

## Immigration Detention: Investigating the Persistence of a Failed Project

*Thursday, 19 June 2025 09:00 (1h 30m)*

This panel examines the expansion and diffusion of immigration detention systems, despite evidence that they cause harm and do not deliver stated policy objectives. Immigration detention fails to deter, is disproportionate to immigration control objectives, discriminates on the basis of race, gender and class, and often includes inhuman and degrading treatment. Scholars have highlighted the high financial and human costs of detention that regularly involves the incarceration of already vulnerable adults and children, produces additional vulnerabilities, and harms detained individuals and their families.

From the state narratives to the involvement of non-state actors and the sites of incarceration, this panel explores why immigration detention systems are sustained and expand despite their failings, how this continuation is justified, and how it is resisted. The panel focuses on three case studies—Australia, the UK, and US—early adopters of immigration detention and innovators and leaders in the transnational policy field. It asks how we understand the plasticity of detention regimes, alongside an enduring carceral logic, and how detention is resisted at the local, national and international levels.

**Track Classification:** International Politics of Migration, Refugees and Diaspora Working Group