

Council of Europe HELP/UNHCR online course on Alternatives to Immigration Detention

The **requirement to develop and implement** alternatives to immigration detention is well established in the European and International legal Framework.

Recent years have seen growing attention to the question of how alternatives can enable states to **manage migration** without over-reliance on depriving people of their liberty. Despite increased interest however, alternatives are not yet widely applied. Sometimes legislation has to be strengthened, but there is also a need for greater **practical guidance** on developing and apply alternatives **effectively**.



The **HELP/UNHCR course on Alternatives to Immigration Detention** therefore addresses both the legal and practical aspects of alternatives to detention in the context of migration.

The topics are developed in a practical way, by using presentations, interactive screens and knowledge checks.

The course was completed in June 2020.

Target audience

The course target audience is inevitably diverse. It is primarily addressed to all **legal professionals** (judges, prosecutors, lawyers or court staff) and justice professionals in the wider sense.

It can also be used by other **public authorities**, including national human rights institutions, law-enforcement, parliamentary staff, public administration staff etc. dealing with immigration legislation and practice. It can be a great resource for **university students** or **civil society organizations**, and in general for anyone who wishes to learn more about the legal and practical aspects of developing and applying alternatives to immigration detention effectively.

Development of the course

The course has been produced jointly by the **Independent Human Rights Bodies Division** and the **HELP Programme** of the Council of Europe, alongside the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**. It has been developed under the [Council of Europe Action Plan on Protecting Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe \(2017-2019\)](#), with the support of the **Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees (SRSG)**.

Course outline (4 substantive modules)

Introductory Module: Welcome message; navigation instructions; course authors, target group and background.

Module 1: Legal and Practical Basics

- Wider context of alternatives and relevant legal terms
- Who is concerned by alternatives
- Potential benefits

Module 2: Legal Framework

- Provisions of European and International legal framework
- Principles of necessity and proportionality
- Substantial and Procedural Guarantees
- Requirements linked to vulnerability

Module 3: What Possible Types of Alternatives?

- Different types of alternatives
- Benefits, challenges and human rights implications
- Implementation in different countries

Module 4: How to make Alternatives effective

- Assessing effectiveness of alternatives
- Elements of effectiveness
- Effective implementation in a national context

Access the free online course

The course is **publicly available on the HELP online platform** <http://help.elearning.ext.coe.int/>. To access the course, you will need to open a HELP account if you have not yet done so (2 minutes).

Complementary online courses

Related HELP online courses include:

- HELP/UNHCR course on [Asylum and the ECHR](#)
- HELP course on [Refugee and Migrant Children](#)
- Help Course on the [Committee on the Prevention of Torture \(CPT\) standards](#), which includes a module on immigration detention.