana to revise its policies, the WGAD wrote: "The current approach must be revised to reflect the exceptionality of detention in the migratory context and ensure that no indefinite detention takes place. The FCII's conditions and regime must be urgently reviewed to guarantee they are not prison-like. Furthermore, detaining children because of their parents' migration status always violates the principle of the best interests of the child and the rights of the child." During a subsequent visit to Geneva coinciding with CERD's review of Botswana, a representative from Lawyers for Human Rights was able to address the CERD and reiterate the key concerns raised in the joint submission.

Table 1: 2022 Submissions

TARGET	SUBJECT	PARTNER
UN Committee on the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families	Peru: Issues Related to Border Controls, Expulsions, Immigration Detention, and Migration Management (34th Session, March-April 2022)	Grupo de Movilidad Humana de la Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humanos
	Turkiye: Issues Related to Immigration Detention (35th Session, September 2022)	International Refugee Rights Association
	Submission on the Committee's General Comment No.6 (on the Convergence of the International Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and the Global Compact for Migration)	
UN Committee for the Prevention of Torture	United Arab Emirates: Issues Relating to Immigration Detention (74th Session, July 2022)	Migrant-Rights.org
UN Human Rights Committee	Lebanon: Follow-up to the Concluding Observations on the Third Periodic Report of Lebanon	MENA Rights Group
UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	Turkiye: Issues Relating to Women Refugees, Asylum Seekers, Migrants, and Immigration Detention (82nd Session, June-July 2022)	International Refugee Rights Association
UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	Zimbabwe: Issues Related to Immigration Detention (107th Session, August 2022)	Lawyers for Human Rights
	Botswana: Issues Related to Immigration Detention (108th Session, November – December 2022)	Lawyers for Human Rights
Universal Periodic Review	Poland: Human Rights Concerns Relating to Poland's Treatment of Migrants, Refugees, and People Seeking Asylum, Including its use of Immigration Detention (41st Session, November 2022)	Association for Legal Intervention, Lambda Warsaw, and Birmingham City University
	India: Issues Related to Immigration-Related Detention and Asylum (41st Session, November 2022)	Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, Organisation Against Torture
	Morocco: Issues Related to Migration-Related Detention and Border Enforcement Measures (41st Session, November 2022)	Group Antiraciste d'Accompagnement et de Defense des Etrangers et Migrants
European Committee for the Prevention of Torture	South Africa: Issues Related to Immigration Enforcement (41st Session, November 2022)	Lawyers for Human Rights
	Poland: Submission in Preparation of the Committee's Visit to Poland	Association for Legal Intervention
UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention	Botswana: Submission in Preparation for its Mission to Botswana (4-15 July 2022)	Lawyers for Human Rights

6. SHAPING THE CONVERSATION

Central to our efforts to end harmful immigration detention practices is our work focusing public attention on the damaging impact that detention has on migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Our website, blog, social media channels, and newsletters—all of which grew from strength to strength in 2022—are critical to achieving this.

The GDP Website: A Unique Global Tool

The Global Detention Project website, which presents every piece of information in our database for easy public access, is today one of the world's most cited sources regarding immigration detention. Providing an unparalleled repository of immigration detention-related data and analysis, it serves as a vital resource for academics, researchers, journalists, human rights advocates, and activists, helping to both

inform and shape their work. In 2022, we doubled our 2021 impact and recorded more than 250 academic, media, and advocacy sources citing our work. This ranged from articles in peer-reviewed journals, books, and policy papers, to international, regional, national, and local news articles.

Although we are increasingly one of the top go-to sources of information for those working on detention—and even more broadly, the human rights of migrants and asylum seekers—we

also regularly take an active role in generating this coverage. Reaching out to, collaborating with, and assisting researchers and journalists, in 2022 we strove to ensure that information regarding critical issues and emerging detention situations reached new audiences and stakeholders. In April, for example, we assisted a consortium of press outlets including Lighthouse Reports, Al Jazeera English, and Der Spiegel as well as Human Rights Watch, providing them with information and quotes to support their investigation into the detention of migrants in Ukraine (for more on this, see: **IN FOCUS: Ukraine - Challenging Detention Amidst War**).

