



New Internationalist

The people, the ideas, the action in the fight for global justice

Detention centres

NEW INTERNATIONALIST EASIER
ENGLISH Upper Intermediate
READY LESSON



This lesson:

Reading

More reading

Reading and note-taking

Reading and speaking *(after each reading, click on the original article at the bottom, and you will be able to understand it)*

Vocabulary: *(for each text, select 5 useful new phrases to note down and learn)*

Reading and writing *(a letter)*



Tough Guide to the World's Immigration Detention Centres



US

A wide range of accommodation is available for *Tough Guide* readers. In early 2013 Congress budgeted for 33,400 detention spaces – the largest in the world. But the US also offers the traveller the ultimate get-away-from-it-all experience – solitary confinement. Some establishments withhold food to control detainees who can earn back a regular diet.^{1,2,3}

—★★★★★

Sweden

Sweden's 235 bed spaces were recently described as a 'prison with extra flavours'. Readers, this is IKEA chic, complete with 24-hour internet and fruit bowls. But you may still get Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and the Committee for the Prevention of Torture registered concern over a lack of psychiatric care in a 2009 report. Give it a miss.⁴

—★

Ukraine

Ukraine offers an arresting pastiche of racism, corruption and violence. With 400 bed spaces and up to 12 months' detention, hospitality can be overdone. Take the riot police putting down a hunger strike in Lutsk detention centre in 2012, who threatened: 'We will kill you if you don't come to lunch.' UNHCR advises against travelling here.⁵

—★★★★★

Britain

With authentic British irony, the country which brought you habeas corpus glories in indefinite detention for foreigners. With 4,500 bed spaces and 13 establishments you will get panoramic views of Oxford, Portsmouth and the hills of Sussex as your locked van speeds you from one prison to another. A sense of humour is essential.

—★★★★

Turkey

EU funding is increasing capacity. Arrest at the River Evros on the Greek/Turkish border means automatic detention by one or other country; a leaking boat or Greek police 'push back' may end your trip completely. Kumpaki, offering views on to the charming old centre, is your stop for short stays in Istanbul. Don't mention 'Gezi Park' to the guards.

—★★

Greece

Tough Guide can't bring you total bed-space numbers. Even police stations are used to detain migrants. *Tough Guide* notes that a Greek court recently acquitted escaped migrants on the grounds that their stay in a Greek detention centre amounted to torture. The friendly greeting 'Yahsu! (Hi)' may help when meeting the locals.⁶

—★★★★★

Libya

Informal detention by regional militia – with little food and no healthcare – adds spice to the Libyan experience even for the jaded 'seen-it-all' traveller. In late 2013 UNHCR reported that the delightfully named *Department for Combating Illegal Migration* was in fact releasing illegally detained asylum seekers. Quick, don't miss out!⁷

—★★★★★

Indonesia

Travelling with the kids? No problem. Children are detained along with adults. A (very) young *Tough Guide* researcher said, 'we had one toilet for 37 people! *Tough Guide* readers are advised not to attempt escape; recapture often leads to a severe beating. The law allows for 10 years' detention.⁸

—★★★★★

Mauritania

On your way along the West Coast of Africa, you will encounter Spanish-funded Nouadhibou – affectionately known as 'Guanantamito'. It houses those attempting the north passage into Spain or the Canaries. Don't miss the hair-raising, unforgettable experience of collective expulsions back to Mali and Senegal.⁹

—★★★★

Australia

Arrival (if you're lucky) by picturesque local boat from Indonesia results in mandatory detention. As of October 2013, 6,521 people were accommodated in this way. 'Offshore processing' is all the rage so don't count on seeing Sydney. If you land up on Papua New Guinea's Manus Island, prepare for cramped conditions, stifling heat and humiliation.^{10,11}

—★★★★★

Are you the kind of person who is fleeing injustice and human rights abuses?

New Internationalist has compiled the most-up-to-date info on where you might be staying – in some cases indefinitely. It's all here, from the near rock-bottom, basic 'minus one star' to the absolutely fatal 'minus five star'.

¹ Sequestration Exposes Need to Eliminate the Immigration Detention Bed Quota; National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC), n.i.j.c./90407n ² Invisible Isolation, NIJC, September 2012, n.i.j.c./1270VX ³ globaldetentionproject.org ⁴ Scorey Jose Parthooprarambil et al. 'Do higher standards of detention prove possible well-being?', *Forced Migration Review*, Issue 64, September 2013. ⁵ Ukraine As a Country of Asylum, UNHCR, July 2013, n.i.j.c./1018B ⁶ The AIDA project (Asylum Information Database); Greece Country Report, June 2013, n.i.j.c./127MMy ⁷ Amnesty International Annual Report, 2013, n.i.j.c./127MJu ⁸ Barely Surviving: Detention, Abuse, and Neglect of Migrant Children in Indonesia, Human Rights Watch, 2013, n.i.j.c./127MJu ⁹ UNHCR External Update, Libya October 2013, n.i.j.c./127MJu ¹⁰ Immigration on Detention Statistics Summary, Australia Department of Immigration and Citizenship, October 2013, n.i.j.c./1018B ¹¹ This is breaking people – human rights violations at Australia's asylum-seeker processing centre on Manus Island, Papua New Guinea, n.i.j.c./127MJu

