



United Nations
Network on Migration
Working Better Together

Youth Consultation on Ending Child Immigration Detention

Concept Note

Monday 8 May 2023, 14:30 - 16:15 CET

Registration Link: bit.ly/ecidyc

1. Introduction

As international migration (both forced and voluntary movement) increases, due to issues such as climate change, conflict, persecution, and poverty, millions of children are on the move around the world, many of them undocumented. Too many of these children are being damaged by the harmful immigration practices of some governments. One of the most widespread and worrying of these practices is the use of immigration detention. Despite being against international law, and despite the well-documented harms that immigration detention causes to children, hundreds of thousands of children are still held in detention each year, in at least 80 countries around the world. Children held in detention are at risk of suffering depression and anxiety, and frequently exhibit symptoms consistent with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) such as insomnia and nightmares, and there can be significant damage to their long-term cognitive and physical development.

Fortunately, there is growing momentum on working to end child immigration detention, and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) offer opportunities to build on this momentum with governments. Already a number of States (i.e. Germany, Mexico, Thailand) made pledges to work to end child immigration detention and to support global peer learning efforts in this direction (i.e. Colombia) at the International Migration Review Forum (IMRF) - the first global review of implementation of the GCM - in 2022. The UN Network on Migration (UNNM) has established a Workstream on Alternatives to immigration Detention (ATD) which is organising a global peer-learning exchange between States on working to end child immigration detention on 24 May, 2023. There will be Regional Reviews of GCM implementation in 2024/5 and the next IMRF in 2026. These fora - plus the Global Refugee Forum in December 2023 - offer opportunities for States to make further pledges on ending child immigration detention and to concretely operationalize these pledges towards the end of this practice on the ground.

Meaningful youth engagement on this issue has the potential to make a significant impact on States' policies and practices. Migrant youth, including those young people who have some lived experience of immigration detention (either themselves or within their families or communities) bring a different and key perspective to the discussions with government representatives on this issue. When States take steps towards alternative approaches to migration governance, without resorting to detention, they need input from migrant youth voices



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to help them devise appropriate systems that work for all sections of the community as well as for governments.

2. Youth engagement work to end child immigration detention

The Migrant Youth and Children Platform (MYCP) which is part of the Major Group on Children and Youth (MGCY) is organising the first global online youth consultation – GCM Youth Talk - on ending child immigration detention, with a focus on garnering youth perspectives on the issue, and hearing about their regional knowledge and/or experiences to contribute to the peer-learning exchange between governments on May 24, 2023, and the subsequent Regional Reviews of GCM and next IMRF, as well as to the Global Refugee Forum.

The event is free, and open to all people 30 years old and younger who would like to participate, especially those who are linked to youth-led and civil society organisations. Young people with lived experience of the impacts of immigration detention on themselves, their families and/or their communities are particularly encouraged to participate.

This first GCM Youth Talk will also provide the opportunity to identify youth speakers for the inter-governmental peer-learning exchange, at which these youth speakers will be able to represent and give voice to views emerging from the Talk. This consultation is key to garnering youth voices on the issue of ending child immigration detention in order to fully brief States on taking subsequent action.

Following the consultation, an outcome document will be prepared in order to provide a collated youth perspective for the intergovernmental meeting on May 24.

3. Objectives of the 8 May 2023 GCM Youth Talk

The objective of the event is to bring together young people, including migrants and persons with lived experience, to discuss ending child immigration detention, and produce recommendations for the May 24 peer-learning event. The participants will also be able to connect and interact with representatives from MYCP, members of the UN Network for Migration and members of the UNNM Alternatives to Immigration Detention Workstream as well as directly contribute to providing a collated youth report submitted to States as part of the GCM processes.

The specific objectives of the consultation are as follows:

- Consolidation and amplification of youth voices on ending child immigration detention
- Bringing child and youth perspectives to decision-making spaces
- Building the capacity of young people on the Global Compact on Migration and Global Compact on Refugees objectives and processes
- Strengthening the capacity of young people to advocate on system change to end child immigration detention



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The event will include language-based focused roundtables focused on child immigration detention based on the following questions:

- What do you know about child immigration detention, and are there any experiences you would like to share?
- What are the consequences of child immigration detention on children and youth, including on their communities?
- Governments are concerned about managing migration. In that context, how can governments in your country or region be persuaded away from using child immigration detention?
- What can be done by children and youth to bring a focus onto this issue, globally and regionally? What can be done by governments to incorporate children and youth perspectives and input on this issue?

4. Logistical Details

This event will be organised by Migration Children & Youth Platform (MYCP) with the partnership of the UN Network for Migration, through its Alternatives to Detention (ATD) Workstream.

Date & Time: 8 May 2023, 14:30 Central European Time (CET)

Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes

Place: Virtual (Microsoft Teams/Zoom)

Host Language: English (with French, Spanish and Arabic translation available)

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5. Draft Agenda

<i>Duration</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Title / details</i>
5 min	Virtual Check-In	
20 min	Opening Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-leads of the UNNM ATD Workstream to deliver remarks, focused on outcomes and relation to May 24 peer-learning - MYCP to explain the plan for the session, and why the session is being held - External expert on child immigration detention to deliver a short address on thematic priorities



<p>Roundtables: young participants will be divided in groups by language to collectively discuss and agree on a one-page outcome document defining policy priorities and recommendations, as well as existing and possible youth-led initiatives.</p>		
60 min	Roundtable in English	<p>Discussions to be led on the following questions, with 10-12 minutes per question:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you know about child immigration detention, and are there any experiences you would like to share? 2. What are the consequences of child immigration detention on children and youth, including on their communities? 3. Governments are concerned about managing migration. In that context, how can governments in your country or region be persuaded away from using child immigration detention? 4. What can be done by children and youth to bring a focus onto this issue, globally and regionally? What can be done by governments to incorporate children and youth perspectives and input on this issue?
	Roundtable in French	
	Roundtable in Spanish	
	Roundtable in Arabic	
15 mins	Summary of Roundtable discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Moderated by MYCP, one selected representative per roundtable will highlight the main inputs from their discussion
5 min	Closing Ceremony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Final remarks from MYCP & UNNM ATD Workstream Co-Leads - Signing up to speak at the peer-Learning event