Our active social media channels also helped us to shape public conversations. We regularly drew attention to critical yet underreported issues such as the detention and deportation of Afghan refugees in Tajikistan and Egypt's opaque and repressive immigration detention practices.

Growing Online Presence

The GDP website attracts hundreds of thousands of users from around the world, and every year, we record ever-increasing numbers of people accessing and using our resources. 2022 was no different—with the website receiving another record number of visitors. Some 662,010 people accessed our site, compared to 583,409 in 2021. (Please note, figures vary to previous annual reports due to our recording website usage through Wordpress, rather than Google Analytics, as of 2022.)

WEBSITE VISITORS

	VISITS	VISITORS
2021	4,229,077	583,409
2022	4,785,875	662,010

USERS' TOP COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN

1. United States
2. Canada
3. Mexico
4. Malaysia
5. Italy
6. Australia
7. United Kingdom
8. United Arab Emirates
9. France
10. India

MOST VIEWED COUNTRY PAGES

1. Mexico
2. Canada
3. Turkey
4. Malaysia
5. Saudi Arabia
6. Qatar
7. Australia
8. United Arab Emirates
9. Turkey
10. Italy

MOST VIEWED DETENTION CENTRE PAGES

- Africa** Ain Zara Detention Centre (Libya)
- Americas** Mexicali Estacion Migratoria (Mexico)
- Asia-Pacific** Kajang Prison for Men (Malaysia)
- Europe** Lampedusa Hotspot (Italy)
- Middle East** Dubai Central Jail for Men (United Arab Emirates)

KARIMGANJ DISTRICT JAIL

Status: **IN USE** 2021

Type: Prison or pretrial detention centre (Criminal)

Custodial Authority: Assam Prison Headquarters

Management: Assam Prison, Headquarters, Home and Political, Government of Assam (Governmental)

Detains: Fa...

DETAINEES

DEMOGRAPHICS

Name	Families
Name	Adult women 2021
Name	Adult men 2021

IN FOCUS: THE GLOBAL IMMIGRATION DETENTION MONITOR

In 2022, we undertook important changes to the Global Detention Project blog. Originally launched in 2020 to track globally how countries responded to the COVID-19 pandemic in their treatment of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, by 2022 it was clear that the blog had begun to evolve into something broader and more comprehensive. In August, we officially relaunched it as “The Immigration Detention Monitor” in order to provide regular comment on—and analysis of—the full range of developments in migration-related detention practices and policies.

Since re-launching, the blog has covered news such as violent pushbacks and arbitrary detention of migrants and asylum seekers in secretive tented camps by EU countries along their borders with Belarus; stepped up migration controls, including mass deportations of Haitians, in the Dominican Republic; and the lack of transparency surrounding Qatar’s detention practices. Where possible, we also use our blog to amplify the voices of our local partners, helping to highlight their advocacy efforts to our global audience or to address issues that they are unable to discuss publicly due to fears of government retribution.

The overhaul of our blog has also been instrumental in broadening and diversifying our audience. In total, we published 42 blog posts covering 35 different countries, helping to cement our position as a key go-to destination for up-to-date information on immigration detention worldwide. Often shared widely on social media, our blog pieces regularly attracted large numbers of new readers. In fact: between September and December, 73 percent of our blog readers were classified as “new visitors.” During that same period, the blog was also our sixth most visited webpage.



“Migrants in Africa at Grave Risk of Abuse”



“Dominican Republic Steps up Migration Controls”



“Arbitrary Detention of Afghans in Tajikistan”

GDP IN THE PRESS

In 2022, we doubled our 2021 impact and recorded more than 250 academic, media, and advocacy sources citing our work.

“Migrants fleeing Lebanon by sea accuse Greece of abuse,” *Al Jazeera*, January 2022.

“Eastern Europe welcomes some refugees, not others: Is it only racism?” *The Christian Science Monitor*, March 2022.

“Kurdish mother of two violently forced out of Denmark,” *Rudaw*, March 2022.

“‘Scared for our lives’: Grave concerns over safety of refugees detained by Ukraine,” *The Guardian*, April 2022.

“Immigration depot deaths an urgent wake-up call for Malaysia,” *Free Malaysia Today*, June 2022.