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Look quickly at the text (next 2 slides) and match:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1) Computers and fruit | a) Turkey / Australia |
| 2) Lovely views | b) Indonesia |
| 3) Children welcome | c) Indonesia / Libya |
| 4) No hunger strikes allowed | d) Britain / Turkey |
| 5) (Minus) 5 stars | e) Sweden |
| 6) Arrive in a boat | f) Ukraine |

United States A wide range of accommodation is available for *Tough Guide* readers. In early 2013 Congress agreed to build 33,400 spaces in detention centres – the most in the world. But the US also offers the best experience – solitary confinement. Some detention centres stop giving food to control people – they can ‘earn regular food’. **STARS:** minus four

Sweden Sweden has 235 bed spaces. Someone described it as a ‘prison with extras’. This is *IKEA chic* – they have 24-hour internet and bowls of fruit. But maybe you will get Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. And the *Committee for the Prevention of Torture* said it was worried about not enough psychiatric care in a 2009 report. Better not to go there. **STARS:** minus one

Ukraine Ukraine offers racism, corruption and violence. They have 400 bed spaces and up to 12 months’ detention. The riot police controlled a hunger strike in Lutsk detention centre in 2012, by saying: ‘We will kill you if you don’t come to lunch.’ Not a good idea to travel here. **STARS:** minus four

Britain It is ironic that Britain, the country of habeas corpus also keeps foreigners in detention indefinitely. There are 4,500 bed spaces and 13 different places. You will have beautiful views of Oxford, Portsmouth and the hills of Sussex when your police van takes you from one prison to another. You need a sense of humour. **STARS:** minus three

Greece We do not know the total number of bed-spaces. They even keep migrants at police stations. Recently, a Greek court recently set free some migrants who had escaped migrants because they said their stay in a Greek detention centre was the same as torture. It might help you meet local people if you know how to say *Yahsu!*(Hi) **STARS:** minus four

Turkey They are building more detention centres with money from the EU. If you are arrested at the River Evros on the Greek/Turkish border they will automatically put you in a detention centre – either in Greece or Turkey; maybe your trip will end completely if your boat has a hole in it, or if the Greek police push you back. If you are in Istanbul for a short time, you will stay at Kumpaki, with a lovely view of the beautiful old centre. Don't talk about 'Gezi Park' to the guards. **STARS:** minus two

Mauritania As you travel along the West Coast of Africa, you will come to the Spanish detention centre Nouadhibou – people call it 'Guantanamo'. It is for people who try to cross north into Spain or the Canaries. The worst thing is the 'collective expulsions' (lots of people sent together) back to Mali and Senegal. **STARS:** minus three

Indonesia Are you travelling with children? No problem. Children are put in detention centres with adults. A (very) young *Tough Guide* researcher said, 'we had one toilet for 37 people'. Do not try to escape; if they get you again, they will beat you badly. The law allows them to keep you in detention for 10 years. **STARS:** minus five

Libya There is informal detention by regional militia – with little food and no healthcare. This makes the Libyan experience more interesting, even for people who have been in detention centres in other countries. In late 2013, UNHCR reported that the *Department for Combating Illegal Migration* was releasing asylum seekers who were put in detention centres illegally. Quick, go there! **STARS:** minus five

Australia If you're lucky, you will arrive in a beautiful local boat from Indonesia – and they will put you in detention. From October 2013, 8,521 people were put in detention in this way. They try to keep everyone away from Australia, so you probably won't see Sydney. If they take you to Papua New Guinea's Manus Island, you will have very little space, and a lot of heat and humiliation. **STARS:** minus four

Now read the texts again:

a) If you had to choose a detention centre, which one would you choose to stay in? Why?

b) Which one would you least like to stay in? Why?

c) Compare / discuss



Find out more.....

In groups, create some questions: what would you like to know about these detention centres?

Why ...? Who?

When....? Where ...?

How ...?



In groups, read these 4 texts (one each) and make notes to answer your questions):

1) Why are we locking up migrants?

http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Why_are_we_locking_up_migrants%3F

2) Another sad death in a detention centre

http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Another_sad_death_in_a_detention_centre

3) The companies who put immigrants in prison and make money

http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/The_companies_who_put_foreigners_in_prison_and_make_money

4) Argument about humane detention

http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Argument:_If_we_make_the_detention_of_migrants_more_humane,_does_this_increase_detention%3F

What are people doing about this?
Choose one of these links to find
out more information:

[http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Take action
on the detention of migrants: links and mo
re information](http://eewiki.newint.org/index.php/Take_action_on_the_detention_of_migrants:_links_and_more_information)

In pairs, write a letter to someone
who could change this.

