

FACTSHEET: IMMIGRATION DETENTION

RIGHT TO REMAIN

WHAT IS IMMIGRATION DETENTION?

Immigration detention is when the government removes people from their families and communities and holds them in prison-like centres called immigration removal centres (IRCs) or Short-term holding facilities (STHFs) because of their immigration status.

- People are not detained for committing crimes.
- They are not a threat to public safety.
- Detention is about control, not protection.

WHY ARE PEOPLE DETAINED?

The Home Office says detention is to remove people but most are later released. In practice, detention feels like punishment, even though it isn't for a crime.

The UK is the only country in Europe with no time limit - people can be held for days, months, or even years, not knowing when they'll be free.

WHO IS DETAINED?

Anyone without secure immigration status can be detained, including:

- People seeking asylum when they arrive in the UK.

- Long-term residents with British families and lives built here.

- Survivors of trafficking, modern slavery or violence.

- People refused asylum or whose visas have expired (often due to confusing rules and high costs).

- People taken without warning in immigration raids (at work, home, transport, or worship).

- > People taken straight from prison - punished twice.



WHY DO WE OPPOSE IMMIGRATION DETENTION

- **It traumatises people:** prison-like conditions, no trial, no sentence, no release date. Self-harm is widespread. People have taken their lives. When people are released, they return to their families and communities harmed, destabilised, and often with no support.
- **It tears families apart:** children lose parents, partners are separated, neighbours disappear overnight. The grief and disruption is felt by many.
- **It targets people already made vulnerable by systemic injustice:** racialised, working-class, and migrant communities, who are the least resourced to fight back, are punished for paperwork or Home Office mistakes denied rights others can rely on by default.
- **It's expensive:** The government scapegoats migrants as a financial burden but even by their own logic, detention makes no economic sense costing £100-£120 per person per day and most people are eventually released back into the community. The UK spends hundreds of millions each year locking people up while private companies profit from carrying out state violence.
- **It enables abuse and denies basic care:** poor oversight and regulation, limited legal help, unsafe healthcare, and widespread reports of abuse.
- **It's about control, not safety:** detention doesn't protect the public. It punishes people for crossing borders, surviving injustice or simply existing without the right paperwork.

WHAT CAN I DO?

- Scan the QR code to learn more about immigration detention and how you can support people at risk.
- Spread the word - educate your friends and a family
- Join your local Anti-Raids or Reporting Support group.



THESE WALLS MUST FALL

MIGRATION IS LIFE

NO ONE IS ILLEGAL

**RIGHT
TO REMAIN**