“‘Parents had to watch their children deteriorate’: Refugees increasingly forced into immigration detention centres,” *The Telegraph*, July 2022.

“Las violentas devoluciones de Argelia al desierto de Níger que frenan la migración a Europa: ‘Estuve a punto de morir,’” *El Diario*, August 2022.

“En Turquie, les refoulés de Grèce retenus dans des lieux indignes,” *InfoMigrants*, September 2022.

“Иностранцы — узники Волынского депортационного центра страдают от холода, отключения электричества и связи,” *ADC Memorial*, December 2022.

108

academic citations

148

media and advocacy citations

7. THE GDP TEAM AND GOVERNANCE

Michael Flynn, Executive Director

Michael Flynn is the founding director of the Global Detention Project. He previously was a project director at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C.; a project coordinator at the Graduate Institute's Programme for the Study of Global Migration in Geneva; and an editor at the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists in Chicago. He is coauthor (with Izabella Majcher and Mariette Grange) of Immigration Detention in the European Union: In the Wake of the "Crisis" (Springer 2020) and co-editor (with Matthew Flynn) of Challenging Immigration Detention: Academics, Activists, and Policy-Makers (Edward Elgar 2017). Flynn has a BA in Philosophy from DePaul University and a PhD in International Studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

Rachael Reilly, Senior Advocacy Coordinator

Rachael Reilly has more than 30 years' experience in global refugee, migration, and human rights advocacy and policy. She was the founding Refugee Policy Director at Human Rights Watch; served as Geneva Representative for the Women's Refugee Commission, where she spearheaded several major projects, including the organisation's ground-breaking work on disability inclusion in humanitarian emergencies, gender equality in nationality rights, and organising the first-ever global consultations with refugee youth and adolescents; and was the regional advocacy director for Oxfam International, where she led the organisation's advocacy on the Rohingya refugee crisis in the Asia-Pacific region. She has a BA in Social Anthropology from the University of Cambridge and a Masters of Science in Social Policy and Planning from the London School of Economics.

Katie Welsford, Communications Officer

Katie Welsford has a background in non-profit communications and journalism and specialises in conflict and displacement. She previously worked for the AMAR International Charitable Foundation, overseeing digital communications and campaigns focused on the IDP crisis in Northern Iraq. She also worked as a coordinator for the human rights NGO, Reach All Women in War, and as a freelance journalist for publications including The Guardian, Daily Beast, and Le Monde Diplomatique. She holds an MSc in Political Science from the University of London's Birkbeck College and a BA in Social Geography from Durham University.

Mario Guido, Project Coordinator

Mario Guido coordinates the GDP's "Global Immigration Detention Observatory" project, helping oversee collaborative work between the GDP and external partner organisations on developing detention data in key geographic regions to raise awareness of human rights concerns. He holds an LLB in European Legal Studies from the University of Reading and an LLM from University College London.

Abdul Aziz Muhamat, Research & Advocacy Fellow

Abdul Aziz Muhamat is an experienced refugee rights advocate who began his advocacy work while a detainee on Australia's offshore detention centre on Manus Island (Papua New Guinea). A Martin Ennals Award Laureate for Human Rights Defenders (2019), Aziz advocates for the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants in detention, community detention, and post resettlement. He has assisted the Global Detention Project in reviewing its database, providing critical insights into its methods based on his lived experience, and assessing ways to impact advocacy through improved documentation of detention systems.

Executive Committee and Board Members

Sahar Okhovat (NSW Inspector of Custodial Services), President of the Board

George Kourous (UN Food and Agriculture Organization), Vice President of the Board

Yves Klein (Monfrini Bitton Klein), Secretary of the Board

Pierre-Eric Simon (Processus Immobilier SA), Treasurer of the Board

Roberta Cecchetti (Independent Consultant), Member of the Board

Meghna Abraham (Centre for Economic and Social Rights)

Megan Day Paterson-Brown (Webster University)

Alexandra Dufresne (Cornell University)

Seta Hadesian (Middle East Council of Churches)

Kirsten Sandberg (University of Oslo)

Michaela Told (HumanImpact5/HI5)



Academic Advisory Council

François Crépeau (McGill University)

Jeff Crisp (Refugees International)

Matthew Flynn (Georgia Southern University)

Niels Frenzen (University of Southern California)

Elsbeth Guild (Radboud University)

Jussi Hanhimäki (Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies)

Donald Kerwin (Center for Migration Studies)

Daniel Wilsher (City University London)

Governance

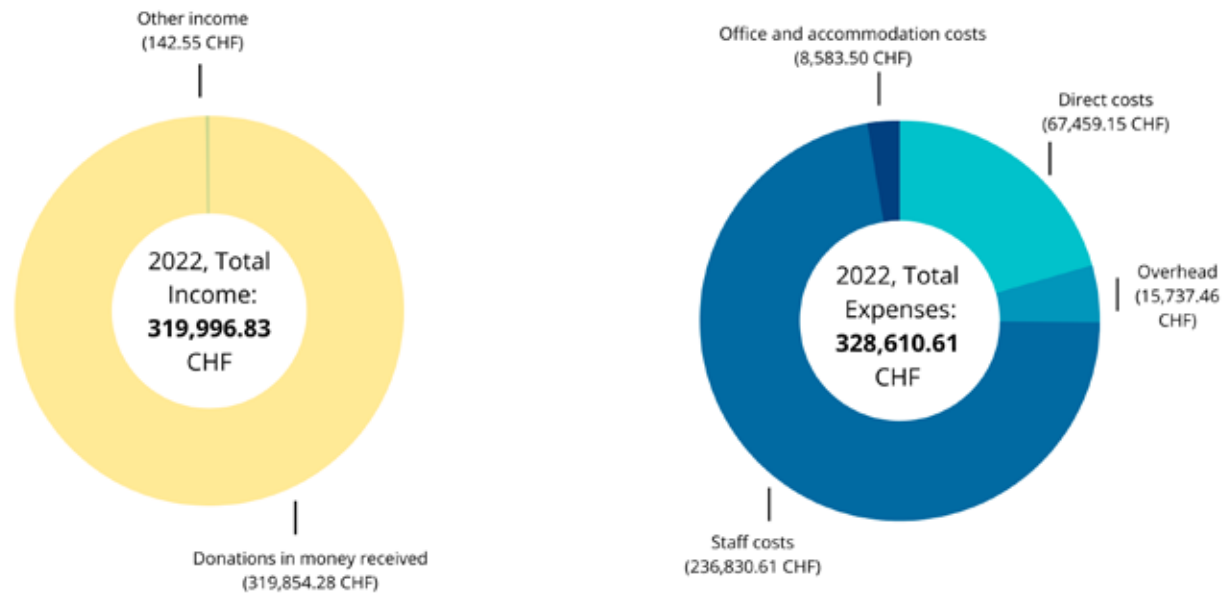
A non-profit association under Swiss law, the Global Detention Project (GDP) has two main governance bodies: the General Assembly of association members, whose responsibilities include appointing the association's Executive Committee, which is responsible for managing the association, approving budgets, and authorising grants, among other activities. Executive Committee members, who participate on a voluntary basis, may appoint a Board that is intended to interact more closely with the Executive Director and provide assistance on short notice for a range of activities, including banking and finances, drafting contracts, addressing legal questions, and generally serving as an easily accessible advisory body to the Executive Director. Board members include the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the Executive Committee.

The Board is directly involved in financial oversight of the association and has direct access to all of its financial information. Copies of banking and financial records are sent directly by the association's bank to the Treasurer. The association also has appointed a nonbinding Academic Advisory Council, which is made up of prominent academics and scholars working on issues central to the GDP's mandate. The academic council is intended to serve in a consultative capacity to the Executive Director, helping to ensure that the GDP's outputs meet the highest standards, providing advice on research, suggesting areas to focus GDP efforts, and collaborating with staff on producing material published by the association.

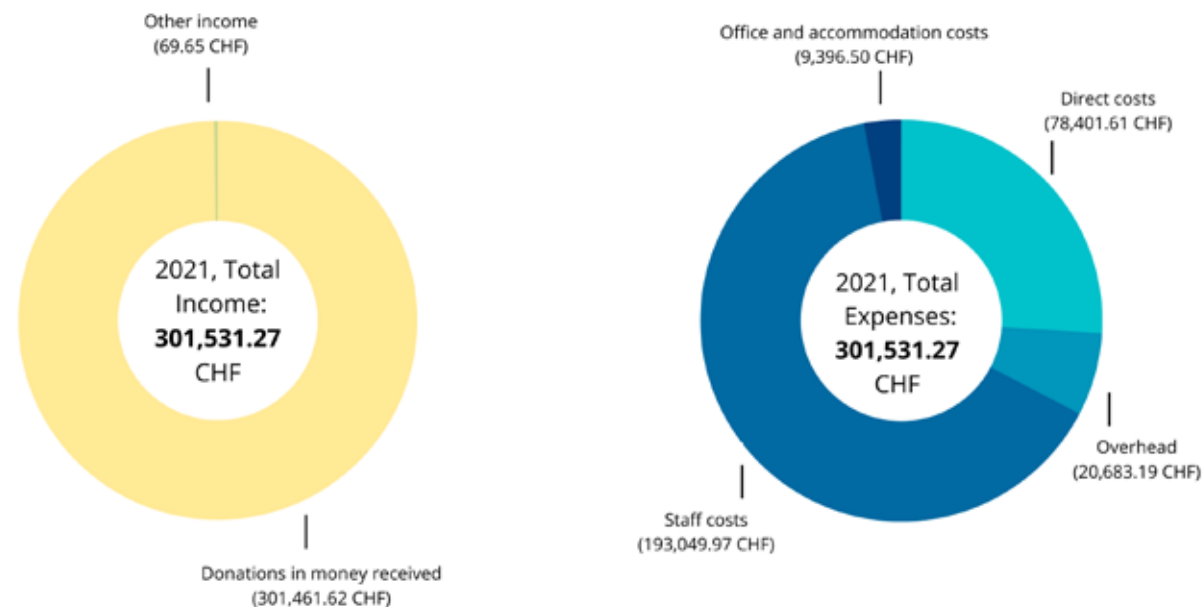
8. FINANCES

This is an extract of the Global Detention Project's financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2022. To request a copy of the full audit, please email admin@globaldetentionproject.org.

2022 – Income and Expenses



2021 – Income and Expenses



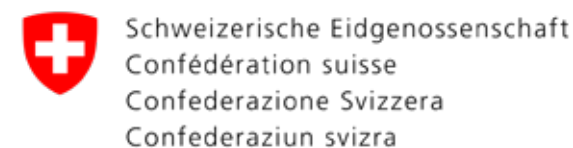
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Global Detention Project would like to thank the following financial partners, whose support made our work in 2022 possible: the Swiss Department of Foreign Affairs, the Oak Foundation, the Ville de Geneve, and the World Health Organisation.

We would also like to thank the numerous immigration and human rights experts around the world who collaborated with us during the year, including Marko Anojčić, Massimiliano Bagolini, Hindpal Singh Bhui, Steven Caruana, Pablo Ceriani, Sir Malcolm Evans, Veronica Filippeschi, Habibe Kara, Sanja Milivojevic, and Kwanele Pakati. Our sincere thanks, also, to the following organisations: the Asia Pacific Refugee Rights Network, Association for Legal Intervention, Birmingham City University, Border Criminologies, EuroMed Rights, Groupe Antiraciste de Défense et d'Accompagnement des Etrangers et Migrants, Grupo de Movilidad Humana de la Coordinadora Nacional de Derechos Humano, Human Rights Monitoring

Institute, Human Rights Watch, International Committee of the Red Cross, International Organisation for Migration, International Refugee Rights Association, Lambda Warsaw, Lawyers for Human Rights, Lighthouse Reports, MENA Rights Group, Migrant-Rights.org, Migration and Asylum Project, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, People's Migration Challenge, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the World Organisation Against Torture, as well as various individuals and organisations in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia who prefer to remain anonymous for security reasons.

We are also grateful to the students, research fellows, and interns who generously gave their time and energy to the GDP throughout the year. In particular, we would like to thank Reta Barfuss (Utrecht University) and Charlotte Souyris (Sciences Po) whose contributions to the Global Immigration Detention Observatory were invaluable.





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